



# NEWSLETTER

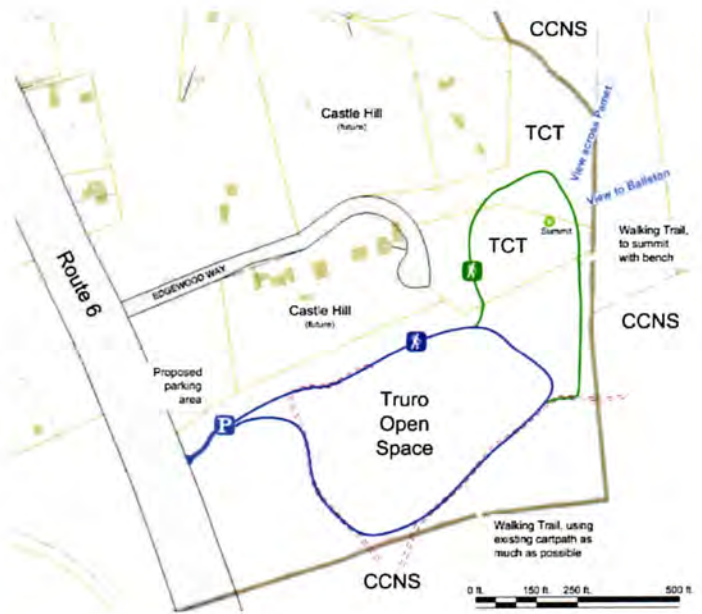
December 2014

Truro Conservation Trust, P.O. Box 327, North Truro, MA 02652-0327  
www.TruroConservationTrust.org • PH: (508) 487-1190

## TRUST SIGNS P&S AGREEMENT FOR MELDAHL LOTS

In late-2013 the Meldahl family approached the Truro Conservation Trust and The Center for the Arts at Castle Hill to consider the joint purchase of four lots known as Edgewood Farm.

Almost a year of negotiations between the sellers and the two non-profit organizations has culminated in all parties signing separate Purchase and Sale Agreements in September. This is the first time that two Truro non-profit organizations have collaborated on such a significant land purchase.



Edgewood Farms is sub-divided into four lots.

The Trust has agreed to purchase the combined 3.77 acres of vacant lots 3 & 4 for \$536,000 and Castle Hill has agreed to purchase the combined lots 1 & 2, including the existing structures. The selling price of the four lots is significantly below

appraised and market values as the Meldahl family desires to honor their recently deceased mother Eleanor Meldahl, a well-known and loved Truro artist, art teacher, and art historian who supported land conservation, the arts in general, and the Trust and Castle Hill in particular.

The two lots to be purchased by the Trust will be protected in perpetuity as open space. The closing is anticipated to be mid- to late-2015 to allow Castle Hill time to raise the funds for their purchase. Lot 3 has a spectacular view to the ocean across abutting Cape Cod National Seashore land. The Trust intends to build a public-access trail across the two lots with at least one bench positioned towards this view. Lot 4 is adjacent to over 11 acres of Town-owned conservation land previously purchased with Land Bank funds.

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# Truro Conservation Trust

P. O. Box 327  
North Truro, MA 02652

[www.truroconservationtrust.org](http://www.truroconservationtrust.org)

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The acquisition of property for open space often faces many hurdles such as cost, perceived value to the community, accessibility, and maintenance. Such conservation projects are most successful when they are the result of several organizations working together, drawing on and leveraging their individual resources and talents. The purchase of Edgewood Farm is a good example of a cooperative effort by four organizations, Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill, the Town of Truro, the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, and your Truro Conservation Trust (TCT), working together to satisfy the needs of all these organizations while also meeting the requirements of the seller. Grant funding and a conservation restriction (CR) have been sought through the joint efforts of the Truro Conservation Commission, the Open Space Committee, the Board of Selectmen, the people of Truro at Annual Town meeting, and the TCT. The Truro Conservation Commission, the Open Space Committee, and the Board of Selectmen have enthusiastically supported a TCT proposal to construct a walking trail through adjacent town-owned conservation land to connect with a planned trail to a scenic overlook on the TCT parcel. A convenient parking area off Route 6 is already under construction by the Town. In 2005, another cooperative effort resulted in the passage of an Open Space Committee-sponsored article at Town Meeting that sought the purchase of Poor's Hill by the Town. A \$500,000 donation by the TCT, announced at Town Meeting, lowered the purchase price to \$1.5 million, making the purchase palatable to voters. The TCT holds a state-approved CR on this property. TCT's ongoing stewardship program ensures that the terms of the CRs on these and other properties in town are not violated. Recently, Town Meeting approved an agreement between the TCT and the Town by which numerous Town-owned open space properties became a part of the TCT's stewardship monitoring program. Working together, sharing our many and varied resources, we can and do accomplish great conservation goals for the betterment of our Town and its citizens.

Early this summer, the Board reluctantly bid farewell to Trustee John Pendleton who has moved to Maine with his wife Betsy. We are pleased to announce the addition of two new Trustees, Tom Bow and Valerie Falk. Tom was formerly a member of the Truro Golf Course Advisory Committee, and Valerie is a long time Truro resident. Our volunteer fourteen-member Board is once again complete, continuing the work to protect and conserve our town for our children and their grandchildren.

