



# BULLETIN

*The Chatham Conservation Foundation preserves land for the benefit of the people, plants, animals and ecosystems of Chatham.*

Spring 2022

## CCF Celebrates 60 Years!

by Cathy Weston  
Trustee

### Cape Cod's Original Land Trust

60 years – it's quite a milestone. As we celebrate our anniversary, it's a good time to pause and look back at our "scrapbook" that traces our history and points the way to our future.

### Founding by Visionaries

In 1962 leading citizens of Chatham saw the rapid rise in land being developed and were worried. They loved the wildness that gave Chatham its natural beauty and knew that preserving land was a key part of preserving the economic vitality and sense of community that was Chatham. But how to do so? Robert McNeece, John T. Manson, and General Lucius Clay considered the recent preservation of the Cape Cod National Seashore by the federal government but knew that local citizens were wary of handing their land to a government entity. Instead, they adopted the nonprofit land trust as the legal vehicle for preserving land, established

the Chatham Conservation Foundation as the first land trust on Cape Cod, and began soliciting land donations and funds to purchase land.

Within 2 years, 6 parcels of land had been donated, starting with the first gift of Fox Hill Island. The CCF Board was active in seeking new gifts, and by 1970 over 120 acres had been donated in such key areas as Bridge Street, Red River, Muddy Creek, Morris Island, and Barclay Pond.

### Key Turning Point

In the early 1970's, the



Photo by Richard Cooper Kelsey

Presentation of Charter to Chatham Conservation Foundation Inc, by Governor John Volpe 1962.

L.to R: Hon. Hastings Keith, Congressman; Percy A. Grey, Treasurer; John T. Manson, President; & Frank G. Love, Clerk

town became aware of a plan to develop Strong Island – the idea was to use the upland to construct an entire neighborhood of condominiums. Greatly concerned about the impact on Pleasant Bay and on the area's natural beauty, CCF launched a major capital campaign that drew the organization and the community together and were successful at negotiating the purchase of the property.

### Pursuing Environmental Goals

From the beginning, CCF leaders had important environmental goals in mind as they sought out donations, purchased properties, and accepted conservation restrictions:

- Protecting groundwater supplies and wildlife habitat, which was accomplished by assembling large tracts of uplands and woodlands. Together with the Town of Chatham, CCF protects such large tracts on Stage

continued on page 6

**Save the Date!**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**August 15<sup>th</sup>**



**Guest Speaker**  
**David O'Neill**  
Pres. Mass Audubon  
See more page 6

## President's Message



by Bob Lear  
President of the Board of Trustees

“Spring is sprung, the grass is ris, I wonder where the birdies is. Come out yourself and see how tiz”. (attributed to Ogden Nash, and/or ee cumings)

Now that it is finally the season to enjoy the warmer weather and the birds have been calling us to “come out” early for a few weeks, CCF has some opportunities to “see how tiz”. The old standby trails, Frost Fish Creek and Barclay Pond, have been cleaned up over the winter by Julie’s land steward crew. Sylvan Gardens remains an impressive colorful vista. Valley Farm, the site of last year’s Poetry Walk (which is planned again, location TBD), is a great quiet retreat for listening to our feathered friends.

For a selection of shorebirds Morris Island is still an option, but not as convenient as previously due to sea level rise. It requires parking on the causeway or Wildlife Refuge lot, walking down Tisquantum Road to a marked path that leads to the beach, and around past CCF property and to the entrance to Stage Harbor. You might even catch a dredge working. Closer to Town you can follow a loop from lighthouse beach overlook north to a CCF property on Holway Street and back up to Main Street.

For something more adventurous CCF is planning six walking tours of Strong Island, with transportation from the mainland generously provided by Jay Cashman. Projected dates and more details are available on our website.

In anticipation of CCF’s 60th anniversary we have been moving ahead, with assistance from Cas and her colleagues at AmeriCorps, on a trail from Stage Harbor Road down behind the Atwood House, to a loop with an overlook of the Mill Pond and the Mitchell River. Again, check our website for information on when this new trail will be open to the public.

On another note, and a great relief to me, I am delighted to announce that Lauren Arcomano has agreed to be our new Executive Director. You can read about her on page 2. I am confident that her enthusiasm, communication and organizational and executive skills will be a great addition to CCF.



