



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · JULIA ZELL

As I write this, Deer Isle is blanketed in snow from IHT's public educational Walks and our first official "blizzard" in years. Trails are covered, but not quiet! Dozens of tracks appear on the surface, zig-zagging this way and that -- snowshoe hare, white-tailed deer, red fox, and so many more. Our intrepid community joins the fray in snowshoes, cross-country skis, and even boots, leaving prints that sink deep beneath the snow's surface. An ephemeral reminder that even in the depths of winter, these lands are a-buzz with activity.

We are just as busy here at IHT. We are excitedly making plans to celebrate our 35th Anniversary, and our successful Accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Commission. Jacob McCarty has transitioned into the Development Associate role, and Alex Drenga, our Stewardship Director, is rounding out his first full year with IHT, just as Martha Bell is entering her 9th year as our Environmental Educator! Our day-to-day operations continue to be impacted by the ever-changing public health landscape, with our highest priority being the health and safety of our community. The good news is that we have been able to continue our work. Over the last two years, we have ensured that our preserves and trails have remained open and accessible to the public and found new ways to connect with and engage our community. I am so grateful to this team for their unwavering dedication and hard work in the face of adversity.

While we have welcomed some new faces into the IHT family, we have also been sad to lose some important friends from IHT's history. Mike Little, IHT's Executive Director from 2008 to 2018, passed away last fall. So many of the wonderful places protected here on Deer Isle, and the organization we have today, are thanks to Mike, his team, and many other long-time volunteers and members over that time. Two of those volunteers include Ann and Roger Hooke. Ann has worn nearly every hat there is to wear here at IHT, most notably chairing the Stewardship Committee for multiple decades! And Roger contributed significantly to

Talks programming, and so much more. Sadly, Roger passed away in early 2021, and Ann has decided to retire from the role of Stewardship

Chair as of the end of 2021. Other long-time committee members who have recently decided to "retire" are Steve Cox from the Stewardship Committee and Judy McCaskey from the Development Committee. I don't have nearly enough space here to properly celebrate and thank these dedicated individuals who have generously volunteered their time and energy to further the success of IHT. Their contributions will live on, along with Mike Little's legacy, as we continue to fulfill our mission of protecting these places we love, in perpetuity.

35

YEARS

As I reflect on all this, it strikes me that while IHT might be in the business of "land," we are very much a community organization at heart. The human aspect of our work, the countless hours (decades!) of effort contributed so willingly and passionately by so many, is what has made IHT's work possible. From a fledgling idea started around a dining room table more than 35 years ago, through years of dedicated volunteer leadership and action, to where we are today - it is truly a remarkable journey. As IHT celebrates its 35th Anniversary this year, in 2022, we look forward to sharing some of these incredible stories in the coming months. I hope you will join me in showing our deepest gratitude for the many hands that have played a role in making this all happen. As you notice an exquisite moss on a granite ledge; listen to birdsong in the woods; gather with loved ones for some mentally and physically healthful exercise; hear about what a local student discovered on the School Nature Trail; learn new skills as a trail stewardship volunteer or how to identify a new plant species on a walk with our Master Naturalist, take a moment to think of all the incredible people who have helped make this possible.

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SPOTLIGHT ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

By Martha Bell, Environmental Educator & Maine Master Naturalist



You may wonder what is on the minds of local teenagers. It might surprise you to know at Deer Isle Stonington High School (DISHS) a dedicated group of a dozen students spend a lot of time thinking about climate change, solar energy, plastic reduction, sustainable agriculture and clean water. And they don't just think about these issues; they are doing something about them. Let me introduce you to the ECO-Club, where information with a good dose of student passion turns to action. Meeting weekly in Cynthia Peases's art room, the club has a long list of priorities that range from having the school switch to solar energy and reduce the use of plastic, to taking their ideas and information to the community at large.

Recently, I sat down with Henry Penfold and Anwen Hudson, seniors and founding members of the club. We discussed progress on several projects at school and in the community. Henry spoke of creating systemic change such as switching to solar energy, while Anwen spoke about educating the youth. The club's concern about how burning fossil fuels affects climate resulted in the entire team, led by Henry, attending a school board meeting to propose their idea of switching to solar power.

