By the time this newsletter has reached your home, Island Heritage Trust will be in its new home at 420 Sunset Road, just south of the Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society. In fact, the two properties were originally one, the Sellers Farm. Salome Sellers’s son Dudley built the handsome Greek Revival farmhouse some time after the Civil War. When it was occupied by two sisters, the house was divided into two apartments. The northern half will now house the Trust office; the southern half will comprise the public rooms. The suite of upstairs rooms will be used for board meetings, conferences, storage, and the like.

Visitors will already have noticed that the stone wall between the two organizations has been breached for easy walking. Park once and visit twice, in effect a single campus as Haystack’s Stuart Kestenbaum so accurately observed when the purchase was being contemplated. Both lawns are mowed (and portions left unmowed!) simultaneously to enhance the effect of one farm.

It has appeared this past summer that both organizations had record attendance. Beyond a doubt, the talks of our popular Walks and Talks series were attended by more people than ever. In addition to a series of very well-attended art openings, Dr. Steve Cox spoke on archeology; our own Bill Haviland on Island history, and Dr. Bob Knowlton on tide-lands ecology – all to a full house.

Josephine Jacob, who chairs our school outreach program, reports that our Island kindergartners are tough; they would not have retreated from their outing at their adopted preserve, Reach Beach at Grays Cove, even if it had rained. But for the rest of us, we now have a place for all-weather activities.

Come and see.
Heritage House was the scene of a number of very successful art shows this summer. The barn all-purpose room works well with its gallery track lighting. There was something for every taste. Not only were a number of George Hardy’s exuberant folk carvings on exhibit, but forty years’ worth of lobster pot buoys collected from the beach at Felsted were on display, courtesy of David Pashley.

On the fine arts scene, Rob Shetterly generously lent a selection of his compelling *Americans Who Tell the Truth* portraits. Stu Kestenbaum read from his new book of poems, *Prayers and Run-on Sentences*. The 1895 botanical collection of Ada Southworth, on loan from the Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society, was accompanied by an Asian style watercolor by Frederica Marshall and greeting cards from the ephemera collection of Ron Stegall. A close look at the lace borders of one valentine showed it was actually made not of pressed flowers but of dried red algae and lacy white corallina.

The South Parlor was effectively renovated as a gallery and meeting space with plain walls, elegant wood floor and natural light. Visitors enjoyed the shoji screen of Ann Flewelling’s photographs and Marnie Reed Crowell’s poems from Threeway Press, and the watercolors of Bruce Bulger and quilt hangings by Holley Mead.

Jill Hoy and Larry Moffet again lent their vibrant oil landscapes. George Bayliss lent several stunning paintings which showed Scott’s Landing and Shirley Conant gave us a lovely painting of Shore Acres, both long-time IHT supporters.

Carolyn Caldwell’s moving landscape was complemented by her thoughtful words: “...What do I paint? Vanishing beauty. The world is changing rapidly. Development is overtaking the natural world. Unique places are becoming homogenized. The natural environment is disappearing. We can’t take a beautiful landscape for granted anymore because tomorrow there may be a cell phone tower in the center of it or a strip mall in its place. My hope is that artists can slow the rush. Maybe we can make people appreciate what is there and care enough to preserve it before it is lost forever.”

We are fortunate indeed to have such artists in our community speaking on our behalf.

**Pace Gift**

Summer’s end brought us a gift and a loss. Stephen Pace, perhaps the Island’s most distinguished painter, gave IHT an oil painting; and he and his wife Pam have now moved permanently to Indiana. The painting, an oil which marked a significant turning point in his career, was given by Stephen to be sold for the benefit of the Trust’s work. Pam Pace is remembered fondly for her hours as a volunteer in the office and her loving manner. Who could resist when she asked for your support?

Stay tuned for further details about this exciting forthcoming sale. Our heartfelt thanks to the Paces.
The IHT Scott’s Midden 2007 archaeological field school was conducted from June 28 to July 2. Eleven students participated, supervised by Dr. Steven Cox and ten experienced volunteers who were paired with the less experienced students in excavation teams. 10 one-meter squares were excavated during the five days in the field, and fieldwork was supplemented by evening lectures on digging techniques, Maine prehistory and prehistoric technology.

The field school excavation proved to be very productive, exceeding expectations in producing a variety of interesting material. Although the site deposits have been disturbed by both agricultural activities and more recent pothunting, we did find undisturbed shell midden deposits in most of the excavation units that yielded material dating from the early European contact period a few centuries ago back to at least 3,000 years ago. Recovered material included pottery, stone and bone tools such as arrowheads and scrapers used to work wood and skins, and animal bones and shell that can tell us what the prehistoric inhabitants of the site were eating, and what season of the year they were there. Highlights of our finds include half a dozen shell beads probably dating to about the time that Europeans arrived in the area, two pieces of decorated bone that perhaps date to the same time period, and a concentration of pottery and stone tools from near the base of the midden that date to the early Ceramic period, about 2,500 - 3,000 years ago.

