

CHATHAM CONSERVATION FOUNDATION BULLETIN

Fall
2019

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

David Doherty Receives Ansel B. Chaplin Award

by Carol Odell
Board of Trustees

Chatham was fogged in the morning of September 4th, but by 5:00 the skies had cleared for a spectacular special CCF event at the Chatham Beach and Tennis Club overlooking a pristine ocean beach with clear azure skies. CCF hosted the Annual Meeting of the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts where CCF past president David Doherty received the Ansel B. Chaplin Award for conservation excellence. The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts was conceived of and founded by Ansel B. Chaplin of Truro. There was an excellent turn-out of representatives from land trusts from Falmouth to Provincetown as well as local



Mark Robinson from the Compact, Andy Young CCF Honorary Trustee and former award recipient, and Leonard Johnson, President of the Compact present David Doherty with the 2019 Ansel B. Chaplin Award.

dignitaries, CCF supporters and Trustees.

CCF's new president, Bob Lear, opened the meeting by welcoming all and introducing CCF's Executive Director, Dorothy Bassett and Land Steward, Julie Baca. After delivering an update of the recent activities and accomplishments of CCF, he turned the meeting over to Leonard Johnson, of the 300 Committee in Falmouth and President of the Compact for a brief business meeting.

Andy Young, Honorary Trustee, past president of CCF and recipient of the 2012 Ansel B. Chaplin Award spoke of David Doherty's contributions to conservation over the

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2019 Annual Meeting August 5th

by Debra Lawless
from an article in the Cape Cod Chronicle August 15, 2019



Outgoing president Oonie Burley with Peter Trull, keynote speaker at the Annual Meeting in August

"Observe, observe, observe. Be better observers." That was the message naturalist Peter Trull delivered to about 160 members at the CCF's 57th annual meeting at the Wequassett Resort in East Harwich Aug. 5.

Trull, 68, is the author of six books on the Cape's natural history. His latest is "Birds of Paradox: The Life of Terns" (Schiffer, 2019).

"I'll bet a lot of you don't know what's on that land," Trull said at the beginning of his illustrated 50-minute talk, referring to the CCF's 815 acres of land held in trust. He added that his motto is "you've got to get out more." Trull described himself as a "wet feet, dirty knees kind of guy."

"When the Chatham Conservation Foundation buys a new property, go to the wetland to see what's there," he advised.

(continued on page 6)



Mini-Meadow on Main
See article on page 3

Chatham's land trust since 1962

President's message: It's an exciting time at the Foundation.

By Bob Lear
President, Board of Trustees



Bob Lear

The last six months have been a period of substantial transition for CCF. The obvious organizational changes are a new Executive Director, Land Steward and President. More significant is a change in emphasis from acquisition of land to proactive stewardship and maintenance of our properties. We are focusing more on clearly identifying our lot boundaries and abutters' encroachments. We have cleared and marked our trails and led guided walks to encourage greater use. We are collaborating with other organizations to assess the conditions of our wetlands so that we can develop interventions to improve and protect them, particularly from sea level rise.

Each of these activities requires additional resources, both fiscal and physical. Therefore, we are significantly expanding our outreach efforts to publicize our good works so as to attract new members and encourage their active participation, and to engage business and non-profit partners. At the same time, we are adding benefits to our members to add value to their (your) support. We are also applying for grant opportunities to expand our existing projects and investigate new areas for and methods of conservation.

Executive Director's Message:

by Dorothy Bassett
Executive Director



Dorothy Bassett

It's been quite a busy summer, and we are still ramping up at the Mayo House. I have been settling into my new position serving as the Executive Director, and have been so fortunate to receive the guidance and support of the wonderful board members. I've also been so encouraged by the engagement and participation of our members and community.

My days have been full, and my efforts have been across the board: fundraising, advancing the organization, learning from other local land trusts, building our volunteer base, budgeting, outreach, managing our fantastic intern and wonderful land steward, and many

more projects. One of my biggest efforts at the Foundation has been to increase the value of membership to our community. With new walks and a new kayak trip, we've been getting members engaged, and getting the public out on the beautiful trails.