## Land Stewardship Director's Report



by Julie Baca  
Land Stewardship Director

It’s late March as I am writing this and the leaves on the shrub honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and autumn olive are growing each day, garlic mustard seeds are germinating, and, \*gasp\*, are those the tips of knotweed shoots peaking their red heads out of the ground? These invasive plant species certainly don’t wait for us to shake winter off. This early start gives them a competitive edge over native plant species. (Ok, to not be too glum, let me say that I have also noticed the buds of red maples and highbush blueberries swelling.) “Wait!”, I think, “I’m still knitting our growing season plans!”

Yes, planning has been a main theme of my winter and early spring- layered upon everyday tasks such as property and CR monitoring, trail maintenance after storms, and communicating with community members and volunteers and I will be busy with projects this growing season! We’ll continue work at sites where we are conducting native plant restorations. I hold particular excitement for an upcoming AmeriCorps Cape Cod (ACC) project day to plant over 70 shrubs and grass plugs in an area where we established invasive control on the Menekish property (corner of Shore Rd and Old Harbor Rd) last year. I hope this project will break the trend of bone-chillingly cold 2022 ACC projects with CCF.

Bundled in winter clothing just below the threshold of significantly impaired mobility and with rubber gloves within work gloves on the day a few inches of snow coated the ground, ACC made incredible progress carving out a new trail through the dense, primarily invasive understory of a CCF assemblage, unburdening some beautiful trees from bittersweet and porcelain berry vines along the way. We are still working through our punch list for this new CCF trail. Stay tuned for an announcement of its opening.

As seems to be my tradition, I’ll end with an invitation to come join us in caring for conservation land. As our restoration projects have increased so, too, have our volunteer stewardship opportunities; I anticipate holding nearly weekly group projects during the growing season. We recently offered a plant ID training for volunteers and hope to continue to offer planned learning sessions. ***If you would like to be added to our group project list, please email me at [landsteward@ccfinc.org](mailto:landsteward@ccfinc.org).***

## New Trustees



Sarge Slicer



Linda Nixon

In the fall, the Board elected two interim trustees who will be on the ballot to be voted by the membership at the Annual Meeting in August. Both candidates are well-known in Chatham and already are making helpful contributions to the board.

Sarge Slicer whose family has been in Chatham since the mid 1950's at their home on Lover's Lake, retired from his career in New Jersey as a fire protection engineer in 2003. He moved to Chatham full time in 2006. He is a member of CCF's finance committee and he also serves on the board of the Friends of Chatham Waterways.

Linda Nixon moved to Chatham in 1997 and has been very active in town events. She has served on the board of the Eldredge Public Library and was Chair of Fundraising for the Friends of the EPL. She worked many years for First Night Chatham as Entertainment Chair, Chairman and Vice Chairman. For 20 years she organized and co-ordinated Thanksgiving meals at Brax Landing. Linda is working with the Advancement Committee planning and organizing events.

## Staff News



Lauren Arcomano

### CCF Welcomes New Executive Director

CCF is pleased to introduce Lauren Arcomano as our new Executive Director. She brings to CCF a wealth of experience working in nonprofits, including as an Executive Director and Trustee. From this experience, she has gained strong organization and community outreach skills, which will be put to good use here at CCF.

Lauren, who lives in Eastham, is an avid outdoorswoman and has already walked many of CCF's trails. She will be a clear advocate for CCF's mission of preserving the environment now and into the future.

*Welcome, Lauren!*

### Administrative Assistant, Ellen McKey

Last fall, CCF hired Ellen McKey as an additional administrative assistant and she worked closely with Evelyn Burckhart who had been with CCF for over twenty years. After tragedy struck, and we lost Evelyn, Ellen stepped up to the task of learning Evelyn's role as well as her new responsibilities. Many of our members may know her or her family as she has lived in Chatham for many years. Our organization is indeed fortunate to have Ellen on our team as she is experienced, well-organized, and creative.



### Evelyn R Burckhart 1945-2022

For 22 years, CCF benefited from the loyalty, good work and humor of Evelyn Burckhart. As secretary, she knew the people, the history and the business of CCF. Her tragic accidental death in January left a somber void. We are ever grateful for her service to CCF.



## Celebrating Our First Acquisitions!

Photo by Carol Odell



Fox Hill was the first property gifted to CCF in 1962 by Dorothy W. Smith.

CCF often introduces itself by saying that it holds over 800 acres in its care, but what does that really mean? and how did that happen? As we look back on our 60 years, we are amazed by the number of Chatham families that have turned over the responsibility to preserve their properties to CCF and, in some cases, a family has sold or gifted more than one property to the foundation.

