



SPRING 2017

The Interesting and Delightful Pott's Point Preserve: Something for Everyone

Writing and photos by Lynn Smith

At the very end of Harpswell Neck an incredible treat awaits those who make the journey. The beauty and diversity could challenge scenic sites state-wide. Among the many jewels in Harpswell, Pott's Point stands out.

One day my husband and I met a man named Herb on the beach by Dick's Lobster, who was curious about our actions and stopped to chat. We were clearing the beach of navigation hazards; namely, driftwood, so we can recycle these into

furniture and art. Herb told us the story of the preserve. He said the Archdiocese of Portland bought the property for the eventual site of a retreat. However, after a few years of paying taxes on the property, they decided to sell. At this point, the residents of Pott's Point Road approached Harpswell Heritage Land Trust (HHLT) with an interest in preserving the land. Neighborhood residents raised the money and it was purchased by HHLT in 2000. The result is protected public access to a spectacular site.

Pott's Point can be accessed all year round and has something for everyone. Wildlife seekers can observe copious bird and marine life, as well as the occasional snake. The tide pools can keep explorers of all ages busy for hours (but go at mid to low tide). History buffs will enjoy the view of Eagle Island where Admiral Peary's family summered, which is now



a National Historic Landmark, and dwell upon his adventures. Geologists will marvel at the geologic diversity and rusty

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Junior Ranger Activity Book Launched for Harpswell

By Doug Warren

"Nature, Community, Forever." The motto of Harpswell Heritage Land Trust (HHLT) neatly ties up the organization's core mission: connecting people with nature in lasting ways. "Forever" is the key concept, because, while legal agreements are binding, if successive generations lose touch with the natural world around them, all bets are off and

something precious could be lost.

Thanks to the efforts of an enterprising and gifted young Harpswell native, however, HHLT has a new tool to help ensure that the connection between nature and the community remains strong through the years. A 68-page, full-color "Junior Ranger Activity Book" will be published this spring that will introduce young people to 10 trails, parks and preserves in Harpswell, while also exploring elements of nature that make these places special and fascinating.

And there will be plenty of fun along the way!

The activity book is the brain child of Emma Levy, 18, a Mt. Ararat High School graduate and Williams College freshman. During the summer of 2015, Emma volunteered at HHLT's preschool Nature Day Camp and

was pleased to discover how excited the youngsters were to learn about the natural world.

She decided to develop a handbook for a junior ranger program, modeled on those she'd enjoyed as a child at various national parks, as the Capstone project for her senior year at Mt. Ararat. The result is a thoroughly researched, very engaging production chock-full of information and enjoyable activities.

For example, the section on HHLT's Curtis Farm Preserve offers an informative map and description, along with space for junior rangers to imagine what they might see on their visit and a place to list the "treasures" they actually find. Then there's an explanation of glacial erratics, the scientific term for the giant boulder known as "the Pebble"

found at Curtis Farm. (There's also a formula for estimating the weight of that big hunk of granite.) And there's a detailed look at invasive species that junior rangers might encounter at Curtis Farm and elsewhere, and a clear explanation of the dangers they pose.

"It was definitely a lot of work and rather overwhelming at times," Emma explained. "But it was very much worth it in the end. I particularly loved getting to trek through the preserves with my mom and dad on countless gorgeous weekends. The time I spent trying to imagine what kids might find most exciting or interesting about that particular spot really encouraged me to experience and explore the natural places of Harpswell in a way I never had before."

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Our Mission:

To preserve and protect Harpswell's natural resources, cultural heritage, and access to the outdoors through targeted conservation, responsible stewardship and education.

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Pott's Point

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rocks exposed by years of waves and wind action. Scientists will wonder about the "floating" superior mirage islands and copious "smoke" tendrils rising from the sea. Boaters will dream of mastering the "Snake Pit", one of the most challenging navigational waters in Casco Bay. The lobster connoisseurs will build an appetite watching the numerous lobster boats motoring and hauling offshore. The whimsical will enjoy the "sailor's valentines" that periodically show up. The architects will wonder at the mastery of the mysterious cairn builders who craft masterpieces, but are never seen. If one looks carefully, he or she will spot the old man of the sea "carved" and worn over ages.

To get to Pott's Point Preserve, drive to the southern end of Harpswell Neck Road

(Rt 123). Park by the side of the road, without blocking access to the boat ramp or neighbors' houses. Walk around a half mile down private Pott's Point Road to the very end then follow a short trail through shrubs to the preserve. Be prepared to carry in and out all trash, and be aware that there are no restrooms. But be assured: the effort is more than well worth the trip!