For the coming year I've been researching speakers to come to the Cape, and planning new and expanded walks and events. I'm excited about these fresh ideas and projects, but I want to hear from you: what events and activities do you want to see at the Foundation, and what would make you want to get involved? I welcome your feedback and participation. I can be reached in the Mayo House at 508-945-4084, or by email at ExecutiveDirector@ccfinc.org.

Dorothy Bassett

As a result of this shift in priorities recipients of this Bulletin will also be receiving requests to increase their financial support through membership dues and our annual appeal. We will also seek your assistance in other ways, such as encouraging your friends and neighbors to become members, or walking our trails with loppers in hand to help clear invasives. With over 230 properties in all sections of town there are likely sites in your neighborhood that you can monitor, and with some basic training, update reports and photos to our website. For those who would like to volunteer indoors there are opportunities at the Mayo House to support office staff doing tasks such as digitizing files and researching deeds. And of course we need a few happy gardeners to maintain the Mini Meadow on Main. The Chatham Conservation Foundation thinks globally and acts locally; we are proud to offer opportunities to the community to preserve our woods and marshes, and invite you to join us in making a positive impact.

I look forward to working with all the members as we strive to conserve and improve access to Chatham's natural resources.

Adaptation

NEW FUNDRAISING ACTIONS

As CCF continues to increase our focus on caring for the land entrusted to us, our costs have also increased. To address this we have taken two actions:

A Fall Appeal was instituted asking for donations from the entire Town. Our most recent appeal resulted in over \$16,000 in new donations, for which we are most grateful. We will be sending out another Fall Appeal in the next few weeks.

A Spring Membership Renewal Campaign was conducted during which about 25% of our members renewed - thank you!

Our plan is to continue with the Fall Appeal and Spring Membership Renewals on an ongoing basis. We hope that when the Fall Appeal arrives in your mailbox, you will continue your support of CCF.

We could not do this important work without you!

Julie Baca Joins CCF Staff

by Dorothy Bassett
Executive Director



Photo by Dorothy Bassett

Julie Baca

We are very excited to announce the addition of our new team member, Julie Baca. Julie has been serving as our new Land Steward, and she has been a great addition to our team. Julie is a Dennis native, who has an Engineering degree and experience with volunteering at the Barnstable Land Trust. Her extensive farming experience and work with volunteers will be invaluable to the Foundation. The fresh veggies from her garden are already a big hit around the office. If you see her outside this fall monitoring the CCF properties, please say hello!

Volunteer Intern Makes a Splash

by Dorothy Bassett
Executive Director



Photo by Dorothy Bassett

Jeremy Green

The Chatham Conservation Foundation would like to thank volunteer intern Jeremy Green for all of his work with us this summer. In Jeremy's own words,

"The CCF gave me an opportunity to dive headfirst into complex and rewarding work testing water, mapping salt marshes and calculating the area of foundation parcels. I enjoyed my experience and loved meeting and working with

Dorothy and everyone else I met at the Mayo House."

Jeremy created a map of the Foundation's land in GIS, complete with saltwater and freshwater marsh areas. He used this map to calculate the number of acres the Foundation is protecting: 212.5 acres of saltwater marsh and 146.41 acres of freshwater marsh. That's almost 400 acres of protected marsh land in Chatham!

Marsh ecosystems are rich in biodiversity and serve as an important sponge for excess nutrients, and as a buffer during stormy seas. They also slow shoreline erosion and provide habitat for nesting birds, fish, and shellfish. Jeremy's map and data will be valuable as we continue our work to protect these fragile and valuable ecosystems.

Thank you for all of your hard work Jeremy! And thanks to the donors who make preserving these ecosystems possible.

Mayo House Mini Meadow- Second Year Report



It was with great anticipation that we awaited the second spring of the Mini-Meadow. What plants survived the winter? What plants would spread out this year? The early spring was promising. The grasses came back, as did the showy columbine. And our strawberries even produced a few berries!

As summer took hold, the winner for the year was clear – the butterfly weed. Last fall, the seed heads of 40 plants burst and scattered, and this year we probably had 200 small new plants. This was thrilling, but most important, we hosted monarch butterflies all summer long.



