



Site Lines

SUMMER 2015

SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST

SKLT TO HOST LAND TRUST DAYS OPENING EVENT



Rhode Island's 4th Annual Land Trust Days, when the state's land trusts showcase their accomplishments to the public, are almost here! This year, SKLT is happy to host the statewide kick-off event at 7 pm on Friday, July 31st at the Barn. Our Blue Moon Hike and sky viewing will begin with a bonfire and potluck dessert, with complimentary wine and coffee.

As the sun sets and the full moon rises, we'll head into the fields at Weeden Farm for a moonlit hike. Thanks to the Astronomical Society of Southern New England, several astronomers will be on hand with telescopes to give you an expert glimpse into the night sky. They'll be on the lookout for

certain features that are only seen from this area of southern Rhode Island. Plan to join us for this exciting first-of-its-kind event for SKLT.

Thursday, August 27th is our annual hot dog dinner at the Barn! This popular family outing features hot dogs roasted over our open fire, beans, salads and desserts. And the best comes after dinner with live music. The 10-piece band *High Society* will play Dixieland and 1920s jazz! Suggested donation - \$5/person or \$10/family.

Land Trust Days will be a great celebration here at SKLT, but events will be going on all across the state, open to all. Check them out at RIlandTrustDays.org.

GREAT OUTDOORS CELEBRATION & AUCTION COMING IN AUGUST

Our annual *Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction* will be held on Sunday, August 9th at the Barn, celebrating the preservation of 2,657 acres of beautiful South Kingstown land. As SKLT's largest fundraiser, the event supports all our land preservation and stewardship initiatives.

The live auction will feature dining experiences, works by local artists, and travel adventures. Louis Raymond of Renaissance Gardening will again regale us with his gregarious and legendary auctioneering style. Louis has been vital to the success of our past nine auctions.

We thank Honorary Chairs Paul and Barbara Schurman and these generous sponsors: Karen Kames & Chris Gaffney, Claudia Flynn and Troy West - Farmhouse Art & Architecture Studio, David & Carolyn Moulthrop, Centreville Bank, P. Schurman Contractors, Sweenor Builders, James V. Aukerman & Assoc., Citizens Bank, Coastal Properties, Martha Day & CN Hetzner, Lila Delman Real Estate, Howard Johnson, John & Carol Howland, MaryLee and Kevin McDonough, Ocean



Auction item: One week for four in paradise on Eleuthera, Bahamas!

Mist, Randall Realtors, and SmithCo Oil. To be a sponsor, please contact Anne at anne.oneill@sklt.org.

Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. Look for your invitation in late June. Bring a friend to enjoy a lovely afternoon and help protect open space!



IN PRAISE OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN'S YOUTH

Anyone who's enjoyed SKLT's hiking trails should know that their experiences are greatly enhanced by the planning, organization and hard work of youth organizations in our town. Over the past three years, Boy Scout Troop 44 Matunuck, Troop 1 Kingston, Troop 138 West Kingston, Girl Scout Troop 690, Daisy Scout Troop 869, and the Youth Conservation League have provided hundreds of hours of trail improvements, bridge building, invasive plant removal, and wildlife habitat work. The energy and enthusiasm displayed by these groups is off the charts! It's a great pleasure to see the combined ingenuity of the young workers and their adult advisors result in lasting contributions.

Alex Deluca's 2013 Eagle Scout project provided an informational kiosk at the DuVal Trailhead in Perryville. We've received a pair of sturdy wooden foot bridges at Yawgoo Pond, one of SKLT's most beautiful sites—one built over Chickasheen Brook for Alex Duckworth's Troop 44 Eagle Scout project, the other over Mud Brook for Max Hempe's Troop 1 Eagle Scout project (shown below). Alex Kleckner's Troop 44 Eagle Scout project has provided an informational kiosk at Yawgoo's entrance. And at the Biscuit City site in Kingston, Kelby Anderson and Jaqueline Lindstrom cleared trails, installed signage, and cleared the ruins of the miller's house for their Troop 690 Silver Award.



