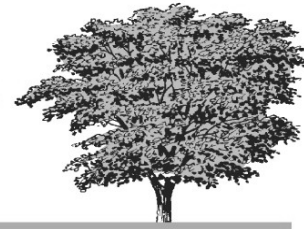


East Quabbin LAND TRUST



Thoma Donation: The Old Calf Pasture, 136 Acres Conserved!

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136 acres conserved! A local parcel of land with extensive frontage off 32A just southwest of the Hardwick Commons and bound on the west by Patrill Hollow Road and Czeski Road was protected forever due to the generosity of the landowners, Hans and Ginna Thoma.

Long time conservationists, Hans and Ginna moved to Hardwick from Ware in the early 1980's purchasing the "Old Calf Pasture" from the Mixters. The Thomas lived on the land while completing their home, thankfully moving out of their barn and into their home when the fall frigid outdoor showers became too painful!

Their conservationist values never waned as the land has always been kept in agriculture and open for passive public use. Besides the tax advantages of the donation, there is the personal satisfaction of knowing that the land will be forever kept in it's natural, undeveloped state while remaining open to passive public use.

Outright land donation is only one of the "tools" or options that are available to land-owners interested in protecting land. Other options include Conservation Restrictions, sale of the property to a conservation organization, to name a couple. Goals for the land are currently being developed but will include continued agricultural use, trail development, and timber management, all in accordance with the Thomas wishes and values.

In the bigger picture, this parcel is a critical linkage in the "Quabbin to New Braintree wildlife corridor" that EQLT has been working to accomplish, with nearly 90% now complete. The wildlife corridor is a series of parcels under various types of protection that are to be forever undeveloped allowing wildlife to flow from the Quabbin Reservoir to other conservation lands to the east. As more and more land is developed, these corridors are seen as an important measure in preventing isolation of wildlife populations. —Rick Romano

Mark Your Calendar!

- Texas Hold'em Jan. 27
- Bird Club Outings:
Jan. 27 and Feb. 3
- Winter Day, Feb. 3
- Dinner & Silent Auction,
Mar. 24
- Don Kroodsma " Singing
Life of Birds" Mar. 25
- Annual Meeting, May 6



Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends:

The changing of the calendar brings new hope and optimism as we embark on 2007.

Your financial support made our year-end appeal a great success, with many new donors the goal was surpassed. The list of supporters is included in this newsletter. The EQLT is pleased to announce that it received a \$2,000 grant from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation/Water and Land Stewardship Fund in support of land stewardship of EQLT's six properties and a \$500 grant from the Hardwick/New Braintree Cultural Council. In addition, the EQLT greatly appreciates recent commitments from Country Bank and Quabaug Charitable Foundation for the rail trail.

We also are indebted to the 60+ volunteers who gave their time and labor to help on various projects.

Land conservation is the hallmark of the East Quabbin Land Trust activities. This year the EQLT is initiating a multi-year effort to pull together a group of landowners willing to sell a conservation restriction. By pooling the land into one conservation effort the opportunity for funding is enhanced. Many landowners already contacted are excited by this conservation opportunity.

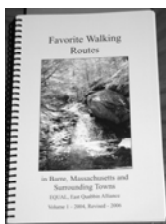
*This winter and spring are filled with EQLT activities, indoors and out. A reliable source said that the presentation by Don Kroodsma on *The Singing Life of Birds* will be extraordinary. Plan on sitting at the edge of your seat and learning much about the birds that live all around us. We look forward to seeing you at all of these events.*

The stewardship committee has the enviable task of planning the trail network, signage and other management activities on 136 acres recently gifted by Hans and Ginna Thoma. The land spans the ridge south of Hardwick center between Rte. 32A to the east and Patrill Hollow Road and Czeski Road to the west. The EQLT anticipates placing a conservation restriction on the land in the near future. The EQLT sends its heartfelt thanks to Hans and Ginna for the generous gift to the organization and broader community.

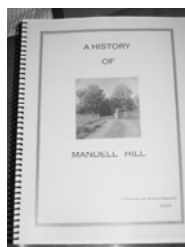
The article "Ask the Board" reveals the varied reasons why the EQLT board members are involved with the organization. Knowing the reasons why you support land conservation and the EQLT is important to us. Please send us your thoughts in the enclosed envelope.

Warmest wishes for a happy 2007, Cynthia Henshaw

For Sale at EQLT Headquarters...



Favorite Walking Routes in Barre, Massachusetts and Surrounding Towns, put out by EQUAL, the East Quabbin Alliance, \$12



A History of Mandell Hill, newly revised and expanded, by Susan Gainley, \$25



EQLT hats, \$15.

