



The MIDDLESEX LANDSCAPE

Serving the towns of Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland and East Hampton

Improvements at the Oakum Dock Preserve

MLT's Oakum Dock Preserve is a 1/3 acre parcel located on the Connecticut River at the end of Oakum Dock Road. The property is the historic Cobalt Landing, a 19th-century commercial steamboat dock.

Two years ago the preserve was in distress, with apparent encroachment issues with the abutters on both sides of the property. The westerly abutter had installed a chain link security fence that extended up to 12 feet over the property line, and the easterly abutter had constructed an access road that occupied a similar amount of the preserve. MLT resurveyed the property, staked out the actual boundaries, and entered into discussions with the abutters to ensure the removal of the encroachments.

While negotiations with the abutters proceeded, the Oakum Dock Preserve became the site of a beautification and improvement project. Drew Gates from East Hampton's Boy Scout Troop 8 designed his Eagle Project on the property, and the troop spent many hours removing invasive plants and vines, replacing them with grass and desirable trees and shrubs. Drew constructed a picnic table and bench, and placed them on the property for public use and enjoyment.

By September 2009 the easterly abutter removed the access road from land trust property and restored the

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Left to Right: John MacLeod, Caleb Gates, Doug Bonoff, Sean Claffey, Rosse Gates, Drew Gates, Matt Cote, Eli Gates, Betsy Gates, David Gates. — Photo by Mark Cote

MLT Accepts Donation of Conservation Easement

MLT now holds its first conservation easement thanks to a generous donation by John and Kelie Luby of South Glastonbury. The easement is on a 3.4 acre property adjacent to the southern edge of Meshamosic State Forest and sits below the rock outcropping and popular lookout at Great Hill in Portland. This viewing area on the Blue Trail overlooks Great Hill Pond, the Connecticut River, Middletown and the trap rock ridges beyond.

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Think Globally – Act Locally

The Middlesex Land Trust Inc. is a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve open space in northern Middlesex County (Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland and East Hampton)

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The Chairman's Corner

Dear MLT Members,

I love winter, but I have had little time to enjoy it this year. Several weeks ago on a Saturday, after a typically hectic week, I was driving back home from running errands with my son and daylight was fading fast. It had been particularly cold that week, and I had hoped to get down to the river to see the ice flows. It didn't look like it was going to happen that weekend.

As we came into East Hampton, I realized I could take a short detour off of Route 66, and take a quick look at the mighty Connecticut. We stopped at the MLT's Oakum Dock preserve and got out of the car. The sky was turning to winter purple. The only sound was the constant murmur of ice as the flows swept down the river, bumping and grinding against each other. We stood taking in the quiet spectacle – the shifting patterns, the changing light - until the cold crept into our fingers and toes, chasing out the chaos of the previous week.

Preserving open space is what the Land Trust does. A significant component of our mission is providing public access to these natural areas. John LeShane will be leading hikes on a few of our preserves and I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to get out and visit some of our preserves. Further details are available in this issue, and as always, thank you for your continued support.



Stuart Winqvist

Rockfall Foundation Hike Scheduled

John LeShane will lead a hike for Rockfall Foundation on June 19th at 10:00 AM on the Abe Temkin Preserve, and the Wangunk Meadows Wildlife Management Area. This is a 5 mile hike through a land trust preserve into Hales Brook ravine and the Wangunk Meadows.

We will meet at the Hemlock Grange near the junction of Rt 17 and 17A in Portland. Participants should bring food and drink. Hiking boots are suggested as the terrain is hilly with some steep spots. Bad weather cancels. RSVP John at 860-342-0658 on June 18th for information and directions.

Coming Work Parties

March 13th and April 3rd – 9am - 12noon
Roy Huse Collins Preserve
Build bridges.

April 10th – 9am - 12noon
Pine Brook Preserve – Chestnut Hill
Patrol trail and maintain as necessary.

April 17 – 9am - 12noon
Abe Temkin Preserve
Remove a fallen tree and some side-hilling work.

We would love to have help. It's a great way to get familiar with our preserves.
Please contact John LeShane at (860) 342-0658 if you plan to attend.

Community Gardens

The MLT Stewardship committee is hard at work establishing a Community Garden at the Red Barn on the Palmer/Taylor Preserve. It is planned as a two year project with the target date for the first season of planting being Spring of 2011.

This year the area will be cleared and fencing erected using posts cut from Black Locust, removed in the clearing operation. There will be an area established for composting, but in fact composting has already begun with leaves donated last fall by local landscapers. Composting will provide the gardens with good rich soil.

We are excited to be able to offer the community space to grow their own local, fresh, nutritious vegetables. If you are interested in having a part in establishing this garden, we encourage you to join the MLT Stewardship Committee.

Think Globally – Act Locally

Annual Meeting and Dedication

The Annual Meeting of the Middlesex Land Trust, Inc. will be held on Saturday May 1, 2010, at 9:30 AM at the new Roy Huse Collins Preserve. Please join us!

The business meeting, including the election of officers and board members, should be brief. It will be followed by the dedication of this beautiful 15 acre preserve which is crossed by two scenic brooks and contains an historic foundation. Afterward there will be short hike to explore the new preserve.