LYNN SMITH PHOTOS

A Look at Life on a Farm From the Past to the Present

By Christine N. Farrell

Have you ever wondered what it was like to be a farmer in the 19th century on the coast of Harpswell? To try to make a living from the earth and from the sea? To feed yourself and your family throughout the whole year, even during the long dark Maine winters?

Conversations with current farmers tell us about life today as a farmer. For the past, one can turn to records maintained by the Harpswell Historical Society.

Joe and Laura Grady run Two Coves Farm on the site of what was once known as the Dunning Farm. James Dunning acquired it in 1831 from Isaac Alexander, and other family members added land to bring the farm up to its current size of 88 acres.

Life in the 19th century was not easy. To survive, the Dunning family raised cows, horses, sheep and hogs. Hay was grown to feed the animals; wool was gathered from the sheep; hogs were sold for meat; milk was collected from the cows and butter was churned for sale to the community.

Life was full and busy in those days.

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Explore Harpswell this summer! Check out our guide to the outdoors in the July edition of the Harpswell Anchor or on our website (hhlmaine.org), or stop by our office at 153 Harpswell Neck Rd to pick up a copy.



NEWS AND UPDATES

CURT CHIPMAN PHOTO

Land Conservation

The Lands Committee and staff continue to pursue new land conservation opportunities, including our first preserve in the Cundy's Harbor area. We'll keep you updated as this project moves forward.

Otter Brook Success!

It is always exciting to complete a major fundraising campaign to protect habitat and public access in Harpswell. With a big thank you to more than 150 families, the Town of Harpswell and several foundations, HHLT was able to raise the money needed to protect 71 acres along Otter Brook. We especially appreciate the 2016 Town Meeting vote to contribute \$75,000 to the project. Harpswell people clearly treasure the wild and scenic places that make our town special. Now that we've purchased the new preserve, next steps include designing a trail network and

parking. We hope to open trails this fall. The property will be open for walking, snowshoeing, hunting, fishing and observing birds and other wildlife. Besides being another fantastic place for you to enjoy the outdoors, Otter Brook Preserve also helps to conserve a variety of habitats for wildlife, and protects clean water. Let the trail building begin!

Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee and our stewards have an ambitious work schedule this year to improve our preserves and trails for public use and habitat.

Liberty Farm Trail

A new trail will open this summer to bring visitors from Harpswell Neck Rd to Middle Bay Cove. This is a access point for clambers, and we built the trail to make it easier for them to reach the shore, as well as to offer a pleasant walk for any who are interested. Parking for the trail is in a gravel pull off by the east side of the road just south of the Skolfield Shores Preserve parking lot.

Giant's Stairs Trail Parking

The Town of Harpswell has created space for

four cars to parallel park by the side of Washington Ave on our McIntosh Lot Preserve. This will hopefully help alleviate the lack of parking for the popular Giant's Stairs Trail.

Removing Invasives

Invasive plants threaten our native habitats and wildlife by outcompeting essential native plants. To address this threat, HHLT, in collaboration with the Harpswell

Invasive Plant Partnership (HIPP), is removing invasive plants at Curtis Farm Preserve, Houghton Graves Park (with support from the Newman's Own Foundation), McIntosh Lot Preserve, Johnson Field Preserve and Otter Brook Preserve.

Additionally, we have planted native shrubs at Houghton Graves Park to improve habitat and scenic values.

Community Outreach and Education

Short Courses

We are excited to be offering two short courses this spring as in-depth learning opportunities for adults with very knowledgeable

instructors. The six-session Short Course on Harpswell's Coastal Habitats will delve into plankton, rocks and marine mammals. The three-session



MARY ANN NAHF PHOTO

Short Course on the Ecology of Place will explore how we can observe a place to interpret its history and ecology. Funding support comes from the Alfred M. Senter Fund. Details can be found on our website.

Humans on the Land

From March to August 2017 we welcome the public to learn about how humans interact with and change the land, and how the land changes them. This program series delves into the interesting history of Harpswell, from Native Americans to farmers to vacationers. We hope you'll join us to learn! Check the back of this newsletter for details about upcoming events.

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In memory of Walter Norton

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Appell, Jr.
Larry and Karen Bernstein
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News and Updates

Continued from page 3

Harpswell Community School

With support from the Holbrook Community Foundation, HHLT continues to enrich learning at Harpswell Community School with hands-on, place-based science programming. Spring programs include following Great Blue Herons, citizen science, raising and releasing Atlantic Salmon, phenology and what animals need to survive.

Voices of Conservation

This winter, Harpswell Coastal Academy students explored what conservation means through listening to community members who have made a difference in the conservation of nature, history, fisheries and



Celebrating the winter solstice at Houghton Graves Park (Paul Avis photo)

more. The stories collected through this collaborative project can be found online at www.harpswellstories.org.