These and other finds from Scott’s Midden are important ones that add significantly to our understanding of the Native American occupations of Deer Isle, and more generally of Maine. Over the next few months the material from the dig will be processed and studied by Dr. Cox, before being returned to the Island for exhibit. It is our hope that the successful 2007 field school will provide impetus for longer-term scientific and educational efforts at uncovering the long history of human occupation of the Deer Isle region.
Freese Island

By Barbara Southworth

Arriving at the shore from which he could see Freese Island between Mountainville and Sunshine, George Reardon knew it was the one. Without setting foot on it, he signed purchase papers by the stove at the old Barter’s Hardware in Deer Isle in 1966.

Oldest son Dan, who started coming to Freese in his twenties, recalls that the family easement idea was first floated in the mid-1980s. It required educating a lot of people: the seven signers of the family corporation known as Reardon’s Retreat, Inc., and the twenty other family members who were consulted. While the 1960s were a time of growing environmental awareness, the three brothers say that the process of making decisions about the island’s easement reinforced their environmental ethic and made the family much more sensitive to conservation issues. The family has now given IHT a conservation easement on 37 of the 50 acres of Freese Island.

Dan led walks for IHT six or seven years ago, and talked about easements over the years. Various family members are conservation and land trust supporters. Those who have attended the annual summer musicales at the Stegalls’ home have enjoyed Elizabeth Reardon’s cello playing. Dan’s youngest daughter worked with Island Institute for several years. She’s even plotted waypoints on Freese Island’s trails.

Pickering is a quiet cove and desirable anchorage, 30 feet deep, with soft mud, surrounded by woods. With a nearby Acadia National Park easement and several small islands’ easements in the cove and the Tennis Preserve, the cove ecosystem is gaining protection. The Reardons’ heartfelt connection to the place — across the generations — makes the notion that it can be forever protected by an easement powerful. Dan says simply, “We all have a love for this land.”
Easement Primer

The Reardon family’s easement brings maximum satisfaction because all members participated in the process. A conservation easement is not like a right-of-way or a power line easement. It is important that all concerned parties understand that easement protection is “in perpetuity”—forever. As a donor, you can add protection to an easement in future years, but you can’t take back the rights you have given away.

Working with the IHT Land Committee, chair Kenneth Crowell, (348-6065), you customize your easement to meet your wishes. You continue to own the eased property, pay taxes on it, and your heirs can inherit that ownership. You give a conservation easement to a qualified conservation organization, which accepts it if there is demonstrable public and ecological benefit. You may or may not decide to allow public access. You may or may not reserve additional building sites. The choices are yours and the satisfaction certainly is. Ask the Reardon family!

Conservation Easement Grantors, 1989 to Present

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Arie Van Everdingen
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Sally Mills
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Island Heritage Trust wishes to thank the Field Pond Foundation for funding which enabled trails to be built and entrance work at done at Pine Hill.

For the summer’s work at Scott’s Landing we are indebted to Bar Harbor Bank and Trust, and to Sarah Pebworth for supporting local participants in the dig. We extend our great appreciation to Dr. Steven Cox and the professional archeologists who donated their time for the Scott’s Landing Dig. The paying participants, too, gave outstanding effort to document the importance of the site in the narrow window of opportunity. And it was fun!

We thank the wonderful volunteers who pitched in and moved us from our old office on Main Street in Deer Isle village to our new quarters in Heritage House in Sunset. Under the capable leadership of Linda Campbell, musty old carpeting was removed, floors refinished, and upstairs walls were repainted. We were given board room chairs and display cabinets from the Hudson Museum, but we are still looking for a board room table. The Norcross Wildlife Foundation funded office and outreach equipment. We are delighted to acknowledge M.D. Joyce & Co. who donated paint and other supplies. For our summer celebrations we thank Stonington Sea Products, Nervous Nellie’s Jams and Jellies, and Vern Seile of Burnt Cove Market.

This is what makes a community really come together. We know we are doing the right thing when we shop locally.

We thank the stewardship volunteers who monitor our properties. This most important job gives our stewards a unique opportunity to visit special places while fulfilling a critical part of our responsibilities. Our young people to be thanked include Ethan Brown who worked on the Barred Island parking area and the three Carter sisters, Bess, Allie, and Mary Robert, who not only did coastal clean-up and sign repair at Barred Island with Laura and Justin Logan-Chesney, but they also handed out programs and granite chips from Deer Isle Granite Company at Quarryography. Over a thousand spectators received a colorful introduction to IHT by way of the insert in the Quarryography program, designed with the help of Lael Stegall. And what performances there were, perfectly showcasing our Settlement Quarry Preserve with Opera House Arts!

