

ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

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



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Fall 2010

Meet Board Chair Roger Bergen . . .

Roger Bergen, IHT's new Chairman of the Board of Trustees, brings to his role a multi-faceted background that includes work ranging from furniture design to running a clock company and heading up two nationally-renowned enterprises: the Nature Company/Smith & Hawken and Earthwatch. Although his career took him all over the globe, including to such far-flung destinations as Africa and Australia, it was finally Deer Isle/Stonington he returned to when he retired in 2007.

In a recent interview, Bergen, who grew up in Lincoln, Massachusetts, said that since his childhood, he has spent summers on Isle au Haut with his family. He recalled Stonington during those years as being the family's point of departure for Isle au Haut and the place where they stocked up on supplies. So it seemed fateful, or nearly so, that when he and his wife, Susan, began searching up and down the Maine coast for a home, their search ended in Stonington. Bergen remarked that although he'd traveled the world, he recognized that "there was something very different about this island. The way the community takes care of each other is extraordinary."

He laughed when he recalled that soon after moving to Stonington, he determined to become involved in local government, applying for a position on the planning board. His wife, Susan, thought he was crazy, he said, warning him that your roots have to go back at least six generations to be-

long. But in short order he became a member of the town planning board, a position he still holds. One of the things Bergen most values about Deer Isle/Stonington is that "it's an authentic community . . . a real working community," characterized by "generosity and philanthropy. . . . There's nothing else like it," he added.



Roger Bergen, IHT Chair *Elke Dorr*

It was during the fifteen years he headed the Nature Company and his ten-year stint as President and CEO of Earthwatch that he became acutely aware of the work of land trusts and grew to value the preservation of unspoiled lands. Reflecting on the rapid pace of development, he said he watched Cape Cod "destroyed" and emphasized that the lower Cape was "gone in ten years." He predicted, "It [rampant development] will come here, too . . . unless we're mindful. We don't yet have those urgent development pressures, which means it's hard to get support for protection, [so]

now is the time to plan."

Bergen credited Mike Little and IHT volunteers for creating "the most efficient organization I've ever been involved with." He remarked, "Mike took an organization that had lots of pieces and put them together . . . organizing the mission and the money. We're fiscally sound now, and our books are balanced."

Among the challenges facing IHT, Bergen believes, is how to involve the local community in preservation efforts as well as in responsible stewardship of the island's resources. "Every person who lives on the island should belong to IHT," he remarked. "We [IHT] preserve what we love." He also indicated that he would like to see the Trust join forces with the historical society to create a "learning center," designed to showcase the island's cultural and natural history.

Bergen believes that the Trust's engagement with the community is crucial. He noted that "Lily Pond is an example of what we do best," referring to the Trust's successful fundraising partnership with the community. In the next twenty years, he said, as property owners age, the transfer of ownership will become an increasingly critical issue, therefore,

"We preserve what we love."

"finding ways to instill in the community a sense of responsibility to help preserve the heritage of the island is essential."



From the Executive Director

Fall comes to Downeast Maine! Another wonderful season of transition is upon us as we work to enlarge our focus from being an expanding land trust to becoming a stable and integral member of the island community, working to bring an even better environment to all residents of Deer Isle and Stonington.

There are many challenges facing us as we pursue this goal. While a project such as the Lily Pond Beach campaign has popu-

lar appeal and garnered widespread support, the humdrum, day-to-day management of our preserves and conservation easements doesn't generate such enthusiasm. Another island protected from over-development, another shore access guaranteed forever - these excite people in ways our essential, on-going work may not.

Among our activities and programs is our commitment to provide solid, science-based environmental education to the elementary school students. To fulfill that goal, we now have a part-time Administrative Assistant,

who helps with management of the many volunteers involved with IHT's school programs. An additional and enormous task is managing and/or monitoring over 1,200 acres of land in and around the island. This huge job keeps our part-time Stewardship Director hopping, as he coordinates a couple dozen volunteers to maintain trails and monitor easements.

Protecting our environmental heritage is the long-term task that IHT has undertaken - in perpetuity is a long time. But with your help, IHT can and will stay the course.

Happy fall!

