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Fall 2011

The York Land Trust Newsletter

LANDMARKS



Capstone Gift Completes Smelt Brook Conservation Project

In August of 2011, York Land Trust completed the purchase of 31 acres of land on the York River's Smelt Brook tributary and accepted a conservation easement donated by Julia Clough on an abutting 11-acre field. Kennebunk Savings Foundation awarded a \$25,000 grant this past spring that provided the last dollars needed to finish the \$670,000 fundraising effort to cover the costs of acquisition and stewardship of the property.

According to Julia Clough, "Route 91 commuters often stop, knock on my door and thank me for maintaining the beautiful scenic vista."

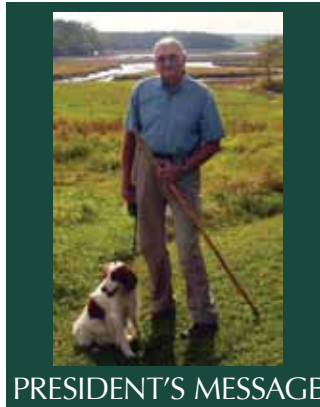
In addition to providing spectacular views, the forests, fields and wetlands surrounding the York River provide ideal habitat for more than one hundred bird species. The salt marshes and the tributaries leading into them are

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In 1986, York Land Trust was founded by Lynn Eaton Wylde and a group of concerned citizens who wanted to save important features of their natural surroundings that they felt were slowly being lost because of York’s exploding popularity and resulting rampant development. Inspired by Maine’s burgeoning conservation movement, they incorporated York Land Trust as a Maine nonprofit with the mission of permanently conserving lands of ecological, scenic, agricultural and historic significance in York.

Helen Winebaum succeeded Lynn as President in 1995, and served through October, 2000. She acted as a dynamic catalyst for the organization’s expansion and set a strong example for generosity, when she and her husband Sumner donated a conservation easement on 22 acres of their forested land along Godfrey Pond in York.

In February of 1999, the Trust hired Doreen MacGillis to begin part-time work as its executive director and twelve years later, Doreen still leads the organization in that capacity and our staff has grown to a team of four. Succeeding Helen, York Land Trust Presidents have been Andrew Beal, Karen Arsenault, Ala Reid and myself.



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

As we reflect on York Land Trust’s Silver Jubilee, it is fitting to celebrate the quarter-center of progress that has been achieved through the grassroots efforts of YLT’s founders, partners, presidents, volunteers, members, board members and staff.

Here are some of the key contributions that York Land Trust has made to our community since 1986:

- Over 13,000 acres of land in the Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea region protected with partners,
- 400 acres of panoramic views of York River along Rt. 91 protected,
- The first in the nation working waterfront easement on Sewall’s Dock,
- The first in the region, universal access trail at the Highland Farm Preserve,

- One of the last stands of old growth forest in York County protected,
- Fin fish and shellfish nurseries of the York River protected,
- Thousands of acres of wildlife habitat for Maine’s threatened turtles and other rare species protected,
- 1,200 acres of forest and fields protected through conservation easements,
- Drinking water supplies for York, Eliot and Kittery residents protected,
- Eight public nature preserves established,
- 5 miles of new trails added to the Mt. Agamenticus region’s 40-mile trail system,
- Gateway to Maine:Outside, Adventures in Nature Public Program collaborative established, and
- The “Learning Lodge at Mt. Agamenticus” established.

We can all take pride in what has been accomplished to ensure a vibrant future for York’s citizens and wildlife. Thank you all for helping York Land Trust achieve so much

David P. Michniewicz
-David Michniewicz

Professional and Personal Leadership Lauded

At this year’s Annual Meeting, retiring Board member Charley Steedman was recognized for eight years of exemplary service. Charley has been a trusted advisor and fervent supporter of the Trust’s efforts for many years. His wise counsel as a member of both the MtA2C and YLT finance committees has been invaluable. Charley is someone who gives generously and cares passionately about conservation and exemplified his and his family’s commitment by donating Steedman Woods to the Museums of Old York. This special natural area at the mouth of the York River is cherished by the community. In honor of the many ways that Charley has generously contributed to the Trust’s efforts and the community, we thank him.





critical nurseries for fish, including commercially important fish such as flounder, and sport fish such as bluefish and striped bass. In a fish study conducted by the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, twenty-eight species of fish were identified, which is about half the total estuarine species of fish found in the Gulf of Maine. With the decline of many fish species throughout the Gulf, protecting fish spawning areas on the York River is extremely important.

