

ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

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



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Fall 2002

Stewardship Lessons from Barred Island

PHOTOS BY RODNEY CHADBOURNE



MANY OF YOU have read of the sad ending to the first nesting of Bald Eagles on Barred Island last summer. Marnie Reed Crowell wrote in her Naturalist Notebook column, "Ospreys traditionally return to Deer Isle around April 15. As we were moaning about income tax filing, the ospreys (which have nested on Barred Island for decades) also met with some unpleasantness. They found that eagles had taken over. In doing so they added sticks

that made the nest two or three times deeper and wider than they had been for the ospreys all those years. In early June the head of a single eaglet was first seen peeking over the nest. A walk down the Barred Island trail to the overlook at the edge of the bar was often rewarded with the sight of eagles perched atop the spruces on the lovely undeveloped island. By the third week of July the eaglet was fully feathered. It spent a week or so actively walking around on the nest, flapping and practicing, until on July 25 it was first seen flying to a nearby tree. Then the chick spent days on the seaward side of Barred Island, just standing on the rocks.

"The eagle story at Barred is a remarkably good one. Humans here this summer were usually quite considerate about sharing the habitat. This year the islands surrounding Deer Isle have supported more eagle nests than any township in the state. So our pre-

served lands and the educational efforts by such organizations as The Nature Conservancy, Maine Island Trail Association, and Island Heritage Trust seem to be paying wonderful dividends.

A case of too much interest

"However, in early August pressures increased. Over-eager kayakers and recreational boaters coming too close occasionally caused much energy to be expended by both the young and adult eagles during the crucial period when the young bird was perfecting its survival skills. The birds could be heard complaining loudly, but the significance was apparently not understood by the humans. On the evening of August 19, the young eaglet was spotted dangling head down from a branch not far from the nest. In spite of the best efforts of a rescue mounted with the help of Wanning Tree Service, the bird—which proved to have

Island Heritage Trust Mission Statement

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

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Stewardship Lessons: Impact of Nearly 2000 Persons at the Preserve

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badly broken its leg in its frightened blundering—was in shock and did not make it.”

How do we regulate use?

This summer's experience with the eagles on Barred Island highlights a number of stewardship issues. How do we regulate use? How do we balance the needs of people and wildlife on our preserves? Until a few years ago the only access to Barred Island was over private land. Then former Goose Cove Lodge owner, George Pavloff, gave 45 acres to The Nature Conservancy. TNC asked IHT to manage the property, and we extended the existing trail to a new parking area—making the entire walk to the island a natural experience. To limit the intensity of use, the parking area was designed for eight cars.

Nevertheless, during the course of the year almost 2000 persons registered—estimated to be only half the actual number of visitors to the preserve. This means about 8000 footfalls on every length of that narrow trail. Maxwell McCormack, professional forester and member of the Stewardship Committee, feels that soil compaction and root abrasion may in time lead to the death of trees along the trail. Efforts are in progress to spread wood chips on sensitive parts of the trail and prevent widening. Visitors are reminded that there are no toilet facilities on the preserve and

that urine is not only a human health hazard but can kill plants. In accordance with TNC rules, we do not allow dogs, whose scent alone can disturb ground-nesting birds and other species of wildlife. In short, the underlying concept is that in a nature preserve, we are guests.

Disturbing nesting Bald Eagles is a federal offense

Enter the eagles. But eagles are on the Federal Endangered Species list. Thus interference with their reproduction is a federal offense. Throughout the summer we consulted with wildlife biologist, Charles Todd, of the Endangered and Threatened Species unit of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. He was concerned that the young bird would be flushed from the nest before it was really ready or that it would be disturbed during critical weeks after leaving the nest before it was proficient at flight. Because the young will return to the nest site for several weeks after fledging and adult eagles begin courting at the nest site in February, Todd recommends closure of the immediate area from February 15 through the end of August.

According to Todd “...in the breeding season impacts from intrusions could be chilling of eggs or nestlings, as adults leave a nest when approached too closely, scaring an excitable fledgling and inducing it to fly prematurely, disturbing feeding schedules, or compromising parental training of young eaglets on the wing.” Such alterations of normal behavior constitute “harassment” under the law. It was this kind of disturbance that we sought to minimize by directing the large number of visitors to use a side beach and an adjacent overlook to watch the nesting progress. But these measures proved inadequate for the increased pressures during the sunny days of mid-August.