EQLT annual posters (not shown) Most past year's editions available, \$15 each (unframed).

EQLT Volunteer Profile— Rod and Linda Leehy: Good Conservationists

The Leehy's driveway is little more than a track through the woods, and I remind myself again why I need a pickup truck. "Set back in the woods a little," Rod told me over the phone. "You'll see the house just past where the gravel peters out." I come upon it eventually, a warm comfortable home with a bright kitchen and a cozy atmosphere.

"We moved to Hardwick as freely evolving tree-huggers," Rod tells me. "That was back in the eighties, when Hardwick seemed to be a majority of tree-huggers." He smirks a little, saying this. "Unfathomably, we're now in the minority. Maybe a third of the people in town are like-minded."

"That's where the Land Trust bridges an important gap, and they've done a great job of it." Linda frowns momentarily, searching for the right words. "We need – we all need – to work much harder on conservation issues."

The Leehy's have been members for eight years, old history where land trusts are concerned. Both in their late forties, the two loved nature as children. Linda tells me she used to play with snakes. Rod says she still does. Rod was an Eagle Scout as a child, and picked up an appreciation of nature early on. On their regular hiking and camping trips, Linda is the expert – "wannabe naturalist," she tells me – who explains all the flora and fauna to Rod. They both have learned a lot from the Land Trust.

"Very few land trusts offer educational opportunities similar to those offered by EQLT," Rod explains. "One of the greatest benefits of being members is the

solid base of experience and knowledge on which to draw."

An issue dear to the Leehy's hearts, as to those of many land trust members, is how the future of the town will be linked to conservation efforts. Following the establishment of Hardwick's Master Plan, twelve different subcommittees define the future of the town, providing a blueprint for growth.

"There is nothing in the town structure for environmental education," says Rod. "There is and always has been the Conserva-

tion Commission to provide environmental protection, but education is different, and with improved education and understanding comes improved chances for protection. Before the land trust, education and pressure on conservation issues were non-existent."

"EQLT is moving things forward, and is also a barrier – currently the only barrier – to environmental destruction." Rod frowns as he says this. Linda, tempering the conversation somewhat, tells me what a natural paradise Hardwick is. "We've learned so much from Chris Buelow's bird research. We're fascinated by speciation; by the formation of wildlife corridors."

Rod sees me out, standing comfortably in the driveway in his shirtsleeves. "Y'know," he tells me, "Linda and I've been saving up for three years now, to get all the gear. We bought snowshoes, crampons, down-lined sleeping bags, a thermal tent – everything. And then this." He gestures at the warm, breezy January night, at the mud in his driveway. "Just another reason we're members."

—Chuk Kittredge



Ask the Board:

What Gets You Excited About the East Quabbin Land Trust?

Like many children who live in urban or rural areas, I had numerous special places within nature that I regularly sought-out for adventure, the backdrop of my childish fantasies or as a place to be silent and observe the unfolding world around me. I was always uniquely drawn to some quality of a particular tree, spot along the stream, thicket of bushes or meadow in which I felt both able to truly “see” that place as well as be seen by it. As an adult, that childhood sense of adoration for and belonging to certain places within nature continues to rest in the deepest corners of my heart and like many adults that childlike love for places in nature has become refined by thought and awareness of the impact of modern civilization upon it.

John Goodrich, meeting facilitator, initiated this sort of reflection at an EQLT strategic planning meeting last month. He believed that through sharing some of our motivational feelings for working for the Trust we could become that much more inspired to continue this work as well as feel closer to each other. Following the ‘go-around’ there was a unique feeling of purpose and strength that reminded us of how similar some of our deepest feelings are and how important it is to preserve this small part of the world in which we live. We wanted to share with you some of what we expressed during this meeting and we invite you to add your thoughts, feelings and stories to ours.

This is what the board had to say...

Large tracts of land will be preserved rather than developed.... The land here provides a sense of character that is unique and we love it.... Beauty of the area.... Facilitating opportunities for affordable land for farmers and others who can work with the land, which is becoming a lost art in New England... To help people manifest their long term visions for their land in a way that is affordable... Create opportunities for generations of family to be able to stay in this area as it is... Preserving land for humans as well as other creatures who need open space to survive... Being a part of the solution to some of the worlds problems... Love for Quabbin area... Growing-up in a farming community and witnessing the dissolution of farms and how that affected our community and the natural beauty of our home... Proactive role to preserve the natural environment... Preserving the heritage of our New England culture and the natural environment... Preserving open space for recreational purposes... Feeling the unique beauty of this area and a very personal connection to it... Wanting to prevent environmental and cultural loss of this rich area... Looking 100 years hence, and seeing an agricultural and working village similar to what was here 100 years ago... Doing work that benefits many people... Doing work that benefits many plants and animals as well as people... Preserving land is a cause that can bridge various groups of people... Educating people in what land stewardship is about.... Preserving the comforting landscape of our fields and woods. ... Exciting to live in such a beautiful spot and wanting it to stay this way... The sense of community that is related to the small town and nature surrounding it.... Being a part of a local group making local changes that will help.