All through the spring and into early summer, there was enough rainfall that we did not need to irrigate. In July, we started supplemental water twice each week, and the plants continued to thrive. Wild strawberry, butterfly weed, spotted bee balm, and prairie drop-seed grass filled in around the CCF sign and suppressed most of the weeds there. Overall, there were many fewer weeds this year than in the initial planting last year.



On the shady bank sweet pepperbush, Joe-Pye weed, and boneset all bloomed well, grew larger and started to form a consolidated hedge.

Photos by Cathy Weston

Walking the trails and

by Dorothy Bassett
Executive Director



Bob Zaremba, naturalist, leads walk along the Barclay Pond Trail.

The beautiful woodland trails of Chatham have been getting more foot traffic this summer and fall, as more people are invited to discover the hidden walks of Chatham. The Foundation has spent extra effort this season to encourage the use of the conservation lands, and to add value to members and supporters like you. In order to help people appreciate these open spaces we're right alongside you in the trails and marshes showing you the way.



Walkers take a break at Sylvan Gardens overlooking White Pond.



Oonie Burley, past president of CCF and Board Member of the Friends of Sylvan Gardens points out storm damage and invasive overgrowth in Sylvan Gardens.

This summer we hosted guided tours of the trails at Frost Fish Creek, Barclay Pond, Sylvan Gardens, and Strong Island. One week before the first walk was scheduled, the tornados touched down on Cape Cod, making many sections of our trails completely unpassable. Thanks to the hard work and sharp chainsaws of Julie Baca and Scott Tappan, the trails were cleared and reopened, and the walks went on as scheduled. We capped the summer season with a popular educational paddle up Monomoy River/Muddy Creek. We were fortunate to have excellent weather and wildlife sightings for each of the outings, and to earn the support of new members at almost every walk.

Although we cannot quantify all of the intangible benefits of

Exploring the Creeks

spending time in nature, we can be proud of these outcomes: 93 people attended our walks, spending a total of 199 hours outside, and explored roughly 150 miles on foot and by kayak. We earned new memberships at nearly every walk, gained new volunteers, received support from

I know the walks are helping me better understand the town's natural resources and land use history. It's also good for folks to realize there's more to Chatham than beautiful beaches, and each of your event leaders have been able to convey that message. Walking lands have always helped give me a sense of place...

Tina Delaney

local businesses, and benefitted from countless volunteer hours from eight members of the community. Special thanks to our guides David McNally, Bob Zaremba, Oonie Burley, Carol Odell, Bill Kyle, photographer Tina Delaney, and RSVP volunteer Sherrie Burson. Also, thanks to Chatham Boat Company for sponsoring transportation to Strong Island and to PBCB for their offer of discounted kayak rentals.

Perhaps the best way to summarize the positive impacts of the walks would be through the eyes of our member and volunteer Tina Delaney:

"I know the walks are helping me better understand the town's natural resources and land use history. It's also good for folks to realize there's more to Chatham than beautiful beaches, and each of your event leaders have been able to convey that message. Walking lands have always helped give me a sense of place, so I thank CCF for these opportunities to get out and about and explore my new home. See you at the next one."

All Photos by Tina Delaney



A spectacular early September day made the walk on Strong Island led by Bob Zaremba a memorable event which was attended by 26 people.



A group of kayakers led by Bill Kyle explore Muddy Creek.

AmeriCorps Cape Cod

By Paul Chamberlin
Board of Trustees

Photo by Paul Chamberlin



Markers indicate that AmeriCorps volunteers have worked in the area.

This fall AmeriCorps Cape Cod begins its 21st year of volunteer service to the various conservation and disaster preparedness entities of Barnstable County. Each year approximately twenty recent college graduates arrive on the Cape from all over the U.S. to be individually placed with a town natural resources department, a private land trust such as CCF, the National Seashore, or a public service organization.

In past years CCF's AmeriCorps members split their time working in Chatham and Harwich; but this year Chatham will have its own service member who will work with the Foundation, the Conservation Department, and the Shellfish Department. This will give the AmeriCorps member a broader perspective of how the natural resources of a single town are managed by both public and private entities. And it will also provide a needed communication and cooperation link between the Town and the Foundation in the management of Chatham's natural resources.

