



# NEWSLETTER

Summer 2017

Truro Conservation Trust, P.O. Box 327, North Truro, MA 02652  
[www.TruroConservationTrust.org](http://www.TruroConservationTrust.org)

## Protecting Truro's "Twine Field"

The two combined lots at 25 and 25A Pond Road in North Truro are 10.18 acres of ecological, environmental, and historical significance. It is also near another 7-acre parcel of open space owned by your Trust. It is hoped that a trail system can be created that transits all 17 acres.



Ecologically, the land is a rare habitat on Cape Cod – an upland meadow. This is the only known such meadow in Truro and the largest of any on the Outer Cape, including within the National seashore. Upland meadows are an ecosystem that is the habitat for unusually hardy, long-seasoned, deep-rooted plants and

fortunate animals. Local naturalist, Tor Hansen, has documented more than a hundred species of amphibians, reptiles, mammals, insects, and butterflies, as well as 94 species of birds that receive food and shelter from such uplands across the Cape. The proximity of this property to Pilgrim Pond, across Pond Road, affords wildlife, such as bobwhite quail, box turtles, rabbits, fox, coyotes, hawks, owls, and small mammals easy access to water, as well as the food indigenous to the meadow.

Environmentally, the root system inherent in such meadows provides a natural filtration system that helps neutralize dangerous nutrients that can pollute the aquifer, ground water, and Pilgrim Pond. Development of this property would replace the filtration system with septic systems and an impervious roadway directing runoff to the Pond. The increased noise, light, and traffic of such development in this area would also detract from its rural character and result in a dramatic decrease in the plant and animal life that is so important to our environment and general wellbeing. *Continued on page 4*

## Remembering Ansel Chaplin

The Truro Conservation Trust recognizes the passing of a true Cape-wide leader for land conservation, Ansel Chaplin. Trust co-founder Ansel Burt Chaplin died peacefully on January 27, 2017 with his wife, the Hon. Anne Kenney Chaplin, at his side. In 1953, Ansel graduated from Princeton University magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. He received a Fulbright Fellowship for study in Paris and Algeria. Following service in the U.S. Army in Germany, he attended Harvard Law School and clerked in 1959-60 for Chief Justice Raymond S. Wilkins of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. A long time Boston lawyer, he continued to practice law on the Cape in Orleans and later in Truro until his death. In addition to his wife, Ansel is survived by his children Rawson, Jane, and Margaret and her husband Mike Aronow, and five grandchildren.

Ansel first purchased a house in Truro in 1976 and moved permanently to Truro in 2002. Co-founding the Truro Conservation Trust with Charles Davidson in 1981, Ansel served for many years variously as Trustee, President, and Executive Director. Under his leadership, the Trust preserved more than 250 acres in Truro, including High Head and many scenic spots along the Pamet River. In 1984 he began convening other local land trusts on the Lower Cape so they could share experiences and knowledge; two years later they formed The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts. Ansel served as Compact President for its first fifteen years. Under his leadership, a revolving capital loan fund enabling land trusts to buy open space through the Compact was established, which to date has enabled the purchase of more than \$20 million of new conservation land on the Cape. The Compact now represents all of the land trusts on Cape Cod and five watershed organizations, and has helped preserve more than 8,000 acres of Cape Cod's fragile environment. In addition to the TCT and The Compact, Ansel helped establish the Truro Neighborhood Association, and the Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown. He was a board member of the Dexter Keezer Fund which

provides individual grants to Truro residents encountering crises, served on the board of Outer Cape Health Services, and also volunteered on various Town of Truro boards and committees, sharing his talents and knowledge, inspiring others with his enthusiasm and vision.

The trustees of TCT remember Ansel for his visionary leadership, his tenacious dedication, and the enthusiastic and collaborative means he personified as he strove tirelessly to assure that future generations, not only in Truro but across the entire Cape, would benefit from unspoiled conservation lands within their towns. We thank him for mentoring us, for his friendship, and for inspiring us to continue to strive to protect this narrow land that we love.

On July 2, the Chaplin family held a memorial gathering in Truro at his beloved High Pamet property. The family has very generously requested that donations in Ansel's memory be made to the Truro Conservation Trust for the acquisition and preservation of the ten acre Twine Fields parcel on Pond Road in North Truro.