Continued on next page....

Expressing what excites us about the work of the Land Trust was gratifying. As we went around the circle voicing our thoughts, many people said, “Others have already stated what I feel.” Some of the Board members shared more personal stories related to their work. Chris Buelow, who grew-up in Hardwick, told his story of doing environmental work in places such as “southwest desert, the Dakotas, southern Appalachians and northern Rockies....The fact is that throughout these widely diverse and dramatic landscapes, the Quabbin region, for me, has grown to stand comfortably in stride as an equal on the continent.” In his own words, his childhood home felt “imprinted in his consciousness” and this, too, compelled him to return.

Rick Romano shared these feelings, “as a physician, I see my work in the land trust as a natural extension of my life work in medicine... A parcel of land that is forever wild with guaranteed protection for all forms of life that depends upon it, is a step toward planetary health. The personal and spiritual satisfaction I receive from being part of a land trust that helps to save even the smallest piece of land, is the same satisfaction I get from saving a human life in medicine. In the end, I will know that I made a difference in my life toward the protection of something as precious as life itself.”

Martha Klassanos commented, “...I remember talking about the Sunderland farm my great-grandparents settled when they immigrated from Scotland, where I spent my weekends throughout my childhood. My relatives

back then would talk about the apartments and houses that were springing up around them, and lamenting that there was no reclaiming those fields once they were developed. The farm was sold and turned into a subdivision in 1987 after my great uncle died. They would not recognize the “Happy Valley” now, and it kills me each time I drive by and see more and more suburban-style housing in that unique, incomparable, irreplaceable soil.”

Most of us can recall such a story as Chris, Rick or Martha of a special connection to a certain area, of protecting or rescuing some one or something precious or remembering the devastating impact of reckless development on a beloved field or woods. Through sharing some of these feelings and stories we hope to take one more step towards strengthening our community and purpose. We would love to hear from you about what excites you about the East Quabbin Land Trust. As Rick said, “...the planet and the life on it is a single and exceedingly complex organism species diversity and ecological balance is a sign of planetary health and well being.”

We thank you, our members, for joining us at the East Quabbin Land Trust for the health and survival of the East Quabbin region and beyond.

—Elizabeth Coe

We're asking our members next: Please tell us what excites you about the East Quabbin Land Trust. We will print your responses in a future newsletter.—Judith Jones, Editor

EQLT Board of Directors & Staff

Terry Briggs—Hardwick

Chris Buelow—Gilbertville

Elizabeth Coe—Petersham

Judith Jones—New Braintree, V.P.

Martha Klassanos—Ware, Clerk

Jerry Reilly—Hardwick

Rick Romano—Hardwick, Treasurer

Jeff Schaaf—Wheelwright

Stan White—Hardwick, President

Magi Ziff—New Braintree

Marion Cooper, Staff

Cynthia Henshaw, Executive Director

EQLT Wish List:

Laptop Computer

Floor lamps

Folding Tables

Outdoor Grill

Land Trust Alliance Tax Tip: New IRA Provisions Allowed

A little known section of the same federal bill that gave you expanded tax incentives for conservation easement donations also offers you a rare tax break when you invest in the East Quabbin Land Trust's good work.

Specifically, if you or someone you know is 70 ½ years of age or older, the new law permits you to make direct contributions from your individual retirement account to a charitable organization of your choice – up to \$100,000 in 2007. These charitable contributions can satisfy your IRA's required yearly minimum distribution and will be excluded from your federal taxable income!

One essential detail: your plan administrator must issue the check directly to the charity. And because your contribution is not taxable income, you cannot claim an additional charitable deduction. However, examples show that gifting funds directly from your IRA is one of the most tax beneficial means of charitable giving.

Consult your plan administrator and/or your tax advisors for more information about this provision of the Pension Protection Act of 2006. You can also find more information at www.lta.org/publicpolicy/factsheet_tax_planning.htm

We hope you will take advantage of this special opportunity. Your gift will greatly impact the protection of the natural places we need and love.

