



ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

The Land Trust of Deer Isle & Stonington, Maine

Spring 2016

Homman Family Donates Newest Preserve

Deer Isle has no shortage of quiet coves tucked along its shores, many of which also boast high, granite perches that provide a place to sit in the warm sun after a swim in the bracing water. In 1972, the Homann family moved to Maine. During the summer Juergen and Christa brought their children, Kalila and Oliver, to Deer Isle to enjoy the sparkling waters and the deep spruce forests. Dr. Homann later purchased property in Oceanville, so that three generations could spend time every summer in the quiet cove that opens into South Deer Isle's Inner Harbor. This year, Juergen Homann and his children wanted to plan for the future of their beloved cove, and there was strong motivation to share this hidden treasure with others. They considered various options, but decided that by giving this land to Island Heritage Trust they could ensure that it would be maintained in a natural condition in perpetuity and could be enjoyed by the people of Oceanville and others on the island. Island Heritage Trust was happy to be given such a generous gift.

With 1,750 feet of shoreline, this 5-acre preserve will not only protect a well-established shore access point used by shellfish harvesters, but also provide a lovely place for walking and picnicking, a destination for bicycle riders from Oceanville and beyond, as well as for kayakers

seeking quieter waters. For geology buffs, this preserve has one of the largest glacial erratic boulders found in Deer Isle! And yes, for generations, young people have sat on top of this rock.



Crystal Cove Preserve, Oceanville Photo: Mike Little

Island Heritage Trust's staff are already making preparations for the small changes needed to provide woodland trails and parking for 1-2 cars. The Trust hopes to have this preserve, now named Crystal Cove, open for visitors in the fall of 2016.

Clean Island Project Talks Trash

Drive along any island road and what do you notice? First, perhaps, the unquestionable beauty of the land and shoreline: fir and spruce forests, glittering coves, and abundant wildflowers. Unfortunately, and in sharp contrast to the stunning natural scenery, far too much evidence of human carelessness or disregard is also evident in the form of litter. While much of our trash ends up

in landfills, far too much still ends up on roadsides or in the water, some of it inadvertently landing there, some intentionally tossed there.

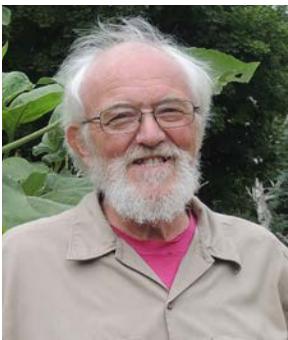
Beyond being detrimental to our environment, trash is also costly. According to Keep America Beautiful, the U.S. spends approximately \$11.5 billion per year cleaning up litter. States each devote *(CIP Talks Trash cont'd on page 3)*





Two young participants from last year's Island Kayak Clean-Up on Wreck Island Photo: Marissa Hutchinson

From the Executive Director | *Mike Little*



Spring no sooner arrives, then suddenly it's Summer – Island Heritage Trust's busy season is about to begin. First we ramp up for "The Season" and then we manage "The Season." Summer on Deer Isle means the Trust's preserves host many visitors, requiring a great deal

of behind-the-scene planning and organizing before "The Season" even begins. Then it's outdoor work. Trails do not clear themselves nor mow themselves. It takes both our hard-working staff and our dedicated volunteers countless hours to maintain those trails and preserves you love. Won't you join us? There are work days when we can gladly use your help. See our website, online newsletter, as well as announcements in Island Ad-Vantages for dates and locations. There are also "Friends of ..." groups forming around each preserve that will welcome your ideas as well as your labor. Prefer to help in other ways? We also have openings for office and Nature Shop volunteers. Call Marissa or me at the IHT office – 348-2455 – and volunteer! Join great people having great fun
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and creating a great result for all to enjoy today, tomorrow and for generations to come.

New this year, are Vegetative Harassment Teams. We want to start up groups who will (on their own) visit IHT preserves and cut back (harass) invasive species – specifically Bittersweet, Barberry and Knotweed to begin with. Interested? Call me and we will get started beating back the invasives!

Above all get out and ENJOY our beautiful island.

WISH LIST

Island Heritage Trust is always happy to accept donations of wooden boards, plywood, and materials for stewardship purposes. Please call 348-2455 or email marissa@islandheritagetrust.org if you like to donate such items.

