



NEWSLETTER

Winter 2020

Truro Conservation Trust, P.O. Box 327, North Truro, MA 02652
www.TruroConservationTrust.org

Super Land Donations!!!

Recent years have seen great land acquisitions and donations, but, even in that context, what we are reporting here is extraordinary and worthy of celebration.

37 Stephen's Way

The neighborhood of landowners in proximity to this 3.84-acre bay front parcel have come together to anonymously negotiate and completely fund this acquisition, from Susan Solomont, for \$1.65M. The funds were donated to your Trust and we closed on the acquisition and registered the deed on October 15, 2020. (Please see the map and aerial photo associated with this article.)

Although the donors request complete anonymity, we thank them, on the behalf of the environment and all the people of Truro, for this generous donation that has allowed us to protect this sensitive and important waterfront parcel from development or sale in perpetuity. We also thank Susan Solomont for selling this property to your Trust for below its appraised market value.



37 Stephens Way
Continued on page 4

Corn Hill Acquisition!!!

On June 17, 2020, you – our friends and neighbors – all became the owners, through your Trust, of the property and cottage at 42 Corn Hill after almost two years of negotiations, fundraising, and issue resolution. Your Trust is now the steward of this important property and, through a lease agreement, the Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill has prepared the cottage, with its new septic, water, and electrical systems, for summer artists' rentals. We thank Jane Bunker and Mason Morfit for offering the property to the Trust for a below-market price and for having the vision of a joint project between your Trust and Castle Hill (see related article from Jane). We also thank all of you who supported the project in so many ways, including, but not limited to, your financial contributions.

We have reconstituted an existing trail to the beach and added a strategically-placed bench. We thank the Truro Conservation Agent – Emily Beebe – and the Conservation Commission for their approval of this aspect of the project and for constructive recommendations on how to accomplish it with minimal environmental impact.

As mentioned in previous articles on this project, there are numerous, valuable aspects to this acquisition. The 1.3-acre property stretches from Corn Hill Road to the Bay and is the last property remaining in private hands from the Town beach parking lot, south across the wetlands, the harbor and its inlet, and across the harbor's sandy peninsula to Great Hills Road.

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We hope that you all remain safe and healthy and are diligent in that pursuit.

We are fortunate, as a Conservation Trust, that in these difficult and unusual times, we are able to advance our mission in the great outdoors of Truro. As you can see in the accompanying articles, we continue, on your behalf, to acquire new land to protect in perpetuity, continue our stewardship responsibilities, and take appropriate actions to ensure that our 350+ acres on 125+ parcels of conservation land and open space remain as just that.

To that latter point, you'll read about a frustrating and disappointing incident that resulted in the intentional desecration by an abutter of conservation land entrusted to us years ago by the Keezer family. You'll also read that we are taking every possible action to restore this property as proper conservation land. We hope that our responsive and responsible actions will also act as a deterrent to anyone not recognizing the inviolability of open space and conservation land.

In striking opposition to that incident, you'll read positive articles about two impressive neighborhood projects to donate all the funds necessary for your Trust to purchase three significant and environmentally impactful parcels for protection in perpetuity. This is the positive example of neighbors working together to preserve Truro's environment and rural character that we encourage and makes us proud of our friends and neighbors. If there's a similar potential project in your neighborhood, we hope that you will contact us to assist in the planning and execution of similar purchases.

We know that you have many priorities these days, both for your time and your resources. Consequently, we did not solicit your financial support this spring or summer, but ask, where possible, for you to consider us and our mission in your end-of-year giving to help us usher in a new and, hopefully, better year ahead.

We hope to see you, but not too closely, on our trails this winter. Spending time in the outdoors is always a physical and emotional advantage in stressful times.

Fred Gaechter
Chairman

VOLUNTEERS

All non-profits depend on volunteers; your Trust is no different. From our volunteer Board of Trustees to neighbors that have stepped up to assist with our property Stewardship Program, the majority of our land and trail maintenance is accomplished by volunteers. During our current circumstances many of you have been walking our trails to enjoy nature and help ease the anxiety of our life today.

Last year, we reported a group of Twine Field neighbors in North Truro who performed yeomen's work in maintaining the trails on that newly acquired 10.2 acres. These same volunteers have given their time and efforts to maintain these trails this summer. All growing plants, grasses, and trees expand and overgrow our trails each Spring and early-Summer. Consequently, our trails need constant clearing and trimming to keep them safe for walkers. This year, in addition to last year's supporters, two new volunteers have helped maintain various other Trust trails throughout Truro -Eric Bingham (who has recently become a member of your Board of Trustees) and Fred Goldstein. We thank them for their time and efforts.