The preserve is located near the intersection of Isinglass Hill and Thompson Hill Roads in Portland.



Kruger Barn at time of acquisition by MLT – Photo by George Logan



Former owner John Kruger watches over the progress of the deconstruction – Photo by David Brown

Kruger Barn Deconstructed

As this is written the Kruger Barn which for the past one hundred years has dominated the landscape on the Kruger Farm in Haddam Neck has been entirely collapsed and the lumber is being sorted and stacked for reuse. When we purchased the 50 acre Kruger Farm a year ago, the terms of the matching grant mandated that the barn be removed.

However, not wanting to simply destroy a historic building, time was spent contacting a number of barn builders, architects, local people and the CT Trust for Historic Preservation, many of whom took the time to inspect the building first hand. The universal opinion was that as a structure it was too far gone to save and the clamor to preserve it died down.

Under an arrangement worked out by MLT Director, David Brown, in cooperation with Mike Yurish, regional manager of The ReUse People of America thereusepeople.org the material, once sorted and bundled, will be sold for reuse on the open market. Dura Construction of New Britain owned by Charles Paonessa is doing the actual work.

Once the building is gone, the area will be re-graded and the magnificent foundation stones will be rearranged by Vic Marek of Haddam to enclose a small parking area.



Main Structure (David Brown Photo)

The ReUse People



Mike Yurish, TRP Founder Ted Reiff and Charles Paonessa
Ted Reiff arranged a trip East in order to be present
as the project was begun. (David Brown Photo)

The ReUse People of America, Inc., (TRP) a California based nonprofit, environmental organization, was founded by Ted Reiff in 1995. Since then it has been quietly yet dramatically reducing construction waste by choosing – and promoting – deconstruction over demolition. While most people understand demolition as the swift, near-complete destruction of a building, few are acquainted with deconstruction. TRP has been changing that as it expands across the country.

Deconstruction is the careful dismantling of a structure with the intent to re-use the highest possible percentage of materials, including lumber, windows, doors, light fixtures, and appliances. By increasing the availability of reusable building materials through deconstruction, TRP is changing the way the way the construction industry operates. And now they're asking conventional demolition contractors to embrace their mission.

In July 2009, TRP expanded to the east coast, specifically Connecticut, with two Regional Managers – Mike Yurish and Charles Paonessa on board. Deconstruction is not new, but when its use is explained, people usually say wow, what a great idea!

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area to its previous condition. With assistance from the Town of East Hampton, the westerly abutter was convinced to move the security fence back to the property line, and this task was performed by the end of the year. Thanks to the landscaping efforts of Troop 8 and cooperation of the abutting property owners, the Oakum Dock Preserve is now more inviting and accessible to the public than it has been for numerous decades.



Continued from Page 1 – Donation

A conservation easement grants certain rights in a property to someone other than the owner. In a nutshell, they prevent the owner or future owners from developing the property or managing the property inconsistent with maintaining the conservation value of the parcel. (It does not grant public access to the property.) This easement will ensure the quality of the recreational experience of the Blue Trail users, while protecting habitat and Great Hill Pond water quality.



2010 MIDDLESEX LAND TRUST MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES – I would like to help protect open space in Northern Middlesex County in 2010!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Renewal New Membership

- Individual Membership.....\$20
- Sustaining Membership.....\$35
- Patron Membership.....\$100
- Guarantor Membership.....\$250
- Benefactor Membership.....\$500
- Endower Membership.....\$750
- Life Membership.....\$1000+

I would like to:

- give an additional donation for: Land Acquisition \$_____ Land Stewardship \$_____
- donate appreciated stock
- learn more about donating land or conservation easements.
- donate time for stewardship, fundraising or office work: please specify _____
- give a gift membership: : Name _____ Address _____

Please make checks payable to **The Middlesex Land Trust** and mail to:
deKoven House, 27 Washington Street, Middletown, CT 06457

The Middlesex Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) organization so your dues and contributions are tax deductible
Don't forget your employer's matching gift form! Thank you for your support!

IN MEMORIAM

The Board of Directors of the Middlesex Land Trust would like to express our sincere condolences on the passing of George Gulielmetti, 97 of Mica Hill Rd, Durham this past February. Mr. Gulielmetti was an outdoorsman and a long time advocate for agriculture and farmland preservation. His lifelong service on behalf of the land was of great value to both his town and the greater community. He will surely be missed.

A gift in the memory of a loved one is a meaningful way to honor a life. We would like to thank the Gulielmetti family for their thoughtful consideration in naming the Middlesex Land Trust to receive contributions in Mr. Gulielmetti's honor.

MLT has received several donations in memory of Mr. Gulielmetti, many noting "his love of the land". One contribution gave tribute saying: "We were one of the young farmers he helped and encouraged in our financing and agricultural plans. With his visit and help we were able to farm for many years and still own our farmland." Another simply said the gift was in memory of George "Who truly loved the land of Middlesex County."

We share Mr. Gulielmetti's love for the land, and this kind gesture will help us in our goal to preserve land for future generations. Thank you again to the family, and to all of those who chose to remember Mr. Gulielmetti through a donation to help preserve the farmlands and woodlands of Middlesex County.

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