Part of the AmeriCorps member's field and office work at CCF will be to integrate town-owned conservation properties

over which CCF holds conservation restrictions into CCF's data base for future monitoring. She will also be involved in clearing and maintaining CCF's walking trails – some of which merge into Town walking trails which could be cleared at the same time. AmeriCorps service members are also involved in developing and training volunteer citizen land stewards for which both the Town and CCF have similar needs and could benefit from the development of a common pool of willing individuals.

We are excited to welcome our new AmeriCorps service member, Kate Witte, to CCF and Chatham and are looking forward to the opportunities her service will provide to CCF and the Town for a more coordinated approach to natural resource protection.



Photo by Dorothy Bassett

Kate Witte is the new AmeriCorps volunteer who will be working with CCF and the Town of Chatham. Kate who is from Nyack, NY has degrees in Environmental Science and Sustainability Studies from Messiah College in PA.

Annual Meeting *continued from page 1*

His talk, was designed to cultivate a feeling of wonder for the natural world. Trull, who began teaching seventh graders at the Cape Cod Lighthouse Charter School in 2003, noted that it is imperative to introduce children to nature.

But adults should not lose that sense of awe. He encouraged adults to bring binoculars while kayaking in fresh water ponds. He showed close-up pictures of endangered damselflies and dragonflies. "Watching them—it's like a gift," he said.

Trull described the life cycle of dragonflies which, after mating, drop their eggs into pondwater. The nymph stays in the water for three years before climbing up a stalk of grass in early August. Eventually its back splits open, and out comes a dragonfly. "Pretty incredible, right? Right across the street today," he said.

"This is why you're shelling out all that money to protect the land," he added, generating laughter and applause from the audience.

During the business part of the meeting, Robert Lear was elected as

president to replace Eunice "Oonie" Burley on Sept. 3. Paul Chamberlin will continue as vice president, Gerry Stahl as treasurer and Edyth Tuxbury as clerk.

Burley noted that the organization is now "running as a proper non-profit business." She commended the staff—Dorothy Bassett, who has served as executive director; Julie Baca, who serves as land steward; and Evelyn Burckhart who has been secretary for 19 years. She also praised Dave McNally, who served as acting executive director for several months after the group's first executive director, Matt Cannon, moved to Maine, and Scott Tappan, who served as acting land steward.

CCF is working to acquire additional property which Burley said is exciting as "so little land is available" in Chatham. She also noted that the excavation of William and Anne Nickerson's c. 1664 homestead is happening right now on CCF land in partnership with the Nickerson Family Association, Inc. The dig is at the rear of a 1.84-acre parcel in North Chatham, which will soon be restored by removing invasive

plants, replanting the site and adding a walking trail. An \$87,000 Community Preservation Act grant will pay for the work and maintain the site for three years.

Board member Carol Odell listed some of Burley's accomplishments as overseeing the writing of a strategic plan, enlarging the CCF staff and moving the group's headquarters to the early 19th century Mayo House at 540 Main St.

As a parting gift, Odell presented Burley with a bowl made from a Bradford pear that once stood in front the Mayo House, as well as a gift certificate for three native beach plums.

A special thank you

to each of these out going trustees. Over your term you have given generously of your time and talents.

*Jeanne Branson
Rachel Barnes
Oonie Burley
Tim Willis
Dave McNalley*

Land Steward's Report

By Julie Baca
CCF Land Steward

Research team from UMass to study Red River Marsh.

Since joining CCF this spring as the Land Steward I have stayed busy getting to know our properties, meeting trustees, members, and neighbors, and taking care of our trails and small restoration projects.

Over 200 parcels and 800 acres is a lot to become familiar with and I am still working on it! From mainland to island, upland to marsh, large assemblages with trails to small parcels tucked away in neighborhoods, there is much variety in our lands. Getting to know a parcel involves learning about it on different scales. Zoomed out details include understanding deeds and land plans and the parcels context within Chatham, while zoomed in details involve bounds on the ground, knowing our neighbors, and understanding plants and animals that call our parcels home.

