

# LAND LEGACY

A NEWSLETTER OF THE KENNEBUNK LAND TRUST



## Bringing People and Place Together

by Isabel Lescure



Land Trust: There are two distinct definitions of a Land Trust.

- A private, non-profit organization, that as all or part of its mission, actively works to conserve land by undertaking or assisting in land or conservation easement acquisition, or by its stewardship of such land or easements;
- or an agreement whereby one party (the trustee) agrees to hold ownership of a piece of real property for the benefit of another party (the beneficiary). At the Kennebunk Land Trust we do both.

The trustee/beneficiary relationship is a very important bond and one that I, as the Chair of the Development

Committee, take very seriously. The Board of Directors carries the fiduciary responsibility to use the assets of the Land Trust wisely and to advance the Trust's mission. KLT's mission is to permanently conserve and steward land to benefit natural and human communities.

We like to think we are responsive to the needs of the

communities we serve. Some of the significant ways we do this are by providing no cost public access to KLT preserves for year-round and seasonal users to enjoy, by providing opportunities for more and varied people to be involved, and by strengthening connections to nature and to oneself.

The work of the Trust comes with a cost. As a non-profit organization, the Land Trust relies on your generosity. It is through your membership and participation in our annual appeal, fundraisers, estate planning and bequests that we meet our operating expenses and have the ability to acquire land and easements. Financial sustainability is a core responsibility that we at the Kennebunk Land Trust continually work to achieve. Only by reaching that goal can we continue to do the work that is so necessary to bring people and place together.

## Sewall Grant Award

Delighted we are to announce a three-year award from The Elmina B. Sewall Foundation. This Operations Grant will be used to sustain and strengthen the infrastructure of the Trust. We are privileged to be a part of Mrs. Sewall's legacy and grateful for the Foundation's consideration.

"Here is lesson:  
What happens to  
people and what  
happens to the land  
is the same thing."

Linda Hogan

# Landscapes

by Marie Louise St. Onge

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## Newsletter Design

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When I was a kid, bamboo grew its lanky legs in the ledge across the street from the front door of my two-family house. Out the back door, “Old Man Turcotte,” who was the grumpiest man I ever met except for my own uncle, had the biggest yard around – filled with lilacs in springtime. And, next to that sat Bradt’s Cracker Factory, a low-slung, one-story shingled place. There were as many pigeons in the eaves of that factory as there were cigarette-smoking men inside. Big hot furnaces loaded with coal and wide flat paddle boards, those were the tools used to make tasty soda crackers.

Once a week, “Rag Man” came by riding his horse-drawn cart, he’d call *rags, rags, rags* while the wheels of his wooden wagon clacked down the cobblestone street. I never missed the chance to watch him, but only through the window. Mr. Descheneaux, wearing a blue-grey striped jumpsuit, delivered the only milk we drank, drawn from the warm bodies of cows grazing his big back 40. And Pearl, the lady at the water company, logged our family’s payment for water that my mother and I hand-delivered once a month; she wrote it down in an enormous leather-bound ledger that was almost as big as she was.

I had one aunt that stopped seeing when she was 18 years old and another who was so badly burned by boiling water as a small girl that the tip of her chin was attached by flesh to the top of her neck. My cousin couldn’t hear a word, so I learned young to speak to him with my hands – it seemed like a form of singing to me. I had another cousin who was a little nuts and he was as free as a bird.



In Lowell, dandelions grew in the sidewalk cracks and milkweed tufts floated up and out of the pit where the elderly housing building now stands. We played outside until the streetlights lit up, and every day was another adventure, another chance to make up the rules, another shot at fun: kick-the-can, red light, pick-up baseball games, baby dolls napping in the grass, snow sledding, king of the mountain, and more.

We moved to the top of the hill in the Acre section of the city at around the same time an urban renewal project bulldozed “Little Canada” the area that, up until that point, had been the center of my school and church life. I thought we had become exotic when we moved, because at the top of that hill my neighbors were not all like me. One family was Irish, another Syrian, some Protestant, and another two houses were filled with Greeks who’d arrived just months earlier from Ptolemaida, Greece. At Easter, amazingly, they cooked a whole lamb in the driveway – only the eyes missing, and whining music that I’d never before heard spilled from the windows just like ouzo from glasses. My life most certainly changed with that move.