At a second meeting, the students brought solar energy experts to present to the board. The school board was receptive and impressed and recently voted to use solar energy from a solar farm for school electricity, a significant success for the ECO-Club.

Anwen spoke about the club's efforts to decrease the consumption of single-use plastic in the school, not only plastic bottles from a vending machine, but eating utensils

and food packaging as well. She emphasized our need to consider long-term consequences of our practices and how plastics are made, transported, and discarded. Actively moving its ideas forward, the ECO-Club's plastic reduction efforts are underway at the school with the transition from plastic cutlery to metal. Moreover, food packaging is being researched to find more sustainable options. As part of the students' efforts, they are planning educational presentations that include speakers and info graphics.

They are also taking their concerns to the community by creating projects that heighten awareness of sustainable practices. Prior to the Maine State plastic bag ban, ECO-Club students spent long hours sewing cloth shopping bags -- even holding an all-night sew-a-thon -- to distribute to local stores for donations and to encourage the use of reusable bags. The bags flew off store shelves. Another activity involved making beeswax food wraps to replace plastic wrap. Placed in stores over the holiday season, the cloth and beeswax wraps were also well received by customers. Additional projects in the works include composting and growing local food for student consumption. Making themselves and their concerns heard has also led to taking part in climate change rallies.

As one of a group of adults working with the ECO-Club, I am honored to work on behalf of IHT alongside DISHS's art teacher, Cynthia Pease; Tony Ferrara of Climate Action Network; and Cheryl Wixson from Edible Island/ Healthy Island. My involvement since the club's first meetings has allowed me to watch the students grow into a cohesive, determined group, willing to take on hard environmental issues and experience the subsequent successes they have earned.



Moss-bed in snow at Crockett Cove Preserve (above)

Mark Island Light in the distance from Sand Beach (Front Page)



COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

By Jacob McCarty, Development Associate

When I was a child, I owned a book titled "What Do People Do All Day?" by Richard Scarry. Depicted are the townspeople of Busytown, going about their days fulfilling different aspects of societal needs, explaining every job required for a thriving community. I chuckle to think of Island Heritage Trust's mission and work explained via a children's book. And yet, the symbiotic relationships the book describes could offer a blueprint for explaining our mission and function as a land trust in our community.

To that end, I recruited three year-round residents of Deer Isle/Stonington, who all grew up here, are now parents, and operate local businesses on the Island. I asked them all the same three questions. First, "What does IHT do all day?" (a nod to Scarry's book). They answered unanimously, "IHT is a land trust organization that serves the Island community." Their accurate response made me smile during all three interviews.

The second question generated more compelling ideas. "What does the generation before yours think IHT does?" Abby Barrows of Long Cove Sea Farm answered, "Some of the local generations before me might say IHT provides easements that hinder local economic development." The notion that conservation dampens our civic advancement is not an unfamiliar perception of a land trust's work; it's also not definitive. Barrows continued, "Providing shore access to commercial fisheries and teaching educational programming in and out of local schools is just as much a part of IHT's mission as conservation." Easements do not inherently hinder economic development. For example, some IHT conservation easements support local use and commercial harvesting by protecting public access to the shore for clamming or catching bait, thereby ensuring that these activities are permitted in perpetuity.

Morgan Eaton of The Island Agency reflects, "Generations before us didn't have as many concerns about accessing the shorefront. They knew all or most of their neighbors, and there was more undeveloped land for shore access. Over the decades, land continues to be developed, and properties change hands. Sometimes this limits access to work and recreation. The benefit of ensuring access for present and future generations provided by IHT is of huge importance for year-round residents and visitors." It's also important to note that IHT makes payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) every year to both towns (Deer Isle and Stonington) above the amount any taxpayer might qualify for under Maine's "Current Land Use" tax programs. We hope to increase this amount in the future as our budget allows.

The third question, "How are both generations correct?" nudged interviewees to think about how to bridge understanding. Hollan Oliver of Coastline Physical Therapy answers, "While I think there was some ambiguity for the generation before me, communication is key to understanding the mission of what IHT does for this community. Many year-round community members (all generations included) believe IHT has done a great job to help people explore the Island. We didn't have a designated place to walk in the woods when I was growing up. Now, no matter what happens, we all have access to this land." Looking back, I know now a children's book could never fully express the nuances of Island Heritage Trust's work.