## Truro Conservation Trust

P.O. Box 327  
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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

For years many of us have walked the streets of North Truro Village and imagined the day when we might see the Twine Field property (see related article) protected and maintained as open space in perpetuity. We imagined providing public access for sitting on benches along a trail across the 10+ acres, enjoying the quiet in a busy world, and communing with the abundant flora and fauna of the area, attracted and protected by existing and new indigenous plants. Well, we are close to realizing that dream, with your support and assistance.

This past week, your Trust and the intended developer have signed a Purchase and Sale Agreement that will result in the Trust's ownership of the Twine Field property for \$1.6M. This is possible because of a \$650K commitment from the Trust, a \$200K grant from the Town's Community Preservation Committee and Town Meeting, and numerous small and large donations of \$675K from our friends and neighbors, including one private donation of \$400K. There is also the potential for a State Conservation Grant of \$85K in December. This team work between your Trust, the Town, the State, and all the numerous individual donors will make this land purchase possible.

We particularly acknowledge the work of Mary Ann Larkin for her coordination and management of the neighborhood's capital campaign.

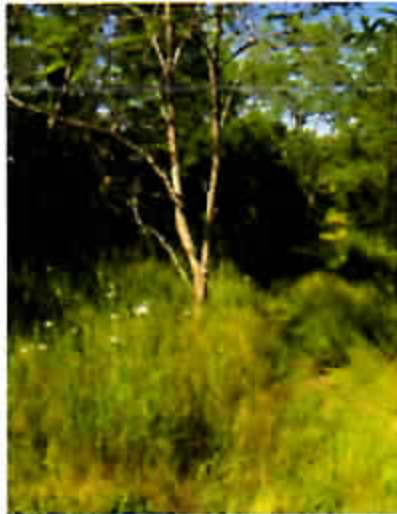
However, we remain approximately \$75K short of our financial goal of \$1.6M. Your Trust commits that all donations in response to this Newsletter will go directly to the Twine Field purchase project and for the ongoing maintenance of the property and its trail. So, please, if ever you have considered donating to the Trust or increasing the amount of your donation, this is the time. This is the most significant project that the Trust has ever undertaken. **Please be a generous part of its success!**

I would also like to acknowledge the passing of our friend and conservation mentor – Ansel Chaplin. He has been the spirit and conscience of open space for decades, across the Cape. I have, personally, served with him in many capacities over the years and we will miss his counsel, commitment, honesty, humor, and creativity. He was always an inspiration. His family has generously asked that any donations in his memory be to the Twine Field purchase project.

Fred Gaechter  
Chairman, Truro Conservation Trust

## Twine Field continued

Historically, the meadow derives its designation – Twine Field – from its decades-long use by local fishermen for the drying and mending of their nets. Research indicates that only two such fields remain on the Cape, Truro's and Chatham's. The latter was similarly preserved by the citizens of Chatham two years ago.



The meadow resides in and complements Pond Village, an area eligible for listing as a National Register Historic District. Directly across Pond Road is the Town-owned public Pilgrim Park where 16 Pilgrims, including Miles Standish and William Bradford “encamped on the shore of this pond for their second night on American soil” according to the stone marker in the Park.

What is presented above is a compelling story for the preservation, in perpetuity, of this open space. This story led the Cape Cod Times, in a recent editorial in support of the effort to protect the land, to state: “Is it worth the effort? You betcha. Now it's up to the good citizens of Truro to preserve this piece of history .... and to adorn the land with benches and trails.”

Well, the good citizens of Truro have been responding – we're almost there. With your donations, we'll all be proud of our success in protecting Truro's upland meadow.



The Annual Meeting of the Truro Conservation Trust will be held at 4 PM on September 13, 2017 at the Council on Aging, 7 Standish Way, North Truro. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to present a report to members on the status of the Trust, and to hold the election of Trustees. The Nominating Committee recommends the election of Bob Daglio to a five year term on the Board of Trustees. Any member of the Trust, however, may submit a petition signed by ten (10) members of the Trust nominating a candidate or candidates. Refreshments will be served.