The Smelt Brook project was a top priority for the partners of the Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative who have worked together to permanently protect over 400 acres on the York River and Smelt Brook since 1992. “The next step is to develop and implement a management plan for the River lands that protects the ecological features while providing some visitor amenities including the possibility of canoe/kayak access,” said Executive Director Doreen MacGillis. Newly opened, the adjacent Highland Farm Preserve just across Cider Hill Road, will provide ample parking for visitors.

Additional, major funders to the project included the Town of York, the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, the Maine Community Foundation, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Fields Pond Foundation, and the MARPAT Foundation.



Aerial photo of 42-acre Smelt Brook Project area.

Board rejuvenated by new talent!

York Land Trust is pleased to introduce two new Board members:



Bob Brisebois is recently retired from a career in healthcare management where he directed quality assurance programs for a national mail order pharmacy and medical laboratory. He also managed a hospital clinical laboratory for 14 years.

Before joining the Board, Bob donated many service hours volunteering at the Highland Farm Preserve and as a member of York Land Trust's Stewardship Committee. Bob also volunteers his time mentoring students in the York School system and teaching English as a Second Language for York Adult Education. Bob is a member of several environmental sustainability committees. Bob and his wife Jackie live in York.



A 43-year banking career veteran, **Jeff McConnell** redirected his organizational oversight skills and financial acumen to benefit the community. Jeff serves on the Board of the York Country Club and is a Trustee of the Hartley Mason Reservation Park. He holds the office of Treasurer for the York Golf and Tennis Club, the Assessor position with the First Parish Church and is a member of the Audit and Finance Board for the Museums of Old York. He also served for 25 years as the Treasurer of the Ogunquit Museum of American Art. Jeff and his wife Sherry live in York.

From the Ground Up! – A Farm Fresh Benefit Dinner

On September 18th 250 dinner guests, farmers, notable local and visiting chefs, restaurants and businesses came together under an elegant sailcloth tent set in the picturesque gardens of Arrows Restaurant. All were treated to a mouth-watering dining experience that featured local pork, beef, lobster, tomatoes, corn, mustard greens, cucumbers, apples and more, transformed into six delicate and delicious courses, a feast befitting the York Land Trust's 25th Anniversary.

Arrows Executive Chef Justin Walker championed the idea of using York Land Trust's milestone occasion to tell the stories of local farmers and fishermen to help raise awareness of the importance of conserving our natural and cultural heritage and the working landscapes on which these livelihoods depend. The success of From the Ground Up! was largely due to Justin's effort and the goodwill and dedication of Arrow's Chef owners, Mark Gaier, Clark Frasier and the entire Arrows Restaurant staff.

Event Co-Chairs Helen Winebaum and Karen Arsenault and the event committee carefully planned the Benefit Dinner in the hopes it would become York Land Trust's new signature annual fund raising event. Longtime York Land Trust supporter and veteran fundraiser,

Ann Ramsay-Jenkins saw great potential in the community-embracing concept and was delighted to help ensure the event's success by providing a \$20,000, "Sow the Seeds of York Land Trust's Future" matching grant, as a special tribute to hers and her late husband's love of southern Maine. Ann's generous gift and an impassioned appeal made at the event by past President, and Board Member, Helen Winebaum did indeed inspire supporters whose contributions met the match, totaling just over \$20,000.



To highlight York's cultural heritage and learn about the lifestyles of contemporary farmers and lobstermen, three short interviews have been prepared by writer and local resident, P.W. Fox. The profiles featuring Lindsey Donnell, sixteenth great-granddaughter of a York lobsterman, organic micro-gardener Bill Connolly, and John and Abe Zacharias of Zach's Farm, were published in the From the Ground Up! printed program and will soon be available on York Land Trust's website. Together these stories represent the spirit, dedication and love of the land and the sea that reaches back to the region's founding.

"From the Ground Up! was the threshold event that launched our farmland conservation efforts," As we reflect on our 25-year commitment to preserving York's natural heritage, we look forward to finding more ways that York Land Trust and its Members can best make a difference for the future of farming in our community," said Executive Director Doreen MacGillis.



Thank you to From the Ground Up! farmers and gardeners.

