

ISLAND HERITAGE TRUST

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



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Fall 2004

IHT aims to complete Gateway project on Eggemoggin Reach

For centuries, the Eggemoggin Reach has been valued for its waters and shores – from the native Americans who paddled the waters of Deer Isle to the schooners and the steamships bringing passengers from points south to the Scott ferry that linked our island to the mainland until 1939. Archaeologists, historians, fishermen, mussel harvesters, clammers, sailors, down east travelers, all have reason for appreciation of this body of water and its surrounds. In 1858, Roberts Carter wrote, “There cannot be a finer sheet of water in the world than the Reach, which is bounded on every side by superb views.”

Especially for local residents, public access is a motivation for action as waterfront disappears with development of the area. Economic viability of the indigenous fishing industry and the multifaceted tourist industries depend upon sustaining this marvelous ecosystem. IHT has been working with Maine Coast Heritage Trust and Blue Hill Heritage Trust for several years to determine how we can preserve qualities of this magnificent Reach and assure public access to its waters.

This past May, we were presented with a unique opportunity when the owner of 22 acres at the northern tip – part of the “Gateway” – approached us with the hope of keeping his special property intact. This property, field and woods, wetland and beaches, has been in the



PHOTO BY KEN CROWELL

IHT volunteers help clammers plant seed clams at Causeway Beach in the spring.

Scott family since 1782 and incorporates the first ferry-landing site along with other treasures.

The public will have complete access to the Reach through a boat launch on the former ferry landing or they can choose to sun and swim on a wide sandy beach nearby. They will be able to walk on nature trails through glades of poplars and apple trees while hearing peepers and wild ducks call from adjacent wetlands. In January, IHT received the gift of the Causeway Beach (see spring 2004 newsletter). In late August, we purchased the 4-acre former Ranga Kennel property across from the Causeway Beach. This September, we closed on the long-pending purchase of the northern 3/5 of Carney Island, a Class A wildlife habitat supporting a suite of fish, shellfish, and birds. Phase Three will be the purchase of the 22-acre

parcel. We have been encouraged in this step by the full partnership of Maine Coast Heritage Trust with whom we have been working all summer. After much exploration by our Land Committee and much discussion by our board, we decided to leap ahead with this project and our Campaign for the Gateway. The timing was fortunate as we

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Island Heritage Trust is to conserve significant open space, scenic areas, wildlife habitats, natural resources, and historic and cultural features that offer public benefit and are essential to the character of the Deer Isle area.

Survey says: Protect access, habitat; engage schools, community

IN THE SPRING edition of our newsletter, we enclosed a survey designed to get input from the membership regarding priorities for the organization. The response was good – 122 out of 400 were returned, more than 25%. Of these, 27 were from year-round residents of the island, 72 from seasonal residents, and 15 from members of the Board of Trustees (including both year-round and seasonal members).

We asked people to rank-order nine items in terms of their importance for land conservation. One hundred individuals did so. We found that there were virtually no differences among the three groups (year-round residents, seasonal, trustees), so we combined their responses. To look at High, Medium and Low priorities and to avoid a confusing array of small numbers, we combined their first, second and third choices.

In terms of program activities, the IHT Trustees differed from the other groups in that they chose “Full-time Executive Director” as their top priority, followed by “Active management of easements and preserves” and “Strategic Plan.”

Asked whether IHT should take a more proactive role in working with community groups to achieve affordable housing and access to the waterfront to make a living from the sea, most respondents just checked “yes”, without further comment. However, several who did

say “yes,” warned against losing sight of our mission. *“While affordable housing is extremely important, pursuing the goal may lead the organization away from its main mission or, at the very least, cause ‘housing vs. land’ decision*

mented that IHT *“needs clear ‘carrying capacity’ guidelines and effective ‘crowd control’ measures.”*

Questions 8 to 13 dealt with perceptions of the organization and asked, “How do you think the native residents see the work of the Trust?”

Regarding native residents, 56% of respondents said they “Didn’t Know,” 3% chose “Excellent,” 1% said “Good,” 21% said “Fair,” and 2% added the category “Poor.”

For other year-round residents, 55% rated the perception of IHT as “Excellent” or “Good.” 43% said they “Don’t Know.”