IHT Connects with



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Consultant Mary Murphy has developed K-8 environmental education curricula based on the ecology of our island preserves. Kindergartners learn about sorting and categorizing by collecting different kinds of shells at Reach Beach. These hands-on lessons engage the children and earn the praise of teachers. Call Mike to join the growing cadre of volunteer docents in this exciting program!

Thank you to Girl Scouts Ella, Cassidy and Soozin, who joined the Coastal Clean-Up at IHT's Causeway Beach.



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ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST NEWSLETTER

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.

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Volunteer Profile



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Volunteer stewards Jane Rosinski and Gordon Russell by one of their favorite trees on Campbell Island

IHT's service to the community is, in essence, land stewardship carried out by volunteers sharing a powerful sense of connection to a cherished place. Among the most effective and committed on the island, IHT volunteers find that one rewarding effort leads to the next.

Jane Rosinski, who moved to Maine at age two months when her mycologist father became a botany professor in Orono, worked as an educator for Maine Audubon for ten years. Her husband, Gordon Russell, worked as a biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in New Hampshire from 1978-1990, and in Maine from 1990-2006. They gravitated naturally to IHT membership after a five-year search for a home site led them to a spot on Greenlaw Cove. *R e t i r e d* now, they divide their time between here and Holden, Me., coming to Deer Isle throughout

the year.

A participant in the annual island Christmas Bird Count, Gordon is also a regular leader for IHT birding events, including the Wings, Waves and Woods Birding Weekend. Featured artwork for Wings Waves and Woods in May 2011, Jane's watercolor of a winter wren will grace the event's brochure.

Jane and Gordon began serving together as IHT stewards when Ann Hooke, head of IHT's Stewardship Committee, tapped them to look after 92-acre Campbell Island, less than two miles from their home. The pair happily boated to a landing on the island's pristine shore to show the trail they keep open and clear of blow downs and human-generated trash, noting "We spend a lot of our time motoring and kayaking to Campbell Island and other islands around Deer Isle."

Bearing signs of early occupation, Campbell is known as the site of an 1899 Smithsonian Institution archeological expedition when three skeletons were unearthed, one a European in ar-

dian chieftain.

Purchased by the Chewonki Foundation in 2006, Campbell features two Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) campsites; IHT is responsible for the conservation easement monitored by Jane and Gordon. This includes keeping an eye on campsite usage, clearing blowdowns along the trail and picking up trash. Jane reports that initially Chewonki wanted to leave the island completely as-is, but later agreed with IHT and MITA to reclaim the all-but-vanished woodland perimeter path. Gordon and Jane joined a work party to begin restoring the overgrown grassy path, eventually establishing the trail they now maintain. Jane notes that a distinct, thoughtfully-located path reduces the likelihood of erosion caused by random trails, especially along the shore.

Last year Ann invited Gordon to join the Stewardship Committee. In his first indoor job for IHT, he helps prepare land use and management plans for the properties for which IHT is responsible. Using formats pro-

Entry from logbook at Campbell Island campsite:

"Thanks for doing a great job protecting these beautiful islands."

vided by the national Land Trust Alliance and guidance from Maine Coast Heritage Trust, a plan for Bradbury Island was recently completed, and one for Mark Island is currently being drafted. History, legal description, appropriate group size, activities, and special considerations, such as nesting eagles, are compiled for each property. These carefully-drafted plans provide guidance for volunteer stewards as they monitor properties, or islands, like Campbell.

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Community Committee Takes Charge

Last spring Island Heritage Trust and the communities of Deer Isle and Stonington successfully partnered to carry out the purchase of the Lily Pond. As important as that initial step was, the next step is even more crucial: preserving the pristine nature of the site while maximizing its advantages and expanding its usage. A standing committee of island residents has been created to manage that process. Meeting regularly and communicating frequently with each other, the six-member committee is tasked with monitoring all aspects related to the use of the pond and to preserving it.