Wheelbarrow

Microwave

Hallway Runner (approx. 5' long x 24" wide)

Clean Island Project Talks Trash

(cont'd from page 1) millions of dollars of taxpayer money per year to clean-up. Moreover, aside from the direct costs of clean-up, litter also exacts indirect costs. Both property values and tourism decline, for example, when litter mars the land and seascape. Even our sense of well-being and safety can be adversely affected by its unsightly presence. Here on the island, IHT has long been involved in an annual roadside clean-up effort as well as ongoing programs to collect trash on our preserves, shorelines and offshore islands. Many individuals also pick up trash throughout the island, including the Wednesday Morning Walkers who walk the Sylvester Cove Loop, and have made roadside clean-up part of their weekly routine for the last year. Yet, despite the various efforts at roadside clean-up, the volume of trash has increased year by year. Frustrated and annoyed by all the trash she sees in her routine travels across the island, IHT's Development Director and Volunteer Coordinator Marissa Hutchinson decided to do something about it. She called on various community leaders and activists to meet to plan an island-wide program to address not only the roadside litter but the issue of trash in general. It was clear she wasn't the only one concerned. The first meeting – dubbed Trash Talk – was held in January and was very well attended. Abundant ideas percolated, reflecting the comprehensive community involvement it will take to effectively deal with both the volume and types of trash. Precisely what Marissa had in mind, a community-wide effort. Since that gathering the group, now officially named Clean Island Partners (CIP), has met monthly to discuss the multifaceted challenges the problem poses.

One of the group's first efforts was the island-wide clean-up held to coincide with Earth Day, April 22. According to Marissa and Ann Hooke, 300 orange bags were distributed for collecting trash. Additionally, articles were featured in the paper and truck drivers were enlisted to collect and convey the bags to the transfer station. Besides the trash, a large volume of returnables was also separated and given to various community organizations to benefit their programs. In addition to four additional island-wide clean-ups planned for June, July, August and October (with free bags donated by DOT, thanks to Ann's efforts), CIP is also sponsoring a contest for students to create a catchy slogan; working with DOT to post no littering signs on Routes 15 and 15A; enlisting volunteers to take

on particular sections of roads; planning an entry in the July 4 Parade; and exploring ways to encourage the reduction of single use plastics on the island.

While road and shoreside trash initially impelled the group to act, CIP is also working with the towns as well as businesses to think about trash in new ways. Among the organizations and businesses supporting the effort are the towns' Conservation Commissions, DI-S schools, Island Employee Cooperative, Penobscot Bay Press, Opera House Arts, Chamber of Commerce, and Maine's DOT, as well as many others. Marissa emphasized that CIP is open to "anyone who wants to come to meetings or participate." She added that "all are welcome to be involved in ways that best work for them."

Although CIP's enthusiasm is high, the group also recognizes the significant challenges it faces in its efforts to change both perception and practices. Both Ann Hooke and island resident and IHT member, Liz Zentz, noted that education about how we regard trash and what we do with it is at the heart of the effort. Evelyn Duncan, Stonington selectman, also focused on the cost of trash management for the town. We have to balance "how we can save money ... as trash contracts rise in cost," she said, "at the same time do what's good for the environment." Citing one man's effort at making good use of what many consider trash to be tossed away, she offered the example of Tom Brophy, the town's transfer station manager, who collects bottles for scholarships. Over the years he has awarded numerous scholarships. This year again he will award two \$2500 scholarships, life-changing gifts made possible through mindful regard not only for the environment, but for how trash can be put to good use. If you're interested in joining the community-wide trash effort, please contact Marissa Hutchinson at 348-2455 or Ann Hooke at 348-6933.

ROADSIDE CLEAN-UP WEEKENDS

June 24-26

August 26-28

July 29-31

October 21-23

Free DOT bags for Rt 15/15A clean-ups will be available at IHT office & other island locations to be announced.

BEACH CLEAN UP VOLUNTEERS

Claim a week to pick up litter along your favorite beach.

Causeway Beach, Reach Beach, Scott's Landing Beach, Bowcat, Shore Acres shoreline, & Barred Island shoreline.