I feel affirmed by the interviewees' words. Their insight makes me hopeful that IHT will further be acknowledged as a fundamental part of this island society. We will continue to serve our community and strive to instill faith in our mission for generations to come. If you have any thoughts, my office door is open, and I'm only a phone call away (207 348-2455).

Moss in the sunlight (left)

BEHIND THE SCENES OF STEWARDSHIP

By Alex Drenga, Stewardship Director

As Island Heritage Trust celebrates its 35th anniversary, I reflect on my first year serving our island community. At the earliest moment of my career in land conservation, a mentor offered me advice that shifted my outlook on success. She told me, "To make a difference, you must tell stories that make people care about your mission and always aim to inspire the youth. If you can accomplish this, then you will positively impact and help shape the community that you work in for years to come." Working for IHT offers me a chance to fulfill this obligation to a community we all cherish. IHT has had many chapters in its long story before the current staff's time. Fortunately for all of us, the natural wonder of Deer Isle is ever-inspiring, and stories are hidden in plain sight; you only have to look. As I go about my day-to-day tasks as Stewardship Director, I seek inspiration to help keep the prop turning in my head.

Last July, Terry Real, IHT's Stewardship Assistant, and I set off by kayak to monitor Campbell Island. It was a warm and sunny day, paired with a checkered sky of clouds and quiet seas. This was my first trip to the island, and Terry informed me that the best landing spot on this tide would be the northwest beach. As we paddled around the NW corner of Campbell, I was pleasantly surprised to see a small pocket beach of sand. We played chicken with a few boulders dressed in rockweed to arrive at our destination. The beach was a kaleidoscope of what once had been pink rock and seashells, thousands of years in the making. I took a second to recognize the time and circumstances it took to create this moment,

until I noticed Terry's black and white Nikes with an all-red swoosh making imprints in the sand. I laughed and said, "Terry, I didn't know Nike made water shoes!"

For the rest of the day, we poked around the island, jotting notes on shoreline condition and forest health, taking pictures, mapping nests inhabited by birds of prey, and hoping not to find any invasive species. For many reasons, this island was incredible to walk around, but what struck me was that it offered me a chance to understand what existed while nature was not its owner. A previous chapter revealed itself through a long rock wall, a great oak that still guards a pasture, and plant communities regaining their status as movers and shakers. This is a glimpse of forest succession in action, a process by which one plant community replaces another over time.

This summer, Island Heritage Trust will acquire a new storytelling vessel. Through the gracious support of our donors, IHT was able to purchase an 18ft aluminum hulled boat to facilitate the stewarding of our islands and coastal properties. Our preserves tell stories, Heritage House tells stories, even our faithful old pickup truck tells stories. But this boat is like an empty notebook, and I am grateful to start chapter one with you all, of what will become our own IHT stories on the water. The autonomy and freedom we gain with this vessel will surely make for stronger programming and volunteering at IHT. For these reasons, I am most excited about 2022; although, Terry and I might kayak to monitor Campbell Island again this summer, if just for nostalgia's sake. I look forward to seeing you on land, sea, and everywhere inbetween! •

Deer Isle Thorofare (below)



Tidings



Celebrating Our Accreditation

We are pleased to announce we have achieved national recognition – joining a network of over 450 accredited land trusts (of 950 total) across the nation that have demonstrated their commitment to professional excellence and to maintaining the public's trust in our work.

"Accreditation demonstrates IHT's commitment to permanent land conservation on Deer Isle and the surrounding islands," said Julia Zell, Executive Director. "We are a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program. Our strength means special places – such as Lily Pond Park – will be protected forever, making our home an even greater place for us and our children."

Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

Deer Isle/Stonington Elementary School (DISES) science teacher, Mickie Flores, was awarded the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)! The PAEMST recognizes outstanding teachers for their contributions to the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science.

We are thrilled and are especially grateful for her tremendous presence in the community and for Mickie's role as Board Secretary at Island Heritage Trust. She has been instrumental in connecting our Environmental Educator, Martha Bell, with DISES. The construction and creation of the beloved School Nature Trail is just one of their many impressive collaborations. Check out our website for the article link acknowledging this prestigious award!

