

The Local Trails and More

By Gabe Hall

Whenever I set foot in nature, there is a great feeling that fills me because in nature, everything is both random and unique. This feeling was uplifted again, thanks to the wonderful crew of BHHT. Thank you for your generosity.

- Gabe

The educational nature walks of 2017 for the Blue Hill 8th graders took place on the 17th through the 19th of October. During that time, the class set foot on three beautiful trails; Ferry Landing, Weinland, and Cooper Farm. On these journeys, my classmates and I learned about nature through an assortment of fun facts and common knowledge which were expressed by our guide, Chrissy Allen, educator at Blue Hill Heritage Trust. BHHT's mission: "To conserve the 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." Who they are: "A nationally accredited non-profit, membership based land conservation organization founded in 1985 by residents of the Blue Hill Peninsula in Coastal Maine." (Both quotes are credited to the Blue Hill Heritage Trust @ bluehillheritagetrust.org)

Some of my classmates thoughts:

Harrison- "It was awesome! Great views on Caterpillar Hill, I loved it!"

Connery- "I thought it was interesting learning about the ferry."

Abby- "A swell time!"



An old tattered shed on the Bagaduce



An overlook of the river with Negro Islands

Ferry Landing: As my classmates and I walked through the 1 mile trail we took pictures of the local wildlife and hurried along to our destination. Once we arrived at the Bagaduce River, our guide Chrissy Allen informed us that this was a watershed, an area or ridge of land that separate waters flowing to different rivers, basins, or streams. Chrissy Allen told us it was very important to conserve this area, because surface and storm runoff create the clean water, which runs off into other bodies of water through the watershed. She also informed us that there was a ferry that transported people across the Bagaduce. Chrissy explained the ferry and how it's existence impacted the

community. This was my personal favorite because of the vast amount of history that exists in this small parcel of land.

Brief History: Ferry Landing was gained in 2014 after BHHT combined with The Conservation Trust in Brooksville. The 23-acre land was donated to TCT in 1990 from Maine Coast Heritage Trust. The picture in the bottom right reveals the Negro Islands, which were used during the time of slavery as a part of the Underground Railroad. The well known ferry was run first by Cunningham Limeburner, who tried to be a farmer and a ferryman. He assumed full control in 1796, sparing people the grueling 25 mile long trip and providing a quick, efficient alternative.

Weinland: The second day was just as good as the first! We trudged along easy 1 mile trails in S. Penobscot on a beautiful day. Coming across old stone boundaries and learning valuable knowledge was definitely a key point of the experience. Facts like NOT to peel bark off trees, where useful reminders to be respectful of the forest. As we moved along, we learned of people like the Weinlands, who participated in the conservation of the land. The rock walls that we had noticed while hiking were ancient boundaries for farms that existed many years ago. I was relieved to see the forest healthy and recovered from the aggressive logging that took place in the 1970's.

Brief History: The area began being conserved after The Conservation Trust had been donated 40 acres of land through the period of 1997 and 1999. The land was given through the kindness and generosity of the Weinlands. In the 1970's, the area was logged, but moving forward, life has begun to flourish once more. With the forest jumping back into its natural state and wildlife returning, Virginia Weinland acquired a camera for her 60th birthday in 1972. Soon she became deeply in love with the art of photography, constantly going on nature walks and recording the natural integrity of the woods. Virginia continued this passion until she was physically unable. Although her work will always be remembered through the photos she produced and the abundance of books published with her name.

Yellow Birch, scientific name: *Setula Lutea*



The Weinland trail entrance



Cooper Farm: Unfortunately, this was the 8th grade's last trip. Hiking the Cooper Farm trails we learned of the different pines and about glacial erratics that were left behind in the Earth. The trails were very scenic, moss covered the ground like a blanket, birds chirped away with their little songs, and the unmistakable smell of pine wafted through the air. This gave me a little time to reflect on previous trips and how

grateful I am to live in the state of Maine. I thought about how many habitats were saved thanks to this campaign. I am really wondering how much people actually think about their impact on the environment or how they can help protect it? Hopefully it's a lot.

Brief History: Cooper Farm was donated in 2001 by the Casey, Gwynn, and Brown families. The property is 134 acres with 2 miles of scenic hiking trails. It borders Walker Pond and houses rare Maine birds such as the Woodcock, Eastern Meadowlark, and Bobolink. BHHT is looking to expand this property by purchasing 30 acres of land for 600,000 dollars. The funding has not yet met the requirement, but is hopefully on a steady incline to its destination.



An overlook of Cooper Farm



The soft needles of a White Pine

Gallery: All photos by Gabe Hall



Photo of author