Connecting People With Nature

Here on Deer Isle, we are clearly rich in abundant green space, including much that is publicly accessible. But many of us likely take it for granted. Indeed, it is human nature to take the best parts of one's surroundings for granted – even to ignore them. A good example: many lifelong residents of Washington, D.C., have never visited the White House or the Lincoln Memorial – locations that draw millions of tourists annually. Sound familiar?

Just as denizens of Washington, D.C. can “ho hum” the Lincoln Memorial, many of our island children would be largely unaware of IHT's preserves were it not for IHT-sponsored field trips. So despite our readily accessible green space, it is no less important to work intentionally to bring the people of the island – especially our children – in touch with their surroundings.

Engagement with nature is particularly beneficial for children. In a leading work on the subject, *Last Child in the Woods, Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, Richard Louv cites research showing that an increased engagement with nature improves the mental and physical health of children and leads to improved performance in school. The National Park Service and researchers in the field have turned their focus on people, especially on underprivileged children, living in urban environments, where green space is less accessible and life's options are or appear more limited. Their research has shown that concentrated exposure of kids from the inner city to nature improves not only their work in school, but makes them better citizens.

Who among us has not found their spirits lifted by an exposure to nature: the first glimmers of bright morning sun after a week of gray days, the sun setting over a tidal pond producing a brilliant array of color and texture, the starry sky on a clear August night, or a day's exploration of our wonderful woods? Most of us know this intuitively: a walk in the woods is better for us than binge-watching *Mad Men*.

It turns out that this intuition is borne out by a wealth of history, experience and research. From its founding early in the last century, the leaders of the National Park Service have recognized the health value of their domains. And since 2010 the Park Service has sponsored a Healthy Parks, Healthy People initiative focused on connecting more people and communities with nature, on the theory

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Camp Kooky Kids at Settlement Quarry Preserve Photo: Jo Sullivan

– proven in academic quarters – that a greater exposure to nature not only improves the health of individuals but of communities as well. As people become more appreciative of their natural surroundings, they become more motivated to work together to preserve and protect those surroundings. Moreover, the increased engagement with nature and with fellow citizens works to improve both individual health and community life.

To this end, Island Heritage Trust has in recent years stepped up its education work – offering programs to children of all ages and working closely with both the elementary and high school to build nature study into the curriculum. IHT's field trip program links each elementary school class to one of the IHT preserves, where students concentrate their attention. IHT's Nature Club, which operates for seven weeks during each school semester, offers weekly, after-school nature activities to grades two through five. Summer programs, entitled Kids in Nature, are also offered for children and adults.

Two years ago, IHT hired Martha Bell as its part time environmental educator. Martha is at the center of our environmental work and has a wonderful knack for engaging young people with their surroundings. One notable project initiated by Martha was the enlistment of school children in preserving and planting the sea grass on Causeway Beach. This project exposed the kids to the fragility of certain aspects of nature, demonstrated the need for community support for their preservation, and gave them a tremendous sense of pride and achievement. In short, IHT is at the forefront of a growing movement among land trusts to use their resources to promote an active engagement with nature. Using its preserves and its environmental education programs, the Trust is working to pull people of all ages into recognition of the value of open spaces, in the process supporting the overall well-being of the entire community.

Volunteers Island Herbalist

Brigid Doherty's path into the plant world seemed destined from her childhood onward. "I was always called to working with herbs and plants. I made my own potpourri when I was eight years old," she said of her lifelong interest in herbals, crediting her mother for inspiring her and allowing her to make her own garden as a child. Now Brigid generously shares her passion for and expertise in herbals with a large audience of visitors who attend her monthly IHT Summer Walks and Talks, during which she introduces them to the beneficial herbs readily available outdoors. "The idea of being able to get herbs right outside your door and free," she said, "surprises people."

Not only does Brigid have a life-long interest in plants, but she has a nearly life-long love of Deer Isle, having come every summer but one, as a result of her maternal grandparents summering here. "This is such a special place," she said about the island. It was years, however, before she moved permanently to the island she said she has "always loved." Growing up in rural Vermont, she made a bold decision to move to the other side of the country, to Washington, to attend college, where she studied sustainable agriculture. She then completed a certified herbalist program and has been working as an herbalist for some 20 years.

