In 1989, a young couple approached the Island Heritage Trust about placing a conservation easement on their property in South Deer Isle. The couple's motivations were simple. They loved the unspoiled beauty of their shoreline property on the Inner Harbor as well as their small, turn-of-the-century saltwater farm. They wanted to preserve the farm, the undeveloped shoreline, its clam flats, and the surrounding natural habitat for wildlife.

They described their wishes to IHT and asked for its help. Working together, IHT's first conservation easement was drafted, stipulating that the undeveloped portion of the land would always remain in its natural state. Additionally, they specified that the homestead portion of the land would be cared for in a way that retained the original character of the buildings.

In 1999, another couple purchased the property and along with the purchase came the conditions of the easement. "It was actually one of the reasons we were attracted to the property," one of the new owners said. "We agreed with the spirit of the easement and wanted to continue to protect the land, its creatures, and the look and feel of the original buildings."

What is a conservation easement? How do conservation easements come to be? How do they affect a property owner? People considering a conservation easement on their land ask these and many other questions.

A conservation easement is a legal document that describes the character and qualities of a property that its owner wishes to have permanently preserved. As such, a conservation easement is a legal way for property owners to restrict the future development of their land, even when they no longer own it. The landowner donates the conservation easement to a land trust, such as IHT, and the trust ensures that the conditions of the easement are enforced.

A conservation easement held by IHT typically starts with the landowners' deep love and appreciation for a specific piece of land and some special qualities associated with their land. It is this concern for the preservation of these qualities that most often brings the landowner to IHT. When the trust believes that the preservation of these qualities will have a long-term public benefit, it works with the landowner in drafting a suitable easement. Jointly they prepare a legal document that gives IHT perpetual stewardship responsibilities for the property. IHT's role then is to ensure that future owners of the property continue to preserve the property's special qualities in accordance with the terms of the easement.

Important Facts about Conservation Easements

- A conservation easement is a legal document that describes the character and qualities of a property that its owner wishes to have permanently preserved.
- IHT accepts conservation easements to further its mission of protecting the community's open space, scenic areas, wildlife habitats,...

continued on page 2
President's Letter: IHT is maturing and growing

On Tuesday, January 29, Pat Gross and I had a little celebration. We picked the beautiful, fat, round, ripe orange from the Valencia orange tree that stands near the front window of the IHT office.

The tree looks a bit like a Charlie Brown tree with its skinny stem and skimpy collection of leaves. We were not sure what to expect when we peeled this orange that had been slowly growing under our watchful eyes. To our delight and surprise, the orange was sweet and juicy. The taste of a freshly picked orange in Deer Isle is unusual enough, but imagine such an orange ripening here, in late January, in our office!

Somehow this fruit symbolizes the growing maturity of much at IHT. One of my goals as president has been to broaden our support in the local community. Our new administrator, Melissa Skelton, was hired to facilitate this process. We have been taking a long hard look at our relationship with the community that we serve.

Many of us who are active in IHT were not born on Deer Isle, but we have come here because this community of people and the natural environment are both unique and special. Working to conserve significant natural resources, which offer public benefit and are essential to the character of the Deer Isle area, seems an obvious worthy objective. But many of us have had little prior experience with a rural community and its inner strength. People who were born here help us to learn that in a rural community you share what you have (like shore access) if reasonable, help others in need, and join broad-based community efforts on projects that are important to all of us.

We have had many discussions about ways IHT can increase its efforts to share its human and natural resources, help others, and become a more active participant in community efforts. We hope you will join us, for example, as we participate in the Lupine Festival in June, and create a float for the July 4th parade.

We also hope that you will feel free to call, write, or visit us to share your ideas and expertise with us.

Ann Hooke

Important Facts about Conservation Easements
continued from page 1

- Owners of property protected by a conservation easement continue to pay their local real estate taxes on their land in support of local schools and government.
- The owner of a property under a conservation easement retains all the normal rights of property ownership. The owner is only restricted by the conditions he or she chooses to include in the easement.
- Donating a conservation easement to a land trust can qualify the donor for a federal income tax deduction, a reduction in estate taxes, and potentially some reduction in property taxes on undeveloped land.
- IHT currently holds 21 conservation easements protecting more than 600 acres and 10 miles of shoreline on Deer Isle.
- Interested in a conservation easement? Call 348-2455 for more information.

