



Joshua's Tract

Conservation and Historic Trust, Inc.



FALL 2012

www.joshuaslandtrust.org

Ashford: A Strong Partner In Conserving Open Space

“Open space” is not an unfamiliar concept to Ashford.

Over 35 percent of its land is in open space – an unusual amount for one town. Another 25 percent is permanently protected from development.

While the Natchaug State Forest, private camps, and the Yale Forest comprise the largest part, over 600 acres in the town are under the direct protection of Joshua's Trust, and a number of other properties have easements that prevent their ever being developed.

One of the first properties that the Trust protected is here – the Ashford Oak. Back in 1972, about six years after the beginning of the Trust, the organization was asked to help look after one of nation's largest trees.

Unfortunately, the tree was already in decline, but over the past 40 years, the Trust has ensured that it is appropriately protected. Another historical property is the Josiah Byles Sanctuary off of Route 44, which has the original homestead dating from 1726.

Several properties are shared with

others. The Church Farm's house and barn are under the aegis of Eastern Connecticut State University, while the Trust maintains the trails that wind through the property.

Under the leadership of the current first selectman, Ralph Fletcher, the town purchased development rights to several area farms.

Because Ashford is not an affluent town, its leaders sought out Joshua's Trust as a partner, along with the Department of Agriculture, to ensure that the former Croke Orchards (now Horse Whisperer's Farm) as well as the Knowlton property remain forever development-free.

More recently, the Trust supported the town along with the Connecticut Farmland Trust to attain the development rights to the Haberman property, which has over 230 acres.

Of course, all this could not happen in Ashford without dedicated citizens. There are actually more Trust members per population in Ashford than in any other town.

Continuing a long tradition of vol-

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Trust scenes in Ashford: The entrance to Fliegel Farm Woods (top), the fields of Church Farm (center), and the path into Josias Byles Sanctuary.

Stewardship Chair Joan Hill Steps Aside After Setting High Standard

Joan Hill, who thought she was going to chair the stewardship committee for only a year, has passed her duties on to Dan Donohue -- after serving since 2007.

During her tenure she tirelessly worked to ensure that all the Trust properties were well-managed, while publi-

cizing their unique characteristics through the Trust web site and this newsletter. Because of her commitment, she has inspired the many stewards to better maintain our properties. Her numerous, professional-quality photos will continue to motivate the community to visit these pro-

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The value of a positive image. See our president's remarks on Page 2.



Joshua's Tract Conservation And Historic Trust, Inc.

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OFFICERS:

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Conservation Coordinator: Stephanie Clark
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Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust was formed in 1966 to receive gifts of money and land, or to buy land of historic, aesthetic, or scientific value, for the benefit of future generations.

The Trust protects over 4,100 acres in the region, maintains trails which are open to the public, and publishes *The Joshua's Tract Walk Book*.

The office is located in the historic Eagleville Schoolhouse, South Eagleville Rd., in Mansfield.

Office hours: Thurs. 1:30-3:30 pm.
Phone: 860-429-9023



The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

Maintaining A Positive Image For Centuries Into The Future

I started writing this column while summering at one of the 1,000 Islands. Summering is what my ancestors called it when spending time on the St. Lawrence River.

I've been doing the same thing for 70 years and am thus qualified to call myself a River Rat. And, every year a new generation of River Rats begins to learn about and love what is always referred to simply as *The River*.

How many hundreds of years has this majestic river been offering enjoyment and service to the millions who spend time on it?

That should be the question facing inhabitants of this planet in the centuries to come when the subject of Joshua's Trust is on the table.

Wouldn't it be interesting if we could hear what they were saying?

Well, it would be terrific if what they were saying was positive, but it wouldn't be much fun if their comments were negative and unappealing.

That's where we come in.

Look at the accomplishments we've achieved since a small group met to establish the Trust in 1966.

Every year we've increased our holdings and our membership. But, we did more than that.

We developed management plans for our properties and baseline reports for our easements. We stewarded our properties, built trails, cleared land and dealt with invasive plants. We strengthened our relationships with easement owners.

We developed policies for fiscal controls, processing land donations and easements, conflicts of interest, codes of ethics for the Board and fundraising to name a few. We received our accreditation from the [Land Trust Accreditation Commission](#).

With every passing year, we've become stronger and better organized. Our name is well known within

the land trust world.

In short we're on the right path -- the one that will lead to positive enjoyment and service in the centuries to come.

But, we cannot stop here. We need more members, more volunteers, more Board members, more visibility. We need to ensure that the words surrounding Joshua's Trust are always positive.

