

# ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

The Conservation Land Trust of  
Deer Isle and Stonington, Maine, and Surrounding Islands



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## QUIET WORK

Land development is loud: chain saws fell trees, excavators growl their way into the earth, table saws buzz through fresh lumber. And the landscape changes: a road is cut, cement is poured, a structure rises into view. Development is active, visible, forthright, the yang to conservation's quiet, invisible yin— protection of the natural landscape, the places and views that nurture the human soul and provide habitat for countless fellow creatures. Like the Chinese symbols, development and conservation are interrelated. Both are part of a whole and balanced community.

Conservation is not passive, however. Even land that has been deemed "forever wild" is transformed over time by the forces of nature. Furthermore, land trusts work very actively, albeit invisibly, to conserve land: collaborating with owners on legal documents, writing management plans, monitoring protected lands, and reckoning with— thankfully rare— violations. These are very unusual in "first generation" easements, but when the land is passed to heirs or sold on the real estate market, new owners may not understand or, unfortunately, care what an easement means, even though they committed to it when they signed their deed.

The land trust is legally bound to uphold the terms of the easement. This may mean clarifying the property boundary for a neighbor who is cutting near the line, or meeting with the land owner to ascertain where a new shed may be erected without violating the easement. Annual monitoring—

walking the boundaries, documenting natural and man-made changes, meeting with the owner—helps avert after-the-fact problems.

Nationally, land trusts have faced few legal challenges, but over time



Zen view of conserved lands from Mountainville shore *Mike Weinberg*

they are increasing, especially as easement property falls into new hands. Many cases are settled out of court, and land trusts usually prevail when a suit is filed, but at the expense of trust resources. According to Rand Wentworth, the president of the Land Trust Alliance (national conservation

group), these challenges, often frivolous, typically come from "deep-pocketed opponents who are willing and able to bleed [land trusts] dry to develop conserved land." Needless to say, a major suit could utterly sap both human and financial resources of a non-profit land trust, especially a small one like IHT.

After considerable study, IHT Trustees voted to join a new insurance pool called Terrafirma that was specifically initiated this year by the Alliance to help land trusts defend their conserved lands from the liabilities of legal challenges. More than 420 land trusts nationwide have joined together to form this one-of-a-kind liability insurance company. While IHT has not yet suffered a court challenge, trusts in both Vermont and Connecticut have. "It nearly brought us to our knees," said Anita Ballek, co-founder of the East Haddam Land Trust, speaking of \$415,000 spent over ten years in a suit with Timothy Mellon, who cut down 300 trees on conserved wetlands near his runway.

Conservation is quiet work, largely invisible to the onlooker. Most conservation efforts take years to complete and that is just the beginning of a stewardship responsibility that projects far into the future. Now, with over 25 years of experience, IHT is learning how to prioritize conservation efforts, manage risk and responsibility, and contribute quietly to an island landscape that is a balance between development and conserved lands.



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michael J. Little

The brisk air of fall calls me to be outdoors. Birding, or just walking, I want to hit the trail, feel the roots under my feet, and see the beauty of nature around me. And beauty is not hard

to find here on Deer Isle. Just this morning George Fields and I visited one of IHT's older easements to talk with the owners, grandchildren of the farsighted woman who protected her land in 1992.

The encounter reminded me of why I do this kind of work. The current owners have a deep relationship with the land where they spent their summers growing up, and it is beauty

ful. Looking out at islands sparkling in the sun, I reflected on how lucky we are here to have generous families who love their land and want to protect it for future generations to enjoy. And how fortunate that some prescient island residents formed a local land trust to support and encourage those efforts. Our efforts, bound in good faith, must be to carry on the work entrusted to us.

## TRAIL SEEKS COMMUNITY ADVOCATES

Phase 1 of the Backbone Trail—a lollipop-shaped loop trail of 2 miles in the Holt Mill Pond Preserve area—is nearly finished. Meandering through mixed hardwoods, spruce stands, and across streams, the trail offers views of salt marshes and traces historic byways used long before Route 15 was born. This “uncovering” of history—old mills, dams, cart trails, forgotten landmarks—is one of the most fascinating aspects of the project. Accessible via the Airport Rd, the trail will be marked with signs once the work is fully completed.



Holt Mill Pond

Anne Beerits

The concept of an island-long trail was initiated by island residents in 2011, some of whom put in time clearing this initial portion of the trail. Although no one enjoys “field work” more than the IHT staff, they have put in many more hours than anticipated on this visionary project. Reactions from landowners in the proposed path of the trail have been mixed, some happily allowing a trail to cross their land, others unwilling, and some waiting to see. Crossing or skirting wet areas (the Labrador Swamp nearly bisects the island just north of Holt Mill Pond) offers logistical challenges and requires regulatory oversight that simple “high and dry” trails do not. One option may be to build the trail in segments, beginning where sympathetic landowners make clear passage available and where the terrain offers few obstacles. Later, the pieces can be linked as opportunity presents.