Melissa Skelton

IHT Will Cite Objections to Local Salmon Pens

An article entitled “Why should a land trust care about the use of navigable waters?” appeared in the Fall 2001 issue of this newsletter. Stanley Myers discussed concerns regarding an application for two large salmon aquaculture pens to be located off Little Deer Isle. Many of our members believe that we should take a strong position opposing this use of public waters, while others feel we should not devote our resources to such an issue.

At a recent meeting, the Board of Trustees confirmed its position that our mission statement justifies our continuing opposition to this project. While the Board is sensitive to the concerns some expressed about its position, it plans to submit a Letter of Testimony to the Department of Marine Resources in advance of the hearing. In this letter we will outline our objections to the specific site, the conflicts between the proposed project and our mission statement, and suggestions for modifying the site-selection criteria to recognize a broader range of parameters.

It is noteworthy that 50 coastal innkeepers have stated their opposition to salmon aquaculture in its present form, as have several local firms representing construction, boat building, and repair.

Ken Crowell
Vice President,
IHT Board of Trustees

Become an IHT Member

Interested in IHT membership? Contact us at 207-348-2455 or P.O. Box 42, Deer Isle, Maine 04627 to volunteer, contribute or participate.

2
Stewardship Responsibilities Include Trail Maintenance

IHT's stewardship responsibilities have been expanding steadily and now include the management of eight preserves (including five islands) and their miles of trails. Each year the number of visitors increases, and our job gets bigger. We are happy that Stan Ingram has joined our staff to strengthen our stewardship program with the help of our very able volunteer stewards.

Stan has helped organize volunteers to clear the debris from the devastating storm of January 13th. Once that work is completed, further trail improvements are planned. Heavy foot traffic compacts soils and exposes the shallow roots of island conifers. This constant wear on the roots weakens the affected trees and smaller plants. Remind your children and guests how important it is to respect signs that ask you to walk single file or avoid a particular section of trail needing a rest.

Part of the solution to the damages from heavy trail use is to have volunteer days to help maintain trails or clean shorelines. A group of students from the Liberty School in Blue Hill worked hard and competently doing trail work. There are many opportunities to help on our various community service trail maintenance projects (see the Walks & Talks schedule). Working on a trail with new and old friends can be very rewarding. There are tasks for all ages and skill levels. It is also a good way to get to know a preserve you may not have visited before.

Easement Completed on Gross Point Property

IHT has recently received a conservation easement on a lovely 10-acre island in the Inner Harbor area of Oceanville from the owners, Ian and Diane Walker. The island is presently undeveloped, making it a wonderful habitat for all manner of wildlife. The purpose of the easement is to maintain the property as a preserve for wildlife and to ensure that this very scenic shoreline remains in its natural, undisturbed state. At present the island is not open to the public to minimize disturbance of the preserve. Ian and Diane are longtime active volunteers and members of IHT. Diane is currently on the IHT Board and also a member of its land committee.

Gordon Rittmeyer
Chair of the Land Committee

Consider a Bequest to the Island Heritage Trust

Leave a legacy for generations to enjoy. For more information call IHT at 207-348-2455 or write P. O. Box 42, Deer Isle, ME 04627.
2002 Summer Walks & Talks

Sponsored by Island Heritage Trust, Deer Isle and Stonington Conservation Commissions, and the Deer Isle Walking Trails Group
FOR INFORMATION, reservations, and changes due to weather: Call 348-2455


Mon. July 8 Community Service Project: Trail Maintenance at Tennis Preserve. Meet at Preserve (FR 523 off Sunshine Road) at 9:30 a.m. All welcome. There are jobs for everyone. Wear work gloves. For info: 348-2559. Rain date: Tues. July 9.

Thu. July 11 Deer Isle the Way it Was. Illustrated talk by Bill Haviland. At Sunset Parish House, just south of Post Office in Sunset, at 8:00 p.m.

Fri. July 12 Hardy Farm Visit. Walk the old Hardy Farm with Bill Haviland. Meet at Causeway Beach at Deer Isle end of Causeway at 9:30 a.m.