Arrows Restaurant	Rumsey Farm
Blaisdell Brothers Family Farm	Sewall Family Lobster Spiller Farm
Breezy Hill Farm	Touching Earth Farm
Chase Farm	York Community Gardens
Connelly's Organics	York Corner Gardens
Johnson Farm	York River Lobster
Moondance Gardens	Zach's Farm
River Lily Farm	

Landmark Giving Circle

The following individuals, businesses and foundations were recognized as 2010 Landmark Giving Circle members at this year's Annual Meeting. The program recognizes donors for their landmark annual support of \$500 or more. As a small token of our appreciation, these donors receive a commemorative York Land Trust pin.

Mr. David Ahl
 Karen and Mark Arsenault
 Mr. and Mrs. William R. Baker Jr.
 The Baldwin Foundation
 Michael T. Beaumont
 Gail Britton & Peter Knight
 Marion Fuller Brown
 Anne Bryer
 Mr. and Mrs. Brian Cadieux
 Robert and Anne E. Chappell
 David and Barbara Chase
 Ann and Jared Chase
 Dr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Clark
 The Clark/Hamel Family
 Mr. and Mrs. Lance J. Colwell
 The Jane B. Cook 1992 Charitable Trust
 Kathy and Bob Davis
 Davis Conservation Foundation
 Stuart and Ellen Dawson
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dempsey
 Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Donnelly
 Diana B. Dunnan
 Elmina B. Sewall Foundation
 Ms. Elizabeth Lanouette Emge
 Mr. Danal P. Epstein
 Mr. and Mrs. William T. Ethridge
 Fields Pond Foundation
 John and Margot Finley
 Firth, Inc.
 Gary and Meredith Goss

Barbara Grace
 Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Greenwood
 Ed and Peggy Harding
 Phil and Peggy C. Haughey
 Jim and Michelle Healy
 Ms. Susan Heckaman
 Mrs. Sydney Henderson
 Mr. Tom Hoffman
 and Melissa Acuna
 Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Hosmer III
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hoy
 Mr. and Mrs. James M. Johnston III
 Mr. & Mrs. Kennett R. Kendall Jr.
 Kennebunk Savings Foundation
 Land for Maine's Future Program
 Ms. Susan L. Lefferts
 Richard G. Leigh
 Dr. and Mrs. John Leonard
 Lois Whitney Memorial Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
 Susan MacDougall
 Maine Coast Heritage Trust
 Maine Community Foundation
 Maine Landowner Incentive Program
 Mrs. Marion Mariner
 MARPAT Foundation
 Louise Mauran and Calvert C. Groton
 Bobbie and Brian McGann

Georgia and Dan McGurl
 Mr. and Mrs. David Michniewicz
 Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Moran
 New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
 The Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Inc.
 Old York Garden Club
 Ms. Polly Perry
 Sandy Plummer
 Mr. and Mrs. William C. Purinton
 Mr. Harold Radochia
 Ms. Susan M. Rakaseder
 Scott and Gretchen Ramsay
 Ala H. Reid
 David & Chelsey Remington
 The Richard Foundation
 Mr. and Mrs. John Roth
 Judith A. Saner
 Mary Gambrell Slavet
 Starkey Ford
 State Street Bank - Matching Gift Program
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 Sandy Steele and Paul Greenfield
 Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus B. Sweet III
 Warren and Deborah Taylor
 Mr. and Mrs. Henry Trimble III
 Harriet and Paul Weissman
 Helen and Sumner Winebaum

Jacob and Cindy Winebaum
 Ms. Valentine Wood
 York Hospital
 Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Zuccotti



HIGHLAND FARM PRESERVE OPENS

On October 3, York Land Trust officially opened Highland Farm as a Public Preserve, marking the conclusion of a colossal, multi-year effort— *the biggest York Land Trust has undertaken to date*. Three and a half million dollars was raised through unprecedented public and private partnerships that halted development of Highland Farm and transformed it into the wonderful community asset that it is today. This commanded a major investment of money, time and human resources. It called for literally thousands of volunteer hours to complete.

The work donated by Stu Dawson, Board member and talented landscape architect is a great example of this. Stu developed the original concept design for the parking area and the landscape plan.



From the beginning, he envisioned a grand entrance, with an elegantly-curved, gravel driveway leading to a beautiful “parking garden” (as he referred to it), that blends perfectly into the surrounding landscape. He mused, “It should be a place where one’s elderly relative would find it an enjoyable experience to simply drive through, even if she never gets out of the car!”