But Phase 2, wherever it occurs, will need a strong show of community advocates, volunteer leadership and support in order for IHT to commit further resources. Is an “island trail” a good idea? Are you willing to help? Let us know what you think. 348-2455; [ih@islandheritagetrust.org](mailto:ih@islandheritagetrust.org)



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*The mission of Island Heritage Trust is to conserve significant open space, scenic areas, wildlife habitats, natural resources, historic and cultural features that offer public benefit and are essential to the character of the Deer Isle area.*

# VOLUNTEER PROFILE: MICHAEL DAUGHERTY



says Daugherty, who also serves on the community advisory board of the IHT. "I've been more focused on making a living. I'm not normally a joiner, but I got involved with IHT because I could actually do constructive work for them and not feel as if I was throwing my time away. I say 'yes' when I can."

*Rebecca Daugherty* Last autumn and this past spring, he joined other IHT volunteers in "work parties" held to clear brush and lay out the Backbone Trail. Earlier this summer, he organized and led a kayak trip for those interested in cleaning up the islands he stewards, coordinating with Bill Baker of Old Quarry Ocean Adventures to provide the kayaks for those volunteers who needed them and to donate the use of his tour boat to ferry equipment and supplies to the islands.

Daugherty is also finding creative ways to combine his IHT volunteer work and his career as an art dealer:



**Island clean up volunteers led by Steward Michael Daugherty** *Michael Daugherty*

Last month, his gallery featured "Archipelago," an exhibition of paintings, photographs and prints showcasing the work of artists who have spent time on the islands, including some who took part in an Isalos-sponsored boat trip to Millet Island. Daugherty readily admits that some of his motivation is selfish: "I want to see the artists work from the place I love."

IHT will receive five percent of

sales and some artists have agreed to give more. Giving some of the proceeds from the show also makes it possible for him to make a monetary contribution to an organization he cares about. "Often, I would like to donate, but I never have enough money," says Daugherty, of giving to non-profit groups.

Impressed with Daugherty's efforts, conservationist and longtime member of IHT, Ken Crowell, says "Michael is the sort of new blood IHT can use."

The Daughertys have lived in Stonington for 10 years, where they settled after a long search for the right gallery space along the Maine coast. The pair met at Goddard College in Vermont in the late '80s. Upon graduating in 1991, they moved to Iowa, where Daugherty attended the creative writing program at the renowned Iowa Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa and received a Master of Fine Arts in English. They stayed in Iowa for seven years before moving to Greece for a few years to become archival assistants to an elderly poet.

Daugherty still pursues the writing life, but has shifted his focus from fiction to recording the goings-on at the gallery in a blog, ([www.isalsofineart.com](http://www.isalsofineart.com)) and chronicling his kayak journeys in another blog, [www.seakayakstonington.blogspot.com](http://www.seakayakstonington.blogspot.com).

In addition to his responsibilities running the gallery, and his kayaking, blogging and volunteering activities, Daugherty is busy updating and expanding the latest edition of the Appalachian Mountain Club's Sea Kayaking along the New England Coast.

Looping back towards the entrance of the Backbone Trail off Airport Road, Daugherty recounts the hours he spent as a boy clearing trails by himself in the woods behind his family's home in Pepperell, Mass.

He's come full circle. And now, working with IHT, he's not alone.

**N**ature: It's evident in the landscape paintings that line the walls of the Isalos Fine Art gallery in Stonington, that he owns with his wife Rebecca, a painter. It surfaces in his love of walking and hiking the scenic paths and trails around the island. It's clear in his passion for kayaking and exploring the islands off the coast.

More recently, it's emerged in his volunteer work for Island Heritage Trust, where he serves as steward of Wreck and Round Islands off Stonington, and as a builder of the Backbone Trail, an ambitious project to create a path that will course through the center of the island, connecting Stonington and Deer Isle. IHT's role in protecting public access to the islands it owns offshore and the trails and open spaces it maintains onshore, led Daugherty to forge a deeper relationship with the organization.

"I really appreciate that the islands are accessible, and I want to have this trail to walk on," notes the 49-year old Daugherty. Pony-tailed and trim as a willow branch, he nimbly guides a visitor one recent morning along the initial sections of the newly blazed, moss-covered Backbone Trail that runs alongside Holt Mill Pond and Toffet Pond. He looks forward to the day when he can leave his Stonington apartment and hike to Deer Isle village.