Wed. July 17 IHT Annual Meeting and Program. Guest speaker Terrell Lester. To be held at the Island Country Club at 7:00 p.m. All Welcome.


Fri. July 26 Introduction to the Geology of Deer Isle. Talk by geologist Roger Hooke. Meet at Sunset Parish House, just south of Post Office in Sunset, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Sat. July 27 Bedrock Geology Field Trip with Roger Hooke from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meet at Settlement Quarry parking area off Oceanville Road. Bring bag lunch if you wish and wear hat with brim. Rain date: Mon. July 29.

Thu. Aug. 1 Old Quarry Charters Boat Tour and Picnic for IHT members. Boat tour of IHT islands and island easements with picnic on an island. Depart 9:30 a.m. and return 2:30 p.m. Cost $30 (includes lunch). New members welcome! Rain date: Fri. Aug. 2. Reservations necessary: phone 348-2455.

Sat. Aug. 3 Glacial Geology Field Trip. Led by Roger Hooke from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meet at Mariners Park off Sunshine Road. Bring bag lunch if you wish, and wear a hat with brim. Rain date Mon. Aug. 5.

Wed. Aug. 7 Picnic and Blueberry Picking on Caterpillar Hill. Meet in lower field at Caterpillar Hill by site of old farmhouse at 11:00 a.m. 4WD or high vehicles recommended. Led by blueberry specialist. Reservations necessary: phone 374-5118. Joint trip with Blue Hill Heritage Trust.
2002 Summer Walks & Talks Continued

Fri. Aug. 9  Community Service Project: Trail Maintenance at Barred Island. Meet at Barred Island parking area at 9:30 a.m. Rain date: Sat. Aug. 10.

Mon. Aug. 12  Life in Deer Isle’s Rocky Inter-tidal Zone. Talk by Bob Knowlton. To be held at Sunset Parish House, just south of Post Office in Sunset at 7:00 p.m.


Thur. Aug. 15  Deer Isle’s Fall Bird Migration. Walk led by Ken Crowell. Meet at Burnt Cove Market parking area in Stonington at 9:00 a.m. Rain date: Fri. Aug. 16.


Wed. Aug. 21  Rejuvenating Our Coastal Spruce-Fir Forests. Talk by Max McCormack, retired professor of forestry. To be held at Sunset Parish House, just south of Post Office in Sunset at 7:00 p.m.

Fri. Aug. 23  Care and Culture of Your Small Woodlot. Walk led by Max McCormack. Meet at Sunset Memorial Garden opposite Sunset Post Office at 9:00 a.m. Back by noon, or bring lunch and participate in further observations and discussion. Rain date: Sat. Aug. 24.

Thur. Sept. 5  Wild Mushrooms of Deer Isle. Walk led by Edythe Krape. 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Bring a picnic lunch to eat by the waters of the Reach. For directions and reservations phone: 348-2455. Rain date: Sept. 6.


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Did you know???

- IHT preserves are open for day use only.
- IHT preserves are not posted – they are open to the public for hunting. Wear blaze orange in fall.
- When picnicking at a preserve, use a campstove for cooking. No fires please.
- Plan ahead when you visit a preserve. Use a bathroom before your visit – no bathroom facilities are available in the preserves.
- Dogs on leashes may be walked at Shore Acres, the Tennis Preserve, and the Settlement Quarry.
- A good rule of thumb when visiting preserves is to remove everything you bring in (food, trash, garbage). Leave no trace that you were there!

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New in the Store

This summer we are excited about the new items we have to sell at the IHT office. Faith Munson will have two beautiful new cards of the view from Caterpillar Hill, and we will also have Terry Lester’s first calendar using his photographs. Roger Hooke’s Geology of Deer Isle has been revised and reprinted. Of course, we will also continue to sell our best map of Deer Isle, our colorful Jill Hoy and IHT shirts, cards, six-month tide charts, and walking trails maps. Volunteers will be there to answer questions, and you will also be able to pick up other useful maps and brochures about IHT, conservation easements, and the island.
The Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers of the Island Heritage Trust wish to thank you, our contributors. Your generosity has enabled us to protect cherished land in the Deer Isle area that enriches our lives.