EQLT Upcoming Events:

Texas Hold'em down at the EQLT Saloon: January 27, 7 to 11 p.m.

Please join us for an evening of old west, saloon-style fun and poker at the New Braintree Town Hall. We will have cabaret entertainment, dessert and cash bar. Feel free to play or just enjoy the fun. Tickets are \$35 per person. There will be American Express gift cards awarded to the top three players of the evening. If you don't play poker, join the fun and enter a raffle to win dinner for two. Check your spurs and horse at the door, costumes encouraged! Call Magi Ziff at 508-867-6679 for tickets and more information.

6th Annual Gala Dinner and Silent Auction: Saturday, March 24, 6 p.m.

Please join fellow EQLT supporters at this festive dinner and silent auction to be held at the New Braintree Town Hall and catered by Reed's Catering of New Braintree. Cash bar with wine and beer available. Tickets are \$55 per person. Call Magi Ziff at 508-867-6679 if you have items for donation to the auction or to buy tickets. Don't miss this great evening!

Winter Day at Wheeler's Pastures, Hardwick, Saturday, February 3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Brook Road, meet at the bridge, just off of Prouty Road. EQLT and the Bird Club will be continuing our project of restoring early successional habitat along Moose Brook by burning the massive brush piles we made in the fall. Depending on the weather we may also be x-country skiing in the fields and skating on the old mill pond. In any event, we will enjoy the bonfires and hot cider. Please come, whatever the temperature! Bring your lunch, rakes and clippers (and skis and skates if appropriate).

East Quabbin Bird Club Activities:

Saturday, January 27, 7:30 am, Morning at Quabbin Park in Belchertown with Jerry Therrien. Meet at the Administration Building, on the south end of the Windsor Dam, just off Route 9.

Saturday, February 3, See Winter Day above.

Sunday, March 25 (time TBA) Don Kroodsmas, Author, *Singing Life of Birds*, will address the bird club. Follow this link to his appearance on "Fresh Air with Terry Gross" on NPR:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyID=4565590>

Check eastquabbinbirdclub.com for up-to-date information and scheduled field trips.

Check our website: www.eqlt.org for details on other activities...

Colleen Abrams
 Nancy Allen
 Ellen H. Anderson
 Thomas & Candace Anderson
 Bob & Carol Andrews
 James Barnes
 Nadia Beard
 Carol Belliveau
 Jason L. Benoit
 Louise Bergeron
 Patricia Bock
 Wendy & Aurelio Bolognesi
 Samuel & Isabel Bonneau
 Donald L. Boothman
 Chester Boronski
 Robert & Rebecca Bottomley
 Martha & John Bowden
 Terrence & Sarah Briggs
 John Brooks & Harri Ann Porter
 Chris Buelow & Jenna Garvey
 Jack & Achsah Campbell
 Matthew & Catherine Carr
 Eric Chivian, MD
 George Clemmer
 Arthur & Gwendolyn Clough
 Thomas & Barbara Clough
 Elizabeth H. Coe
 William Cole & Christine Greene
 Mardia Coleman
 Sue Coles
 Gail Coolidge
 Tremaine & Marion Cooper
 William J. Cote
 Karen & David Davis
 Martha Degnan
 Stephan & Gina Deibel
 Craig Della Penna
 Jean & Sue Despres
 Ed DeVenne
 John Dieckmann
 Katherine Diehl
 Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Doppelt
 Linnea M. Dreslin
 George Dresser &
 Margaret McCandless
 Marcia D. Dwelly
 Ann S. Earley
 Don & Christina Eaton
 Warren & Rachel Ehrlich
 Christopher Ellison
 Christine & Thomas Fiorelli
 Don Flye
 Douglas & Julieane Frost
 Paul Gaebens
 Donald R. Gardella
 Dorothy H. Gerrish
 Lisa & Jonathan Gill
 Ruth T. Goddard
 Celeste & Christopher Goodhue
 John C. Goodrich
 Martin P. Goulet
 Nancy B. Grimes
 Cheryl Ann & Larry Habink