Finally, for the perceptions of summer residents, 87% said “Excellent” or “Good.” A comment was, *“If you mean the people from away who’ve settled on Deer Isle, how can they help but love what you’re doing? You are preserving what they came here to be part of...”*

Asked how to promote the most positive view of IHT’s work among native residents, a number of people mentioned the issue of taxes: one said, *“IHT needs to overcome the perception that it takes property off the tax rolls and the remaining taxpayers must pay more taxes.”*

Several people noted that working in the schools and

providing other educational programs such as Walks and Talks provide the best hope for changing perceptions. Several mentioned the need to get more “natives” actively involved in the organization. One suggestion was, *“Encourage them*

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The top priorities for conservation:	
Land for waterfront access (clamming and fishing).....	77%
Land to protect bird and wildlife habitat	50%
Land to protect tidal flats and salt marsh	44%
Significant open space.....	32%
Land to protect water resources	28%
Land to protect scenic views	27%
Land of historic and cultural significance	16%
Farmland to retain traditional usage	12%
Land to be used for community housing.....	11%

Most important IHT activities	
Members were asked to rank-order the most important activities of IHT in the last five years. Again, we combined the top three choices of 100 people. Here are the top rankings:	
Active management of easements and preserves	81%
Educational programs for schools	44%
More visible collaboration with community groups	42%
Walks and Talks programs.....	40%
Full-time Executive Director	37%
Completion of long-term, Strategic Plan	34%
Supporting community events such as the Lupine Festival	5%

making.” Another wrote, *“I believe that supporting full-time residents is the key to preserving the land.”*

A majority of members (46%) rated IHT “Excellent” for its stewardship of lands in Question 7. 32% said “Good,” 2% said “Fair” and 15% “Didn’t know.” One com-

President's Letter

We look back on a successful year

AUTUMN on Deer Isle brings quiet joys, with warm light that begs to be savoured as migratory birds gather and trees dazzle us again with their colours.

We have been busy! Mac Herrling has been with us for ten months as executive director. We all find his amiable flexibility and efforts to know our members and volunteers an asset. We are deeply indebted to the volunteers who share their time and expertise (See *Thanks* article on page 5.) We thank them for their valued contributions.

Several trustees attended the Maine Coast Heritage Trust conference in May, dividing ourselves to cover excellent workshops. Our collaboration with other small land trusts and with the larger MCHT is integral to growth in understanding and effectiveness, and the conference each year provides the opportunity to share similar missions and challenges.

Our annual meeting in July was held at a new venue, the advantage being more seating and visibility for the speakers. Attendance and response to the presentation by

Kathleen Billings, Marnie Reed Crowell and Ted Ames addressing the marine resources of the Causeway Basin was encouraging. We welcome new board members Bill Haviland and Lee Fay and returning member Gordon Rittmeyer, and thank retiring trustees Peg Myers, Dan Hadley, Melissa Skelton, Molly Felton, and Candace Hall for their wisdom over the years.

While we are still hopeful that at least part of the 22 acres of Reach shore land offered to us can be integrated into our Gateway Project, it has become apparent that the project itself will depend upon significantly more private funding than anticipated.

Our Strategic Plan was approved by the board in June, and we are well on the way toward many of the goals. Member re-

ready have reached the point of losing its fundamental character."

One individual said *"We realize it is not the charter of IHT to preserve the way of life of the island, but there must be a concentrated effort of all parties to find creative ways to minimize the impact of the continuing pressure for change."*

Thanks to all who took the time and trouble to complete this survey. We are listening and taking note of your comments as we seek to implement our Strategic Plan. We wish we'd had space to print them all!

Judy Hill



PHOTO BY JANE PALMER

President Jean Wheeler steadies the ship as she prepares to row boaters back to Nigh Duck for the annual Old Quarry Charters Boat Tour in July.

response to our spring survey, reported in this newsletter, was enlightening. We depend upon you, our members, and we hope that others will be inspired to join us. The IHT mission statement, foresighted and broad in scope with regard to the unique cultural heritage of this wonderful island, is worth re-reading regularly. We do.

Your support is appreciated and ideas always welcome!

