In 1985 a far-sighted group of local residents got together to discuss how to ensure that some of the Blue Hill Peninsula’s special land resources were conserved for the long-term benefit of present and future generations of residents and visitors. The Blue Hill Heritage Trust grew out of those discussions, but the founders’ expectations were modest. Local land trusts were a new type of non-profit organization. There was no certainty that their creation would be effective, much less become a successful, enduring community institution. But it has. Their bet paid off.

Today, 30 years later, our Trust has worked with willing landowners to conserve over 150 parcels of land totaling over 7000 acres. These lands protect scenic views, wildlife habitat, agricultural soils, recreation trails and water access. They provide shared community spaces where people can learn about or just enjoy the wonders of our landscape. They support the economic underpinnings of a local economy that depends on seasonal residents and visitors who appreciate our Peninsula’s natural assets.

The conservation of these lands — some we own, others protected by conservation easements that we hold — comes with an obligation to care for them in perpetuity. We are committed to meeting that obligation with a sustainable, enduring organization of people — young and old, local and from away — who have the skills and will to carry this work forward even as new generations come and go.

The celebration of the product of our 30 years of work will be modest. Look for a regular column in the local paper this summer that celebrates some of the highlights of our Trust’s story. Join us at a celebratory Annual Meeting on August 25th. Participate in one of our “Tuesdays at 10” walks. The real celebration will be a simple continuation of our conservation work, building on all that has been accomplished with your help over the last three decades.

A Beautiful Gift of Land on Peters Brook

Sixty-two acres of land along the western side of Peters Brook in Blue Hill that provides a variety of wildlife habitat, long stream frontage and the opportunity for extending a popular public walking trail is now conservation land, thanks to a generous gift from a couple with strong conservation interests.

Peters Brook, which empties into Peters Cove on Blue Hill harbor near our AB Herrick Landing property on the east Blue Hill Road, is one of those lovely places in our midst that is of importance to people and wildlife. It is a place that many residents and visitors have come to deeply appreciate since we developed a trail along the brook’s eastern side in partnership with members of the Byers family, the landowners who granted us a conservation easement in 2005 that included trail rights.

Now a long stretch of scenic frontage along the western side of the brook, as well as acres of mixed forest and a large portion of a wetland known as Albion’s Meadow that feeds the brook, will remain as a natural area, complementing the conservation easement along the eastern shore and offering new trail possibilities. After an ecologist completes a natural resources inventory for us that identifies fragile areas of the property, we will be working on a trail design that connects to the existing trail via a bridge over the brook and offers visitors a walk through a beautiful landscape.

POSI AND DOUG COWAN, the donors of the land, are enthusiastic about their gift and about sharing the beauty of this place with others.

“We are excited that this property will complement the magical Peters Brook trail that so many people enjoy,” says Posie. “We are also excited that our gift will allow the Trust to enhance this recreational opportunity located so close to town by extending the trail across the Brook so that people can experience the natural beauty of Albion Meadow and the land’s other natural features. We are confident that the Trust will be a great steward of this land.”

In addition to their land gift, the Cowans made a contribution to our Stewardship Fund, which will help ensure that our trust has the financial resources to be “a great steward of this land” long into the future.
A gift of a legal interest in a parcel that forms Blue Hill Mountain’s scenic western shoulder, sometimes referred to locally as “Little Blue Hill” or “Cobble Hill,” has advanced us toward our long-standing goal of conserving the Mountain’s upper elevations. **A conservation puzzle, pieced together slowly**

Because of the various ownerships, Blue Hill Mountain has been a conservation puzzle that we have worked at steadily over the years, one parcel at a time, some gifted to us, others purchased with funds donated by our members. One key piece of that puzzle is a parcel on the Mountain’s western shoulder, land that includes both fields and woods and is prominently visible from the harbor, the village and the Mountain Road. It lies between two parcels previously conserved by our Trust.

This parcel, once part of a farm owned by the Os-good family, one of Blue Hill’s original settlers, was acquired by Dorothy Austin, a long-time summer resident, in the 1950s. The ownership interest, but not the land itself, was subsequently divided among family members, complicating the possibility of its conservation. Katherine “Kitty” Clements, Dorothy Austin’s daughter, has now generously donated her 80% ownership interest to our Trust, thrilled that we would accept her partial interest and work to ensure the conservation of this family land. Kitty now joins the ranks of Ruth Hayes and Louise Frederick as donors of the Mountain’s high ground for the long-term enjoyment of us all.