My first landscape consisted of the ledge, the gravel parking lot of the cracker factory, and the sidewalks which, to me, seemed like acres of great playing space. It was all I knew. When we moved to the hill, I experienced my second landscape; it included a beautiful garden in my own yard that swelled in spring with peonies, delphinium, larkspur, and eventually the tomatoes my Dad planted. My territory also included the North Common with its enormous oak and maple trees to lean on, hide behind, and where I got my first kiss. On Sundays, we'd travel to my cousins in Westford, MA and for hours we'd roam through cow pastures, poison ivy patches, play hide 'n seek, hideout in barns sweet with hay, or swing until our dirty little sneakers touched the clouds.

Later, when I moved to Greater Boston, the Arnold Arboretum, Boston Common, and Mount Auburn Cemetery were favorite places to sit, see beauty, and think. And, a still later landscape was my owning and living on 16 acres at the end of a dirt road on the side of a mountain in southwestern New Hampshire. I made a life there that marked me in significant ways; I learned to ready the wood for winter and then heat myself and my home with that wood, I learned to read the weather and become a better observer, I learned patience and grew food, I wrote, and I thrived in a small rural community where we all knew a lot about each other's business and held a reverence for it.

Why am I telling this story? I'm telling this story because I believe that the places that mark us are the places that mean the most to us. As you can perhaps sense, the stories that continue to press into

my memory have much to do with people, yes, but all of them "play out" on a stage and that stage is what I call landscape.

My work with Kennebunk Land Trust began 14 years ago this week. Initially, I thought my experiences in rural Westford, MA and in that remote section of New Hampshire were the ones that made me most affiliate with the goals and ideals of my land conservation work. But the longer I do this work, the more deeply I understand how utterly formative and important the ground under our feet is. No matter where we stand now or where we came from, our personal experience is tied to our "landscape." Our relationships, our losses, loves, successes, family...they are all tied to us. The ledge, the city sidewalk, the gravel parking lot, they all shaped me just as much as the apple orchard, the climb up the mountain, and the rolling pristine meadow.

When we speak about the connection of people to place, we are speaking about story – my story, your story, everyone's story. For as many people as there are like me in the world, there are likewise as many or more who are not like me. Maybe they're like you. Maybe they're not like either of us.

For 42 years, Kennebunk Land Trust has continuously tried to bring people to the land, toward and onto ground that is unspoiled and ready to be a canvas for a life, available for each and every

one of us to enjoy. Whether it's the field you ran through as a kid or the sidewalk you chalked, something happened to you in that place. Whether shooting hoops on the corner lot or singing on the front stoop, paddling a canoe or flying a kite, being in the out of doors influenced your ideas about yourself, about the world, and about what you believed possible, it marked you. And so will the place you stand today.

Kennebunk Land Trust invites you to join us and be a part of this community in any way that feels right for you: take a walk, join a committee, volunteer, write a letter, call us – tell us what you think. We want and need your help and participation as we continue to identify meaningful ways to connect people to place. We want you to see yourself in our work.



Marie Louise St. Onge  
Executive Director



# Maine Master Naturalist Grads

by Dorcas Miller

On the first day of the course, Gordon Collins and Tony Liguori walked into the classroom an hour early and asked if they could help. This offer, which became a habit, exemplified their approach to the Maine Master Naturalist Program's year-long training. They arrived early, set up tables, set out collections, took advantage of pre-class opportunities, and actively participated in every aspect of classroom instruction and field events. They also stayed when class was over to pack up collections and take down tables.

"I'd never met them, but immediately knew who they were when they walked in," says course co-director and board member Susan Hayward. "I greeted them by name. That early connection developed into rapport and respect as we shared our mutual enthusiasm for the wonders of Maine's natural history. They were two extraordinary students."

Gordon and Tony came to the program with different skills and interests. Tony, a Master Maine Guide, had logged considerable time in the woods and on the water. He had first-hand knowledge of Maine's game animals, and his contributions during class revealed a keen eye and long practice. In addition, he had observed the seasons unfold in an annual cycle – the bigger picture, in which individual species come together to form a habitat and an ecosystem. For the capstone project that each student must complete, Tony developed a series of presentations on Maine game and non-game mammals that he can take to schools, parks, libraries and other sites.