Jean Wheeler



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Survey results

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to use trails and preserved lands like the beach and the islands..." (In fact, this is a major focus of our in-school programs). One wrote, *"Can IHT solicit endowments to make 'in lieu of taxes' payments?"* (In fact, the Board is in the process of discussing this issue).

Another view was: *"... the island is changing, and has been for many years. The difference now is that the rate of change is dramatically increasing and the island may al-*



PHOTO BY OCEANA CASTENADA

Intern Mary Murphy waves while holding the IHT banner with Board President Jean Wheeler during the July 4 parade in Deer Isle – the first time the Trust has participated in the parade.

Loved working with kids at Camp Kooky

Being an intern for the Island Heritage Trust this summer was an exciting educational experience. I had many duties including: monitoring the trails on the preserves; representing the IHT at the Walks and Talks programs; patrolling the beach at Barred Island; observing the nesting eagle; and leading Camp Kooky walks.

My favorite experience this summer was working with the kids at Camp Kooky, a local day camp run by the Island Community Center. Mary and I led several walks at Barred Island and the Tennis Preserve. It was challenging to plan a walk that would be educational for the kids yet exciting enough to hold their attention. I was thrilled to be able to share information like plant identification and help them be more observant of the world around them.

The kids particularly enjoyed viewing eagles through the telescope on the heights overlooking Barred Island and learning about their island's history through the old cemeteries at Tennis Preserve. Some of the kids were truly surprised that the preserves were open to the public and that they could return anytime with their families. I think it is important to get kids informed about the environment at an early age in order to spark interest and concern as they grow up. I found it very rewarding to be able to teach kids knowledge that could be useful to them for the rest of their lives.

Oceana Castenada

Oceana is an island resident and a sophomore at Dartmouth College majoring in geology.

A summer intern on “Eagle Patrol”

This year I was lucky enough to be selected as a summer intern for Island Heritage Trust, and it has been a great experience. I've built a 4th of July float, toured IHT's islands, facilitated events for the Walks and Talks program, led nature walks for the wonderful kids at Camp Kooky, monitored IHT's preserves, and organized trail work days.

One of the most rewarding activities was “Eagle Patrol.” Lee Fay and Ken Crowell took a lot of time to educate the interns about bald eagles at the beginning of the summer and I was also able to increase my knowledge by reading a few books and attending a lecture by Charlie Todd, Maine's eagle expert. It was then my task to hike down to the beach at Barred Island Preserve at low tide, armed with a spotting scope and binoculars, and make sure that no visitors crossed the bar to the island and disturbed the nesting eagles. I talked to people from all over the world about the eagles and really put my new knowledge to use explaining why it is crucial for the eaglet to be undisturbed. People got a real thrill from observing the birds in the wild.

Possibly the most excited group I

talked to was a family from London – it was definitely a bird for their lifetime list, since bald eagles are not found outside North America. Every person I talked to expressed their gratitude to IHT for its good stewardship of the preserve and its eagles. Thanks to everyone at IHT and in the community who made this summer such a success!

Mary Murphy

Mary is an island resident and a senior at Mt. Holyoke College. Because of her IHT experience, she has developed a serious interest in forestry.



Become an IHT Member

Interested in IHT membership? Contact us at 207-348-2455 or P.O. Box 42, Deer Isle, Maine 04627 to volunteer, or contribute.



PHOTO BY CATHY HART

Brian Clough and Ann Hooke collected a boatload of trash on Wreck Island this fall.

Stewardship report

Mark Island Light restored to original lustre

THE FLOWERS, birds, and bugs had a great summer, but it was clear that wet trails, rain, and fog reduced the number of visitors on our islands and Preserves. As in past summers, there were stewardship projects to complete and minor problems to address. Our biggest project this summer involved the repair and repainting of the Mark Island lighthouse under the able guidance of Dan Foss. Dan's work was greatly facilitated by the donation of a Boston Whaler to the Trust. The cost of the repair is \$11,500 for materials and labor. Some of the work could be done safely by volunteers but much had to be done by Dan. When we received the lighthouse from the Coast Guard, close to \$5000 was raised to cover stewardship costs. We need additional funds from you and The Campaign for the Gateway to help meet the shortfall.

