

# LANDMARKS

YORK LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023



Members of Lafcadio Cortesi's family gathered by the trail head and nature mandala created in his honor. Pictured are Genevieve Morgan, Alexandra Fuller Cortesi Anderson, Emily Fuller Hawkins, Zephania Cortesi, Martha Fuller Clark, Oscar Anderson, Anna Clark, and Naiki Ennis Nguyen.

## CELEBRATING THE GRAND OPENING OF LAFCADIO'S WOODS PRESERVE

On October 22, 2023 York Land Trust hosted a grand opening celebration at its newest public access preserve, Lafcadio's Woods. This 35-acre forested parcel abuts Fuller Forest Preserve on Bartlett Road, expanding conservation connectivity and public access in this part of York.

The preserve was generously donated to York Land Trust by Emily Fuller Hawkins, Martha Fuller Clark, and Henry W. Fuller in honor of their nephew, Lafcadio Cortesi, who passed away in 2022 at the young age of 60. Born in Portsmouth, NH, Lafcadio traveled the globe devoting his life's work to protecting forests on every continent. He was a remarkably effective conservationist and community organizer who provided leadership for numerous international environmental organizations, including Greenpeace and Rainforest Action Network. "This preserve is a way for everyone to remember him and to remind current and future generations about the necessity of preserving our forests," said his mother, Alexandra Fuller Cortesi Anderson. "His hope would be that if people have kids, bring them to the woods. If you fall in love with the woods as a kid, then you always remember how special and important they are." The grand opening event featured remarks about conserving this property and a heartfelt tribute to Lafcadio from members of the Fuller Family. His family was then joined by more than 50 attendees to collect materials from the land and create an intricate nature mandala at the trailhead, in honor of Lafcadio and his legacy. The event closed with a guided hike along the newly forged trails, led by York Land Trust stewardship staff.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The most important accomplishment we made this past year at York Land Trust was the successful transition from our beloved leader of 23 years, Doreen MacGillis, to our incredible new Executive Director, Amelia Nadilo. Leadership transitions are always challenging. I could not be happier with how we handled this challenge and where we stand today. I believe there are several reasons we are in such a strong position, just a year after Amelia joined.

First, we had a very robust search process and a dedicated search committee who worked tirelessly and collaboratively. The result was identifying and attracting the absolute best candidate out there. Amelia's noticeable impact in just a year is strong proof of our success. It's a pleasure to work with her and I'm thrilled to have her on board.

Another critical reason our leadership transition has gone so smoothly is because of Doreen MacGillis. It's not just Doreen's continued focus, involvement, knowledge, and experience that continue to benefit YLT immensely, it is what she built over 23 years that continues to be the foundation and strength of this organization.

One of the significant accomplishments this year led by Amelia is the building of a first-class staff team around her. YLT now has six staff members to lead our crucial work of protecting land in York, responsibly caring for it,

and connecting the community to it through programming and public access. Joining Amelia is Patty O'Connor, Development Assistant, Doreen MacGillis in her new role as Land Protection Specialist, and Liz Walworth, who was promoted to our Stewardship Director. Liz was joined by Myrilla Hartkopf, Assistant Stewardship Director. And most recently, YLT has welcomed Isabel Aley as Programs & Communications Manager.

Lastly, we have come through this transition smoothly because of a strong and committed board, a dedicated staff, and perhaps most importantly, because of the support of our members. I'm always impressed with the core of people that continually support this organization and I look forward to seeing this support help us achieve our goals for the next five years in our new Strategic Plan, which will be shared in the new year. There is much to celebrate and look forward to for York Land Trust!

Sincerely,  
Jared Chase



The York Land Trust is a member-supported, nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving and protecting lands of ecological, historic, scenic, agricultural and cultural significance in the greater York, Maine area, for the benefit of all.

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For more information,  
please visit our website:  
www.yorklandtrust.org



The Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative (MTA2C) is an effort led by a coalition of national, regional and local partners to protect a network of connected conservation lands and natural resources within a 48,000-acre focus area in Southern Maine for the benefit of people and wildlife.

The MTA2C Partners include: the US Fish and Wildlife Service/ Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Great Works Regional Land Trust, Kittery Land Trust, and York Land Trust.