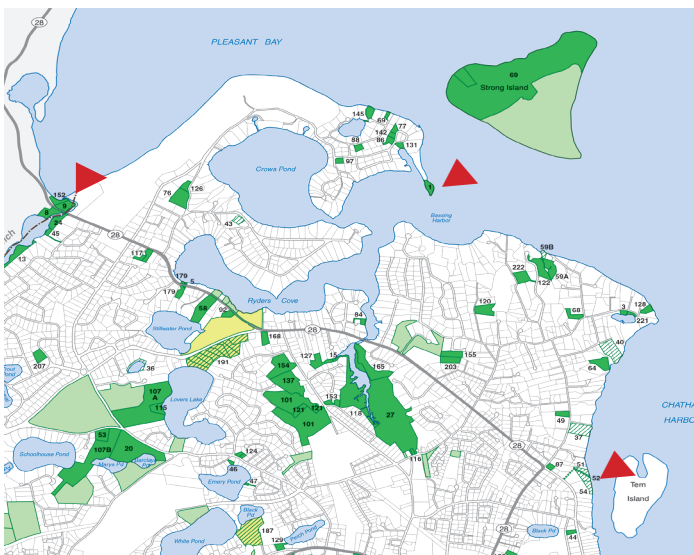
There are three basic ways that properties come into the care of the foundation.

The first is by gift. The very first gift to the foundation was made by Dorothy W. Smith in October 1962 just 3 months after the founding of CCF. Listed as parcel #1 on CCF's maps and land lists, this 2.5 acre North Chatham property, located in the Bassing Harbor area of Pleasant Bay, is known as Fox Hill Island. Anyone going in or out of Ryder's Cove by boat passes by Fox Hill Island. CCF has received gifts of over 350 acres in Chatham!

The second means of transferring property to CCF is by purchase. The very first purchase of land was made in October of 1963, a little over one year after the founding of the organization. This is significant as it indicates that the founders of CCF and the residents of Chatham were so dedicated to the mission as to be able to raise enough money in a year to purchase property. The purchase for 2.53 acres of land along Muddy Creek South was made from Ralph W. Guida. The parcel is just to the southwest of the bridge over Muddy Creek and part of a stunning vista on a well-traveled road, Rt. 28. In 60 years the foundation has purchased over 234 acres.

The third way land is preserved is by placing a Conservation Restriction on the property without giving up ownership and placing the responsibility to enforce the terms of the restriction on a non-profit organization. CCF holds conservation restrictions on 40 parcels of land including some of the larger town-owned properties that were purchased with Land Bank Funds, such as Sylvan Gardens, the Twine Field and Valley Farm. The very first Conservation Restriction to be held by CCF was waterfront property along Shore Road granted by Louise F. Tate in 1971. CCF holds Conservation Restrictions on 180+ acres of Chatham land.

The residents of Chatham have shown how much they care about protecting the natural environment of Chatham and have entrusted the preservation of their lands to CCF. The Foundation is most appreciative of the generous offerings of land and donations over the past 60 years which have allowed CCF to work towards accomplishing its mission to preserve land for the people, plants and animals. Looking to the future, anyone interested in finding ways to preserve property they own is encouraged to contact the Foundation for more information.



The red triangles indicate the location of the first properties acquired by CCF as gifts, donations and conservation restriction.

## CCF's 2021-2022 AmeriCorps Member

Kasey "Cas" Oakes is spending this year in Chatham as an AmeriCorps member splitting her time between CCF and the town of Chatham. In the winter months, she serves our Land Stewardship Director, Julie Baca, on CCF properties. In the warmer months, she will assist Chatham's Shellfish Division on the Jackknife Resilience developing living shorelines to help build back salt marshes.

Cas comes from New Jersey and is a graduate of Stockton University where she studied Marine Science. Last summer, she interned with the Mass Audubon's Coastal Waterbird Program on the Cape and continues to help with monitoring on the weekends. Her term with AmeriCorps runs eleven months from September until July 28th.

Of her work with CCF, she says she loves invasive species removal,



Cas Oakes serves with AmeriCorps assisting CCF and the Town of Chatham

improving her plant identification skills as well as working with the other ACC members.

Julie Baca describes working with Cas,

"Cas has been a flexible and dynamic member of the CCF team, bringing enthusiastic energy to the range of projects she is engaged in from monitoring properties and drafting land management plans to running the wildlife camera and developing a volunteer training."