We have learned that several members of IHT have included the Trust in their estate planning. We are very grateful for their wonderful thoughtfulness. Especially gratifying is the bequest which has just come in from the estate of Judy Hill for $75,000. Judy requested that there not be any funeral service, but in late October a number of her friends from the Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society joined with her IHT friends to plant some red tulips in her honor outside Heritage House.

Special thanks to Barbara and Bob Britton who for our annual meeting 20th anniversary celebration in July gave us $1,000 to begin building up the recently-established endowment fund for Heritage House. They used their IRA. Please check the note about this year’s one-time IRA opportunities on Page 1 of the donor list. Details will be posted on our website.

While you are on-line, don’t miss the latest pre-publication chapters of Beads and String, A Maine Island Pilgrimage, the inspiring story of the generous individuals to whom we owe thanks for the preserves here. Creators Marnie Reed Crowell and Ann Flewelling expect to have the book available for sale this spring, with the profits donated to Island Heritage Trust. Our grateful thanks.
Michele Dur invited the audience at Quarryography to get a program and a granite chip from the Carter sisters.

Sponsored by a grant we received from Maine Community Foundation’s Hancock Fund, Outreach Coordinator Michele Dur worked with children in the school and at Camp Kooky.

Outreach

Dr. Roger Hooke’s geology trip as usual wowed them as part of our popular Walks and Talks series. The lady uncharacteristically in the back row, purple shirt, is Ann Hooke, our energetic Stewardship chair. She and Roger are to be commended for the outstanding contributions they have made over the years to the Trust. Steve Curtis’s astronomy night at Mariners Park during the Perseid meteor shower was really something to behold. Dr. Nishi Rajakaruna of College of the Atlantic gave a fascinating overview of the rare plants at Pine Hill. Dr. Bob Knowlton’s salt marsh talk and Dr. Max McCormack’s forestry talks once again delighted folks this summer.

Working together—at an August Merchants Row stakeholders’ meeting on Fort Island, representatives of IHT co-hosted staff members of Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Maine Island Trail Association, Acadia National Park, and island owners to discuss issues facing the island archipelago.

At the ribbon cutting on August 5 at Scott’s Landing, Bill Haviland was joined by Ciona Ulbrich of Maine Coast Heritage Trust, our partners in the project, highlighting how IHT cooperates with other conservation organizations. It is gratifying that already lots of islanders are visiting Scott’s Landing. Contributors certainly can feel good about their donations.
From the Executive Director’s Desk

Leaving the village, embracing the Island

Here we are in shoulder season. There are still a few visitors who peer into our old office, trying to guess what we do, but most have left. The village is quiet again and our winter routine is returning. For half of our IHT history, we have greeted you and many others in our cozy space at a rent generously kept modest by Nancy and Bill Atwell.

This place has served us well. However, in our twentieth year, our journey is still just beginning. As we move to the center of the island, we hope to move closer to the center of community life. Not only will Heritage House in Sunset offer IHT new office space, but the multipurpose room in the barn and the front room galleries will allow other community groups to join us as we all seek to enrich our natural and human environment. We are especially excited about collaborating with our next-door neighbor, the Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society.

For those of you who came to our annual meeting 20th Anniversary Celebration or to an event this summer, you know what a great space we have been given. In our new location, we can be more in rhythm with the hum of island life. I know we are on the right track when I see and hear schoolchildren on our trails and beaches.

Won’t you join us in celebrating our new headquarters? Come by and see us at 420 Sunset Road. We will be needing your support and your spirit as well as we go forth with our renewed mission.

— Mac Herrling

Mission statement

The mission of the 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.

From the President

For those you who don’t know me, I’d like to introduce myself. I am retired from the University of Vermont, where I taught for 37 years. I have not, however, retired from anthropology – my chosen field, and I continue to do research and to write. My latest book is about our local Indians, but my other writing projects are focused on the ancient Maya.

My family has been part of the Deer Isle scene since 1905 and it is where I always have felt rooted. I grew up with friends, most of whom were islanders, and island values that I absorbed are an important part of who I am today.

Over the past several decades, I have been concerned with the disappearance of so many of the places around the island that my friends and I used to frequent, and the loss of some of the freedom that went with this as houses seemed to spring up all over the place.

I worry, too, about the consequences for our resources. Already, I have heard anecdotal evidence that suggests we may be overtaxing our ground water resources. Then, there are the effects of growth that are changing local society from face-to-face to something different. Such concerns are what have led me to support IHT as well as the Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society (I serve on its board as well). If we don’t work to preserve our island heritage, we will lose it, and something special will be gone.

So – here’s hoping for an active year, strengthening the Trust as we head into the future. And thanks to past President Ken Crowell for passing on an organization headed in the right direction. And thanks to our volunteers and supporters who make it all possible.

— Bill Haviland