One of the committee's first accomplishments has been to improve access to the pond. In August, it commissioned Skip Eaton



Mike looks on as Sarah, Emily and Robby Turner cut ribbon *Anne Sigmund*
at entrance to the new path

the path and new signage in a ribbon-cutting ceremony, accompanied by expressions of strong support from Senator Susan Collins and Representative Mike Michaud. Most appropriately, as a pledge to future generations, children from the Island Community Center's Camp Kooky, car-

first year. The testing is designed to ensure that the pond's high water quality is maintained and to establish a base line that will help to uncover potential issues before they become problems. Initial testing has established that the water in the Lily Pond is exceptionally pure and significantly below state-mandated guidelines for permissible levels of E. coli. Mike Little, who participates in the committee's deliberations, noted that the public can help maintain water purity by using the bags, available at the pond's entrance, for picking up after dogs, which are allowed at the pond (on leash). The committee has also placed a high priority on a good working relationship with Deer Run which makes parking available to pond users, and establishing clear usage guidelines for the community.



Anne Sigmund

Lily Pond Management Committee: Lew Ellis, Pat Gross (Chair), Herm Kidder, Mike Little, Linda Stratton, Carl Simmons; absent Katie Wiberg

to construct a path from the Deer Run parking lot to the pond's beach. The path, a composite of crushed, recycled asphalt, opens up use of the pond to all and was designed to keep to a minimum the number of trees that would have to be felled.

On August 18, IHT unveiled

ried out the ribbon-cutting honors. This summer both the ICC and the Recreation Board of Stonington have held swimming lessons for kids at the Lily Pond.

Another step the Lily Pond committee is taking to preserve and protect the pond is to have the water tested regularly this

Lily Pond committee meetings, which take place the first Tuesday of each month, are open to the public and both the committee and the IHT welcome suggestions from the public on how to protect and preserve the Lily Pond now and for the future.

“Complacency is Dangerous” . . . Tim Glidden

Tim Glidden, Director of Land for Maine’s Future (LMF), the state program that contributed \$140,000 toward the purchase of the Lily Pond Beach, was the featured speaker at IHT’s annual meeting in July. Glidden spoke about the future of land conservation and land trusts, stewardship of lands under conservation, as well as the economic, cultural and spiritual benefits associated with protected land.

Glidden noted that “phenomenal progress” has occurred in preserving land. Since 1998, when approximately 6% of Maine’s land was protected, to 2010, 18-20% of the state’s lands

are now under some form of conservation. LMF, he noted, has assisted in protecting over 500,000 acres, with another 50,000 acres pending. Deer Isle’s Lily Pond was one of those parcels to which LMF contributed significant funds, recognizing, he said, that natural resources are “essential to both the quality of life for all Maine residents and to the tourism economy of the state.”

Noting that dramatic change in land use has occurred over the last 50 or so years, Glidden commented that since 1945, 3.15 million acres of farmland have been lost, with much of that acreage

going, since 1965, primarily to development. He added that about 5,000 acres of Maine farmland are still going out of production each year. In addition to loss of farmland, Maine’s waterfront is also undergoing significant transformation as ownership changes.

Glidden remarked that “only about 20 of Maine’s 3500 miles of coast are well suited for working waterfronts, [while also being] prime spots for other uses that would squeeze out lobster wharfs, fishing piers and processing sites.” Such competing interests create challenges on nearly every level – economic, cultural,



Path at Shore Acres Preserve

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Island Heritage Trust Membership

I/we want to help IHT preserve the natural beauty and way of life on Deer Isle now and for future generations

Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership donation

\$250 Conservator \$100 Sustaining \$50 Family \$35 Individual

Name _____ Telephone Number _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zipcode _____

Summer Address _____

Email _____ Electronic newsletter (PDF) yes!

A remarkable 70% of IHT’s operating budget comes from member donations!

Thank you for joining that effort!

Please mail form to: Island Heritage Trust / PO Box 42 / Deer Isle, ME 04627

political, and ecological.

Glidden remarked that changes in land use and attendant growth affect “wildlife habitat, community integrity and, not least, our tax dollars.” He added that as a result, “Stewardship of our successes is clearly essential.” He went on to say, “Simply continuing to do what we have done here, in Deer Isle, for the past 22 years—just doing it harder—will not be sufficient if what we are really seeking is a whole and healthy community living in

been shaped by its cultural heritage, which is directly connected to the land itself. We, therefore, “need to go deeper,” he said. “Ultimately, the challenge is to build communities in which the protection and stewardship of the land is the natural product of the community’s own behavior and activity.”