We received excellent advice

We have all learned from the past summer. The cooperation between IHT, TNC, and the State of Maine was excellent. Behaviors indicating stress are not always obvious. But it is important that we learn to understand them. IHT members can be ambassadors carrying this information to the public. Actually, our eagles seem tolerant of human presence. As a young pair, they can be expected to nest earlier next year, and when they start nesting in mid-February, we want our support system to be ready. We will provide viewpoints for observation and new access to the west side of the point away from the nest. We have had offers from volunteers to educate visitors, and we are considering signs on buoys to warn kayakers. We welcome your suggestions and offers for assistance!

Ken Crowell, Steward



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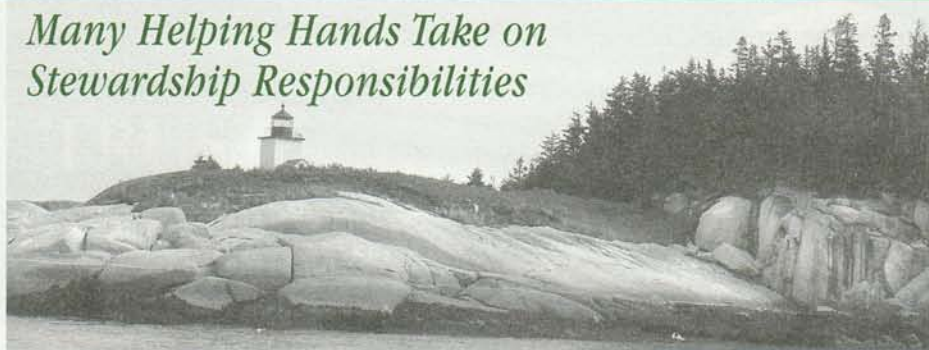
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Consider A Bequest

Leave a legacy for generations to enjoy. For more information call IHT at 207-348-2455 or write to us at 3 Main Street, P. O. Box 42, Deer Isle, ME 04627.



Many Helping Hands Take on Stewardship Responsibilities



Dan Foss inspecting top of lighthouse tower on Mark Island. He found several routine repairs that are needed. Mark Island Lighthouse (above).

EACH SUMMER BRINGS new challenges in stewardship efforts. The most visible challenge was protecting the eagle family on Barred Island described elsewhere. But we should also mention the trail maintenance efforts of young people from Outward Bound, the Seeley family's work on bog bridges at Crockett Cove Woods, and the many volunteers who did trail work at all of our preserves.

We are always grateful when visitors take initiative to enhance the islands and preserves by picking up brush and trash

along trails and shore. There are routine but necessary tasks where assistance would be appreciated, such as restocking brochures, clipping along trails, or in serving as an aide for Walks and Talks events. If you live near a particular preserve and would like to offer to take on specific responsibilities, please let me know (348-6933).

At Mark Island, while the Coast Guard maintains the actual light and foghorn, it is our responsibility to maintain the lighthouse structure. In September Walter Reed, Mark Island steward, and I went with

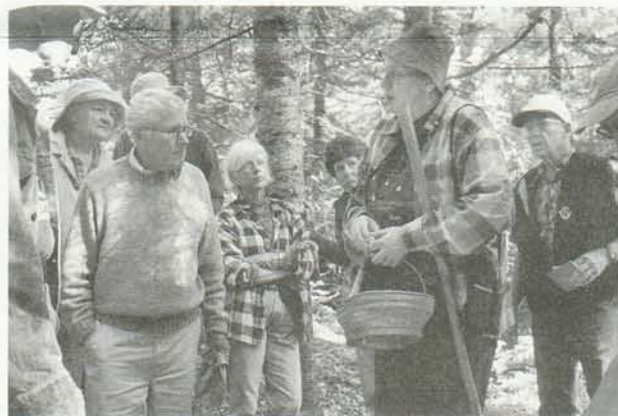
Dan Foss to examine the lighthouse. Dan worked on the Pumpkin Island Light and has a lot of experience with lighthouse maintenance. He found several routine repairs that were needed. A Mark Island stewardship fund from community contributors was established when IHT took ownership of the island in 1997. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please send a separate check to IHT indicating that it is intended for the Mark Island stewardship fund.

Ann Hooke, Chair of Stewardship Committee



Summer Walks & Talks and Boat Trips

Max McCormack (left) leading tree identification walk at Shore Acres Preserve last summer. One of the many popular Walks and Talks led by IHT volunteers.



Edythe Krape (above) explaining a fine point about mushrooms.

Mike Kaiser, Stan Myers, Bob Roth, Cleo Wilson, and Melissa Skelton on an IHT boat trip (left).