If you'd like to volunteer with our property Stewardship Program, please visit our web site: truroconservationtrust.org, and let us know how you'd like to help.

BECAUSE I BELIEVE: Jane Bunker

The little cottage called “the boathouse” and its surrounding land have been in our family since they were purchased in 1930 by my grandparents Emily and Philip Bunker.

In about 1873, the first train went all the way to Provincetown. This helped the flagging Truro economy to improve as fish could be transported to New York and Boston. The “boathouse”, which in its earliest days was almost twice as tall, and a few other surrounding buildings were conveniently placed – practically on the beach and across the street from the train depot. These buildings were used to store boats, nets, and fish. After being purchased by my grandparents, the “boathouse” became a party house for many local artists and writers, a ship model shop for my teenage father, and in 1945, the cottage where I and my three siblings spent every summer growing up. Somehow all four of us, our parents, and our friends, fit in easily. An addition was built in 1960.

The “boathouse” has been like a beloved member of the family. We moved often during the winters, but the “boathouse” was a constant solace for us all. Five generations of Bunkers have cherished our time together there. It has been home to creativity of all sorts, from music, painting, and poetry to beach plum jelly and, even, bayberry candles.

When it was no longer feasible for our family to maintain the property in the way it deserved, we wanted to find a way to protect it and the surrounding land from being destroyed. The idea of having the Truro Conservation Trust own and protect the land while leasing the “boathouse” to the Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill as a summer artist’s retreat, seemed like a miracle. I think our grandparents and parents would be thrilled with the transfer of ownership and stewardship to the Trust.

Last summer I came upon this quote which I shared at the Trust’s fall fundraiser and auction. It reflects my feelings about this transfer and is by a man who most likely walked this land centuries ago –

Wampanoag Indian Chief Massasoit (1590-1661):

“What is this you call property? It cannot be the earth, for the land is our mother, nourishing all her children, beasts, birds, fish and all men. The woods, the streams, everything on it belongs to everybody and

is for the use of all. How can one man say it belongs only to him?” (“Massasoit.”

AZQuotes.com. Wind and Fly LTD, 2020.

05 July 2020.

<https://www.azquotes.com/author/39347-Massasoit>)

We are so grateful to the Truro Conservation Trust for all it has done to preserve this precious land for all to enjoy.

Clear-Cutting of Trust Property

In mid-January, your Trust learned that an abutter had cut trees and shrubs on a significant portion of our 5.2-acre property at 2 Francis Farm Road, along Depot Road. The abutter admitted to the cutting and acknowledged that it was on Trust land. A complaint was filed with the Truro Police Department and the Health Agent who both visited the site, spoke with the abutter, and confirmed and documented the cuttings. Upon further investigation and a professional boundary survey, it was learned that the damage was more extensive than initially identified, encompassing approximately two acres and including a dump site on the Trust property that contained cut timber, debris, disabled vehicles, and barrels containing unidentified liquids. The Health Agent issued an Order to Correct requiring the abutter to clean-up the entire dump site and to properly store or dispose of the liquids. The abutter has cleaned-up the dump site and has paid the Trust for soil and water testing of the site, should it be deemed necessary.

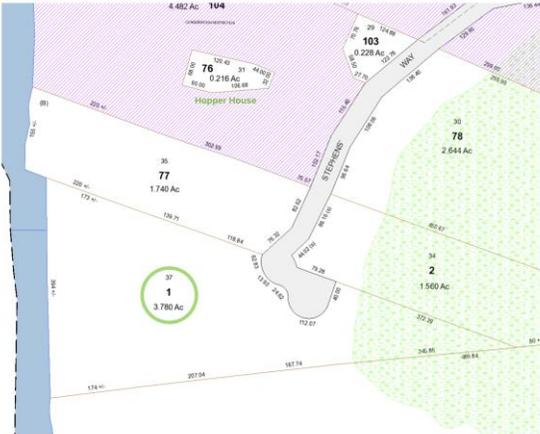
In early-May, the Trust and the abutter entered into mediation. The abutter withdrew prior to a conclusion. Your trustees implemented a parallel path to the mediation by simultaneously filing a lawsuit for trespass, encroachment, and treble damages in Barnstable Superior Court. Prior to actively advancing litigation, the parties entered into voluntary negotiations in an effort to reach a legal agreement and avoid litigation.