After her time with CCF, Cas hopes to go into wildlife conservation and is particularly interested in wolf advocacy. She is also interested in creative writing, hiking, snowboarding and volleyball. We hope some of you will have a chance to meet her either on CCF trails or working along Muddy Creek. Her outgoing personality has made her a welcome addition to CCF's stewardship crew!

Photo by Carol Odell

## AmeriCorps and the Devine House

In 2019, CCF received the generous bequest from Dan Devine of his home and two adjacent lots in in South Chatham. Mr. Devine's intention was that the land was to be preserved and the home used for the benefit of the community. CCF now has a lease agreement with Barnstable County to use the housing for AmeriCorps members. The County is responsible for interior maintenance of the house like appliance repairs, painting, etc. and CCF is responsible for exterior maintenance, roof repair, gutter cleaning, etc. Members maintain the streetscape of all three properties of the Devine estate as well as the house yard. The two vacant lots are gradually being transitioned into naturalized conservation land, and ACC members assist CCF with that effort on some of their group project days.

Cas Oakes lives in the house with five other ACC members. They receive a living stipend and housing, but no wages for their efforts.

This arrangement between CCF and AmeriCorps is exactly what Mr. Devine had in mind when he

bequeathed his property to the Foundation. And it works out especially well for ACC since the Devine House is located in the center of their service area on the Cape. CCF is proud to be able to host these members who are contributing so much to the conservation of the natural environment in our area.

### We Value All Our Donors!

Stories like this one about Mr. Devine are exceptional and meaningful. But we must not lose track of the fact that the larger community of givers is what makes the greatest difference in our organization. Each individual gift, no matter the size, contributes to help CCF carry on its mission. We know that people are increasingly concerned about the environment and more and more are looking to the natural world for their well-being. Please consider making donations to mark anniversaries, honor friendships or celebrate occasions.

## Working Together to Protect Chatham's Environment

CCF is an organization that is deeply concerned and greatly invested in a healthy natural environment. Its mission is to preserve and protect land which in turn helps to protect the air, water, and habitat essential for all life forms.

Threats from the pollution and encroachment caused by development have been recurring pressures. However, the gradual increase of sea level rise is now threatening coastal areas globally, and Cape Cod, with its low topography, is especially vulnerable.

Losing land to the changes in the sea is familiar to CCF. In recent times, several properties along Chatham's eastern shore were lost due to the break in the outer beach in 1987. A later break in 2007 caused extensive erosion to the eastern portion of Strong Island jeopardizing the existing trail, which needed to be relocated landward. The increased intensity of storms, along with sea level rise, is now a concern for all coastal areas.

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a United Nations body dedicated to providing regular scientific assessments about the impacts of a warming world, has issued warnings. In response, our community of local officials, non-profits and concerned citizens are working together to address these concerns. Along with the Chatham Climate Action Network (CCAN), CCF, and other groups such as Friends of Chatham Waterways, Friends of Trees, Chatham Garden Club, Pleasant Bay Alliance, etc. have presented educational webinars about



Photo by Carol Odell

their on-going and future actions to address potential impacts to the water bodies, vegetation, and ecosystems of Chatham.

In 2018 CCF commissioned the Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC) to evaluate the potential for improving the water quality and possible restoration of the salt marsh system at Frost Fish Creek. As a result of this study, the Community Preservation

Committee granted CCF funds for further hydraulic and water quality studies. Because of these efforts Frost Fish Creek received the state designation of a Priority Project by the Division of Ecological Restoration which brings together various state agencies and funding partners to develop future restoration designs and implementation.

Additionally, last year APCC performed baseline studies to assess the current status of the large salt marsh system adjacent to Cackle Cove and Bucks Creek. Approximately 25% of all CCF's holdings are salt marshes and are expected to experience change due to the effects of both sea level rise and increased storm intensity/surge. Having this type of data and information will be useful to CCF for planning land stewardship actions going forward.

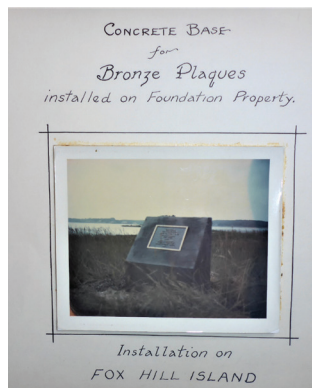
CCF will continue its programs that monitor changes to its properties and consult with local and state agencies to remain informed about sea level rise and how it may impact to our efforts to "preserve land for the benefit of the people, plants, animals and ecosystems of Chatham".