Because the political most often is an integral part of any such endeavor, Glidden reminded his audience that LMF has helped protect significant lands includ-

tells about itself, and said his impression was that the island understands the importance of those stories, as well as its unique identity and the necessity to communicate its heritage to children and future generations, each subsequently adding to the larger story.

In concluding his remarks, Glidden quoted from *Belonging: A Culture of Place*, by bell hooks: “Talking about place, where we belong, is a constant subject for many of us. We want to know if

“ . . . the challenge is to build communities in which the protection and stewardship of the land is the natural product of the community’s own behavior and activity.”

right relationship to this wonderful corner of creation.”

He went on to say that the contributions made to the local economy by ocean, granite, the arts, tourism and the seasonal community is, in one way or another, rooted in the availability and quality of Deer Isle’s natural resources. The island also has

ing working waterfronts, wild lands, and lakes and ponds like our own Lily Pond. He then urged his listeners to vote for the land conservation bond in November’s election, cautioning, “Complacency is dangerous.”

Returning to Deer Isle’s future, Glidden emphasized the value of stories the community

it is possible to live on the earth peacefully. Is it possible to sustain life? Can we embrace an ethos of sustainability that is not solely about appropriate care of the world’s resources but also about the creation of meaning, the making of lives that are worth living?”



Scott’s Landing sculpture dedication

Elke Dorr

◆ Save the Date! Annual Shore Dinner – Sat., July 30, 2011 ◆

Nature Shop Doubles as Resource Center

Last winter, Mike Little, volunteer Lynn Braff, and then vice-president Roger Bergen met to plan the Nature Shop's expansion. A seedling with room to grow, the shop needed nurturing to yield a respectable profit. Roger lent his invaluable Nature Company experience and Lynn brought an educator's eye for fun and affordable books, toys and games, and a talent for attractive display.

Mike believed the shop could play a key outreach role, besides adding a revenue stream for IHT. Keeping it open on weekends and holidays through Columbus Day gave the Trust a daily presence, offering expanded opportunity for people to become acquainted with what IHT offers. Many visitors came looking for maps and help in exploring IHT's preserves. Mike calls the shop "a resource to discovering Deer Isle outdoors."

Visitors can expect to find maps and tide charts, and to choose from books featuring local history, geology and habitats. Plant, animal and insect guides, some by IHT authors, are also



available. Also offered are children's books ranging from a popular line of \$2 tattoo books (reptiles, bugs, dolphins, butterflies and more) to beautifully illustrated hard covers.

Additional items include handy laminated pocket guides featuring raptors, owls and ducks; butterflies and moths; fish and shells; weather, wildflowers and Maine trees. Take-along books include *Life on Intertidal Rocks* and *Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies*, as well as biking guides to Mount Desert.

To enhance your appreciation of birds and wildlife, ferns and tide pools, woods, meadows,

marsh and shore, the shop stocks affordable binoculars and hand lenses starting at \$2, in addition to bird sound recordings.

Reasonably priced gifts for children and adults include games and puzzles, greeting cards, magnets and posters featuring local scenes. A line of mugs, hats, bags, golf towels and shirts sporting the IHT Mark Island logo allow you to show your support of the Trust. Keep the shop in mind for gift giving and as a resource for learning about the natural history of the island. Visit us during our extended weekend hours around Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Buy local *and*
support IHT



The
Nature Shop

Thanksgiving – Christmas
Sat-Sun 10-4 PM



???????????

Elke Dorr

Mycology mysteries . . .

Thirty people participated in IHT's mushroom walk, learning to identify species like this one. If you don't recognize this common specimen, perhaps a copy of *Peterson's Field Guide to Mushrooms* should be on your shelf.

IHT Preserves open year-round!



Mary Murphy and friends explore Davis Farm on snowshoes

Anne Beerits

Coming up...

- ◆ Monthly fall & winter walks with Mike
- ◆ Christmas bird count
- ◆ Igloo-building
- ◆ Winter animal sign and tracking workshop

Watch our monthly e-mail updates for details



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Elke Dorr

Field of ox-eye daisies on Mark Island