



Site Lines

WINTER/SPRING 2010

**SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST**

MATHIAS OPPERSDORFF MEMORIAL PHOTO CONTEST SKLT ANNUAL MEETING, RECEPTION AND EXHIBITION SUNDAY APRIL 11, 2010

Do you have a favorite scene that summarizes the natural beauty of South Kingstown? Grab your camera, and enter your favorite photo in our Mathias Oppersdorff Memorial Photo Contest. 'Mo', as he was known to his friends, helped us with our first photo contest and was the judge for the event. Mo passed away on January 26th, at the age of 75. His legacy as a nationally known photographer will be on display at the photo contest.

The Contest: SKLT is proud of the 'sense of place' that is South Kingstown. To celebrate our diverse habitats and vistas we are encouraging amateur photographers to enter their favorite photographs into our photo contest and exhibition. Photos must be taken within the South Kingstown boundaries. Photos will be displayed at the Barn, 17 Matunuck Beach Road, at our 27th Annual Meeting on Sunday April 11, 2010, starting at 3 pm.

Who May Enter: Any amateur photographer of any age.

Format/Restrictions: All photos must fit in an 8" x 10" mat. WE WILL MAT YOUR PHOTOS FOR YOU! Framed photos will not be accepted. Photos may be in color or black and white. There must not be any writing on the front of the photo. Each contestant is limited to three entries.

Registration: On a piece of paper affixed securely to the back of the photo, please print your name, telephone number, e-mail address, the subject matter of the photo, and date and location of where it was taken.

Fees: There is a \$10 per photo entry fee. Make checks payable to SKLT.

Deadline: Photos must be received by Friday April 2, 2010. Photos and entry fee may be sent to: South Kingstown Land Trust, 313 Main Street Suite C, Wakefield, RI 02879. For more information, please call Claudia at 789-0962.

Exhibit: The photos will be judged prior to the opening and photos will be judged by everyone who visits the show on April 11 to determine the "People's Choice" award. There will be prizes for the top three winners and the People's Choice. Photos may be reproduced and later displayed by SKLT.



Photo: Claudia Swain

Trustees Paul Schurman and Kathleen Hahn

LAND PROTECTION PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN 2009

The big news in land protection for SKLT in 2009 was the preservation of the 41 acre Carpenter Farm in Perryville – a project that had been in the making for over seven years. We are grateful that finally the stars aligned and we were able to coordinate the landowner's needs, available funding sources and an outpouring of community support to get the project done.

Land protection work in a community-based organization like SKLT happens on a small scale as well as the larger, newspaper-worthy projects. SKLT closed on four other projects in 2009, all small properties, but ones that will make a difference in the neighborhoods where they are located. Two projects are in Green Hill – one is an easement donation on a lot on the pond. The other, a project on which SKLT worked in conjunction with The Nature Conservancy, which negotiated the purchase of six lots, two of which are now owned by SKLT, some on the beach and some on the north side of the pond. These projects will prevent at least four septic systems from being built near Green Hill Pond, which has struggled for years from impaired water quality due to dense residential development.

One lot at a time is really how we do our work and make a difference – sometimes in big lots, but sometimes in small ones. Our other closings in 2009 were an easement donation in Kingston – helping to protect the

historic neighborhood just East of the URI campus – and in Indian Lake Shores, a fee donation of a forested lot with some wetlands. We thank all these landowners and our conservation partner agencies for another successful year in land conservation in South Kingstown.

As we look forward to 2010, we acknowledge substantial challenges in funding for land conservation on the state and local levels. Yet opportunities continue to arise, and we are busy at work on a number of projects. If your family has wondered about how to protect your land, this would be a great time to begin to learn more, and start planning. Contact Joanne at 789-0962 or joanne.riccitelli@sklt.org.



Carpenter Farm in Perryville

Photo: Don Bousquet & Son Photography

MORE TRAILS AND TRAIL WALKS

A major focus of SKLT's land management efforts this winter and early spring is to expand our inventory of trails available for your enjoyment. Now that the leaves are down, our crews are clearing a mile of new trail additions to the 2.75 mile DuVal trail in Perryville. The new loop swings off to the left of the original entry trail and crosses the dramatic hills and vales of the Charlestown terminal moraine, through white oak forest, laurel copses, and a nearly unbroken carpet of low-bush blueberry and huckleberry, before rejoining the trail near Polly's Rock.

At Weeden Farm, a new 1.75-mile open fields trail has been prepared to lead hikers along the stone wall perimeter of pastures and corn fields of the 100-acre farm, beginning and ending at SKLT's Barn at 17 Matunuck Beach Road. Another new feature will be a loop on the Strange-Alderwick pathway leading through a section of the Matunuck Hills oak and beech woodland, and secluded kettle ponds. If you'd like to help with these projects, join our work crew! Contact the office at 789-0962 or jane.baumann@sklt.org.

Our schedule of guided walks with ecologist Claudia Swain and land manager Clarkson Collins will begin on March 28th with a walk on the lovely nature trail at the Crawley Preserve on Glen Rock Road in Usquepaugh. This property, consisting of two parcels, one owned by SKLT and the other by Richmond Rural Preservation Land Trust, features rock outcrops,

beech forests, and a trail that bridges one of the tributary brooks of the Usquepaug River.

On May 16th we will walk the 2.75-mile Browning Woods Trail located on Shannock Road, with its diverse landscape of wetlands, pine barren, white pine, mixed hardwood forest, and historical sites. On June 6th we will walk the 2-mile Yawgoo Pond Trail, which leads from Barber's pond road across a shallow stream into a stately stand of mature white pine, past a 19th century graveyard, and down to the nearly untouched Yawgoo Pond. In July we will visit the Strange-Alderwick woods path, and perhaps more.

Look for announcements for August and September hikes in our summer newsletter. Register for any of our guided walks at jane.baumann@sklt.org or call 789-0962. Further information on meeting place and time will be given upon registration.

Aside from the guided walks, you are welcome to check the SKLT website at www.sklt.org and use the down-loadable hiking trails maps to plan an adventure of your own. Happy Trails to you; we hope to meet again!



Interspecies mingling at last fall's hike to the Bliss property

Photo: Claudia Swain

Work Crew Volunteers Needed!

The time has come to formalize our volunteer efforts. Our new Land Operations Coordinator, Michael Bontecou, will be leading a group of volunteers on a regular weekly basis - into the forests, onto the trails, along the stone walls, and everywhere else there is work to be done! Please join this crew by signing up now. You will receive a weekly e-mail providing details of the week's project. Once the group forms, it will set its own schedule. Rumor has it that Mike wants to prepare a new trail as the first project! Please reply to Jane at jane.baumann@sklt.org.

Save These Dates - Events at SKLT Barn (unless noted)

Feb. 13, 27	English Country Dances, 7:30 – 10:30pm
Mar. 13, 27	English Country Dances, 7:30 - 10:30 pm
Mar. 27	RI Land & Water Conference at URI, 8:30 - 4 pm; visit www.landandwaterpartnership.org for details and registration
Mar. 28	Crawley Preserve hike, meet at the site at 1 pm*
Apr. 10	English Country Dances, 7:30 - 10:30 pm
Apr. 11	Photo Contest & Annual Meeting, 3 - 5 pm
Apr. 17	Wildflower Walk & Talk, 10 am*
May 1	English Country Dance, 7:30 - 10:30 pm
May 16	Browning Woods hike, 2 pm*
June 6	Yawgoo Pond hike, 1 pm*
July 11	Perryville Days
July 25	Alderwick property hike, 3 pm*

* Please call 789-0962 or email jane.baumann@sklt.org to register

COME LEARN ABOUT WILDFLOWERS!



Painted Trillium

Pack your bag lunch and come down to the Barn on April 17, 2010 from 10 am to 1 pm. Carl Sawyer, SKLT board member and agronomist at the University of Rhode Island, will prepare us for keying out plants on future hikes by teaching us to use the Newcomb's Field guide. Everyone will be an expert by day's end! If you have a field guide, bring it along. Then we will eat our lunch and hear from Carolyn Curtis, who has been propagating wildflowers in Matunuck for years. Come hear how these little gems can flourish on your property. We will end the day by sowing some seeds on SKLT property and keeping an eye out for anything that might be popping up!