The Truro Conservation Trust relies on your financial support to help us meet our annual operating expenses and to fulfill our goals. Your contribution supports our mission of protecting open space and natural resources in Truro for the enjoyment and well-being of today's residents and visitors as well as for our children and their grandchildren. Your tax deductible financial support is essential to our success in acquiring and maintaining properties to assure the quality of life we all enjoy in this special place. This year, in addition to providing for our annual operating expenditures, we additionally seek your financial support through a separate donation for the purchase of Edgewood Farm. Perhaps you might consider a memorial donation or a thoughtful gift in honor of a special person or family.

As always, we are greatly indebted to and thankful for your continuing support and generosity.

Most sincerely,

Fred Gaechter, Chair  
Board of Trustees

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The Truro Board of Selectmen recently approved a Trust plan to create a trailhead and small parking area on the Route 6 frontage of the Town land and to construct a trail across this land that will join the trail across the Trust properties. This will result in a truly magnificent trail for the people of and visitors to Truro. Truro's 2014 Annual Town Meeting also approved a Conservation Restriction, to be held by the Town, on the two Trust lots, thereby recognizing the value of conserving this land for the people of Truro.



The Trust has applied for several state and local grants to assist with the purchase of these two spectacular lots. We also encourage individual contributions to assist with this purchase. If you are so inclined, please send a separate donation marking on the check "Meldahl Purchase." We also encourage those that are similarly inclined to support Castle Hill's concurrent Capital Campaign for the purchase of their two lots.

Your trustees look forward to all of us being able to enjoy this open space and to working with Castle Hill over the coming years on joint conservation and art programs at Edgewood Farm.

## **TRURO'S SUBURBAN GHOST TOWN**

Occasionally we recommend interesting Truro nature walks in our newsletter, but here is something different that also has some nature trails involved.

You may think the accompanying photos look like a set for the latest zombie movie, but these 27 abandoned houses can be found right here in Truro's own mini-Levittown. They are found on Thatcher and Wilson Boulevards, which still have street signs even though you won't find them on any map. If you look closely you can see that these decaying, once tidy tract houses with attached garages are located on asphalt paved streets with cul-de-sacs. Look closely and you will see curbs, sidewalks, fire hydrants and storm drains amidst mother nature's efforts to reclaim this area.

To walk through these streets on a gloomy, perhaps stormy day can be an eerie experience, especially if by ones self. You can imagine children playing on these streets before being called into dinner. The remnants of lawns and household gardens are still visible. Near one house there is some shiny, new earthquake monitoring equipment that adds to the general surreality.

Truro's lost suburb was built courtesy of Uncle Sam and is part of the North Truro Air Force Station, which operated between 1951 and 1985, to constantly look for any attacking Soviet bombers and missiles, just in case the Cold War got hot. At one point there were some 500 people working and/or living there.



Most of the station was given to the National Seashore when the Air Force left. Ominously, a large, domed radar tower is still there looming over the mostly abandoned landscape, like some sort

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of space ship. It is still operational and tracks air traffic into Boston and New York.

The base became part of the National Seashore when it was decommissioned in 1994. It has been renamed the Highland Center, and various attempts have and are being made to rehab or better utilize the base, but it seems mostly to remain frozen in time.



That said, much of the base is open to the public and provides some great hiking trails which your dog will love.

Or, take a walk through our ghost town before watching a lively performance at the Payomet Performing Arts Center this summer, which is located a stone's throw away. It is one of the Highland Center's successful efforts to rehab the old base.

#### **DISCOVER A TRURO YOU MAY NOT KNOW**

Your trustees are looking for member volunteers to join our stewardship teams to help with the annual inspections of our more than 300 acres of land. E-mail or call us if you are interested. You don't need to be a year-round resident.

**HELP KEEP TRURO RURAL**

## **JOYCE JOHNSON BEQUEST**

Longtime Truro artist Joyce Johnson passed away this year and bequeathed her Truro property and house to the Truro Conservation Trust to manage – a most complimentary acknowledgement of TCT's responsible stewardship skills. There are several specific aspects of this, however, that are not within the expertise, experience, or mission of your Trust, such as rehabilitating and managing the house as a retreat for artists. Consequently, your Trust is discussing potential modifications to the content of the will, with the estate's Executor and counsel, that will meet Joyce's intent while designating more appropriate entities for the implementation of components of the will, i.e., only the conservation of land would be the role of the Truro Conservation Trust.

#### **NEW TAX BENEFITS + CASH**

Even if your legal residence is not in Massachusetts, you could give land to the Trust or establish a conservation restriction on land you own in Truro and receive tax credits and/or cash from the state for up to \$75,000. This is in addition to any federal income tax incentives for conservation of land.

Check out the details on how the new credit works at [Truroconservationtrust.org](http://Truroconservationtrust.org)

To learn more about the work of the TCT, visit our website, [www.truroconservationtrust.org](http://www.truroconservationtrust.org). Out and about? Use this QR code on your mobile device to see a list of all 300 Trust landholdings; see stunning color photos of some Trust properties; see past newsletters; and see much more.