### CCF Celebrates 60 years! (Continued from page 1).

Neck between Cedar Street and Champlain Road, between Bridge Street and Morris Island Road, and the Barclay Pond area.

- Preserving pond shorefronts and the surrounding uplands, to protect water quality and the unique habitats surrounding ponds. Large areas around Mill Pond, Muddy Creek, Goose Pond, and Lover's Lake are examples.

- Protecting Chatham's salt marshes and shorelines, including the abutting drainage areas, for the health of the marine



ecosystems that support the local economy and for resilience during storms. Frost Fish Creek, Herring Run, and Cackle Cove are important areas that CCF has acquired over the years.

- Preserving the natural beauty of Chatham. The Strong Island acquisition was a prime example, but CCF also owns small parcels that enhance the beauty of neighborhoods, such as Dugan's Pond in North Chatham.

Scrapbook photo of bronze marker commemorating the first gift of land to CCF.

## 60th Anniversary Events to Watch For



This, our 60th year, we are planning to offer more events and opportunities to inform our members and others of the conservation work being done by our trustees, staff and volunteers.

### Trail Walks

We will continue to offer walks on our trails led by trustees and some well-known naturalists. The schedule will be on the web site along with information on how to sign up and reserve your spot. So far the following walks have been scheduled:

- May 13th** - The Bob Clem Trail at Frost Fish Creek
- June 8th**- Old Village Walk co-sponsored by the Friends of Trees
- June 18th** - Chase Park walk co-sponsored by the Friends of Trees
- July 13th** - Strong Island - leaders to be decided
- July 23rd** - Strong Island - leaders to be decided
- August 10th**- Strong Island - led by Bob Zaremba, botanist
- August 20th** - Strong Island - led by Peter Trull
- September 7th** - Strong Island - led by Mark Faherty, Mass Audubon
- September 17th** - Strong island - led by Todd Kelley, historian / naturalist



*We are ever grateful to Jay Cashman for providing transportation to and from Strong island for these walks.*

**More walks in the fall are yet to be scheduled. Please check the website for updates.**



Photo by Isaiuh Marquis Lee

Peter Trull will lead a walk on Strong island again this year.

### Other Events

The Mayo House will be open during these Chatham events:

- History Weekend: June 19th and 20th:**
- Mondays Music on Main: Throughout July & August**
- Oktoberfest: October 22<sup>nd</sup>**



Photo by Cathy Weston

**Pollinator Meadow Talk**  
June 18<sup>th</sup> by Cathy Weston

## Annual Meeting

### Monday, August 15th

at 5:30

### Wequassett Inn

Guest speaker this year will be David O'Neill, President of Mass Audubon. David has dedicated his professional career to conservation. He has served the National Audubon Society, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Trust and the Urban Land Institute. He was rewarded by Loyola University for his leadership on Chesapeake Bay recovery efforts. As CCF and Mass Audubon share some similar goals and concerns we look forward to having David O'Neill as our speaker.



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Foundation, Inc.**

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\* Also an Honorary Trustee

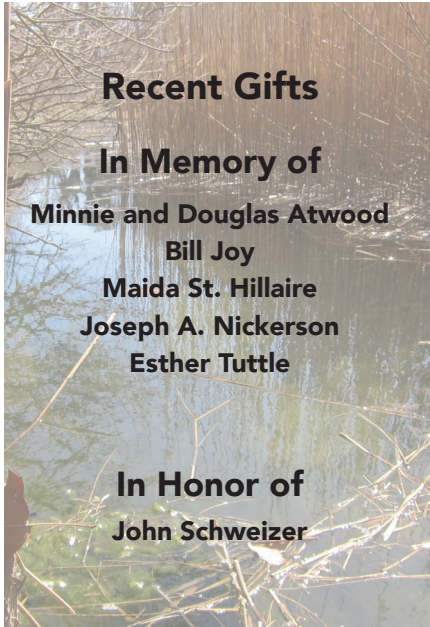
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Contact us at  
945-4084  
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**USED MID-SIZE PICK UP TRUCK**  
(full or extended bed)  
Contact: [landsteward@ccfinc.org](mailto:landsteward@ccfinc.org)

**Tax Smart Giving from your IRA**

You pay no federal income tax on your IRA withdrawal if you make a gift directly to CCF:

- You must be 70½ at the time of your gift.
- Your gift must go directly from IRA to CCF.
- Spouses must use their own IRA for gift.
- Gifts may not exceed \$100,000. per taxpayer.
- Gifts must be completed by Dec. 31, 2022.

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