Growth in Conservation Efforts, Community Outreach

IHT is growing and maturing. This has become abundantly clear in my few months as its executive director. To borrow a lobster metaphor, it feels as if it is shedding time—a time when the organization is in the delicate process of casting off a shell that is too small and growing a new one that will accommodate all that the organization needs to be and to do.

Here's where I see new growth. With increased concerns about development on the island, we're seeing growth in our conservation efforts. We are experiencing a marked increase in interest in conservation easements as well as many new ideas for conserving land through acquisition. We're also growing in our desire to participate in community events and to collaborate with other island organ-

izations. I see this in our participation in the Lupine Festival, in the Opera House dance event at the Settlement Quarry, and in our new conservation easement at The Evergreen Garden Club's Mariners Park.

And, as we're growing, we must learn new ways to operate as an expanded organization. This means we're sorting out how to involve more people in the volunteer jobs that make up IHT's efforts: stewardship of preserves and lands under easements, creating this newsletter, and staffing our office. At the same time, we're working out how all of this can be coordinated in a partnership between Trustees, the growing IHT staff, and others interested in serving IHT's mission.

All of these efforts require time and energy. They also require your



PHOTO BY JUNE LENOCI

"Pete" Peterson and Melissa Skelton on one of the IHT boat cruises.

ongoing time and interest as well as your financial support. Your contributions matter. They will allow us to grow and expand to meet the conservation needs of our island in 2002 and in the future.

Melissa Skelton

IHT Obtains Easement on Mariners Memorial Park

THE EVERGREEN GARDEN CLUB has given IHT a conservation easement on Mariners Memorial Park, located on Long Cove off the Sunshine Road. The park is a parcel of undeveloped shorefront bounded by several historical sites such as the Old Settlers Cemetery, the Indian Haulover, and the house built for the Reverend Pe-

ter Powers in the late 18th century. A granite monument on the site marks the planting of a Bicentennial Tree in 1962 in

The Evergreen Garden Club wanted to preserve 25 acres of open meadows and 1365 feet of shoreline, and make sure it stayed open to the public for posterity.

memory of "all the men who have lost their lives at sea." The Garden Club has owned the park since 1961.

The Park consists of 25 acres of open meadows, shrubs, trees, perennials, and walking paths. There are 1365 feet of shoreline, including tidal areas of sand, a stone beach that

affords swimming, mud flats, and a landing spot for small boats, canoes, and kayaks.

The shore is a feeding ground for migrating shore birds—ospreys, herons, ducks, and Bald Eagles. There are many habitats that are home to butterflies, dragonflies, and many species

of field birds, such as sparrows, flycatchers, and warblers. More than 600 plants, shrubs, and trees have been planted by the Club's founders.

Members of the Garden Club wanted to ensure that the Park would be kept open to the public and would be maintained essentially in its current state for the future, even if the Club itself should cease to exist. IHT's Land Committee is pleased to have worked with the Garden Club in negotiating the easement for this purpose.

Gordon Rittmeyer
Chair of the Land Committee

PHOTO BY GORDON RITTMAYER



View from the shoreline at Mariners Park

A Dance Event and a GPS Treasure Hunt at the Settlement Quarry

WE HAVE MANY reports from both local people and visitors who have discovered the peaceful beauty of our preserves. In addition, IHT's preserves are serving the public in new ways with some very exciting events!

When the Settlement Quarry was being developed as a preserve, several of us recognized the potential of the amphitheater area for performance events. In May, Carol Esty of the Stonington Opera House approached IHT about using this area for a dance workshop performance directed by Alison Chase. Alison, a summer resident of Brooksville, is the artistic director of the internationally known, New York-based, modern dance company, Pilobolus.

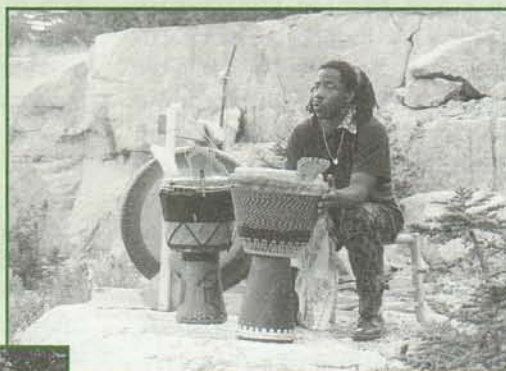
On the balmy summer evening of August 4, over 360 people sat on the rock ledges watching in silent fascination as a group of local dancers joined composer and percussionist, Kevin Campbell, and two dancers from the company perform. In Carol Esty's words, "Sunday evening arrived, the sky was gray and somewhat threatening, our backup plan was in place, but we were a go at the Settlement Quarry. The people started coming and kept coming. Hiding below, the dancers prepped, giggled, and worried. We waited for an eter-