Photos: Sophie Lewis and Clark Collins

This year, Daisy Scouts have built seven bluebird boxes for a bird habitat project at our Chestnut Orchard (shown above), while Daniel Kelley and members of Troop 44 have just completed trail improvements and a bridge on the Jonnycake Trail under development in Matunuck. Projects in the planning stages include: trail improvements and bridges at SKLT's 50-acre site in Kingston by Eagle Scout candidate Brian Haggerty of Troop 1; a new stairway leading to the South County Bike trail from the Tefft Historical Park by Tyler Duckworth of Troop 44; construction and installation of Kestrel nesting boxes by Edwin Madden, also of Troop 44; and a raised planting area at the Perry Gristmill for demonstrating flint corn cultivation by Christopher Nadeau and Troop 138.

It's our pleasure to acknowledge the great contributions that these young people and their adult counselors continue to make in the quality of life in South Kingstown, and we invite you to walk our trail system so you can share in appreciating their work.

BROWNING WOODS STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEER REPORT

Early this spring, the wetland complex at Browning Woods gradually thawed as days grew longer and the sun saturated through leafless treetops. A series of conservation stewardship work days was underway, with a mission to remove Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), an invasive plant that had begun to invade this swath of land beside Healy Brook.

Folks from all over South County came to remove all barberry plants present. This was no easy task—carrying equipment on a 10-minute trek into the site; loping, digging, pulling and gathering plant material; and hauling all visible plant, roots and other “questionable” parts back out, along with the equipment. Not to mention the thorns! But it was joy to experience spring unfold!

As with many non-native invasive plants, Japanese barberry was one of the first plants to green up, though the skunk cabbage was a close second, visibly evident throughout the site. Spring peepers and wood frogs were soundly about, although their chorus drew silent when we approached the vernal pool nearby. We saw a pair of common raven (*Corvus*

corax) overhead, their distinct low, guttural croak filling the airwaves, and a pair of red shoulder hawks (*Buteo lineatus*). These birds inhabit an array of North American forests, but favor extensive, mature woodlands, making them a welcome indicator of the value in conserving Browning Woods. Indeed, in the midst of controlling the barberry, we enjoyed abundant observations of nature.

Without these volunteers, SKLT would not have been able to accomplish this important task. Stewardship is an integral component of land conservation and SKLT is grateful to its members and volunteers for helping to make projects like this happen. Suzanne Enser, who identified the invasion and coordinated the removal

work, wanted to personally thank all the volunteers who came out to assist at Browning Woods: “I enjoyed meeting and working with you all and truly appreciate your taking time away from your own ‘to do’ lists to assist SKLT with the protection of this lovely property.”

Thanks to Barbara & Randy Watts, the Pothier family—Robyn, Neil, Max & Kaitlin, Bridget Buckley, Lisa, Erica & Norman Winn, Caleb Enser, Ira Asher and Megen Shaffer.



Volunteers Robyn Pothier, Lisa Winn, Norman Winn, Caleb Enser (in front), Kaitlin Pothier & Erica Winn

Photo: Suzanne Enser

COME, VISIT OUR PARTNERS

SKLT relies on partner agencies and organizations in almost every facet of our work – funding for land protection, cooperative stewardship efforts, borrowing equipment, and outreach efforts and programs. This summer and fall, we’d like to bring our members to visit some of our partners at the special places they protect in our town, and to learn more about what they do, and how we work together.

We’ll visit RI Department of Environmental Management’s Great Swamp with biologist Brian Tefft, US Fish & Wildlife Service’s Trustum Pond refuge with Janis Nepshinski, The Nature Conservancy’s property in the Matunuck Hills with Cheryl Wiitala, and the Audubon Society of RI’s Eppeley Preserve with biologist Scott Ruhren. You find more wonderful natural places to love in South Kingstown and learn more about SKLT’s great partners. See the calendar (page 4) for dates and times.



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

Tuesday, June 30	*Hike: Trustom Pond with Janis Nepshinski, USFWS, 5 pm
Sunday, July 19	*Talk: Tom Mayes, Why do Old Places Matter?, 7 pm
Tuesday, July 21	*Hike: Great Swamp with Brian Tefft, RIDEM, 5 pm
Thursday, July 30	Farm Dinner with CTC, 6 pm, (<i>see pg 8</i>)
Friday, July 31	*RI Land Trust Days Opening Event, 7 pm, (<i>see pg 1</i>)
Thursday, Aug 6	*Hike: Matunuck Hills with TNC staff, 5 pm
Sunday, August 9	SKLT Great Outdoors Auction, 4-6:30 pm, (<i>see pg 1</i>)
Thursday, Aug 27	*Hot Dog Roast, 5:30 pm dinner, 6:30-8 pm music, by donation
Saturday, Sept 19	*Hike: Eppley Preserve with Scott Ruhren, ASRI, 9 am
Wednesday, Oct 28	Bat talk, Dr. Pete August – save the date!