We will be meeting with the other owners this summer to discuss our joint ownership and the future stewardship of the property. For now, we are celebrating this huge step forward in what seemed but a dream 30 years ago when our Trust was founded.

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**Executive Director’s Column – Jim Dow**

**30 Years of Great People**

Our Trust is about land conservation, but it is also very much about people. For 30 years our organization has served as a vehicle for civic-minded people to work together for a common purpose that will benefit their community well beyond their own individual lifetimes.

Over those last three decades this organization has attracted and been blessed with the contributions of a wide range of people with diverse backgrounds, skills and talents, but all with a common interest – the conservation of the natural values of our remarkable place.

**Meaningful Accomplishments**

Although we could not have come this far without cooperative landowners, the financial contributions of our members, the help of our volunteers, or the hard work of our staff, I want to offer a special thanks to the people who have served on our Board of Directors. These are the people who founded this organization, who have guided it over the last thirty years and who will continue to do so into the future – all volunteers, all hard-working, all committed to our mission, all generous with their time, wisdom and wealth. Over the years the names have changed (except for one: founding member Peter Clapp who has served as “a rudder” for our Board) but the quality of service by this group of people has remained a constant. As individual Board Members have often remarked to me, service on our Board is not only highly satisfying because of our steady accomplishments, it is also highly enjoyable because of the quality of the people involved in our work.

Going forward, to remain vigorous and relevant as a local community organization, we will need to continue to attract great people, especially those of the younger generations. I am confident that we will.

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**Join us for a Hike! Tuesdays at 10**

To celebrate our 30th Anniversary, we are having a group hike on every one of our trails throughout the summer. These are walks for the community, will be led by a Trust member, and are free and open to all. If you haven’t been out on all the trails, now is the perfect time. Check our website for details. Every Tuesday at 10 am, each a different trail.

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**Celebrate our 30th Anniversary at our Annual Meeting**

Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 5:30 PM at Kneisel Hall in Blue Hill.

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**New T-Shirts!**

Thanks to artwork donated by Trust member Ciona Ulbrich (who is also senior project manager at Maine Coast Heritage Trust, our frequent partner on land projects), we have new t-shirt designs. Great gifts. Great summer wear. A great way to help support our work. Available at our office or at our booth at various farmers markets this summer.
New Board Members

We are very pleased to welcome new additions to our Board of Directors. SARAH O’MALLEY is a lifelong resident of the Blue Hill Peninsula with strong ties to Castine, teaches Ocean Science at Maine Maritime Academy, is a volunteer instructor with the Maine Master Naturalist Program and produces a science and nature show on WERU Community Radio. She formerly served on the Board of the Conservation Trust of Brooksville, Castine and Penobscot.

BROOKE PARISH, a member of an extended family of both year-round and summer residents of Castine, divides his time between Castine, where he loves to sail, and New York City, where he is a partner in an asset management firm. He has served on various boards and brings us that experience as well as financial expertise. Both Sarah and Brooke will help connect us to the Castine community that is now part of our service area.

SARAH O’MALLEY, a graduate of George Stevens Academy and College of the Atlantic with deep Maine roots, is co-vice president of Blue Hill Books and a Director of Wild Seed Project, a non-profit working to restore native habitats and support Maine pollinators. She is passionate about rural living, community development and being outside in all types of weather. She brings the perspective of the millennial generation to our Board.

SAMANTHA HASSELL, a graduate of George Stevens Academy and College of the Atlantic with deep Maine roots, is co-vice president of Blue Hill Books and a Director of Wild Seed Project, a non-profit working to restore native habitats and support Maine pollinators. She is passionate about rural living, community development and being outside in all types of weather. She brings the perspective of the millennial generation to our Board.

We welcome CHRISSY BEARDSLEY ALLEN (left), our new Outreach/Development Coordinator and HANNAH HURTIV (right) our temporary Administrative Assistant. For more interesting biographical info, visit our website.

New Staffers

CHRIS BEARDSLEY ALLEN, Pam Johnson, Hannah Hurvitt, Terry Moulton, Phyllis Taylor, Jim Dow, Mary Barnes, President

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BROOKE PARISH, a member of an extended family of

New Strategic Plan Nears Completion

Planning means many things to many people. It can be opportunity; it can be efficiency; it can be responsibility; it can be collaboration and it can be inspiring. For an organization like ours, planning, particularly strategic planning, is a tremendous tool for building vision, ensuring long-term stability and embracing the needs and desires of a community.