Over the past two years, volunteers have shared their enthusiasm, skills and labor to help implement a broad spectrum of stewardship tasks from habitat monitoring and restoration to construction of trails and visitor amenities. We appreciate the tremendous generosity and hard work demonstrated by all who have helped bring our vision for Highland Farm to fruition. And, we are delighted that visitors are flocking to the Preserve!

This project sets a high bar for our future work. But having achieved what we have at the Highland Farm Preserve, I have no doubt that together, we can do anything!

Doreen MacGillis

-Doreen MacGillis



Standing before the new visitors' kiosk, York Land Trust Board President David Michniewicz cuts the ceremonial ribbon opening the Highland Farm Preserve to the public.



Highland Farm Preserve's newly constructed parking lot and the region's 1st universal access trail.



Third Graders from Coastal Ridge Elementary School survey and record habitat restoration photo points.



YLT Stewardship Director David Mallard conducts a volunteer workday orientation.



Volunteers plant native shrubs for the beautification of the parking area.

Special Thanks!

Our 25th Anniversary season would not have been possible were it not for the generous support of businesses throughout the Mt.A. Region. Please join York Land Trust in recognizing and thanking our sponsors:

Season Sponsor

- Kennebunk Savings

Spring Membership Drive

- Maine Community Foundation
- Lee Tree (Banner Hanging)

Turtle Pub Crawl (May 2011)

- York Harbor Inn
- Guac n' Roll
- Lobster Cove
- Nappi Distributors
- Union Bluff
- St. Joe's Coffee
- York Trolley

"Celebrating 25 Years" Publication

- Clay Hill Farm
- It's a Dog's World
- Kittery Trading Post
- Seacoast Media Group, Inc.
- Starkey Ford

Volunteer Work Days

- Ruby's Wood Grill
- York Corner Deli
- United Way of York County (Day of Caring)

From the Ground Up!

• Arrows Restaurant

Guest Chefs

- Neal Fraser
- Paul Kahan
- Melissa Kelly
- Jeff Michaud

Restaurant Sponsors

- Lucia's Kitchen,
- Stonewall Kitchen,
- The Stolen Menu Café
- The Smuttynose Brewing Company
- St. Joe's Coffee
- York Harbor Inn

Financial Sponsors

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- Edward Jones Investments
 - Susan Heckaman
- Ramblers Way Farm

Media Sponsors

- Down East Magazine
- Seacoast Media Group
- WCVB/TV Boston - Randy Price

In-Kind Donations

- Beal Financial Management
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- Gentl & Hyers/Edge Reps.
- Golden Harvest
- Hannaford Supermarket
- Harbor Candy
- Infinite Imaging
- Maine Farmland Trust-Pull Start Pictures
- RAM Printing
- Salmon Falls Winery
- Schumacher Creative Design
- Sperry Tents
- Stageneck Inn
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife/RCNWR
- W. Garrett Scholes
- York Art Association
- York Chamber of Commerce

Technology Upgrades

- New Hampshire Charitable Fndn - Lois Whitney Memorial Fund

Annual Meeting

- Sperry Tents - Seacoast, LLC
- Brixham Country Store

York Village Marketfest

- Stonewall Kitchen
- York Corner Gardens
- Scoop Deck Ice Cream
- St. Joe's Coffee
- Center For Wildlife

Thanks also to this issue's contributing designers, illustrators and photographers:

Designers: Schumacher Creative Design

Illustration: Mark McCollough, Mark_McCollough@fws.gov

Event Photography: Rafi Landau, rafilandau@hotmail.com



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Heroes fuel future of conservation

York Land Trust Board and Staff mourn the loss of several of our conservation heroes who died this year—Marion Fuller Brown, Dean Frieze, Robert Hanson, Ross Kleiman, Susan Lippoth and George L. Rogers. Through their dedicated efforts, generosity and keen interest in the natural world, they helped protect significant case of Marion, landscapes

landscapes close to home and, in the throughout Maine.

A York Land Trust founder Land Trust and the Land Fuller Brown helped acres of land in Maine. a bill that resulted in beautification of Maine's stalwart and outspoken by example, donating around her home at Ram's catalyst for all of York Land Trust's conservation successes and strategic partnerships. Many lives have been positively touched by Marion's good work and her legacy will continue to fuel these efforts for years to come.



Marion Fuller Brown

and former Board member of the York for Maine's Future Program, Marion facilitate the acquisition of 65,000 As a state legislator, she introduced the elimination of billboards for highways. Marion was an active, advocate for conservation. She led conservation easements on the fields Head Farm, and served as an enduring