

Blue Hill Heritage Trust

Community-Based Land Conservation since 1985

Blue Hill Heritage Trust
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30 Years Later: Still Going Strong

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.



Blue Hill Heritage Trust was created in 1985, prompted by a proposal for a 36-unit condominium development on Peters Point on Blue Hill Harbor, shown in the center right of the above photo.

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.



A gift of 62 acres along the western side of Peters Brook protects a place of importance to wildlife and people.

POSIE 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.

The Conservation of Blue Hill Mountain Continues



KEN WOISARD PHOTO

A recent gift helps protect a key parcel on the Mountain’s western shoulder.

Walks & Talks *a perennial favorite*



THE IMPORTANCE OF ALEWIVES More than forty people joined our Walks & Talks program at Patten Stream on a rainy day in May to hear Ted Ames talk about the importance of alewives.

Visit our website for our upcoming events: www.bluehillheritagetrust.org

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.



Jim Dow

Celebrate our 30th Anniversary at our Annual Meeting Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 5:30 PM at Kneisel Hall in Blue Hill.

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.



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 life-long 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, di-



vides 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.

SAMANTHA HASKELL, 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 millennials generation to our Board.



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

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.

Board of Directors

- Mary Barnes, *President*, Sedgwick
- Norman Alt, *Vice-President*, Brooksville
- Pamela Johnson, *Vice-President*, Sedgwick
- Terry Moulton, *Treasurer*, Blue Hill
- Phyllis Taylor, *Secretary*, Blue Hill
- Mitchell Baum, *Brooklin*
- Peter Clapp, *Blue Hill*
- Bonnie Copper, *Penobscot*
- Maynard Forbes, *Harborside*
- Samantha Haskell, *Brooksville*
- Jon Hopkins, *Brooklin*
- Sarah O'Malley, *Sedgwick*
- Brooke Parish, *Castine*
- Tricia Quirk, *Surry*

Staff

- Jim Dow, *Executive Director*
- George Fields, *Associate Director*
- Chrissy Allen, *Outreach/Development Coordinator*
- Hannah Hurvitt, *Administrative Assistant*

Habitat Connectivity, Fish Passage and Patten Stream



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

Wildlife habitat connectivity is an issue to which we are giving increasing attention. That includes the linkage between freshwater ponds and stream systems and the ocean, a connectivity that is essential for diadromous fish, such as alewives, blueback herring, American eel and rainbow smelt, all 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 ef-

fort. 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 that 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.

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 conserva-

tion 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.

Many of you volunteered in the strategic planning process. Thank you for all your input, reflections and ideas. It would not have been possible without your collaboration. We look forward to sharing the results of all this work after the final plan is adopted by the Board of Directors.

Mary Barnes, President



Quotes from the survey:

- “Protect the scenic nature of the area so that people will want to move here, raise families or start businesses...it’s the quality of life that brings and keeps people here.”
- “This is a great endeavor all around. Keep preserving habitat and providing trails- the best thing happening in the private conservation arena!”

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.



Leave a Legacy

Make a planned gift and join our STEWARDS' CIRCLE

For information about planned giving opportunities, contact:
Blue Hill Heritage Trust
207-374-5118
info@bluehillheritagetrust.org

Stewardship



Volunteers at Work

The winter weather was hard on trails, causing lots of tree damage and trail obstructions. Thanks to volunteers like these, clearing the trail at our **RICHARD AND VIRGINIA WEINLAND NATURE STUDY AREA** in Penobscot, we have made them ready for you to enjoy this summer.



New Interpretive Signs

When you next visit our Hundred Acre Wood preserve in Brooklin, you will find a series of interpretive signs that identify various trees and shrubs and provide information about their ecological benefits. A grant from the **BROOKLIN GARDEN CLUB** helped make this possible. Students from the Brooklin School, shown above, helped us place the signs along the trail.

Of Bats and Bees

Our conservation lands provide sites for researchers to study various wildlife issues. This year on our Blue Hill Mountain land a small temporary telemetry tower is allowing Zara Dowling, a researcher from the **UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS** to gather information on migratory tree bats.

A few miles away a data collection site at our Kingdom Woods Conservation Area will help researchers from the **UNIVERSITY OF MAINE** understand the forage and nesting habitats of native bee pollinators in various land cover types.



PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

A Gift: Carleton Island, Gem of the Salt Pond



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 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.