



January 1999
Volume 1, Issue 1

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The Boxborough Conservation Trust is a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501-C3 corporation with mailing address at 462 Hill Road, Boxborough, MA 01719, telephone (978) 264-0113

This Newsletter is an infrequent publication of the Boxborough Conservation Trust, Boxborough, Massachusetts

A Note from Your Editor and Treasurer

By Sam Fisk

On membership: We have 76 members. Our goal for our first full year of operation was to have 100. We have both succeeded and failed. There are many of you who gave for two of you – hence, I suppose, we can turn couples into being two members each. But this simple exercise in math does not add up to 100 paid supporters. So we have some scrambling to do. One way to help out may be for couples to double their contributions and then sign on as one plus one – each contributing equally. We would welcome any increase, but this does sound convoluted. Wouldn't it be better if you asked a neighbor who is not a member to join. Or better yet – how about asking two?

About the newsletter: This is a first effort. There will be more. But like many firsts, we are not sure yet what should go into this piece and what should not. It is a matter of what interests you. Any of you with thoughts and ideas should sign on to help us out. It does not take long – with desktop publishing – to make something like this happen. And it can be a lot of fun.



It's Time to Renew Your Membership

For those of you who are already members, please send in the enclosed yellow **1999 Membership Renewal Form**, with your dues, and if each of you gets a friend to send in a green **New Member Registration Form** (also enclosed) with a generous donation, we will double our membership and our assets, just like that.

From the President

By Frank Coolidge

A year ago six of us, including two members of the Conservation Commission, formed the Boxborough Conservation Trust, a private non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving and protecting Boxborough's undeveloped land. Our prime stimulus was the looming sale to a developer of the Hamilton farm known as High Pastures, a beautiful 34-acre property with an antique house on Barteau Lane. At this property we drew the line in the sand. Enough is enough.

In this first year, the BCT has gained tax exempt status from the IRS (yes, all

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Mission Possible

By Simon Bunyard

On a Sunday afternoon in September, about a dozen Trust members got together in a room at the Town Hall to draft a mission statement. We were ably lead in this effort by Pat Sordill, President of Sordill Consulting here in Boxborough. Pat is an organizational development and training consultant with experience in assisting organizations to focus their efforts more productively. Having gone from no members to more than 70 in less than a year, we felt we could use some of that.

The result of this session was the mission we proudly display on our letter head: *Preserving and Protecting Boxborough's Undeveloped Land*. It was a fascinating process, and well worth the effort. We hope the result is one that resonates for you as well as it does for those of us who selected it from among the many that were considered.



Annual Meeting and Party

Mark the date. We will have a *brief* annual meeting and much longer party to celebrate our first year of operations. Come meet your fellow members.

Sunday, March 21
4:00 to 6:00 PM
at the home of
Sam Fisk and Linda Coe
60 Barteau Lane



Our New Logo

We are very proud of our new logo. James Aromaa, of James Aromaa Design & Advertising in Melrose, the brother of one of our directors, Glynis Hamil, designed it for us. He did a terrific job, don't you think? We are a town of stone walls and some (not enough) large, old trees, which we have to protect. There are more places than you may know where there are cat-o-nine-tails which should become more accessible as we clean up and develop our trail system. It really speaks to the essence of Boxborough. We hope you will be seeing it around a lot.

James is a professional graphics consultant doing advertising and design services from thumbnails to finished electronic art. He specializes in illustration and corporate design. We were lucky to have someone of his caliber helping us on something like this.