For information on the English Country Dances held at the SKLT Barn, visit www.kingstonenglishcountrydance.org.

* Please register at jane.baumann@sklt.org or call 789-0962 ext. 1.

HELP US REPAIR THE SAMUEL E. PERRY GRIST MILL

SKLT is in need of an estimated \$21,325 to repair the turbine assembly and sluiceway of our historic grist mill. The 125-year-old turbine is the main power source for the mill, while the sluiceway, which runs between the pond and the mill, has been eroded by fierce storms over the past few years.

The quaint little Samuel E. Perry Grist Mill on Moonstone Beach Road in Perryville is a working mill where Rhode Island whitecap flint corn is still stone ground by water power. In continuous operation since it was built by Samuel E. Perry in 1703, it's the only water-powered mill in Rhode Island producing marketable jonnycake meal. Operated by the Perry family, with water from Perry's Mill Pond to the east, until 1789, it's been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1990.

For more than 30 years, the mill has been in the loving care of Bob and Diane Smith. They gifted the mill and its surrounding 3.3 acres to SKLT in 2012, and now lease the mill back from SKLT, still training millers, keeping the source of the corn in good shape, and inviting children and families to learn about the

history of the mill.

The dam, mill pond, grist mill and the land it sits on have not changed over these many years. Protecting this entire complex is an example of whole-place preservation, which is the preservation of the land as well as associated agricultural and cultural elements.

SKLT is committed to maintaining the mill so that everyone can experience, if only for a few hours, what it must have been like to live here 300 years ago. When the mill is repaired, SKLT will host three to four public grindings each year. To help, contact anne.oneill@sklt.org.



Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

IN PERPETUITY! *By Jim Farrell*

What will it take to steward the land cared for by SKLT in perpetuity? How do we define perpetuity? Take your pick - 50, 100, 200 years, or forever.

Annual monitoring is a critical part of our stewardship. Each year, we find small violations - some inadvertent, some not. As properties pass from original owners, whether through generational transfer or sale, will a conservation mindset prevail? Will future owners challenge the validity of a conservation easement that prevents them from developing the land? At some point, I am sure we will be involved in a costly legal defense of property placed in our care.

What financial resources will be needed to carry out such duties in 150 years? The short answer is: resources well beyond their current level. Clearly, some of the burden will be covered by the generosity of future generations of SKLT members. Also, when land is placed in conservation with us, we ask for an accompanying donation to help defray future stewardship costs. Sometimes we are successful, sometimes not. From a donor's perspective, such a request can seem downright ungrateful - after all, they are already giving us land or a conservation easement.

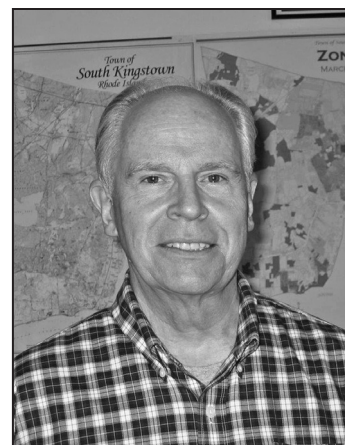
So, we look for creative solutions. An important one is

planned giving, in which SKLT becomes part of one's estate plans. With my children grown, that idea appealed to me because I had a life insurance policy no longer needed for family protection.

So I gifted the policy to SKLT. In

so doing, I became a member of our Evergreen Society. When I pass, the land trust will collect the policy death benefit.

If the idea of planned giving intrigues you, and it can take many forms, please contact Anne O'Neill, Development Director. It is a great way to help assure that SKLT can continue to fulfill its mission - in perpetuity.



EverGreen member and SKLT treasurer Jim Farrell

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ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS AND NEW OFFICERS



President Mike Sherry thanks outgoing secretary Sophie Lewis

Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

Dr. Numi Mitchell delighted the standing-room only crowd on April 26th with her engaging presentation on coyotes. She emphasized two take-home messages: one - coyote populations will self-regulate by the amount of available food (so don't make food available), and two - lethal means can deal only with specific problem animals, but won't control population size. See Numi's website for more info - theconservationagency.org/coyote/.