Come aboard!

REFLECTIONS ON THIS AND THAT

By Allison Burchell-Robinson

Joshua's Trust President



Resting on The River

Isabelle Atwood, Trust Founding Member, 1918-2012

As we went to press, we regretfully learned of the death of Isabelle Atwood, a founding member, and chair of the Gristmill. She died at her home after a short illness. At her request, there will be no memorial service. A tribute to her will be published in the winter newsletter.

Ashford Contributes Greatly To Joshua Trust's Greatness

Continued from Page One

unteering at the Trust, current Ashford members include the president, the web master, and the chair of the land acquisition and planning committee as well as a board of trustee member.

Many former volunteers also came from Ashford. Two of the more prominent are the Pinkhams, who have also given over 80 acres in conservation easements.

As stated in the town's Plan of Conservation and Development (2005), Ashford's greatest strength is its "still unspoiled rural character that is reflected in its forests, farm fields, historic buildings, and unique landscapes."

With over 10 percent of its own holdings in Ashford, Joshua's Trust is an important partner with the town in helping to maintain this uniqueness.

Here's a list of all the Trust properties in Ashford.

For location and access information on each, visit the Trust website.

Church Farm
Friedman Memorial Forest
Josias Byles Sanctuary
Tinkerville Brook
Iron Mine Valley
Fliegel Farm Woods
Ashford Oak
Colts Pond Road Preserve
Ironmine Mine Valley II
Huntington Hill Lot
Hastings Memorial Forest
Burchell-Harris Preserve
Rankin Property
Whiting Lot

More Stewardship News

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tected areas.

More recently, the Trust has acquired three new parcels in the southeastern part of our territory, and, to date, we have not found stewards for them. They are: Bowers – 24 acres off Route 97 in Scotland, Hemphill -- 45 acres on Old Canterbury Road in Hampton, and Stone -- 17 acres off Route 6 in Hampton. If you are interested in the job or know of someone who might be, please get in touch with Stephanie Clark at the Trust office.

An interpretive kiosk and bench have been installed at an overlook at the Windham Atlantic White Cedar Bog. There is a 300-foot trail leading from our sign at the frontage on Route. 6 (just east of Tractor Supply) to the viewpoint. Please stop by for a look.

Benches have also been installed at two overlooks at Allanach-Wolf Woods in Windham. The first is a short walk from the parking area (past our new butterfly garden) to the lakeshore. The other is at the end of the turnaround at the end of the paved driveway. Now you can enjoy the serenity of the surroundings in comfort.

Agnes' Pasture Dedicated In A Fitting Ceremony

The dedication of Agnes' Pasture in Chaplin was held on the evening of June 13 at the Pasture.

Former Trust president Warren Church led a group of 22 on a walk from Garrison Field through Hubbard Sanctuary to the property.

Another 13 people joined the group at the Pasture for the dedication. Warren gave a brief tribute to donor Agnes Fuller and history of the land.

This was followed by refreshments which consisted of apple cider, coffee and doughnut holes. (Agnes was famous for her homemade doughnuts.)



Warren Church with Agnes Fuller prior to her death in April, 2011.

NEW LEADERSHIP :The Board of Trustees added three new members during the summer, to replace recent retirements and resignations: Doug Hughes from Storrs, Jim Russel from Windham, and Gay Wagner from Hampton.

JOSHUA'S TRACT
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Joshua's Trust Provides Plenty To Do... ...When You Want To Go Out And About

On Third Thursday...

Don't forget to look for the Joshua's Trust table at Willimantic's famed Third Thursday – the last one will be on Sept. 20. We will also be at the Mansfield on the Green celebration on Sunday, Sept. 23.

On an occasional hike...

Looking for an excuse to get out and enjoy our region with others? Marcia Kilpatrick and Sarah Stratton have monthly walks – days and time vary – please check the website (www.joshuaslandtrust.org).

Or for a 'Walktober' event...

"Walktober" – What was once a weekend has become a month of walks and other outdoor and indoor activities in the "Quiet Corner." The Trust is sponsoring two of the walks on Saturday, Oct. 13 – but you will have to choose as both begin at 10 a.m.

In Ashford at the Josiah Byles Sanctuary on Route 44 the emphasis will be on the biodiversity and the effects of glaciations. **In Coventry** at the Wolf Farm on Flanders Road, the theme is invasive plants – how to recognize and how to destroy. You must register for this one as there are a limited number of participants. Please call Jasmine Wolf at 860-742-5253 or email her at jbidsing@aol.com.

For more walks and activities during October go to the [Last Green Valley website](#).