The best news is that the eagle family on Barred Island successfully raised their chick and the island was re-opened to the public in late August. During the spring and summer, the life of the family was closely watched through spotting scopes from the hilltop viewing

point at Barred Island Preserve. Visitors were willing to enjoy watching the eagle from afar, leaving the bar and the island to the eagles. There are other eagle nests around Deer Isle, but this nest is most at risk of disturbance by walkers and kayakers.

Sadly, there was an accident on the Tennis Preserve trails in August. A woman fell and broke her ankle. Poor parking of vehicles by other visitors interfered greatly with her rescue by the ambulance crew. Eventually she had to be rescued by the fire department by boat! Please help us keep access gates (as at the Settlement Quarry) and roadways clear for emergency vehicles. Parking is limited at preserves to reduce the number of people on the trails in an effort to reduce trail wear and improve visitor experience.

We greatly appreciate all the people who volunteer to help repair trails, participate in shore cleanups, report problems promptly, and serve as conservation easement stewards. Mac will always be glad to hear your comments, suggestions, and offers to volunteer (call 348-2455).
Ann Hooke

New Trustees on Board

Long-time Trustee and Secretary Peg Myers finished her last term on the Board in July. Peg was presented with a special Lester Terrell print at our Annual Meeting for her many years of dedicated service. Jean Welch has agreed to serve as our new Secretary.

Development Committee Co-Chair Melissa Skelton, Development and Finance Comm. member Dan Hadley, Outreach Comm. member Candace Hall, and Campaign Comm. Co-Chair Molly Felton also completed their work on the Board.

Thank you all for your contributions to IHT!

We welcome former Trustee Gordon Rittmeyer and new Trustees Lee Fay and Bill Haviland.

Gordon has returned to the Board to serve as Treasurer and Chair of Finance. An avid cruising and racing sailor, Gordon and his wife Judy live in Oceanville.

Lee is a retired Army officer who has been coming to the island all her life. An enthusiastic gardener and birder, Lee has been working with Outreach and Communication.

Bill joins the Board after serving as a consultant and frequent lecturer in the Walks and Talks program. He lives with his wife Anita in Deer Isle, where his roots extend back to 1934. Bill serves on Land Committee and on the Deer Isle Conservation Commission.

Mac Herrling

Consider A Bequest

Leave a legacy for generations to enjoy. For more information call IHT at 207-348-2455 or write to us at 3 Main Street, P. O. Box 42, Deer Isle, ME 04627.

Thanks – We could not have done it without you!

TO ALL of our wonderful and hardworking volunteers – summer and year-round – here is a list (hopefully complete!) of the great things you have done for Island Heritage Trust this year:

- Greeted visitors with a cheery spirit in person and by phone
- Cleared brush from trails, monitored visitor use, and entertained and enlightened the public
- Helped re-seed clams in the spring
- Gave wonderful lectures for Walks and Talks Programs (even in rain and fog)
- Stuffed envelopes, licked stamps, and photocopied
- Helped with our computer challenges
- Wrote letters to the editor in support of IHT
- Served on committees – Campaign, Stewardship, Communication and Outreach, Executive, Development, Nominating (now Board Development), Finance, and Land.
- Served as a Trustee for many years and for just a few months (new ones) but always showed up
- Helped paint Mark Island light and donated the boat to get there
- Spoke well of IHT at public meetings
- Taught students about the natural world and introduced their heritage to them
- Hosted neighborhood parties and worked at fund-raising events
- Organized our volunteers
- Acted as Stewards of our easements
- Walked the land and encouraged landowners to consider a Conservation Easement
- Cleaned up the beaches (Causeway and Gray’s Cove) and islands, and other lands
- Soaked up information at workshops for our staff and board
- Gave up beautiful summer days and evenings to work with us
- Donated their time, talent, and treasure to our cause
- Consoled spouses with great conservation stories when late for meals
- Called the trust from Germany, New Jersey, Costa Rica, and beyond
- Depended on the good graces of their friends for major support of the IHT and its Campaign
- Had great design ideas for the office and worked hard to carry out those ideas (Notice office windows, new paint, flowers)
- Collated and wrote up Survey results
- Offered scrumptious food, homes and hospitality for meetings and get-togethers
- Dreamed up (literally!) fantastic ideas to promote conservation
- Worked on the Newsletter, edited articles, designed our Web Site
- And, gave us hope when we were discouraged!