Martha Bell & IHT Receive Business Friend of Education Award

Island Heritage Trust's Environmental Educator Martha Bell and Island Heritage Trust itself have been awarded one of the Maine School Management Association's 2021 MSBA Business Friend of Education Awards. Island Heritage Trust Board Chair Bill Wiegmann stated: "We are extremely grateful for this recognition by the Maine School Management Association, the Maine School Boards Association and the CSD 13 School Board, who nominated us for this award."

"Our Environmental Educator Martha Bell has an outstanding passion for and dedication to our education mission. She is an excellent communicator, able to inspire small children, engage older students and persuade adult audiences. She embodies the ideals of life-long learning, having recently qualified as a Maine Master Naturalist. We are extremely fortunate to have her as a member of the Island Heritage Trust team."

Collaboration with Island Workforce Housing (IWH)

IWH and IHT joined forces to successfully acquire 27.5 acres of land on the Sunset Cross Road. This beautiful site is in a central island location, with almost 2,500 feet of frontage on Oliver's Pond and wetlands, and the eventual home to a 14-acre IHT public preserve along that frontage. "Ground work is done and we're ready to build up 5 structures equating to 10 housing units for this project," says Megan Dewy Wood, IWH Chair. More info to come!

Wings, Waves, & Woods Festival

The Wings, Waves, & Woods festival comprises a mix of birding, nature, historical walks, and activities. The popular boat trip to Seal Island offers sightings of Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills, Northern Gannets, and others. Up to two dozen species of warblers can be seen on the various guided walks on Island Heritage Trust's preserves, as well as shorebirds nesting and breeding along our extensive shoreline. Experience just one activity or make it an entire weekend. Details coming soon! WINTER - SPRING 2022 5









IHT Comings & Goings

As Woody Osborne and Steve Rowan – two dedicated and long-serving members of the board -- retire from their positions, the Trust welcomes its four newest members: David Bayley, Sue Chamberlain, and DeeDee and Jeff Hartnett. David, a full-time resident of Deer Isle since 2012, had a 35-year career as an air traffic controller. David initially became involved with the Trust by helping to maintain trails, which fueled his ongoing interest in stewardship. Not only a member of IHT's board, David also serves as a member of the Deer Isle-Stonington Historical Society Board of Directors and is a moderator for the Deer Isle Sunset Church, all of which keep him busy and contributing to his adopted community.

A Certified Fundraising Executive (CRFE), Sue Chamberlain has been employed by the Wildlands Trust in Massachusetts since 2013, managing donor relations. Impressed by IHT's staff and board members for their enthusiasm and skills, Sue hopes to apply her own skills in fundraising and strategic planning to her work for the Trust. She and her husband divide their time seasonally between two homes, spending summers on Isle au Haut and winters in Stonington. Together, they enjoy hiking, swimming, canoeing and photography and, in Sue's words, both "really appreciate IHT's preserves and trails."

Dee Dee Hartnett's membership in IHT's Development Committee convinced her to stay involved in the Trust. Before retiring to Deer Isle, DeeDee -- with a master's degree in French -- enjoyed a 45-year career in both teaching and administration. She and husband Jeff, also a board member, are now full-time Island residents. As a board member, DeeDee "hopes to actively and successfully encourage local community members to become involved in IHT's mission." In her leisure time, DeeDee enjoys doing needlework of all kinds and making summer's bounty into jam and preserves.

Before his retirement and move to Deer Isle, Jeff Hartnett had a 44-year career as a labor lawyer in St. Louis. About his involvement in IHT, Jeff cited the importance of the Trust to the Deer Isle community. As a board member, he hopes to "assist in assuring that IHT is able to care for its in-fee properties and its conservation easements," in perpetuity. Jeff also serves on the board of the Blue Hill Concert Association and enjoys cheering for his favorite sports teams: the Chicago White Sox, Chicago Black Hawks, Marquette Golden Eagles and the Gonzaga Bulldogs.