The BCT Membership List

- David Bredenberg and Katie DeMeulemeester
 * Pamela Bundy and Scott Bundy
 * **Simon Bunyard** and Ruth Zimmerman
 Ken Canfield and Anne Canfield
 * **Frank Coolidge** and Emilie Coolidge
 Will Coolidge and Jo Coolidge
 Fred Crimins and Jacque Crimins
 Todd Davis and Patty Davis
 Richard Delaney and Cheryl Delaney
 John P. Delano
 J. DiLuna and Elizabeth DiLuna
 Geoffrey Doherty and Susan Doherty
 Timothy Eckersley and Linda Eckersley
 Regina Eddy and Burt Feinberg
Ken Fabian and Sandra Fabian
 John Fallon and Pat Fallon
 Karen Fanucci and Sebastian Kiss
 * **Sam Fisk** and Linda Coe
 * Les Fox and Gladys Fox
 Jeff Fuhrer and Mary Fuhrer
 * Jeffrey Glidden and Janet Glidden
 Charlene Golden and Richard Golden
 Robert Goodnow and Michelle Goodnow
 * James Gorman and Ingrid Gorman
 Betty Graham and William Graham
 Johan Grape and Ann Seymour
 Judithanne Gray and Anthony Gray
Glynis Hamel and Mark Hamel
Norman Hanover and Flo Hanover
 John Head and Barbara Head
 H. Russell Henderson and Muriel Henderson
 David Hirshberg and Arlene Grossman
 Christopher Hood and Sharon Hood
 Jim Howie and Teresa Howie
 Lynn Hurley and James Hurley
 * Christopher Joyce and Deborah Joyce
 * Jeanne Kangas
 Jan Kapstad and Kim Kapstad
 Kim Kinnear and Karen Kinnear
David Koonce
 * George Krusen and Betsey Krusen
 Vinay Kumar and Bela Chandhok
 Steven Levine and Cheryl Levine
 * Peter MacDonald
 Betty MacKenzie and Jim Luckett
 Donald Mackie and Julie Mackie
Daniel MacPhail and Patricia Flanagan
 Stuart Markowitz and Cindy J Markowitz
 * **Bunny Morse** and Ernie Fournier
 * Suzanne Morse
 Noddin-Poulin Family
 John Northrup and Melissa Northrup
 John Nuber and Barbara Nuber
 Marybeth O'Brien and John O'Brien
 Matthew O'Loughlin and Ellen O'Loughlin
 Eleonora Pontoriero
 John Pullerits and Janet Weisenberger
 David Reilly and Annelies Reilly
 Judy Reiter
 Janice Rejto and Stephan Rejto
 Alan Rohwer and Mary Rohwer
 Jeffrey Scott and Anita Scott
 Brian Sears and Sherry Sears

Continued in next column

Current Projects

By Simon Bunyard

Well, you win some, and you lose some. We had a big win with Flagg Hill, but we ultimately lost the High Pastures project after a protracted legal battle with the developer. In the process, we learned a lot about the state law known as Chapter 61. And we are now looking forward to a less reactive and more orderly process for dealing with future projects.

Chapter 61

Chapter 61 (A and B) was enacted to help the owners of farm, forestry and recreation land. It provides tax relief to avoid the forced sale of these important resources to developers due to financial hardship. Without this statute, these properties would be taxed at their highest-and-best-use value. Much of the larger open properties in Boxborough are currently protected under Chapter 61. When land is "taken out of chapter", which happens when it is offered for sale for any use other than its current use, the town has the option to buy it. This is what happened on both the High Pastures and Flagg Hill projects.

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- Matthew Shapiro and Margaret Shapiro
 Nick Sharma and Caroline Sharma
 Pat Sordill and Jeff Kenyon
 * Lisa St. Amand and David St. Amand
 * Tom Steele and Mary Steele
 Alexander Stein and Elizabeth Stein
 * Dan Tappan and Kathy Tappan
 Eric Tornstrom and Barbara Tornstrom
 Nina Veley and H. Arden Veley
 Irvin Weaver
 Mark White and Pascale White
 Patricia Wilkey and Wesley Wilkey
 Kristie Wood and Chris Flisher

* denotes charter members - those members having given \$500 or more since the BCT was founded. You can still become a charter member by increasing your total contributions to \$500 before the annual meeting this March.

Names in **boldface** are members of the BCT Board of Directors.

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from The President*

your donations are fully tax deductible), added three directors for a total of nine, built the membership to an impressive 76 (that is 144 individuals), and raised close to \$25,000.

This gratifying interest and support underscores the townspeople's recognition of the importance of slowing the pace of development in Boxborough and preserving its beauty and rural character. The BCT is doing all it can to this end.

Our efforts to date have been confined primarily to the Hamilton and Flagg Hill properties, in which the Trust played a key role in raising public awareness and, in the case of Flagg Hill, in building support for its purchase by the town. We are working with landowners to familiarize them with alternatives, providing estate planning benefits and other advantages compared to outright sale to a developer. We have held meetings in various parts of town to spread the word of our existence and objectives, and we held a T-shirt design contest in the fifth grade at Blanchard to build awareness among the youth of Boxborough of the importance of conservation issues.

There is a lot more that needs to be done. We need to build and maintain trails so townspeople can enjoy what Boxborough already has. We could clean up along town roads. And we want to leverage our efforts through strategic alliances with other area conservation organizations.