Gordon arrived with an insatiable curiosity in addition to a corporate background and frame of mind that proved useful to him and other participants. "Especially toward the end of the course, he was able to look at the bigger picture beyond the immediate lesson, to the organizational structure and needs. His thoughtful observations and suggestions were helpful to the class and the board," said Susan Hayward. Plus, Gordon attended every optional seminar

offered to current students and grads alike: lichen identification in the lab and the field, bone biology, map making, activities and approaches for teaching natural history, and glacial geology in Washington County. For his Capstone Project, Gordon developed a trail guide to Kennebunk Land Trust's Wonder Brook Preserve; eventually, the print guide will be extended as an interactive virtual guide.

The mission of the Maine Master Naturalist Program is to train participants in natural history and pedagogy, preparing them to be volunteer natural history teachers in their home communities throughout the state. Each year-long, 80-hour course covers an extensive range of topics; participants are expected to devote substantial time – in the range of 120 hours – to homework, individual study and a capstone project. In the year following certification, each graduate is obligated to provide 40 hours of volunteer service to a conservation nonprofit, school or park.



More than 90 individuals have graduated from the program, attending courses at Chewonki Foundation in Wiscasset, Bates College in Lewiston, Belfast, Maine Audubon's center at Gilsland Farm in Falmouth, and its center at Fields Pond in Holden. Through 2013, Maine Master Naturalist Volunteers

volunteered more than 1,200 hours at a wide variety of parks, nature centers, schools and land trusts.

For more information about the program, check the organization's website at [www.mainemasternaturalist.org](http://www.mainemasternaturalist.org). Course location(s) are posted at the beginning of February.

From all of us at KLT,  
**CONGRATULATIONS** Gordon and Tony!

# Annual Report to Community

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We are pleased to announce that on Wednesday, September 24th, the Board of Directors and staff will host an evening of stories and refreshment. Local humorist, Joe Foster, will entertain as only he can do with funniness and commentary to leave us all smiling. Joe is well known throughout the community and beyond having taught at Kennebunk High School for 38 years, for 25 of those years he served as Chair of the English Department. He has served on several non-profit Boards including So. Maine Medical Center Visiting Nurses, the So. Congretational Church, and he was a founding member of the Brickstore Museum and the Cherryfield-Narraguagus Historical Society. In 1999, he was named Citizen of the Year by the Kennebunk-Kennebunkport Chamber of Commerce. Joe grew up in the small Down East town of Cherryfield, Maine, where he graduated from Cherryfield Academy in a class of six (yes, 6!)

After retiring from KHS, Joe began teaching as an adjunct English instructor at York County Community College. He teaches Introduction to Literature, Oral Communications, and a very popular history of W.W.II class, which has the distinction of being the only class at the college where the guest speakers are all between 87 and 92 years old!

He is often an after dinner speaker, toastmaster, and MC at various events. He has done many radio and television commercials over the years, he appeared in a Paramount film called Hot Pursuit, playing (what else?!) a teacher, was a prominent photo on the wall in a scene from Empire Falls, and was featured in the premier of a 90s soap opera called Passions.

Plan to join us for a fun and funny evening at the Program Center of the Brick Store Museum on Dane St. in Kennebunk. RSVP requested on or before September 15<sup>th</sup> to the KLT office: 985-8734.



Join us and support our local farmers. And, when you buy your tomatoes, grab a t-shirt too! For several weeks over the summer, Kennebunk Land Trust will have a table at the Kennebunk Farmers' Market. Stop by to say hello and check out our great t-shirts and hats! Every Saturday, from 8am to 1pm, rain or shine!



# 2014 Auction

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We are happy to report that our Fourteenth Annual Dinner and Auction, held Friday, May 2nd, was another wonderful success. Friends, old and new, enjoyed a fun evening at The Coastal House that included silent and live auctions as well as delicious hors d'oeuvres and dinner. Bidding was all abuzz on everything from Culebra to Hawaii thanks to our outstanding donors. We could never do what we do without you – thank you!

We hope you'll plan to be with us again next year when we hold our Fifteenth Annual Dinner and Auction on Friday, May 1st, 2015! Call the KLT office anytime to discuss making an auction donation and/or advertising in our auction program. We'd love to have your support and your ideas.



*Kennebunk Land Trust*

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