The Trust would also like to thank Steve Rowan and Woody Osborne for their long service on the Board of Trustees. Not only as board members, the two also served as executive officers: Steve as the Trust's treasurer and Woody as board vice chair and later as board chair. Both also worked tirelessly in various committees over the years and continue to do so. Their contributions have been invaluable in helping the organization evolve into the productive, professional and well-regarded community asset it is today. Deep thanks to them both for their many years of outstanding service to the Trust. •

Island Heritage Trust Staff

Julia Zell, Executive DirectorBill WiegmannMartha Bell, Environmental EducatorDee Dee HartAlex Drenga, Stewardship DirectorKaren Hill, TrJacob McCarty, Development AssociationMickie Flores,Terry Real, Seasonal Stewardship AssistantAbby Barrows

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In Memoriam

Michael Justin Little 1948-2021

It is with great sadness that the Trust mourns the passing of Mike Little, who for ten years served as the IHT's Executive Director. Through his love of the natural world and his passion for and knowledge of conservation, Mike left IHT a stronger and more mature organization than it was before his tenure.

Joining the Trust in 2008, when the organization was experiencing challenging growing pains, Mike steered IHT ably and grew its educational program as well as its holdings, and enlarged water access to clammers. Perhaps his most significant accomplishment, however, was securing the future of Lily Pond by enthusiastically bringing to fruition the Trust's efforts to acquire the property, thus preserving this valued public resource for all. Accomplished by forging a collaborative relationship with the community, the project revealed the mutual benefits of the kind of partnership with the community that Mike championed.

If the preservation of Lily Pond as a public resource were his only accomplishment, it would be a significant legacy, but by instituting administrative changes as well as initiating the project to gain accreditation with the Land Trust Alliance, Mike contributed to the Trust's overall professional health and future.

An enthusiastic proponent of land conservation for most of his adult life, Mike was also an avid and life-long birder, his favorite species, perhaps, being the Sand Hill Crane. He led many birding walks and talks on IHT preserves over the years. In addition to birding, Mike had many other hobbies: He was a carpenter, a book collector of out-of-print and rare books, and enjoyed participating in and teaching Scottish dancing with his wife, Dawn. Another of his interests was herpetology. Mike could always be counted on to have a few small snakes for kids to handle during the annual Ice Cream Social, held at Lily Pond.

After retiring from IHT, Mike and Dawn bought a farm in the Bucksport area and enthusiastically took up a life of farming, growing everything from oversized radishes to unusual varieties of tomatoes, eggplant and squash. A man of many talents and interests, Mike will be remembered fondly at IHT for his many contributions to the Trust and the Island community. He is survived by his wife, Dawn, four children, his mother and three sisters.

Roger LeBaron Hooke 1939-2021

Island Heritage Trust lost a devoted member and generous volunteer with the death of Roger Hooke in March, following a tragic ice-skating accident. "A giant in the fields of glaciology and arid region geomorphology," according to the University of Maine's tribute to him, Roger was a groundbreaking and energetic academic and scientist. His career was inspired by his childhood exploration in Montclair, New Jersey, and by his wife of 60 years, Ann, a geology major in college. Earning a bachelor's degree in engineering from Harvard University and a doctorate in geology from the California Institute of Technology, Roger had a long career at both University of Minnesota and University of Maine, Orono.

His research took him to such far corners of the world as Tibet, Greenland, Sweden and Alaska where he conducted ice coring and other research. He was widely published in scientific journals and his book, *Principles of Glacier Mechanics*, remains a foundational work in its field. "He was always working on something," Ann said, and as an example, noted that shortly before his death, Roger learned that two of his papers had just been accepted for publication.

Moving to Deer Isle permanently in 1999, after summering on the island for a number of years, Roger soon began sharing his passion for geology via his IHT walks and talks, in which he made understanding Deer Isle's unique, rocky landscape accessible and engaging to visitors. He also did significant GIS mapping for the Trust. Ann added that Roger encouraged and enthusiastically supported her own involvement in IHT. Moreover, if she needed any construction for the Trust, Roger was there to help. He loved building, she said, and made much of the furniture in their home. In later years, Roger -- frequently accompanied by Ann -- traveled to New Zealand, Sweden, the Canadian Arctic, Siberia, the Amazon and the Himalayas.

Beloved by colleagues in his field the world over, and by his students, Roger Hooke leaves an astonishing legacy through his work and its significant influence on the scientific community. For IHT as well, his contributions will be long remembered, and his loss mourned by the IHT family. Roger is survived by his wife, Ann, their two children and two grandchildren.



The Conservation Land Trust of Deer Isle & Stonington , Maine

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Celebrating 35 years of land conservation in Eastern Penobscot Bay and the Deer Isle area

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*Based on online submitted volunteer hours (on our website)

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