During SKLT's business meeting, former trustee Kevin McDonough was elected to the board, and outgoing trustee Paul Schurman was thanked for his tenure. In May, the trustees re-elected Mike Sherry President, Martha Day Vice President and Jim Farrell Treasurer. Charlie Lewis was re-appointed Assistant Treasurer. New to the Officers roster is Linda Green, who was elected Secretary, replacing Sophie Page Lewis.



MILESTONES

Why Do Old Places Matter?

On July 19th, SKLT will host a talk by Tom Mayes titled “Why Do Old Places Matter?” at 7 pm at the Barn. The topic is particularly relevant as the land trust community encounters preservation projects that combine both land protection and historic preservation, referred to as “whole place preservation.”

Tom Mayes is the deputy general counsel for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In 2013 he was awarded the Rome Prize in Historic Preservation from the American Academy in Rome. Tom wrote in his blog post of April 16th, 2015: “Old places are deeply beneficial to people because of the way they give us a sense of continuity, identity and belonging, because they inspire us with awe, beauty, and sacredness, because they tell us about history, ancestry and learning, and because they foster healthy, sustainable communities”.

The complexities of historic preservation should provide for lively discussion. Please let us know if you can come – email jane.baumann@sklt.org.

Sincerely,

Mike Sherry, President



WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT SOUTH COUNTY? WE ARE!

Leadership Rhode Island says an exemplary local asset is the South Kingstown Land Trust! At their May 19th event, SKLT was the top vote getter and chosen as one of five local organizations to represent South County. The next voting challenge takes place at their “Hi Neighbor - Statewide Block Party” on June 17th at the Steel Yard in Providence, where, hint, hint, all are welcome to attend. This is part of the group’s quest to identify what’s great about Rhode Island. Final voting will be held in early October. *Leadership Rhode Island* is a nationally recognized community leadership development organization, find out more at leadershipri.org.

Like SKLT on Facebook!



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 Sherry
Vice President: Martha Day
Secretary: Linda Green
Treasurer: James Farrell
Assistant Treasurer: Charles Lewis

Trustees

Heather Mae Breau
Edward Cimilluca
Ellen Grebstein
Sophie Page Lewis
Susan Lovejoy
Kevin McDonough
Timothy Philbrick
Carl Sawyer
Richard Youngken

Staff

Joanne Riccitelli,
Land Protection Director
Clarkson Collins,
Land Management Director
Jane Baumann,
Community Relations Director
Michael Bontecou,
Land Operations Coordinator
Anne O'Neill
Development Director

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

Site Lines Designer, Cindy Sabato, Volunteer

GEOCACHES ON SKLT TRAILS

We love connecting with our members and supporters who use our properties in fun and interesting ways. When we were approached about putting a geocache on another of our properties, we thought it was a great way to introduce a new group of people to some of our trails. "Geocaching?" you ask.

SKLT supporter Alison Kates describes geocaching this way: "Geocaching is a real-world outdoor treasure hunt game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates (hence, "geo") and attempt to find a hidden container of any shape or size, at that location (hence, "cache"). Geocaches are on several SKLT properties including the DuVal Trail, Thewlis Woods, Biscuit City Preserve and Sculpture Trail in Green Hill.

Once located, folks sign the log book in the cache and can trade small, fun items with other geocachers. Anyone



Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

can play and it's free! To learn more or to search for geocaches near or far, visit geocaching.com. There are more than 2.7 million caches all over the world!"

Thanks so much to Alison, who created the geocache at Thewlis Woods and knows where the others are hidden, but won't tell. You'll have to find them yourself!

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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\$30
- ☐ Family\$50
- ☐ Protector\$75
- ☐ Steward\$100-\$249
- ☐ Guardian\$250-\$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

227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879



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WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

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Site Lines



CONTEMPORARY THEATER COMPANY FARM DINNER

Please join us Thursday, July 30th for the 3rd annual Farm Dinner, benefitting both the Contemporary Theater Company (CTC) and the South Kingstown Land Trust! We are planning to mix it up this year with an extraordinary tapas dinner prepared by CTC's talented chef Christian Tamez, using fresh produce and meats from our local farms. Expect to have your senses stimulated and tantalized, and hear about the changes and growth the theater is experiencing. Tickets to this event go quickly, so don't miss out on your chance to dine, drink, mingle and enjoy entertainment from our rising local stars. Tickets are \$50 per person, and this is a rain or shine event. Call the CTC at 218-0282 to purchase tickets.



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OPEN SPACE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE