

Trust Acquires Knowlton Parcel

An anonymous donor generously funded the \$20,000 purchase of 8.6 acres adjacent to the Natchaug Forest in Ashford.

The property, known as the Knowlton Parcel, is located off Lipps Road on a discontinued road. The property is an important acquisition because the Blue Trail runs along the southern border and will now be permanently protected.

Richard Hyde, Vice President for Land Acquisition,

described the land as wooded with outcrops of rock and boulders, a very picturesque section of trail.

The effort to protect land such as the Knowlton Parcel is in keeping with the Trust's initiative to protect properties that border existing preserves. The Land Acquisition and Planning Committee in 2001 proposed that the Trust develop a pro-active land acquisition policy designed to create and expand large areas of open space that are needed for habitat protection.

Church Farm Field Station Enriching Student Understanding

"If these fields and streams and woods, the phenomena of nature here, and the simple occupations of the inhabitants should cease to interest and inspire me, no culture or wealth would atone for the loss."

By Dr. Scott R. Smedley

In this journal entry penned in March of 1856, Henry David Thoreau's fascination with New England's environment shines.

The Trinity College Field Station at Church Farm, a partnership between the College and Joshua's Trust, made possible through the generosity of Dorothy and Joe Zaring, attempts to foster such an appreciation in present-day observers of the natural world. This piece serves as the first of what will be a regular newsletter feature devoted to the Field Station and its activities.

As highlights from this fall's events at the Church Farm attest, both teaching and research at the Field Station further understanding of the natural world and promote a fascination with its intricacies. Two first-year seminars, one focused on invasive species and the other on the interactions of insects and people, launched freshmen into scientific investigation at the Field Station.

This year the Tutorial College, a flagship program that engages 40 select sophomores in interdisciplinary inquiry, has an environmental emphasis to its science

component. Besides their analyses of the current Church Farm environment, these students have also considered the site's land use history.

Several projects this autumn are links in our ongoing documentation of the Field Station's biodiversity. Michael O'Donnell, Trinity's wildlife ecologist, has devoted much of a sabbatical to his mammalian survey work, while Joan Morrison, our conservation biologist, continues long-term avian monitoring.

Students in the botany course are actively describing the Church Farm's mosses, while those in Ecology are documenting several faunas: centipedes and millipedes, true bugs, and moths.

This Field Station column will continue to examine how the Church Farm instills a fascination with the natural world akin to that of Thoreau's. The next issue will feature Sarah Arnold, a Trinity senior, with an extensive record of research and course work at the Field Station. Sarah is a recent recipient of the nation's most prestigious award for undergraduate scientists, the Barry Goldwater Scholarship.





Joshua's Tract Conservation And Historic Trust, Inc.

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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.

It is designed to supplement the open space efforts of federal, state and local governments. The Trust protects over 3,000 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: 980-429-9023

This newsletter is published three times each year.

Volunteers Are The Trust's Core

But It's Time for A Part-Time Professional Staffer

Heartfelt thanks to all who have responded to the annual appeal. My hope is that as contributions continue to come in at year's end, Joshua's Trust will be financially able to hire its first part-time professional staff person. The day-to-day job of coordinating all of the Trust's activities has grown beyond the scope of what a volunteer can do.

Even with a paid staffer, the bulk of the Trust's work will continue to be performed by volunteers. A core of officers and others devote hours each week to running the key committees such as conservation easements, finance, land acquisition, membership, and stewardship.

Dozens more help regularly with monitoring easements, maintaining properties and trails, producing the newsletter, bookkeeping, guiding at the Gristmill, maintaining records, helping with special events, and performing countless other tasks.

These many volunteers bring an energy and enthusiasm to the Trust that cannot be replaced by hired help.

A Note From
The President



Madge Manfred

Aren't we lucky to live in a region with such a strong sense of community service?

The coming year will bring some exciting opportunities for conservation and will require us to substantially broaden our membership. Each member needs to encourage others to join, which is easy to do by referring them to the Trust website.

Some of our members have purchased gift memberships for friends and neighbors, which is a fine holiday remembrance. If you are unsure of whether someone is already a member, a call to the office (429-9023) will provide the answer.

Enjoy the coming holidays!

Nearly \$19 Million In Grant Money Available

Good news for conservation in Connecticut came this past summer.

The legislature's biennial bonding package included \$12.5 million for the Open Space Matching Grants program, and a new transaction fee will bring an estimated \$6.5 million annually, part of which will go to the Department of Environmental Protection for the Open Space Grants program.

In past years, Joshua's Trust has successfully partnered with the Town of Mansfield in making application

for the Open Space Grants. Having a non-profit community organization such as Joshua's Trust improves chances of getting a grant.

In an effort to assist other towns in obtaining these grants, Joshua's Trust has sent a letter to conservation and open space chairs in our service area.

In addition to helping towns think creatively about how to fund open space, the Trust will use its modest resources to help leverage funds that towns have available.



Walk Book's New Edition Makes A Great Gift

The new, Fourth Edition of the *Joshua's Tract Walk Book* by Sam Dodd makes an excellent gift for anyone who enjoys the outdoors.

The Fourth Edition has information on the many new properties that have been acquired by the Trust during the last several years, as well as new trails on other properties. There are 15 new trails or extensions of old trails. In addition to Trust properties, the Walk Book contains information on open space areas owned by state and local



Author Sam Dodd signs a Walk Book for Betty Robinson

agencies, regional hiking trails, and canoeing in eastern Connecticut.

The book can be purchased at the Mansfield Community Center, most Town Clerk's offices, the UConn Coop, the Willimantic Food Coop, Nassiff's, and the Windham Textile Museum, and Edmonson's Farm Stand in Coventry.

The book can also be ordered by sending a check for \$17 to Joshua's Trust, P.O. Box 4, Mansfield Center, CT 06250. Use the form on this newsletter's back page.

Grist Mill Survives October's Torrential Rain Nicely

The Gurleyville Grist Mill held up well against this fall's torrential rains.

Although there was water in the mill itself, it receded quickly once the rain stopped. At their highest point, the Fenton River's floodwaters covered the garden and the lower field, and though it never went over the bridge, came within only a few inches of doing so.

Mill attendants took lots of pictures to document the event.

Thanks to the following people who spend Sunday

afternoons as Mill guides: Jane Blanshard, Rob Munnhall, Gordon and Pat Mochel, Quentin and Margaret Kessel, Allen Barstow, Win and Dolores Hilding, Steve Noonan, Bob Pirrie and Jen Stone, Albert and Arlene Gray, Bruce Clouette, Julie Sherman, Dale Cloud, Mary Feathers, Jan Muller and Shoshana Levinson.

Also thanks to Ric Mercier and Virginia Walton who lived in the miller's house for eight years and who now have their own farm in Chaplin. They set up the initial list of volunteers.

Grist Mill volunteers and friends pose on the mill's porch Oct. 16 after their end-of-season dinner at the Wilbur Cross home across the street. The porch was recently taken down and rebuilt.



Mail form and check made out to: Joshua's Trust, P.O. Box 4, Mansfield Center, CT 06250.

_____ Copies of Joshua's Trust Walk Book @ \$17 each Total enclosed _____

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Membership expires at the end of the calendar year. Sending your renewal now will save us the cost of mailing a reminder later. Thank you for your support.

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