"I haven't always been involved,"

## SEVENTH GRADERS EXPLORE BIODIVERSITY AT LILY POND

On Friday, September 27, thirteen seventh-grade kids visited the Lily Pond, accompanied by teacher Mary Rees-Nutter, Ed Tech Barbara Billings, and IHT volunteer environmental educator, Jane Osborne. IHT regularly takes groups of island students (K-8) to explore its various preserves during spring and fall field trips, as a way to teach the kids about their environment and heighten their awareness and appreciation of their surroundings. Lessons vary depending on the nature of the preserve and the age of the kids. For example, at the



Addie McDonald discovers an Eastern Red-backed Salamander

Woody Osborne

Settlement Quarry, the focus is on geology; at Barred Island it is on mosses, and at the Lily Pond it is on pond habitats. The trip to Lily Pond was one of three expeditions facilitated that day by IHT volunteers. Sixth graders, led by Ken Crowell, went to Barred Island; eighth graders, led by Mary Offutt,

went to the Tennis Preserve.

After consultation with Mickie Flores, the middle school science teacher, the trip to the Lily pond was designed to explore biodiversity—the range of species, including animals, plants and humans in a particular ecological community. The seventh grade class is involved in an innovative, state-wide program through the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens and the Lunder Foundation to “connect middle school students with nature while capitalizing on their interest in technology.” The students participate in statewide teams, collecting data in their area and comparing it with statewide data.

At the Lily Pond, students were divided into three groups, each of which explored the shore, the woods, then the adjacent field. Guided by the science curriculum of Mickie Flores and information provided to them in a preliminary classroom session led by Jane Osborne, the kids were instructed to keep their eyes open and take note of whatever they saw, most specifically focusing on indications of animal and human impact on the surroundings. Each of the groups had a camera to record their observations.

The kids were wonderfully enthusiastic, observing with delight all manner of things from caterpillars, snakes, salamanders and crickets, to large and small scat piles, to various plants, trees and fungi. Also spotted and recorded was evidence of human activity including an empty Bud Lite can, a fragment of a beer bottle and a pair of boxer shorts hanging high in a tree.

One of the highlights was learning that caterpillars will play possum. In the excitement of discovery, one of the kids dropped an apple on an unsuspecting caterpillar, that appeared to have died from the trauma. But on close inspection, he proved to be “faking” and was soon up and about.

Back in Flores’s science class the following Monday, Osborne showed the kids the pictures they had taken, as well as a tray full of newly harvested

mushrooms. The final activity consisted of placing the mushrooms underside down on pieces of tin foil—an experiment designed to gradually re-



Science teacher, Mickie Flores

Woody Osborne

veal their spores.

IHT has discovered that, more often than not, simply taking kids to our preserves and asking them to purposefully observe and record what they see

changes their perspective. They notice things such as the caterpillar playing possum, and the many varieties of mushrooms and trees. They see their surroundings more deeply and become excited by them.

The impact of these outings is evidenced by their grateful correspondence such as that written following a trip to settlement quarry led by Ann Hooke and Debrae Bishop. One child wrote a full page letter listing the various things that piqued his interest and curiosity: the different patterns of glacial striations, the way the quarriers used dynamite to cut the granite, the fact that you can “burn” granite. He wondered what prompted the quarrying to begin and why it has tapered off. Another child submitted her own drawings of igneous rock, metamorphic rock and sedimentary rock. Still another submitted an imaginative list of adjectives to describe her appreciation of the trip, using the first letters in “Settlement Quarry.”

Helping to instill such enthusiasm for the environment and awareness for its fragility and vulnerability in those who will carry on the work of land preservation in an ongoing task at IHT and essential to our mission.

## BIG THANKS FOR ARTS SUPPORTING NATURE

Isalos Gallery & Artists  
Turtle Gallery  
Terrell Lester Gallery  
Anonymous Donor

Over this past summer and fall IHT has been the benefactor of art donations and special support by artists, galleries, and art owners ~ for this the Trust is extremely grateful.

## HERITAGE SOCIETY INAUGURATED



This past June IHT held the first gathering of our Heritage Society members over a locally-sourced omelet breakfast prepared by Chef Roger Olsen at the home of Ellen and Steve Rowan. The breakfast was a jovial affair, with members sharing lively stories and bonding over great food on a gorgeous sunny morning, one of those mornings that highlight why conserving Deer Isle long past our own days is so important.

Island Heritage Trust's Heritage Society has been established to recognize the extraordinary commitment of people who include the Trust in their estate plans.