Harpswell Day, Lantern Walk, Native Plants and Other Popular Events

Since the fall, we've held several popular and successful public programs to engage people of all ages. In October, we celebrated traditional handcrafts and subsistence skills with Harpswell Day, a collaboration with the Harpswell Historical Society. In December we celebrated the winter solstice with a lantern

Thank you to our donors

Continued from page 5

In memory of Walter Norton, cont.

Georgette Miller and Keith Brown
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In memory of Richard Young

Thomas and Michele Kane

walk. And in early April we came together to learn how and why to include native plants in our yards. Videos of four presentations on native plants are available on our website. For the most up-to-date information about our many events, sign up for our email newsletter, which

you can do on our website (www.hhlmaine.org).

Southern Midcoast Summer Trail Challenge

For the third year in a row, we're collaborating to offer the Southern Midcoast Summer Trail Challenge. For details, visit: www.midcoasttrailchallenge.org.

Junior Ranger Activity Book

Continued from page 1

The quality, breadth and accessibility of the activity book should guarantee that youngsters who use it – and their parents – will have a similar experience in the great outdoors. Where else can you find images of various animal tracks, along with a discussion of the impact of soil erosion, and instructions for estimating the height of a tree using only a ribbon, stick and your arm? The "Junior Ranger Activity Book" truly has something for everyone.

The activity book will be available from Harpswell Heritage Land Trust in late May. The book will be sold for \$3 to partially cover printing costs. Funding support also comes from Casco Bay Estuary Partnership. Young people who visit all the properties and do most of the

activities can bring the book back to HHLT to receive a certificate and prize.

The junior ranger program is just one of the ways HHLT is reaching out to heighten awareness of the world around us in the next generation. Nature Day Camp, HHLT's work with



Harpswell Community School and the collaborative Harpswell Family Outings give ample opportunities for young people to enjoy and learn about the outdoors.

Emma knows that this is

important work being done. "Even though I've lived in Harpswell all my life, in visiting the preserves and trails for this project, I realized there are so many lovely, hidden corners of the town that I'd never known about before," she said. "I hope the activity book encourages future generations of Harpswell kids to discover and explore these beautiful corners, allowing them to foster an enduring love and passion for the natural world and the place we call home."

Emma is enjoying college life in western Massachusetts, but Harpswell and its unique natural beauty are something special to her. "You can't beat the Berkshires for sweeping views of purple mountains, but there's something inherently Mainer in me that needs to be near the sea," she said. "When I'm back, I'll go for long walks on the beach while my parents are at work, breathing in the salty breeze and cherishing the bite to the air that means I'm home."

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Community Conservation

By Doug Warren

A recent sold-out screening at the Frontier Café in Brunswick of an important new film – “Community Conservation: Finding the Balance Between Nature and Culture” – really drove home the vital role land trusts play in connecting people with the places in which they live.

Shot throughout four seasons, the hour-long documentary profiles four active land trusts in different regions of Maine: coastal, inland, western mountains and Downeast. While Harpswell Heritage Land Trust is not specifically mentioned in the film, HHLT Outreach Coordinator Julia McLeod does make a cameo appearance.

“The purpose is to educate and advocate for the advancement of community conservation,” said filmmaker Mark Ireland, owner of MI Media. “We hope this film spurs both public interest and



Filmmaker Mark Ireland shoots a scene for the documentary “Community Conservation” in the Rangeley Lakes region.

support, while also encouraging other land trusts to initiate and engage in their own community projects.”

At its deepest level, community conservation addresses the traditions and needs of all community members, providing access to preserved land and creating projects that build constituencies across diverse communities. The four land trusts at the heart of the film provide great examples of community conservation: The Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust (BTLT) works with gardeners, both local and from away, as far away as Africa, at Crystal Spring Farm. Other projects range from supporting shellfish harvesters to working with the faith

community. At Downeast Lakes Land Trust, community members serve local school children and crafts people, as well as hunters and fishermen. The Androscoggin Land Trust partners with various organizations to create access and programs for the growing immigrant community in Lewiston/Auburn. The Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust runs an Eco Camp that utilizes tourist dollars to help fund the cost for local children. The trust also owns and maintains a community campground.

The beauty of Maine – from the coast to the mountains, farmland to deep forests – is richly captured in the documentary. Hikers, kayakers, immigrant farmers, children, fishing guides, balsam tree-tippers, canoe-builders and others tell the stories of local communities finding balance in nature.

Ireland, a Brunswick native, spent 15 years at Maine Public Broadcasting, where he produced, directed, shot and

edited numerous documentaries, as well as other broadcasts and features. After launching his career as an independent producer, Ireland created a number of nonprofit and educational projects.