For more information,  
please visit www.mta2c.org.

# TEAMWORK FORGES NEW TRAILS FOR THE PUBLIC - continued from page 1

Creating a new public access preserve involves significant planning with input from various stakeholders. When envisioning the new trail at Lafcadio's Woods, there were numerous factors to consider. Using topographic maps, YLT staff determined that the existing path from previous logging operations was unsustainable for a permanent trail due to poor drainage. Additional considerations for building the new trail included creating multi-use terrain to accommodate visitors on foot or bike, while integrating diverse scenic views. Keeping sensitive wildlife habitat intact was also a priority. The long, narrow shape of the property required an innovative approach when planning the placement of the trail. The goal was to create a path with varied terrain and views that respected the property's neighbors and kept visitors away from the Bartlett Road traffic noise. With input from the Stewardship Committee and outside advisors, YLT staff was able to finalize a trail plan that integrated a balanced mix of microenvironments and technical terrain for a variety of uses, including mountain biking.

Thanks to the collaborative work of many volunteers and YLT staff, the preserve now features a newly constructed kiosk, trails, and bridges. The 1.3 mile figure-eight loop trail spans diverse topography, ranging from shrubby wetlands to the south to steep rocky outcroppings to the north. This preserve is an ideal location for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, nature study, mountain biking and hunting. Pets on leash are also welcome. Parking for Lafcadio's Woods is located across Bartlett Road at the Fuller Forest Preserve parking lot. Learn more about Lafcadio's Woods Preserve on our website and download a trail map to take with you on your next adventure. We invite you to explore and enjoy this special gift to our community in all seasons!

**Lafcadio's Woods Preserve**

**Lafcadio's Woods Preserve Trail Map**

We acknowledge that our preserves are on Abenaki lands. We extend our sincere gratitude and respect to those original caretakers of this land and to all other Maliseet people who have a relationship with the land.

Lafcadio's Woods is a 35-acre forested parcel that spans diverse topography ranging from steep rocky outcroppings to the south to steep rocky outcroppings to the north. The preserve is predominantly an oak-pine forest and the upland understorey is dotted with hair-cup moss covered stones, lowbush blueberry, staves and strawberries. Wetlands and stream areas are dense with bracken fern, sensitive fern, young oaks, and highbush blueberry. Historical features of the property include a decomposed road and stone walls. A variety of common mammal species can be found here including deer, chipmunks, songbirds, native bees, wood frogs, spring peepers, moles, and gray treefrogs.

Interested in supporting York Land Trust through a gift or volunteering? Visit [www.yorklandtrust.org](http://www.yorklandtrust.org).

**Allowable Uses**

**Preserve Use Guidelines**

- Open during DAYLIGHT HOURS only
- No fire or overnight stays
- Stay on existing trails and do not create new trails. No motorized vehicles allowed.
- Respect abutting private property.
- No trespassing.
- Take only pictures/leave only footprints. Please hydro-hike!
- Take care not to disturb plants and wildlife. No cutting or removal of plants.
- Heads down on trails at all times. Please pick up after your pet.
- Hunting and fishing are permitted. Hunting tags apply. Water intake change during hunting season.
- Take precautions against and check frequently for ticks. Ticks are abundant in this area.
- Please report property damage and trail obstructions by calling 207-363-7400.

The newly built kiosk at Lafcadio's Woods presents visitors with a clearly marked trail map, ecological information, and a dedication to Lafcadio Cortesi.

# REVAMPING THE STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Caring for our conserved lands is at the core of York Land Trust's mission and we are fortunate to have many dedicated volunteers to help us with this year-round, ever-expanding work. York Land Trust's Assistant Stewardship Director, Myrilla Hartkopf, has recently redesigned and improved YLT's Stewardship Volunteer Program, bringing greater organization and process to the program. Some upgrades include instituting time tracking for volunteer hours which bolsters grant applications and reporting, project progress tracking systems to keep all parties informed, and organized volunteer onboarding days. Training volunteers on proper reporting practices, safety protocols, equipment use, and land use laws is critical for a well run program. All of these programmatic improvements also benefit YLT's Preserve Ambassadors, who are responsible for specific Public Access Preserves. They regularly monitor the land, refill our kiosks, report on conditions/changes, and collaborate with stewardship staff to perform critical maintenance and updates when necessary.

Stewardship volunteers care for YLT lands in various ways, including, but not limited to, monitoring and removing invasive plants, maintaining trailways for public safety and ease of access, and assisting with signage installation and repairs. This invaluable support is done throughout the year and often in groups, so it is a terrific way to meet other members of the community who care about leaving our only home better than we found it. If you are interested in getting involved as a land steward, please contact Myrilla Hartkopf, Assistant Stewardship Director, at [mhartkopf@yorklandtrust.org](mailto:mhartkopf@yorklandtrust.org).



Stewardship volunteers and staff brushed out and cut a new trail system at Lafcadio's Woods this summer.

## VOLUNTEER TIME AND TALENTS KEEP YLT STRONG

There are many ways to get involved with York Land Trust as a volunteer – whether that is being a land steward, supporting our outreach efforts, or serving on a committee or our Board. At this year's Annual Members Gathering we recognized two dear volunteers who have contributed tremendously to the growth and success of YLT over decades, and welcomed two board members to help lead the Trust into its next chapter.

Lawrence 'Larry' Graves has served on several committees at York Land Trust including Building & Grounds and Finance. He joined the Board of Directors in 2007 and was the Trust's Treasurer for many years, keeping a detailed eye on our financials and effectively keeping the Board informed. He is a proud supporter of York Land Trust and all that it offers our community, from access to the outdoors to nature-based programming to responsible stewardship of its conserved lands. As a thank you for years of involvement and support, York Land Trust is gifting Larry a framed scenic photo of our headquarters so he knows he always has a home at YLT.

David Michniewicz has shared his experience, knowledge, and expertise with York Land Trust for many years. David has served on several committees including Stewardship, Building &

Grounds, and Lands. He first joined the Board of Directors in 2005 after stepping down from his role as Superintendent of the York Water District. He always understood that the best way to protect drinking water is to protect the land around it. David also was a prior Board President and successfully cultivated personal relationships with everyone on committees, Board, and staff. In recognition of his steadfast support of and advocacy for stewarding our land, York Land Trust is dedicating the Stewardship Wing of our headquarters to David.

As of October 1st, York Land Trust has welcomed two Board Members, David Radue who is new to our Board, and Cliff O'Connor who is returning after a required one year off following the completion of a nine-year tenure on the Board. David and Cliff both live in Cape Neddick and bring their own individual passions and expertise to the Land Trust.



David Radue



Cliff O'Connor

David practiced for 38 years as an interior architect and currently chairs our Building & Grounds Committee, and sits on the Stewardship, ATV, and Lands Committees. His attention to detail and outstanding commitment to the Trust has been such a gift already.

Cliff is a former long-time Board Member and prior President. He sits on our Lands, Building & Grounds, Executive, Advancement, and Events committees. His robust knowledge of how far York Land Trust has come and his dedication to its future success are so valued.

Volunteers are the heartbeat of our organization. We are so fortunate to share this work with dedicated individuals who deeply care about preserving York's unique character and natural areas. If you are interested in getting more involved with York Land Trust, please reach out to Amelia at [anadilo@yorklandtrust.org](mailto:anadilo@yorklandtrust.org) to learn more. We have a wide variety of volunteering opportunities available and there are openings on the following committees: Advancement, Finance, Outreach, Events, Building & Grounds, and Stewardship.



# NATIVE PLANTS GREENHOUSE PARTNERSHIP BEGINS



Volunteers recently cleaned out the old greenhouse at York Middle School for a fresh start.

We are thrilled to announce a newly sprouted collaboration between Old York Garden Club, York Land Trust, and York Middle School. With a common interest among these groups to raise awareness about native plants and local ecology, an idea was born this past summer to revitalize the old York Middle School greenhouse for a new hands-on educational program. The non-functioning YMS greenhouse was recently cleaned up by a crew of volunteers, including Maine Master Gardeners, parents from York Middle School, and Old York Garden Club.

During the fifth graders' enrichment period at YMS, students will have the opportunity to take part in this new learning opportunity. Starting this fall, students will receive an introduction to native plants and their importance to our local ecology, as well as the workings of a greenhouse. Over the winter, students will work

collaboratively to develop detailed plans for the new greenhouse and start plantings from seed. Some ideas for eventual transplanting include a wildflower meadow, sensory garden, pollinator haven, and signage to share this project with the larger community. This program is still a seedling, but we expect it to grow mightily in the coming months. Stay tuned for updates!

York Land Trust is grateful for our community partnerships. By working with other local organizations, we can expand positive impacts by offering resources and benefits to a broader audience. If you are interested in collaborating with YLT on programs in the local community and schools, please reach out to Isabel Aley, Programs & Communications Manager, at [ialey@yorklandtrust.org](mailto:ialey@yorklandtrust.org).

## YLT WELCOMES NEW PROGRAMS & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Isabel Aley recently joined the York Land Trust staff team as Programs & Communications Manager. Isabel currently lives in Exeter, NH but is a Mainer at heart. Her father, Jack Aley, was a founding member of Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust and served as the Executive Director for twenty years. Isabel grew up living on the edge of a meadow conserved by BTLT, which gave her a deep appreciation for natural and open spaces from an early age. After earning a BA in English & Environmental Studies from Bates College, Isabel spent ten years working in Portland, Maine followed by ten years in the Seacoast. Most recently, she worked at Shoals Marine Laboratory and Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire in communications and fundraising positions. Isabel is passionate about connecting people with nature and she's excited to work with the YLT community to expand programs, grow partnerships, and communicate York Land Trust's vital work to a broad audience. Welcome, Isabel!



Isabel Aley joined the York Land Trust staff this fall.

## REMINDER: HUNTING SEASON HAS BEGUN ACTIVE THROUGH DECEMBER 31ST



Please note that hunting season has begun and York Land Trust welcomes hunting on all of its preserves unless posted otherwise. We recommend that preserve visitors and their pets wear blaze orange on all trails for the duration of the hunting season. YLT has provided vests and pet bandanas at the trailheads of our public access preserves for visitors to use while

out on their hike. Please be sure to return them for the next visitor!

Hunters must comply with all state and local hunting regulations and possess a valid hunting license. To view the York Land Trust hunting policy, visit [yorklandtrust.org](http://yorklandtrust.org). For further questions, please contact Stewardship Director, Liz Walworth, at 207-363-7400 ext. 6 or Assistant Stewardship Director, Myrilla Hartkopf, at 207-363-7400 ext. 4 for more information.

## WISH LIST:

York Land Trust is seeking a truck donation, which would provide our stewardship staff a vehicle to support their work on the trails and preserves. If you have a vehicle that would be up for the job and are interested in donating it to YLT, please contact Liz Walworth, Stewardship Director, at [lwalworth@yorklandtrust.org](mailto:lwalworth@yorklandtrust.org).







# York Land Trust Map of Conserved Lands

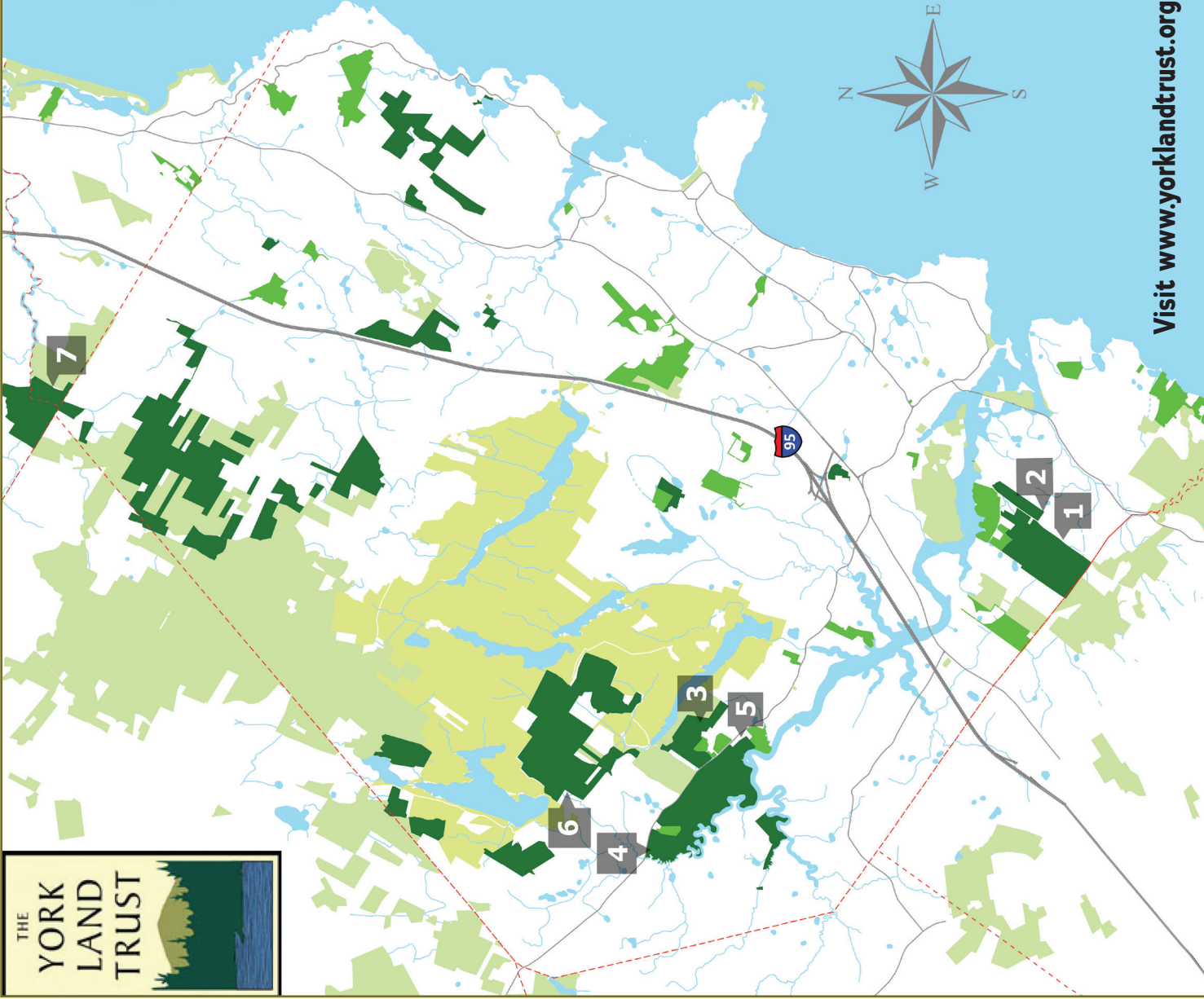
York Land Trust has protected nearly 3,600 acres of land with ecological, historic, scenic and agricultural significance in the greater York area, including more than 1,500 acres in public access preserves.

## Map Legend

- YLT Owned Land
- YLT Conservation Easements
- Other Conservation Land
- Water District Land

## Public Access Preserves

1. Fuller Forest Preserve
2. Lafcadio's Woods Preserve
3. Highland Farm Preserve
4. Near Point Preserve
5. Smelt Brook Preserve
6. McIntire Highlands Preserve
7. Hilton-Winn Preserve



Visit [www.yorklandtrust.org](http://www.yorklandtrust.org) for updated trail maps and preserve information!





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FSC  
(RAM to add logo)

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

*Visit [www.yorklandtrust.org/events](http://www.yorklandtrust.org/events) to learn more and sign up for free!*

### PROGRAMS:

#### GARDEN STORYTIME WITH YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Thursday, November 9 | 10:30-11:30am  
York Land Trust Headquarters

#### WATERSHED WANDERINGS: GUIDED WALK

Saturday, November 11 | 10:00-11:30am  
Smelt Brook Preserve

#### BIRD WALK WEDNESDAY WITH WHITE PINE PROGRAMS

Wednesday, November 15 | 9:00am-10:30am  
Highland Farm Preserve

#### GRATITUDE YOGA WITH AMELIA

Saturday, November 18 | 10:00am-11:00am  
York Land Trust Headquarters

#### BITTERSWEET WREATH MAKING

Monday, December 11 | 4:00pm-5:30pm  
York Land Trust Headquarters

### EVENTS:

#### VOLUNTEER SOLSTICE SOCIAL

Friday, December 15 | 3:00pm-4:30pm  
York Land Trust Headquarters



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

Our programs and events have been generously  
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