If you would like more information about becoming a Heritage Society Member or have already included IHT in your estate planning and would like to be included as a member of the Heritage Society, kindly contact the office at 207-348-2455 or email [marissa@islandheritagetrust.org](mailto:marissa@islandheritagetrust.org).

### A FEW FAVORITE PRESERVE LETTERBOX QUOTES FROM SHORE ACRES:

*"Biked here along Reach & Fish Creek road from where we are staying at Old Ferry Rd. – now taking this beautiful walk – the 3rd part of our triathlon will be ice cream in the village! Thank you to IHT for all you do!" – Eda & Arnie, Boston, MA*

*"I am originally from the island and lived here for 5 years during my childhood. I have family here and try to come back every year. I think it is the most beautiful place in the whole world! Thank you to the Island Heritage Trust for making my wonderful hike possible! It is so important to have places like this on the coast that are open to the public for everyone to enjoy. Thank You!!"*

– Leah Spear, Freeman TWP, ME

*"I love the walk it is so fun I like the rock to clime [sic] on too I wish I could do the walk every day" - Samantha*

### "FRIENDS" MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO TENNIS PRESERVE



Elke Dorr

Joe and, his brother, Tom Dorr, recently installed a new kiosk at popular Tennis Preserve

In 2012, island preserves had the most visitors recorded ever, reaching over 12,500.



### FRIENDS OF...

As part of IHT's Stewardship Volunteer Program, and building on the success of the Friends of Tennis Preserve, the Trust will be starting a "Friends of..." support group for **Settlement Quarry Preserve** beginning this winter and spring (don't fear if you aren't here, seasonal community members are welcome too). And thanks to a grant from the **L.L. Bean Maine Land Trust Grant Program**, this group will have the funds to get a lot of work done! If you are a big fan of Settlement Quarry Preserve and would like to assist the steward in caring for IHT's first preserve, contact Marissa for more information:

[marissa@islandheritagetrust.org](mailto:marissa@islandheritagetrust.org) or 207-348-2455.

Being part of a "Friends of. . ." group is a low key, hands-on way to ensure that many more people will enjoy IHT's properties just as you do.



Marissa Hutchinson

# MEET TRUSTEE CHAIR ELLEN ROWAN

Island Heritage Trust's newly elected Chair of the Board of Trustees, Ellen Rowan, is far from shy about her passion for environmental concerns and her belief in IHT's mission. Serving in a variety of trust positions since 2000, Ellen began her involvement with a stint as an office volunteer. In no time, she was asked to chair the Volunteer Committee and soon thereafter began serving on other committees as well, including membership, land and board development. She was elected to the IHT Board of Trustees in 2009.

Trained as a psychologist, Ellen was always passionate about the environment, she said, even taking classes in eco-psychology, which explores the relationship between people and their environment. She admits to having always been an "outdoors kid," up early to listen to birds, growing up near a pond in Wellesley, Massachusetts. In visiting her grandmother at the beach and through her father's love of boating, she said she learned to love the ocean. Add to that an abiding, life-long interest in creatures and their habitats and it was inevitable that she would become a strong advocate for conservation.

From its beginning, Ellen's involvement in IHT has been colored by her enthusiasm and dedication and her belief in the trust's mission -- to conserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of the island. Speaking at length about how the trust must continue to evolve with the changing nature of land conservation, she remarked that one of her goals is to enlist and strengthen the involvement of islanders in maintaining the island's beauty and its health. To

that end, she's a strong advocate of the trust's educational component, seeing it as a path to involving future generations in the work of "sharing responsibility for the health of the island." Her work with "Ready by 21," and the Early Childhood Group attest to her belief in the benefits of education.

For Ellen, the environment and the island economy are closely connected. A healthy island, she believes, will create economic opportunities both in the fishing and recreational industries, the "two engines that drive the island economy," she said. She added that ensuring good water quality helps create an environment "that's healthy for the island and ultimately also good for its people."

Additionally, she said she hopes to expand IHT's membership and to increase giving. Contrary to popular belief, she said, "we're not a wealthy organization; we do a lot with what resources we have. It's costly to maintain easements and programs, for example." She also would like to correct persistent misconceptions about IHT's work and spread the word about "all the good the trust has done" over the years on behalf of the island's environment and in protecting its resources. Moreover, she is dedicated to continuing the work the trust has begun in creating increased access to the water for clambers. Her hope, she said, is that dialogue between the trust and island fishermen will be an ongoing, mutually beneficial process. With typical enthusiasm, Ellen commented that "working together is not only good for the island, it strengthens our whole community."