Following her studies, she moved to New Hampshire, to work at a natural pharmacy as manager, consultant and teacher. At the same time, she was able to continue her herbal studies through a program offered by the pharmacy. Her favorite part of the pharmacy work, she said, was teaching. "I like to empower people to use herbs and incorporate them into their daily routines," she said, adding, "Herbal medicine was the medicine of the common people. It was passed on from one generation to another."

Of her Summer Walks and Talks for IHT, Brigid commented that participants come from all walks of life, span a wide age range, and include both local folks and summer visitors. Some attend because they are simply curious about herbals, while others want to learn more, and some are interested in plant history. Many often ask about "how to make a tincture," she noted, "and



Brigid Doherty and Isla Rose Photo: Elke Dorr

all are surprised by the number of plants." While she offers abundant information, she also includes plenty of opportunities for tasting, smelling and touching what she's teaching about.

Scott's Landing has proved to be an ideal preserve, she said, because its trails offer easy, pleasant walking; it has open, sunny fields ideal for herbal plant growth; and it has a rich bio-diversity. There are also "far fewer endangered plants there," she pointed out. Brigid's enthusiasm for the Trust in general was revealed by how "grateful [she is] to have so many preserves on the island, so many cleared trails to walk." She also values "the access to the water," that IHT provides.

When she's not giving her time to IHT as a volunteer, Brigid pursues a host of other interests, all ultimately related to the natural world. She raises chickens, has a landscape business (from which she has taken a temporary break to have her first child), loves gardening and grows her own medicinal plants. She also offers periodic herbal spa days and workshops in which she teaches participants how to make herbal pillows and skin care products. While these days find her attention focused on baby Isla Rose (named for two of Brigid's passions), Brigid is already planning another summer of volunteering for IHT, continuing to share her extensive knowledge of medicinal plants.

MEDICINAL PLANT WALKS: May - October at Scott's Landing Preserve every 3rd Saturday at 10 am.

Summer 2016 5

From My Perspective

As Conner Coleman of Aspen Valley Land Trust says, “Land trusts aren’t saving land, landowners are. We’re just providing them with the tools to do so.” This may not be the whole truth, but seems like a piece of it. It points to something I’ve just begun to glimpse as your new Stewardship Director – the inheritance that is ours as IHT participants. My first day at IHT was October 14. Each subsequent week, clues to the annual cycle of our work have come to light, a cycle spinning around the hub of summer. It was not at all evident to me on that first day or even first month that a huge chunk of what the Stewardship Director needs to know would not even be available to me until summer rolls around. That’s because it’s largely about relationships.

Through the winter I’ve met a handful of volunteers and landowners. But there are so many more to meet! It’s slowly become clear that IHT’s efforts to build relationships over the past 25-plus years is the big pot of gold I’ve yet to fully see.

My winter’s temptation was to focus on what’s broken, but as summer gets closer, I have a growing awareness of rich relationships with landowners and volunteers that IHT has built over time. Between-the-lines of the legal documents in our files, I’ve read many “accounts” of those relationships, charting decisions families have made with IHT that will last beyond all our lives.



Slowly, while focused on things like missing reports and lost survey pins, a picture has formed of the huge mountain of work IHT has already done. Every new person I meet this summer will be a discovery of what you have been up to for decades. That amazes and enriches my work, and to think that the vast majority of this work was done by volunteers pushes the envelope toward gratitude.

I fully suspect that summer will be crazily busy for IHT, as it is for most of us who live here. I fully expect to emerge from my desk work and meet a host of you who have made this place tick for a long time. While we clear trails and build bog bridging, I’ll want to hear your stories, your piece of the puzzle. I fully suspect that, after this summer ends, I’ll be better able to guide our stewardship efforts because I will have seen what is likely our greatest treasure – the people who have built this organization and are still building. I’ll know something more too, if you’ll be so kind to share with me what has motivated you. Connor Coleman’s statement should perhaps be amended to read, “Land trusts don’t save land just by being more proficient, more professional, and perfecting procedures. They do it best when they know and serve the people who have loved and nurtured that land over time.” You’ve been doing that for a good while now. We’re all the richer for it.

— David Vandiver

NATURE SHOP

Don’t miss this great little shop! We have educational and fun, nature-based items for all ages.