Much of my parcel exploration has involved following up on monitoring work conducted by our AmeriCorps member, Ben, who wrapped up his service in July. I will continue our monitoring work with our new AmeriCorps member this fall. This leads me to a friendly reminder for the fall cleanup season. We often run into yard debris deposited on our conservation land. While it may seem like a harmless action, it concerns us because it can smother vegetation and spread invasive species, which can crowd out native plants and disrupt habitat. Yard debris can be brought to the town dump, private brush disposal facilities, or composted in your yard.

One piece of work I am particularly excited about was helping to gain approval for UMass to conduct a study at Red River Marsh, where CCF owns some marsh. This is part of the second year of a study monitoring marshes around Massachusetts. In this study they are collecting drone and on the ground data to develop a model to use drones to monitor the health of marshes. The research team is interested in studying Red River Marsh because it has interesting sediment dynamics, they have not studied a marsh on the south side of the Cape yet, and the marsh has unique features such as a possible tidal restriction at Deep Hole Rd.

As one of CCF's strategic goals is to monitor and maintain the health of our marshes, we are enthused Red River Marsh could be part of this study and it was great to hear the following update from researcher Amanda Davis: "The folks visiting and living near Red River

have been so curious/excited about our work - you all have such a great community!" We hope to have more information to share about the marsh after the study.

I am looking forward to becoming acquainted with Chatham's natural spaces in the seasons of fall and winter. I hope you might take some time to explore too; there is much to observe on our trails at Barclay Pond and Frost Fish Creek in every season!

The storm that brought tornadoes to the Cape in late July detoured our work, turning our focus to cleanup, as I am sure it did to many of you. A huge shout out of thanks to Scott Tappan, our dedicated volunteer who accompanies me for hours of field work each week. Our trails would not have been passable so soon after the storm without him!

David Doherty continued from page 1

years. David has used his skills and knowledge from a career in real estate to assist CCF and residents in Chatham with preserving open space. David has and continues to work closely with individuals, the Town of Chatham and with the Compact to carry out CCF's mission of "preserving land for the people, plants, animals, and ecosystems of Chatham". Representative Sarah Peake brought greetings and award certificates from the Massachusetts Senate and House Representatives.

To close the meeting, Mark Robinson gave a thoughtful talk entitled "On Forbearance" honoring landowners who choose preservation of open space over financial gain. He highlighted the fact that the Cape Cod land trust community pioneered the doctrine of overlay protection. As a matter of fact, it was David Doherty who led CCF to the use of



David Doherty with Representative Sarah Peake receiving award certificates from from the Massachusetts legislature.

Photo by Carol Odell

secure overlay protection to hold land "in a natural state for conservation purposes forever". Robinson continued with an introduction to the new concept of partnering with the Native Land Conservancy, the first nonprofit land trust governed by native peoples east of the Mississippi, whereby willing land trusts would allow the NLC access to some of their properties for non-intrusive traditional life ways such as ceremony and education.

CCF is proud of the work that it does in Chatham and proud to be part of this larger land trust community, the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts.

Special congratulations are given to David Doherty, an Honorary Trustee of CCF, for his years of service to conservation and the receipt of the 2019 Ansel B. Chaplin award.



**Chatham
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<p>OPEN SPACE PROTECTED TO DATE</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Parcels</th> <th>Classification</th> <th>Acres</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>148</td> <td>Gifts</td> <td>375.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>42</td> <td>Purchases</td> <td>243.83</td> </tr> <tr> <td>47</td> <td>Easements & Restrictions</td> <td>215.12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>237</td> <td>TOTALS</td> <td>834.85</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Parcels	Classification	Acres	148	Gifts	375.90	42	Purchases	243.83	47	Easements & Restrictions	215.12	237	TOTALS	834.85	<p>Tax Smart Giving from your IRA</p> <p>You pay no federal income tax on your IRA withdrawal if you make a gift directly to CCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, 2019.
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148	Gifts	375.90														
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<p>Recent Donations have been given in memory of Kenneth Sexton</p>	<p><i>"I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise what is there to defend?"</i> Robert Redford</p>															
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