THANK YOU VALERIE & JORDAN!

This just in from one of SKLT's members – Valerie Maine:

“My husband, Jordan Rosenblum, and I were married on August 1, 2009 in East Greenwich, RI. When planning our wedding, we made an effort to be as thoughtful about our ecological impact as possible. This was harder than it sounds as we discovered the wedding system is not set up with a focus on sustainability. As frustrating as this was, we found little ways to keep true to our values. We had all the events in one place so that people weren't driving around, we tried to keep all vendors local, and we tried not to buy things that had to be thrown out after the wedding. One thing that we did decide to do was forgo having favors for people to take home. In place of the favors, we decided to make a donation in honor of our guests. We wanted that gift to go towards something local that was meaningful to us. We chose the South Kingstown Land Trust for many reasons. First of all, my family has owned a home in Snug Harbor since 1971, and we grew up going to the beach in East Matunuck. I spent many summers here and was living in my parents' house in Snug Harbor when my husband and I met. In addition, my parents are very involved in the community and in local issues. For all of these reasons, we wanted to make a gesture that was not only congruent with our values, but also showed our support for South Kingstown. It was great to be able to find a local organization, the South Kingstown Land Trust, with a mission in which we both believe.”



Valerie Maine and Jordan Rosenblum

THANK YOU! YOUR SUPPORT WILL MOVE US FORWARD IN 2010

The land that we will be able to protect, the trails we will be able to clear, the stone walls we will be able to restore, all this work depends on the support that you generously provide in our annual support campaign.

This year, we had significant help in reaching our goal for the campaign. Chris Little, SKLT trustee, and his wife Michelle decided to enhance our efforts by providing a challenge match for our 2009 year-end campaign. Well, obviously, there are lots of us who love a challenge! In our 2009 campaign, we received 173 gifts, more than double the 78 gifts we received in 2008! Please accept our whole-hearted thanks, and know that you have made a lasting difference in the landscape of South Kingstown.

When asked if we could publicize their generosity in this newsletter, Chris said: “Michelle and I are happy to allow you to do this; provided that the context of the statement is to recognize the generosity of those who have contributed so much in the past to SKLT as well as those who will do so in the future. It was simply our turn.”

SKLT stands strong today due to the generosity of so many. We are grateful to all those who have taken their turn, and hope that their dedication will inspire others to do the same.

MILESTONES

The year 2010 is underway and 2009 has been put to rest. But what a year it was for the South Kingstown Land Trust! Despite the national economy's woes, and Rhode Island's own economy being tested on all levels, your land trust was able to accomplish the seemingly impossible by closing on the Carpenter Farm in Perryville. With the generous assistance of over 100 individual donors and private foundations added to the funds provided by the Federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program and the Town of South Kingstown, we raised enough money to purchase the development rights to 41 acres that will remain farmland in perpetuity. It was certainly affirming to realize how connected our community is to the goals of the land trust! Thank you.

But there was so much more. Last year we invited members to participate in more activities than ever before. And you responded. You cleared trails, took hikes, learned about invasive plants and lichens, and, of course, monitored all 137 land trust properties. Members took advantage of many opportunities at the Barn, and the Board and staff were thrilled to have so many new participants to the various programs we offered.

Finally, at the end of the year, members stepped up once again making our annual appeal more successful than ever before. More of you responded - twice as many as 2008 - and we raised much-needed funds for our organization.

This year began with a special program at the Barn featuring a film on Rachel Carson. We hope you were able to join us for that. We are also stepping up our volunteer efforts asking for your commitment to a weekly group led by our newest staff member, Mike Bontecou. We know we will get the support we need because we have the best members ever. Another great year is underway - hang on, join in, and enjoy the view!


Michael A. Sherry, President

NEW MEMBERS!

Thanks to all our new members for joining SKLT in 2009. We expanded our membership by over 10 percent during the year! Some people joined because of our great events, some because they live near one of our properties and others from recommendations from their friends - existing SKLT members. If you know someone who might like to join us in our mission - let us know and we'll extend an invitation to join and a newsletter so they can get to know us better. Thanks for sharing the word about the important work of SKLT!

SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

The mission of the South Kingstown Land Trust is to conserve and protect the natural resources and open spaces of our town for the enduring benefit of our community.

Officers

President: Michael A. Sherry
Treasurer: Charles M. Lewis
Secretary: Sophie Page Lewis

Trustees

James V. Aukerman
Kathleen Peterson Hahn
Christopher Little
Kevin McDonough
Doug McGovern
Peter Nunes
Sally Olsen
Anne O'Neill
Carl Sawyer
Paul Schurman
Carroll Tickner
William Wallace
Virginia Lee, Trustee Emerita
Margaret Munroe, Trustee Emerita

Staff

Joanne Riccitelli,
Land Protection Director
Clarkson Collins,
Land Management Director
Claudia Swain,
Development Director
Jane Baumann,
Membership Coordinator
Mike Bontecou,
Land Operations Coordinator

Main Office
313 Main Street, Ste C, Wakefield, RI 02879
401-789-0962
Field Office (SKLT Barn)
17 Matunuck Beach Road
401-783-4999

Site Lines Designer, Cindy Sabato, Volunteer

A CELEBRATION OF RACHEL CARSON

SKLT hosted a wonderful evening dedicated to learning about the work of Rachel Carson on January 27th at the Barn. After a light dinner and rambunctious chatting, over 50 of us settled down to watch 'A Sense of Wonder', a one-woman film starring Kaiulani Lee which focuses on Rachel Carson's final years, reflecting on her fame from her book *Silent Spring*, published in 1962. Thanks to The Nature Conservancy for lending us this film to share with our members and friends.



LOSS OF AN SKLT PIONEER

Agatha Littlefield, a pioneer of the South Kingstown Land Trust, died in December. Aggie's first husband Ivory (Chris) Littlefield was SKLT's founder and first Board president. Some years after his passing, Aggie took her own turn on the Board. Knowing their parents' love for preserving land, the Littlefield's grown children made SKLT the beneficiary of memorial gifts honoring their mother after her death. These gifts will be added to a scholarship fund that Aggie and Chris began many years ago, a fund that has allowed SKLT to hire student interns during the summer. As our hearts go out to Aggie's friends and family for their loss, we are also grateful to all who have remembered Aggie through contributions to SKLT. Your gifts will be put to good use, and her legacy will long be remembered.

JOIN US IN PRESERVING OPEN SPACE IN SOUTH KINGSTOWN

Your support for open space preservation continues to strengthen our organization and invigorate our work. Join or renew your membership, make a general donation, or become an EverGreen member! SKLT is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization so your donation is tax-deductible. As always, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP:

I would like to: ☐ Join ☐ Renew

- ☐ Individual..... \$25
- ☐ Family..... \$40
- ☐ Protector..... \$50-99
- ☐ Steward..... \$100-\$149
- ☐ Guardian..... \$150-\$499
- ☐ Conservator..... \$500-\$999
- ☐ Benefactor..... \$1000+

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

GENERAL DONATION:

I'm already a member, but I would like to make a general donation. Please accept my check in the amount of \$_____.



EVERGREEN:

I have already planned a gift to SKLT and qualify to be an EverGreen member through:

- ☐ Estate Plans ☐ Trust ☐ Other

- ☐ I am a landowner interested in preserving my land.
- ☐ Please contact me about making a Legacy gift.
- ☐ My employer will match my gift. I've enclosed a matching gift form.

Please make checks payable to:

South Kingstown Land Trust

313 Main Street, Suite C, Wakefield, RI 02879



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Site Lines



A WEIGHTY THANK-YOU TO AN SKLT 'ROCK STAR'

SKLT feted our hard working, self-effacing, board secretary and volunteer Sophie Page Lewis at a party in her honor last December. Here she is receiving her “Rock Star” award, along with special rocks from her many admirers. A dedicated member of SKLT since nearly its inception, Sophie earned this moniker working on stone wall restoration at Weeden Farm and her longtime work with stone creations at home. Sophie promises to place each rock in her current project – her hand-made front walk.

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Photo: Claudia Swain

Open Space Makes All the Difference