An outstanding success: Pilobolus dance performance at the Settlement Quarry.

nity for Kevin's gong announcing our go. When it finally came we walked out silently in a group. I don't think I will ever forget that moment of entering and seeing all of those people standing, sitting, ringing the amphitheater, and merging down into the rocks below. The

silence of the crowd, the beauty of the space, the gray sky above, the simple sounds of Kevin's score sending us to each place in time, the camaraderie of the dancers feeling each other's presence and support in this once-in-a-lifetime endeavor



Composer/percussionist Kevin Campbell drumming for Pilobolus workshop performance last May.

in this extraordinary place. None of us had ever done anything quite like this before. Not Alison, not the dancers, not Kevin, not the Island Heritage Trust. It wasn't just a dance performance — it was an event and the event was a smash!"

On a different scale, a father and son made a surprising discovery at the Quarry. In June, Whitney Landon of Brooksville and his young son, Kevin, were exploring in the Settlement Quarry. Kevin discovered a well-concealed "Geocache" that is part of a global GPS treasure hunt! The challenge is to go to the Web at www.geocaching.com, download coordinates, and use your GPS unit to locate the treasure on the ground. Kevin did not need a GPS unit to find the treasure, only the searching curiosity of a child. Can you find it?

Ann Hooke, President

Become an IHT Member

Interested in IHT membership? Contact us at 207-348-2455 or write to us at 3 Main St., P.O. Box 42, Deer Isle, Maine 04627 to volunteer, contribute or participate.

PHOTOS BY ANN HOOKE



A crowd of 350 gathered at the Quarry's natural amphitheatre for a Pilobolus dance performance.

We Draw on Talented Volunteers to Help Us with Community Projects

THIS SUMMER has seen many more people interested in easements, in our Walks and Talks programs, and in our role as conservationists in the community. Even more people have discovered our public preserves, and these preserves are being used in new ways. It had been a dream of mine that one day the Settlement Quarry would be used for performance. This summer that dream was realized when Pilobolus Opera House workshop performed on the floor of the Quarry. We were delighted to work with the Opera House in this collaboration. Together we swept the loose gravel and glass from the area, and together we celebrated the success of the event.

This collaboration with other community organizations is an expansion beyond our role as steward of land and easements. We

look forward to lending our talents and energies to further such projects that coincide with our primary mission. To make this happen we are drawing on a growing group of volunteers with many talents—as teachers, as office volunteers, as trail volunteers, as writers, as consultants, and as board members.

We welcome our three new board members, who represent different parts of the community: Susan Greene, who works with Healthy Island Project; Babette Cameron, who works for Shepard's Realty and who served on the board in the early days of IHT; and DeeDee Moore, who is a retired professor with a long history of participation in Deer Isle community projects. Many thanks to all of you who contribute in many ways to IHT, and welcome to any who

have an interest in helping. Please feel free to call me at 348-2455 or 348-6933.

Since our founding in 1987 volunteers have largely done the work of the Trust. Today, with the expanded scope of our community work and with 22 easements and eight owned properties to care for, we are sharing some of these duties with our part-time professional staff. We welcomed Melissa Skelton as executive director this year. IHT is trying to find a balance between staff and volunteer responsibilities. It seemed prudent to break with the pattern of two-year presidential terms in order to provide continuity during this process. I have offered to serve for an additional year, ending my term as president in July 2003.

Ann Hooke

Terrell Lester, on Sacrifices & Heroes

"If all that I have done with my photographs is to preserve a record of how it once was, then I feel I will have accomplished little. My heroes are people who have donated their time, money, and property to help preserve our island and our world for all of us and for future generations. Words are easy but personal sacrifice and actions are not. To me this is what the IHT is all about: people working hard and making personal sacrifices in order to preserve the most important thing that all of us on this island share in common, our natural heritage."

Comment made by Terrell Lester during his guest presentation at the IHT annual meeting, July 17, 2002.

IHT Gifts for the Holidays



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

IHT Note Cards, four different color cards of Faith Munson paintings, box of 8, \$5.00.

2003 Terrell Lester Calendars, \$12.95 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.

Butterflies and Moths of Deer Isle, 56 pages, \$10.00.



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