Elke Dorr



Black-throated Green Warbler Leslie Clapp

## RECENT SIGHTINGS. . .

- Ring-necked snake – Bradbury Island
- Juvenile Peregrine Falcon – Sunset
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo – Scott's Landing

And, thanks to Chip Moseley, who is an assiduous collector of bird data, we have a solid record of sightings at Scott's Landing over a number of years. On Sept 17, after a night of "heavy migration," Chip was there at 6:35 AM and, in a couple of hours, counted 30 species and *several hundred* birds altogether, most of which were warblers. Check out IHT's website under "Wildlife Sightings" to see Chip's and other's lists and to post your own.

Please share *your* sightings with us!

## WHAT IS THE BEST SELLER IN THE NATURE SHOP?

IHT's Hiking Trails & Public Access Map! People have even been coming back for seconds. Maps are also sold at Old Quarry Ocean Adventures, Pilgrim's Inn & the Welcome Center on Little Deer Isle.



Our favorite way to hand them out – to new or returning MEMBERS! Maps are free with membership.

## DIANE & IAN WALKER CREATE BEQUEST TO IHT

Updating their will “took all of 30 seconds,” quipped Ian Walker, commenting how he and Diane, his wife, made IHT one of their legal beneficiaries by simply calling their attorney to effect the adjustment. Long-time supporters of the trust, the Walkers made the decision to include IHT in their will to help, in Ian’s words, “perpetuate what IHT does to protect the land.” Having seen first-hand in his native state of New Jersey, how a landscape can be destroyed, Ian noted that Maine’s shoreline ordinance and billboard law (enacted in 1977), for example, are two initiatives that have helped preserve the scenic beauty of the state. Similarly, he hopes IHT will continue its work to preserve the beauty and wildlife habitats on the island.

The couple has been members of various state and national organizations for many years and joined IHT in 1984, after they built a cabin on the island, said Diane, noting that land trusts were not that common in those days. She and Ian have been full-time residents of the island since 1990, having, by then, retired. Ian, a geologist, was a Director in the New Jersey Dept. of Environmental Protection, while Diane, a self-described “volunteer activist,” has long worked on behalf of environmental as well as civil and human rights issues. Not only has the couple been IHT members of long-standing, Diane also has been a member of the trustees, for a total of 3 terms, serving on both the land and stewardship committees. She was also “president by de-

fault,” she said, only agreeing to take on that role knowing she would be “out in 9 months,” like a pregnancy, she laughingly added.

Deciding to create a bequest wasn’t a complicated process, both of them emphasized, having discussed doing so after observing that other organizations they support were receiving bequests. “While our bequest isn’t huge,” said Diane, “when added to others and used wisely,” it can help



Diane & Ian Walker at home in Oceanville

Elke Dorr

make a significant difference in the work the trust is able to accomplish. Ian remarked, “The future is the sum total of what you can do today . . . and our bequest is something we can do today.” He also mused, “If we don’t give a bequest, why should we expect it of someone else?”

## GARRETT ALDRICH: IHT AMBASSADOR



IHT Trustee Garrett Aldrich

Ellen Rowan

This summer, 46 major donors were treated to a cruise of the archipelago, graciously narrated by IHT Trustee and Captain, Garrett Aldrich. His enthusiasm for his native surroundings, gift for storytelling and appreciation for conservation delighted listeners as he took the crowd on a custom tour of his favorite spots.

Just a week earlier, Aldrich had organized an afternoon of games and play for IHT’s Ice Cream Social. Equally at home with children, Aldrich shone as Master of Games. The happy crowd was clear evidence that Aldrich is a natural ambassador, whether you are six or sixty.



ICE CREAM SOCIAL  
& FIELD DAY 2013

Ellen Rowan

**STEWARDSHIP WISH LIST:** Wheelbarrows & lumber for repairing bog bridging

# RAFFLE TICKET

**\$50**

- ◆ is a great holiday gift
- ◆ supports IHT
- ◆ could be a winner!

Spider Woman Pot (approx 16" x 14")  
by Melissa Greene, donated by anonymous  
donor, is valued at \$5,000  
and celebrates the mythology  
of Navajo textile arts

Contact IHT to purchase tickets  
207-348-2455 – [iht@islandheritagetrust.org](mailto:iht@islandheritagetrust.org)



Give to IHT *and* family and friends at the same time . . .

gift membership ◆ maps ◆ field guides ◆ donation ◆ IHT hat  
◆ binoculars ◆ games ◆ Nature Shop gift certificate

Nature Shop (we ship!) is open 10-4 weekdays, and between Thanksgiving and  
Christmas, Saturdays too!



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