“I had done a couple short projects for BTLT, and this lit a spark about finding a way to advocate for land trusts in Maine that are actively involving their local communities in their projects,” Ireland said. He received a grant from the Elmina B. Sewall Foundation, which funded about 85 percent of film’s production costs. Ireland is currently seeking business underwriters to complete the production budget.

The message of “Community Conservation” is being shared, initially, through community screenings like the one at the Frontier Café. Distribution of the documentary online to environmental organizations will follow, Ireland said, along with the sale of DVDs and broadcasts on Maine Public May 25 and 27. For more information on the film, go to www.mimediaine.com

Life on a Farm

Continued from page 2

Before school every day, the Dunning boys had to milk the cows (by hand, of course), feed the animals and then walk to school. In the summer months, sheep were moved to Birch, White or Ragged Islands for grazing. Without machinery, the horses were used throughout the year for tasks ranging from collecting and moving hay to clearing the snow.

No indoor plumbing existed. Clothes were boiled in a large copper bucket, then scrubbed and rinsed in a hand wringer. Heat came from wood and coal stoves located on the main floor. Rocks were warmed in the stoves during the day for inserting into cold beds at night.

According to Clem Dunning,

who was born in 1916, in the springtime the children made “May baskets,” which were hanging baskets filled with candy and left surreptitiously at neighbors’ doors. Clem loved his life as a farmer.

After Clem died, Walter and Helen Norton purchased the land to save it from development into house lots.

Thanks to the Nortons, today the land is protected by an agricultural easement held by Maine Farmland Trust. This means that farming is allowed but development is restricted, forever.

The Gradys lease the farm. Joe finds it “incredibly rewarding to work and live here. We inherited a lot of good will based on the respect of the community to Clem Dunning.” At Two Coves Farm, in some ways, life is similar



Sheep from Two Coves Farm, visit the Town’s Cattle Pound for Harpswell Day. (Curt Chipman photo)

to farming in the past. The animals need to be cared for. No pesticides are used, and guniea hens are used to keep down the harmful bug population.

The public is invited to learn more about the interesting history of the Dunning Farm at a public event

on May 20. See the back of this newsletter or the HHLT website for details. Space is limited and advance registration required.

Thank you to the Harpswell Historical Society for conducting and preserving interviews with Clem Dunning.



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Summer Events and Programs

Most events are free. For details: www.hhlmaine.org.

Short Course on Harpswell's Coastal Habitats

Various dates and locations, starting May 3 • Advance registration required

History of the Dunning Farm



Sat., May 20, 3-4:30 p.m. • Two Coves Farm • Advance registration required

Harpowell Hiking Challenge



Sat. & Sun., June 3-4 • Various locations in Harpswell

Short Course on the Ecology of Place

Various dates and locations, starting June 8 • Advance registration required

How Thomas Alva Edison's daughter Vacationed at What is Now Houghton Graves Park on Orr's Island



Sat., June 17, 2-3 p.m. • Harpswell Heritage Land Trust



Summer Solstice Celebration

Thurs., June 21, Details TBA



Annual Meeting: Native American Archaeology on the Maine Coast

Tues., July 11, doors open at 6 p.m., meeting starts at 7 p.m. • Cundy's Harbor Community Hall

Wildflower Walk



Fri., July 14, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. • Long Reach Preserve



Identifying Dragonflies

Sat., July 22, 9:30-11 a.m. • Otter Brook Preserve

Family Campout



Sat.-Sun., Aug. 5-6 • Mitchell Field • Advance registration required

Casco Bay Art League Summer Show and Sale

Aug. 5-13 open 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Artist Reception Aug. 5, 4-6 p.m. • Harpswell Heritage Land Trust

Sunset Cruise



Tues., Aug. 8, 6-8 p.m. • Leaving from the Dolphin Marina • \$60 for adults and \$30 for children. Advance registration required



Paddle to Helen and Walter Norton Preserve in Middle Bay

Sun., Aug. 13, 12:30-4:30 p.m. • Leaving from Lookout Point • Advance registration required



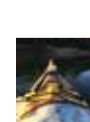
Tide Pool Exploration

Sun., Aug. 20, 3:30-5:30 p.m. • Pott's Point Preserve



The Tarr-Eaton House - A Journey in Harpswell History (1783 - Present)

Mon., Aug. 21, 7-8 p.m. • Harpswell Heritage Land Trust

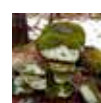


Paddle & Lunch in Cundy's Harbor

Fri., Aug. 25, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. • Leaving from Bethel Point • Advance registration required



Harpowell Family Outing collaboration with Harpswell Recreation and Harpswell Community Nursery School



Harpowell Heritage Land Trust's Humans on the Land series