

ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

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



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Fall 2000

"Shore Acres" Preserved, Thanks to Generosity of Judy Hill

WHAT A WONDERFUL GIFT to the Island Heritage Trust! Thanks to Judy Hill, thirty-seven lovely wooded acres on Greenlaw Cove are now permanently protected and available to the community for hiking and the enjoyment that comes from exploring the natural world. This property provides great habitat for shore birds, and its shoreline has some especially interesting glacial geology. In addition to its wooded cover of spruce, birch, and balsam there are fern, mosses, and lichen. The shoreline looks southeast towards Campbell Island about a half mile away. Since the island was protected from development five years ago by a conservation easement held by IHT, much of Greenlaw Cove will remain in its present natural state.

This story starts in the early 1940's when Judy Hill's family lost their family farm in Massachusetts through a taking by eminent domain for a military base. The family moved to Deer Isle in 1943 after buying a farm originally owned by William Greenlaw. An old sign found in the barn preserved the property's traditional name, "Shore Acres." Judy attended the Deer Isle High School and then went off to college and a career that led to Alaska and research in the field of Social Psychology. In due course, Judy's parents divided the farm, giving her and her sister separate parcels with the understanding that they were not to be developed during their lifetime. It was assumed that



PHOTO BY ANN HOOKE

View along Shore Acres Preserve with Campbell Island in the background.

the family tradition of allowing neighbors and community members to walk the land would be continued. In 1979 Judy returned to the island to be near her aging parents and started working with Maine's Division of Mental Health. Along the way she became greatly interested in the need for low-income housing and began to think that her share of the old farm might be used to meet this need. It was a disappointment to learn, after a careful study of the property, that its development for this purpose was not practical because of some internal wetlands. The increasing loss of open land to seasonal home development and its negative consequences for traditional rural neighborhoods were much on Judy's mind when she

started exploring land protection ideas with the Island Heritage Trust. She considered a conservation easement prohibiting development but ensuring that community members could continue to visit the property. A bequest of the property to the IHT was another option. Finally she concluded that an outright gift of the property – sooner rather than later – was the right choice. For those of us who will now have the opportunity to enjoy this lovely property, it is a magnificent gift. Judy is happy with the thought that the early Shore Acres name will be preserved in the new Shore Acres Preserve.

One issue related to her gift is a lingering concern for Judy. She is

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New President's Letter

Conserving Scenic Areas and Wildlife Habitat Provides Pleasures Without Price

THIS IS MY FIRST LETTER to you as your President and it is nice to have the quieter days of autumn to reflect on the intense activity of this past summer for IHT.

As noted in our cover article, our most exciting news is the donation by Judy Hill of part of her woods and shore, which we plan to develop into a preserve with trails to allow the public to enjoy its unique beauty. I have been doing some of the preliminary work in the design and location of the trails. Ecologically, this area is interesting as it is less bold than other protected shores and thus provides an opportunity to observe the birds, plants, and geology characteristic of flat lying woods and shores. Standing on the rocks looking out toward Campbell Island with Mount Desert in the distance and Bonaparte's Gulls feeding in the near-shore shallows will soon become a pleasure experienced by other visitors. This is what IHT is all about: conserving significant wildlife habitat and scenic areas that offer public benefit and are essential to the character of the Deer Isle area.

Behind the scenes, there has been and will be much work to realize these conservation goals. As a volunteer organization, our chal-

lenge is to develop continuity and committed leadership to keep up with the challenge of responsible stewardship and new land conservation efforts. In September, the Trustees held an all day retreat to access where we have been, who we are today, and where we would like to go in the future. It is evident that we need to make better use of our dedicated and talented membership to enable us to expand and improve our efforts.

As IHT is interested in the conservation efforts of other organizations in the community, we were pleased to honor the work of Kathleen Billings of the Deer Isle-Stonington Joint Shellfish Committee with the Rowan Wakefield Award at the Annual Meeting in July. In this year of Rowan's passing, it was significant that this successful local Deer Isle effort to protect shellfish habitat and resources was recognized. As development pressure escalates, cooperative effort and support of natural resource protection will benefit both our local economy and our beautiful island.

We hope that you will continue to support the work of IHT during the fall fund raising appeal. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Ann Hooke

Consider a Bequest to Island Heritage Trust

One significant way to preserve the Island and its natural beauty for your children, grandchildren, and others is to leave a bequest to the Island Heritage Trust in support of its mission of environmental and scenic protection for Deer Isle and Stonington.

For more information about how to leave a bequest, ask for our brochure on bequests by writing or phoning our office: IHT, P.O. Box 42, Deer Isle, ME 04627 (207-348-2455).

Leave a Legacy for Generations to Enjoy.

Volunteers Needed: There Are Many Ways to Help

We have many dedicated volunteers serving in the office and as land stewards during the summer. These jobs are essential to IHT's success. We are always looking for additional people to help in these areas and for people with other talents (financial, writing, artwork, teaching, scientific, legal, real estate, public relations, social). Given the number of islands for which we are responsible, it is also helpful to know of people who have boats and are willing to use them in various ways for the IHT cause.

As a volunteer organization, our collective strength is based on each of our individual contributions. If you have a talent you would like to share, please phone, write, or e-mail us at IHT@acadia.net.



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Good Stewardship Takes a Lot of Dedication and Management



More than 25 people came to the August 3 gathering to celebrate IHT ownership of Polypod Island.

PHOTO BY ANN HOOKE

THE STEWARDSHIP committee now has seventeen easements and eight owned properties to monitor in addition to Barred Island Preserve, which we manage jointly with the Nature Conservancy. It takes a lot of dedicated people who love messing about in the woods or in boats to perform our job as stewards.

Meeting with owners who love their land and meeting the public as they enjoy our protected properties are the positive parts of stewardship. There have been some particular "highs" this summer. If you visited the Settlement Quarry, you saw the new sign pointing out the islands in the view from the top of the quarry. The sign was given by the family, "In loving memory of Robert M. Whitcomb, in honor and preservation of the island he loved and grew up with." We are very pleased with the artwork of Michelle Billings of Little Deer Isle who painted the sign, and the handsome ironwork stand and frame made by Doug Wilson, also of Little Deer Isle.

Another "high" was the August 3 Polypod Island Celebration when more than 25 people came by kayak, sailboat, and motorboat to celebrate IHT's newest island. It has been very heartening to dis-

cover that Polypod is becoming a popular destination for local people who are seeking a destination for day trips in more protected waters.

To answer some management questions, a counter was placed at Barred Island to estimate the number of visitors. During July and August, more than 2000 people visited the Preserve. This affirms that there are a lot of people visiting all of our preserves! While littering and vandalism are minimal, trail wear is becoming signifi-

cant. Necessary trail modifications were made at Barred Island, the Tennis Preserve, and the Settlement Quarry. There were two shore cleanup trips to the islands during the summer. These "work" trips are an excellent excuse to join with others and enjoy a morning on an island gathering the year's collection of trash that floats in on the tide.

If you are interesting in being a steward, please contact me via e-mail at aphooke@acadia.net.

Ann Hooke



The handsome new sign at the Settlement Quarry, painted by Michelle Billings, was installed by Doug Wilson, left, who made the ironwork stand and frame, shown with Ian Walker.

"Shore Acres" Preserved

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well aware that attractive spots, like the popular Barred Island Preserve on Stinson Point, create problems for its near neighbors. On a sunny July day, when the tide is low at midday, the number of visitors causes its modest parking lot to overflow and occasionally block traffic on the Goose Cove Road. She very much hopes that this kind of problem can be avoided at the Shore Acres Preserve. The solution is not a larger parking lot. It has been deliberately kept small as a way of limiting the number of visitors to the preserve at any one time – a form of rationing necessitated by the limited ability of a small preserve to survive too many footprints. It is hoped that a full parking lot will be recognized and accepted as a signal that the preserve's capacity has been reached, and one should plan to return another time. New attitudes and understanding seem to be evolving. Already, an ethic of



The new IHT Shore Acres Preserve is highlighted in red. This map was prepared using the Geographic Information Systems mapping software. See story below.

"leave no trace" camping is developing. Increasingly, that simple principle is accepted as necessary if the natural world we enjoy today is to remain for the enjoyment of those who come tomorrow. Judy's concern is a challenge accepted by

the IHT – to see that visitors to Shore Acres Preserve are fully respectful of its neighbors. Visitors are not encouraged until next summer when marked trails and a parking area will be in place.

Stanley Myers

GIS Maps Show Roads, Properties, Geology, Wildlife Information

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION Systems (GIS) is a tremendously versatile method for manipulating spatial information by computer. The fundamental unit of a GIS database is called a "theme." For example, we have one theme that consists of a contour map of the island, another is a map of the roads, a third is a map of IHT properties, and so forth. Any of these themes can be combined with any others to make a map, at any desired scale, serving a specific purpose. A major application of GIS technology is for land use planning, whereby natural features can be combined with social and economic patterns. IHT is developing this capability for use in evaluating potential projects, monitoring protected properties, making public presentations, and assisting

local governments and neighboring land trusts with their land use planning programs.

In 1998, IHT employed Megan Shane Hellstedt as a summer intern. Megan, now with the Brunswick office of Maine Coast Heritage Trust, set up an initial database using ArcView software. Roger Hooke has now taken over the task of supervising further development of our GIS program. During the spring semester, Roger took part in a GIS course at UMO, during which he and some of the other students developed several new Deer Isle themes including geology, tax maps, and wetlands. In June 2000 IHT was awarded a Conservation Technology Support Program grant for software, so we now have ArcView capabilities on the Island. During the fall of 2000

another intern, Ben Tanner, is working under Roger to expand the database.

The primary application of the GIS system will be to assist us in making future conservation decisions using criteria such as relationship to already protected land, presence of wetlands, value to wildlife, and so forth. In addition, GIS will aid our stewardship and monitoring efforts by tracking protected properties. We also hope to store long-term ecological information – for example on wintering waterfowl. Finally, we hope to provide ecological information to the community, promoting environmental awareness in the schools and assisting local planning boards, conservation commissions, and other public and private groups.

Ken Crowell and Roger Hooke

Land Committee Reports

IHT Given Easement to McGlathery Island

At 145 acres, McGlathery is the second largest island in Merchant Row. It was one of the many settled islands around Deer Isle in the 19th century. Island living was a hard life and by the end of the 1880's there were no longer any year-round residents. Charles McLane's *Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast* records that 15 of the 18 students attending school on McGlathery Island died in the diphtheria epidemic of 1873.

The island is now owned by the Friends of Nature, a small conservation group founded in the early 1950's to save McGlathery from being clear-cut for pulpwood. It has a nice sandy beach and two very good anchorages that make it a popular stop for cruising yachtsmen. It is heavily wooded but there are still signs of its earlier farming days. There are several foundations, stone walls, and a small cemetery. Visitors may explore the

island, but camping is not permitted.

Some years ago we initiated discussions with the Friends of Nature about the long-term future of McGlathery. FON is committed to maintaining the island as a nature preserve and to making it available for the community's enjoyment. It also recognizes that as a small organization its own future is uncertain. The idea evolved that a "belt and suspenders" approach to protecting McGlathery would make sense. This past spring FON gave a conservation easement to IHT ensuring that its wishes for the island will be respected regardless of its own future. Neighboring islands, Round and Wreck, are owned and managed by IHT, and it seems natural that we should join with FON in the protection of McGlathery.

Three Area Land Trusts Working Together to Preserve Caterpillar Hill

A year ago we reported that we had teamed up with the Blue Hill Heritage Trust to find a way of

preserving the magnificent Caterpillar Hill view-shed. To date, no legal documents have been signed but it can be reported that very encouraging progress is being made. The landowners of some of the most significant property have stated their interest in helping preserve the view. In addition, the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, as well as several State of Maine agencies, have joined us in our protection efforts. We are optimistic that some form of permanent protection can be found for the view's prominent blueberry fields and the woods beyond.

Deer Isle Causeway Beach on the Market

The recent appearance of a "For Sale" sign on the Deer Isle causeway beach has prompted a series of meetings exploring how IHT can best help preserve the traditional use of this popular spot. At this point no firm plan is in place but we will keep you posted.

Stanley Myers

Rowan Wakefield 1919 - 2000

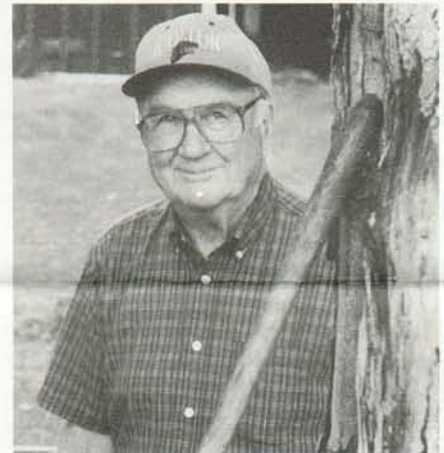
"ROWAN WAKEFIELD created the foundation on which the IHT rests," said a trustee who has been actively involved with the IHT over the years. He stepped in during its faltering years and held the organization together. A supreme optimist, he was responsible for the survival of the organization.

President of the IHT from 1989 to 1995, Rowan was given the Maine Coast Heritage Trust's Heritage Award in 1992 in recognition of his "outstanding work to protect Maine's scenic, recreational, cultural, and ecological resources." This was an important tribute to his statewide—in addition to his local—land trust work. Rowan contributed to the establishment of the Penobscot Bay Land Trust Alliance.

During Rowan's presidency, the IHT's first five easements, including two properties in Oceanville and one in Sunshine that became part of what is now the Edgar Tennis Preserve, were acquired.

I remember attending meetings around Rowan's kitchen table in the early years. We were a small band, incited, fueled by Rowan's enthusiasm and total dedication to the IHT. Barbara, his wife, sat quietly in the background, ably assisting. Gentle, friendly, a smile always on his face, Rowan worked indefatigably around the clock, inspiring us to share his commitment. He had a talent for networking in the field, for organization building, and for finding people to roll up their sleeves on behalf of the IHT. Tireless in his pursuit of grant money, he also wrote and edited much of the newsletter.

It is fitting that his spirit will live on with the Rowan Wakefield



Award, presented annually by the IHT trustees to an individual in the community for his or her contribution to the environment.

Concerned about Deer Isle's future development, Rowan labored to preserve traditional aspects of the island. The IHT's success today is largely owed to Rowan's selfless devotion to its cause.

Brenda Gilchrist

A Busy, Successful Summer



PHOTO BY PAGE HAWKE

Bettina Dudley and Ann Hooke were leaders on the "Tide Zone Critters of Deer Isle" field trip last summer.

AS EVER, SUMMER in Deer Isle was beautiful and busy! We had many visitors stop by our newly redesigned IHT office to shop from our expanded inventory of maps, shirts, and cards. Our office volunteers ably spread the word about IHT's mission to these visitors. Why don't you consider using IHT shirts for holiday gifts!

The Summer Walks & Talks were again a great success. In the adjacent photo taken on the "Tide Zone Critters of Deer Isle" field trip, the curiosity and enthusiasm of leader and participants show clearly! Between May 14 and September 1, there were ten field trips; evening talks on forests, water resources, and geology; four work days to clean shores and trails; two walks; the ever popular boat tours of IHT islands; and a picnic outing to Polypod Island! The collaboration of IHT, the Deer Isle and Stonington Conservation Commissions, and the Deer Isle Walking Trails Group provides the diverse talents and energy to support such a broad program. The series also provides a way to explain the role that each of these organizations plays in the preservation and enjoyment of Deer Isle's natural resources.

The turnout for all these events was excellent with a balanced mix

of year-round residents, summer residents, and visitors participating. Our primary objective is to provide an opportunity to learn about the specific characteristics and protection needs of our natural community, particularly for people with a long-term interest in Deer Isle.

While many of the events in the series are perennial favorites, we are always looking for new leaders with a particular area of expertise. If you have suggestions or would like to volunteer to help with the program, please contact us by phone at 348-2455 or e-mail us at IHT@acadia.net. **Ann Hooke**

Gifts for the Holidays



IHT Note Cards, four different color cards of Faith Munson paintings, box of 8, \$15.00.

Matted Prints, choose your favorite, ready to frame, \$7.50 each.

Wild Flowering Plants of Deer Isle, 60 pages, with drawings and map, \$10.00.

Quick Key to Birds of Deer Isle, a seasonal guide, 80 pages, \$10.00.

Deer Isle Sketches, 30 drawings by Richard Myrick, signed and numbered, \$9.50

IHT T-shirts

100% heavyweight cotton
Choose from our multicolor scenic painting, in white; or the IHT logo T-shirt, available in royal blue, green, or navy blue.

Short sleeved, \$15.00

Long sleeved, \$26.00



TO ORDER, call IHT during office hours, Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. to 12 noon, 348-2455 or leave message at other times. Shipping and handling is additional.