- ◆ Island & Trail Maps
- ◆ Children’s Books
- ◆ Bluebird Houses
- ◆ Binoculars & Field Lenses
- ◆ Notecards, Postcards & Posters
- ◆ Educational Games, Puzzles & more...

& our specialty - **Field Guides** covering the stars and birds to amphibians to lichens.

Save the Date

SATURDAY, JULY 30TH, 4:30 PM

2016 ANNUAL SHORE DINNER & BENEFIT AUCTION

A fun evening of music from the fabulous Isle of Jazz, a classic Maine shore dinner catered by Bianco Catering, and an auction that will keep you laughing and supporting the work of conserving Deer Isle’s beauty, all at the same time!

Tidings



Kudos to all the great School Field Trip volunteers! We really value your participation, and the knowledge you share with the kids.

A big hand for Ellen Rowan, our Board Chair for the last 6 yrs. Ellen is retiring as Chair in July, but will remain on the Board.

Thank you to Steve Cox and Judy McCaskey, who have served on the Island Heritage Trust board for six years and nine years respectively, and will be stepping off this summer. Luckily for us, Judy will continue serving on the Development Committee and Steve Cox will continue to serve on the Stewardship Committee.

From Mrs. Brown's 2015/2016 2nd Grade class:

What is Scott's Landing?

A fun place full of nature
Tweeting birds and rotten apples
Smells of deer droppings
Lots of things to do like go on the beach
A beach full of seaglass
Us finding grass to make bird nests
Smells like berries
Lots and lots of bird food
Yellow dandelions
Bugs are bird food on the ground to pick up
Blackberries in the fall
Tiny sea water scented periwinkles

Wings, Waves & Woods Festival had another great year with over 89 species of birds counted. Save the date for next year's Festival: May 19-21, 2017.

Walks & Talks 2016: We have a great line-up of walks, talks & boat trips all summer long, thanks to many volunteer trip leaders and the program committee. If you don't have a schedule on hand, go to islandheritagetrust.org/events to see our calendar (print one out or sync with our Google calendar!).

KIDS IN NATURE has added some Saturday 9 am events to its usual Tuesday 9 am offerings during the height of the summer!

Volunteers are the backbone to all the Trust's work. If you are someone who loves nature, Deer Isle, and ensuring the Trust serves the community well, come talk to us about becoming a volunteer. We have many different ways you can contribute time & skills that make a difference and are fun. And if you have a friend that might be interested - let us know about them too. Contact Marissa at marissa@islandheritagetrust.org or 348-2455.



Lily Pond Park: new parking lot space off Quaco Road is getting prepped. Thanks to a Fields Pond Foundation Grant/Loan, we are able to put the gravel parking lot in this summer. We are waiting on the release of the Land for Maine's Future funds to finish improvements: trail to the beach and bathrooms.



ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST STAFF

Mike Little, *Executive Director*
Marissa Hutchinson, *Development Director*
/Volunteer Coordinator
Martha Bell, *Environmental Educator*
David Vandiver, *Stewardship Director*

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P.O. Box 42
Deer Isle, ME 04627
207-348-2455

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Rocky Shores Walk & Talk
Photo: George Linkletter

Join Us!

MEMBERSHIP! *Be a vital part of our Islands, Habitats, & Trails - sign up to be member today!*

Even better - join the *Luna Giving Society* (a fancy new name for our monthly giving program). Monthly donations are easy on your bank account and give the Trust steady, reliable support to keep these beautiful lands accessible and provide engaging programming for all.



To join the Luna Society and become a monthly donor yourself, go to ISLANDHERITAGETRUST.ORG, click on the "DONATE NOW" button, and select "MONTHLY."

\$10/month covers a week's worth of mowing & weedwacking through the summer (*helping keep those ticks at bay while you are out walking*).

\$42/month covers two hours a month of stewardship work.



Heritage Society Members & our Executive Director, Mike Little, on Freese Island last year.

Island Heritage Trust's Heritage Society has been established to recognize the extraordinary commitment of people who include the Trust in their estate plans. If you would like more information about being a Heritage Society Member, and to be invited on our fun annual events, contact the office at 207-348-2455 or email iht@islandheritagetrust.org.

A big thank you to the Reardons, of Freese Island, who hosted last year's Annual Heritage Society event.