We have dedicated the last six months to assessing ourselves from within and listening to what people in every town across the peninsula had to say about us. Residents spoke of water access, hiking trails, habitat for wildlife, fish migration and issues involving natural resources. This feedback has given us ideas and a vision of how to meet community needs going forward. The process has enabled us to study what it honestly takes to engage and commit to conservation in the years to come, which we believe is essential to our community. This is inspiring but also the paramount responsibility of our board—to have a plan that ensures that our organization is relevant, sustainable and effective over the long term.

Mary Barnes, President

Survey results:

“Protecting wildlife habitat”...received the highest importance ranking by the 400+ participants (both members and non-members) in our strategic planning process survey.

“Providing walking trails”...was a close second in survey responses. We have over 25 miles of trails to date.

Habitat Connectivity, Fish Passage and Patten Stream

Wildlife habitat connectivity is an issue to which we are giving increasing attention. That includes the linkage between freshwater ponds and streams and the ocean, a connectivity that is essential for diadromous fish, such as alewives, blueback herring, American eel and rainbow smelt, all of which play a key role in our local food web. Barriers to the passage of these fish from the salt water to the fresh water and back again during their life cycle have been created over the years by dams and road construction. Removal of those barriers will restore the former ecological connectivity.

A group of local citizens in Surry with whom we have been working for the last few years will soon be able to celebrate a major step forward in this effort. Through their sheer persistence, a partnership between the town, various state agencies and a local landowner was developed. This led to funding for an engineering firm’s design of a fish ladder that will remove a barrier to fish passage on Patten Stream caused by the earlier construction of a highway bridge over the stream near the center of Surry village. Additional funding has now been secured to pay for the construction of this fishway. Soon the huge runs of alewives of former times will be able to move freely from Patten Bay up the stream to Patten Pond where they spawn.

There are many other barriers to fish passage on streams throughout our Peninsula. We and others will be working together to replicate the Patten Stream success story elsewhere.

Blue Hill Heritage Trust

Mission Statement

To conserve in perpetuity land and water resources that support the long-term health and well-being of the natural and human communities on the Blue Hill Peninsula.

Outreach/Development Coordinator

CHRIS BEARDSLEY ALLEN

Executive Director

Mary Barnes, President

Treasurer

Peter Clapp, President

Secretary

Terry Moulton, Treasurer, Blue Hill

Vice-President

Pamela Johnson, Vice-President, Blue Hill

Blue Hill Heritage Trust

For information about planned giving opportunities contact: Blue Hill Heritage Trust 207-374-5109 info@bluehillheritagetrust.org

Leave a Legacy

Make a planned gift and join our STEWARDS’ CIRCLE

A new fish ladder will allow alewives to move from Patten Bay up to Patten Pond, where they spawn.

Greater Yellowlegs

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We were delighted when we learned that Kitty Clements would be donating her ownership interest in her family’s Blue Hill Mountain land to our Trust. We were doubly delighted when we learned that she would also be generously donating Carleton Island, which her family had also owned for many years. Thanks to her generosity, the island is now in our conservation fold.

A Gift: Carleton Island, Gem of the Salt Pond

A long, narrow forested island that is visible from Route 172 near the Blue Hill-Sedgwick town line, Carleton Island is a prominent feature of the Salt Pond, a wildlife rich estuary where the salt water of Blue Hill bay mixes with freshwater from Fourth, Third, Second and First Ponds via Carleton Stream.

Incredibly rich wildlife habitat

Because of its wildlife values, including providing habitat for a variety of waterfowl as well as bald eagles, the Salt Pond was identified as an area worthy of our attention in a 2009 conservation planning report. It has also been identified as a place with archeological values because of its former use by native people. The conservation of Carleton Island will help protect both the wildlife and archeological values of the Salt Pond.

The island has long been included in the Maine Island Trail, and will remain so as a “day use only” island. Staff and volunteers from the Maine Island Trail Association will assist us with its stewardship. (One of our first projects will likely be the removal of an old cabin on the island that has fallen into extreme disrepair.) We plan to include an exploration of the island as part of one of our future Walks and Talks programs.

About the name

The Carleton family were early settlers of this area of South Blue Hill as reflected by the name of the stream where they had a sawmill and the name of the island near the mouth of the stream.

The Carleton name (sometimes spelled Carlton) is also attached to our office on the Mountain Road, which was built by William Carleton about 1815 after he “came north” and married into the Osgood family. This historical connection between island and office adds a special dimension to this gift.