Dana Harbert
 Howard Hastings
 Cynthia Henshaw
 Kathleen & Thomas Henze
 Achsah Hinckley
 Catherine & Francis Houle
 Deborah Houston &
 Lee McLaughlin
 Robert & Sara Hunt
 Gayellen Huntress
 Lewis & Nina Iadarola
 Patricia & Malcom Ide
 Dennis P. Jones
 Judith & Tim Jones
 Karen Kennan
 Peter & Dedie King
 Roger & Carolyn King
 Rebecca Kinn
 David & Annemarie Kittredge
 Jack Kittredge & Julie Rawson
 Martha & Brian Klassanos
 The Koziol Family
 Cynthia M. Lagomarsino
 Phyllis H. Lagomarsino
 Landvest, Inc.
 Judith Lane & Mark Mattson
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 Ken & Diane Mammone
 William Marshall & Sarah Falkoff
 Wallace & Linda Massey
 Deborah A. Miner
 James & Denise Moran
 Deborah Morrison
 Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust
 New England Garden Ornaments
 Candace Nichols
 Ronalie & David Nichols
 Ida Nyrstrom
 Linda & Jonathan Olken
 Robert & Barbara Page
 Robert & Linda Paquet
 Susan E. Pellegrino
 Samuel C. Pickens
 Lynne Pledger & Ridge Shinn
 Roger P. Plourde, Jr.
 Harrison & Diane Quirk
 Rose A. Rabschnuk
 Brad Raleigh
 Megan & Joe Raskett
 Red-Barre, LLC
 Susan & Edward Reed
 Jerry & Liz Reilly
 Martha Richard

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Thank
 You!

Scott Ricker
 Ray & Pam Robinson, Jr.
 Richard Romano & Lisa Nash
 Gary S. Rousseau
 Robert & Erin Roy
 Danial Salvucci & Doug Anderson
 Jeffrey S. Schaaf
 Peter A. Schmid
 Thomas & Donalyn Schofield
 Rosemary Scrivens
 Leonard Shustek
 Guido Simone
 Nancy J. Skamarycz
 Sara Small
 Jeffrey Smith
 Joyce L. Smith
 Robert A. Solari
 Doria Steedman
 Joseph Stenger, MD & Kathleen Hardie
 John & Polly Sterndale
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 Glenn & Genevieve Stillman
 Jacob & Susan Stukus
 Evelyn Swinamer
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 Hans & Virginia Thoma
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 Ledlie Woolsey
 Elizabeth & Walter Worthington
 Edward P. & Grace M. Yaglou
 Magi & Howard Ziff
 James & Aurea Zuberbuhler

Foundations

Anonymous Foundation
 Fields Pond Foundation
 Greater Worcester Community Founda-
 tion/Water & Land Stewardship Fund
 Hardwick-New Braintree Cultural Council
 Mass Riverways/Adopt-a-Stream Program
 New England Grassroots Environmental Fund
 Quabaug Charitable Foundation

In-kind Support

Bourgeois, Dresser, White & Beard
 Chase Pre-cast Concrete
 R.N. Glidden Landscaping Service
 Haston Free Public Library
 J&S Enterprises

P.O. Box 5
120 Ridge Road
Hardwick, MA 01037

Phone/Fax: (413) 477-8229
www.EQLT.org
Email: eqlt@comcast.net

"Conserving the land, preserving our character."

Our Mission :

The East Quabbin Land Trust exists to conserve the natural, historical, agricultural, and recreational character of our region. To this end we gather resources, educate, and develop and implement land-protection strategies.

119 Acre Tract of Land Conserved in Hardwick— Thank you Achsah Hinckley!

Achsah Hinckley recently provided the catalyst for the conservation of 119 acres in Hardwick. The mostly wooded parcel was sold to the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG) with the assurance that the land will be kept open and available to the public. The additional land enlarges the Muddy Brook Wildlife Management Area.

Achsah and her husband bought the house on 347 Greenwich Road back in 1957 when she was pregnant with her fourth child. The house was built in 1862 for the Paige family, and had remained in that family until the Hinckleys bought it from Eleanor Rogers, whose mother was a Paige.

The Hinckley family enjoyed their land thoroughly. The kids spent their summers camping in the woods and hiking along country trails. In the fall, they hunted in their hardwood and pine forest. Growing up in a rural town with little traffic and few residents, they developed a healthy love of their land and a desire to keep it that way.



Achsah remembers the beautiful sunrises and sunsets along the ridge. She appreciates God's beauty in every new day. She loves Hardwick doesn't want to see changes in its small town feeling.

After six years of illness, her husband died in 1981. Before he died her husband said, "Never sell the land to be developed." She was determined to keep that promise. Achsah thought about giving the land away, but the land was too valuable. After having conversations with the East Quabbin Land Trust, Achsah agreed that a bargain sale to the DFG would provide enough cash, give her an income tax deduction, and most importantly, conserve the land forever. The EQLT facilitated the effort by covering the survey cost until the land was sold and Achsah reimbursed the EQLT.

—Cynthia Henshaw