You are the best!

Mac Herrling



Message from the Executive Director

Our biggest challenge is to respond and listen to the community we serve

HERE are some observations from my first year as your full-time Executive Director.

Our biggest challenge is to respond and listen to the community we serve. In the course of our Campaign for the Gateway, we learned there is a great deal of support for conservation but many questions about its cost. IHT and all islanders are concerned about the trade-off between conservation and tax revenue and how our priorities complement efforts to create affordable housing and a sound economy.

From our member survey, we know that you are a constant source of inspiration and accountability for the Board of Trustees and myself. We heard from you that we must support projects that provide access to the shore and protect wildlife habitat while continuing to steward IHT lands and work with the schools to promote conservation. I appreciate the fact so many members took the time to respond and made so many thoughtful comments. (See article on page 2.)

One eighth-grade student on our spring field trip said, “You mean I can come back here with my family anytime I want?” Indeed, we do have a long ways to go!

Our web site (www.islandheritagetrust.org) is on-line but under construction. Through it, we can update you on important developments at IHT and within the larger conservation community.

Finally, I enjoyed getting to know many, many wonderful volunteers this year. You helped get me through a busy summer with honesty, delightful stories, and great humor! (See *Thanks* article above.)

Enjoy a peaceful and safe holiday season and I will see you in the spring!

Mac Herrling

Crossing the Bar: The Causeway Basin through time

IMAGINE plucking flounder by the handful out of a churning tide. See 19th Century crowds gather on Little Deer Isle to watch a whaleboat foundering on the great sand bar stretching across the Causeway.

These images are part of the colorful history of the Causeway waters connecting Little Deer Isle with Great Deer Isle. Long before the Causeway was built, flounder, mackerel, and herring came in on the flood tide and used the narrow channel to get to Egge-moggin Reach. Early people floated their canoes

and sailing craft through this calm passageway.

Native Americans called this particular area, Egge-moggin, “the place of the fish weirs.” From archeological sites, we know that Indians lived along these shores for perhaps 3000 years. They built fish weirs to catch mackerel and herring and speared flounder from their canoes. The Causeway was a key canoe route that connected the Bagaduce River settlements with the protected shores on the east side of Deer Isle.

When Europeans first arrived in the area in the 1700’s, they fished like their Native American friends. However, misunderstanding the Indian “Egge-moggin” name for the entire area, they applied the name to the whole body of water to the north of Deer Isle. In the 1870’s, summer cottages were built at the northwest tip of Little Deer Isle

and named “Egge-moggin” by Charles Babson in hopes of luring summer guests.

Older residents today remember well the fish weirs, good fishing, and abundance of birds in the causeway. Fish weirs were set up each spring as the previous year’s weirs were destroyed by winter ice and schooner captains re-

Cat en route from Deer Isle’s Northwest Harbor to Benjamin River loaded with hoop poles attempted to cross the Little Deer Isle bar on the ebb tide. She ran aground and, on the flood tide, the wind shifted to the east, and, as she floated, she was driven high on the beach and received much damage. When the storm abated,

there were notices posted in stores at Deer Isle village for volunteers to go up to the *Bow Cat*. A large crowd gathered to watch the rescue operations. Shop carpenters repaired the damage. The *Bow Cat* was placed on



PHOTO BY THOMAS P. HAVILAND

Summer sunbathers wade across the great sand bar in the 1930’s before the Causeway Bridge went up.

paired their boats in the Causeway’s coves. The area was also popular for flounder fishing. Captain Walter Scott reported in the 1880’s “in early March many boats would go from Northwest Harbor to the *Bow Cat* to spear flounders. It was not unusual for one boat to spear a barrel on one tide.” In April, 1900, it was reported that “Mr. Peter Haskell of Little Deer Isle picked up 155 flounders that had become tide ripped between Carney Island and Little Deer Isle. He did not use a net or hook but took them out with his hand.”

The most compelling story about the Causeway involved the vast sand bar that was fully exposed at low tide. At high tide, boats could safely pass over the bar.

In April, 1859, Captain Walter Scott reported that “a large whaleboat by the name of *Bow*

skids. Two yoke of oxen were able to haul her where she would float.” After this incident, the causeway basin area was known as “the *Bow Cat*.”