The Trust obtained an arborist’s written proposal for the proper restoration of the land with meadow grasses and wildflowers as well as pods of trees and shrubs designed as proper conservation land for wildlife habitat and carbon sequestration. The abutter also obtained a separate arborist’s proposal for meadow grasses and wildflowers.

Efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution and settlement are ongoing at this time.

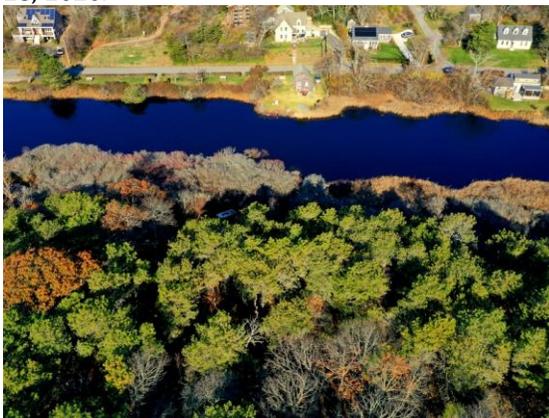
Super Land Donations!!! (Cont.)

This property, with its almost 400 feet of beachfront, its vulnerable coastal bank, its small wetland, and its sloping upland of coastal heathland, is not only significant for wildlife, wetland, and aquifer protection but as part of a Cape-wide effort to mitigate and adapt to the effects of rising sea levels due to climate change.



12 and 14 Laura's Way

Another anonymous neighbor has negotiated the purchase and donated the \$625K necessary for the Trust's acquisition of these two lots - totaling 2.4 acres - directly uphill from Pilgrim Pond and the historic Pilgrim Memorial Park. (Please see the map and aerial photo associated with this article.) Once again, although also requiring complete anonymity, we thank this donor for providing all the funds necessary for your Trust to purchase and protect these two very desirable and buildable lots in perpetuity. The Trust closed on the properties and registered the deed on October 28, 2020.

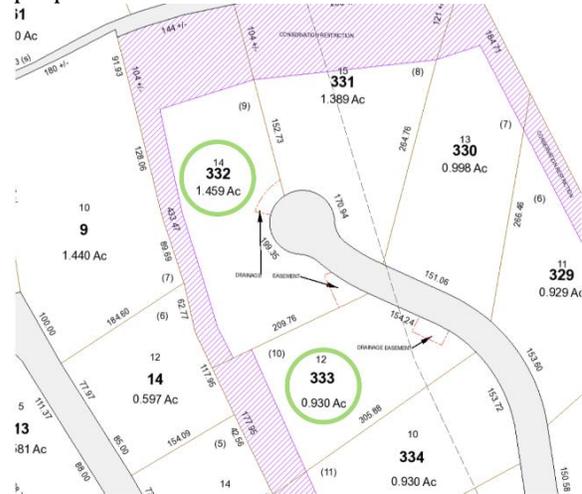


12 and 14 Laura's Way

The expressed purpose of both the donor and the Trust in protecting these two particular parcels was primarily to prevent their

clearcutting, as recently occurred on an abutting parcel, and to protect Pilgrim Pond and the Pond Village neighborhood from erosion and the potential adverse impacts from two more houses, with septic systems, fertilized lawns, and wells. The Pilgrim Village neighborhood has recently been at the center of a water quality concern and discussion. Due to its proximity to the pond, this land is also important to the protection of local wildlife and the survival of indigenous species of plant life

The acquisition of this property compliments your Trust's ownership of other properties in this environmentally sensitive and historic neighborhood, including the 10.2 acres of the recent Twine Field acquisition- another neighborhood effort - and three pond front properties on Pond Road.



Corn Hill Acquisition!!! (Cont.)

Now this ½-mile stretch of Bay Front is all conservation land maintained either by your Trust or the Town. The agreement with Castle Hill ensures the protection, for as long as is physically and financially feasible, of the historic "Bunker Cottage" and puts it to a worthy use. Although the building could not meet code as a year-round residence, its use as a summer artists' cottage continues its history and tradition. This property is also an abutting upland to the wetlands surrounding Pamet Harbor. In the context of the ever-rising sea levels, from climate change, it will be valuable in the study of how to use such land to adapt to and mitigate the erosion of such properties throughout Truro.

So, congratulations to all of us. Please visit the site and sit on the bench, with its marvelous views, to help relieve some of the anxieties of today's world.