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IHT Welcomes New Administrator, Trail Steward

Happily for the Island Heritage Trust, Melissa Skelton joined its staff last February, as its new administrator. Melissa comes to IHT after four years at Tom’s of Maine, where her work focused on building relationships between Tom’s, its customers, employees, the local community, and the professional scientific community. Melissa also worked in a special capacity on the development and marketing of new products. Prior to joining Tom’s, Melissa was head administrator and faculty member at a school, working most recently on the design and implementation of educational programs for leaders.

Stan Ingram also joined IHT in February as trail steward. In his new role at the Trust, Stan is assisting with trail maintenance at Shore Acres, the Settlement Quarry, and the Tennis Preserve.

Melissa and Stan join Pat Gross who has been a friendly presence in the IHT office for many years, maintaining financial records and performing a variety of other important functions at IHT.

Island Heritage Trust NEWSLETTER

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Newsletter Committee: Melissa Skelton, Harriet Steinharter, Ann Hooke, Peg Myers

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Fire Destroys Cooper Farm Landmark

Sadly, in the early morning hours of February 19th, 2002, the old farmhouse on the Cooper Farm burned to the ground. This familiar landmark, photographed and loved by all who stopped on Caterpillar Hill, is gone. To some it brought warm memories of other farms, but for all it stirred the imagination, and it defined the place and the view.

Although the building had not been lived in since 1952, it was a cherished historical landmark for the people of Sedgwick, as the farm had been built in the 1890’s. It was the intent of the new owners, Blue Hill Heritage Trust, to preserve the building. When IHT was raising money to help with the purchase of the farm last summer, many people wanted assurances that taking care of the old farmhouse was part of the stewardship plan. We assured them that this was the case.

Fortunately, Terry Lester, who has very generously allowed us to print a copy of his photo here, has several photos of both the exterior and interior of the house giving us a record of the structure. Clearly this place was loved by many, many people.

Ann Hoke

Lupine Festival

Is our Island lupine a native?

That question came to us as plans for an Island-wide festival geared up this spring. The answer to that question is quite interesting. The simple answer: no.

Lupinus perennis, what the wildflower books call Sundial Lupine, is believed by the Maine Natural Areas Program to have been extirpated from this state. This is the very same species of lupine that has some fame in the endangered species world as the sole host of the Karner Blue butterfly. This species tecters on the brink of extinction on the pine barren fragments around Albany, New York.

William Cullina of the New England Wildflower Society has a wonderful book called Growing and Propagating Wildflowers, which sheds an interesting light on “our” lupine. Wild Sundial Lupines come only in shades of blue with small white upper petals. After the flower has been pollinated, the upper petals take on a red hue. Lupinus polyphyllus, or Large-leaved Lupine, is originally native to the west coast of the United States. Plant breeding work in Britain produced the form we are familiar with today. English “Russell lupines” come from genetic stock, which includes yellows and reds. Cullina suggests that although the Sundial Lupine is quite willing to grow in our gardens, this wild form, L. perennis, readily interbreeds with today’s popular hybrid forms, but the offspring are unsuitable butterfly hosts.

Enter Miss Rumphius in our story. Miss Rumphius is a sort of Victorian-era fictional female Johnny Appleseed, the star of a lovely children’s book by the popular author Barbara Cooney, who summnered in Maine. Miss Rumphius takes it upon herself to beautify her world by spreading seeds of lupine. If Miss Rumphius were real, and here today, she would no doubt have the savvy to suggest that one respect property lines, sowing seeds only on your own property. Lupines are not especially invasive. They are not notorious species like purple loosestrife, kudzu, or Asiatic milfoil, by a long shot. They do quite well on disturbed sites, roadsides for example. Miss Rumphius didn’t do too badly.

One would not want to plow up a meadow to sow it with lupines. Not only are they fairly toxic to dairy cattle, but also they are not to the taste of our native species of butterflies. However, those “little green bugs” you see swarming the lupine stems, most likely aphids, have their own place in the grand scheme of nature.

Garden flowers are not unlike our animal pets. We often select for looks, which may or may not produce totally satisfactory breeds. Further, feral dogs and cats wreak havoc when loosed in the wild, but they can be quite lovely companions – in their place. So enjoy the lupines. They are certainly emblematic of the value we place on beauty and open space, especially here on Deer Isle.

Marnie Reed Crowell