During the early 1900’s, ‘crossing the bar’ referred to people walking across the bar at low tide or riding a horse-drawn buckboard. By 1930, round rocks from old stonewalls outlined the best route across the bar. Once the bridge was opened in 1939, the level of the bar was gradually built up above high tide line closing the water passage between the basin and the reach. Gradually, the road was widened and rocks from Pine Hill were brought in to line the roadway.

By 1950, the fish weirs and wintering schooners were gone – only the ducks and eagles remained.

Bill Haviland

Local students learn science, history

BEFORE they graduated and moved on to high school last May, Deer Isle-Stonington 8th graders enjoyed field trips to three island nature preserves with their teachers, parent volunteers, and volunteer guides from the Island Heritage Trust.

IHT volunteers and board members Ken Crowell, Josephine Jacob, Diane Walker, and Ann Hooke and eighth grade teachers Ken Lantz and Mary Rees-Nutter worked with school parent volunteers to guide students through Settlement Quarry, Barred Island Preserve, and Tennis Preserve.

In thank you notes sent to IHT after the trip, many students talked of how much they enjoyed the trips and how visiting the preserves drew them closer to their own roots. Here is a sample of their comments.

"I really liked the Settlement Quarry," said Alison Turner. "My relatives, the McGuires, used to own it. So it's a part of my island's

history and my family's history."

Josh Coleman spoke of how he liked the nature trail at Settlement Quarry "because you can see where my mother works and it reminds me of my great-grandfather. (He used to be a stone carver)."

Regarding the Tennis Preserve, Meranda Smith liked the cemetery there "because I got to see what the last names were way back then and I heard the last soldier that was killed in the Civil War was buried there."

When she went to Barred Island, Margaret Speer said it was "a little disappointing because we weren't able to walk onto the bar due to high tide, but the views were just amazing."

Hannah Eaton said "my favorite trail was the Tennis Preserve. It was historical and it got me more interested in the history of our island."

Tennis Preserve was a favorite of Leti Douglass who loved "seeing the old cellar holes and graveyard. I also found it interesting about the shell heaps. I never knew that there was such a thing."

Parent volunteers and Field Guide Friends Marie Jacques, Crystal Robbins, and Jodie Ciomei worked closely with students and staff. Junior stewards Ethan Cobb and Sarah and Kimberly Jacques helped with the IHT float and worked with the interns to learn



PHOTO BY ANN HOOKE

Falling between the cracks: Luke Saindon of Deer Isle is gleeful about standing in a crevice during last May's eighth grade trip to Settlement Quarry.

Gateway Project

Continued from page 1

ended up one small step ahead of the developers with full cooperation from the sellers. If ongoing negotiations are successful and sufficient funds can be raised, the Gateway to Deer Isle, on both sides of the causeway, will be protected and accessible to islanders forever.

Our Campaign for the Gateway has evolved from what began as our Campaign for the Future. Success in the challenge of fundraising will not only protect the precious Gateway to Deer Isle, but it will also build our Stewardship Fund and fund the Executive Director position for five years. Look for a Campaign mailing in mid-winter.

Ken Crowell and Dick Paget
Co-Chairs, Land Committee

about the island's preserves.

IHT sponsored school trips as part of its outreach work. Anne and Roger Hooke worked on the science curriculum with fifth graders and then accompanied them to Settlement Quarry. Fifth grade teachers Linda Graceffa and Linda Weed organized the experience.

Then in July and August, stewardship volunteers worked with IHT Interns Mary Murphy and Oceana Castenada to show Camp Kooky campers around Barred Island, Tennis Preserve, and Holt Mill Pond

Mac Herring

McGuire Family Correction

In the spring newsletter, we wrote of the extraordinary contribution of the McGuire family to the quarrying tradition on Deer Isle. Here are two corrections to that story. Frank McGuire and his brothers bought the *Benvenue Quarry* on the north end of Crotch Island. There was a separate granite company on the south end. Frank and his brothers founded the *Deer Island Granite Corporation* in 1922. The name was later changed to the Deer Island Granite Company, Inc. **Ann Hooke**

IN MEMORIAM DONATIONS

In 2003-2004 donations have been received in memory of

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