All of this sounds great, but a lot of time, effort and money are required to achieve these goals. We have learned from the High Pastures project experience that it is vital to have a dialogue with landowners to help them understand all of their options before turning to a developer. Future newsletters will address the options landowners have for realizing the value they deserve from their land, without compromising its natural beauty.

This is one reason we need to raise considerably more funds on an ongoing basis. We need more members to help

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Letter from SVT and SCT on Flagg Hill

December 14, 1998

Dear Members of the Boxborough Conservation Trust:

Please accept this heartfelt "Thanks" from Sudbury Valley Trustees and the Stow Conservation Trust for your support of and involvement in the protection of Flagg Hill, or what we refer to as the Heath Hen Meadow Brook Corridor. Your dedication to the protection of the land at Flagg Hill in Boxborough, and your successful public campaign to encourage residents to vote favorably for the project laid the groundwork for our success in Stow. As we spread the word about the importance of this community resource, we reminded Stow residents over and over of the commitment that residents of Boxborough displayed in your support of the protection of this land. Your leadership helped inspire like action in Stow, resulting in the protection of an ecosystem that pays no mind to town boundaries.

As we move forward and work to finalize the details of these land purchases, we can all feel the satisfaction and pride in our joint success. Knowing that the wildlife here will have one more haven from the encroachment of suburban sprawl upon their ever more rare habitats is one of the wonderful rewards. Helping to shape the future of our communities is yet another.

Congratulations, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year to you all!

Sincerely,

Stephen T. Johnson
Executive Director
Sudbury Valley Trustees

Marion Scott
President
Stow Conservation Trust

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Current Projects*

High Pastures

The Hamilton land, known as High Pastures, is an old 34 acre farm lying between Barteau Lane and Hill Road. It has a wonderful combination of pristine open meadow, woods, wetlands and a beautiful pond, and is a vital link between existing conservation lands. Because of this diversity, it offers a wide range of habitat and wildlife is abundant. Unfortunately, it also has the potential for twelve or more houses.

It was offered for sale by its owner to a developer, Habitech, Inc. Because it had been under Chapter 61, it was first offered to the town, who in turn assigned its rights to Sudbury Valley Trustees, a regional land trust. Our fledgling BCT worked alongside SVT in its attempt to

acquire the property. Unfortunately, we could not pull it off, and it looks as though the property will be developed after all.

Flagg Hill

When the 80 acres of the Stewart property were offered to the town, the town said YES!. With the unanimous support of the Selectmen, the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, and the Finance Committee - and a lot of hard work by many very active members of the BCT I might add - the \$1.4 million cost was approved overwhelmingly both at Town Meeting and at the Prop 2½ override vote shortly afterward. It was especially gratifying when Stow purchased 280 acres adjacent to it not long afterward. Thank you, citizens of Boxborough and Stow.



Fifer's Day

By Sam Fisk

Our booth at Fifer's Day was a great success. Pictures and words on both the High Pastures and Flagg Hill projects had their spot next to the dunk tank. Having our school superintendent and principal, and a couple of Blanchard's teachers, were just some of our offerings as eager beavers between the age of 10 and 60 tried their luck dunking their favorites into gallons of cold water.

And it was cold and wet, if you remember, the celebration coming near the end of last June's monsoon season. Let it be said that we are grateful to all our volunteers who exposed themselves to wet and cold.

We raffled a kayak donated by Sue Morse and Walden Paddlers of Concord. The lucky winner was none other than conservation commission member Charlene Golden.

We raised almost \$1000. Needless to say, we hope to repeat last year's success. Fifer's Day is one event we should never pass up.

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from The President*

with all that we need to do, and we need a broad base of support to give us greater credibility with landowners and developers. As a goal, I would like to see at least a doubling in our memberships by the end of 1999. We solicit the participation of all members. Please let me or any of the other board members know of your particular interests and willingness to help.

The undeveloped land in Boxborough is disappearing fast, and the time to preserve what's left is now.



The Boxborough Conservation Trust Board of Directors

Simon Bunyard, clerk 263-3139
Frank Coolidge, president 264-0113
Ken Fabian 263-6524
Sam Fisk, treasurer 263-4522
Glynis Hamel 263-6456
Norm Hanover 263-3250
David Koonce 263-1052
Dan MacPhail 263-7404
Bunny Morse 263-4514

Call us any time



1998 T-shirt Contest

One of the most gratifying events of 1998 was the first annual T-shirt contest. Diane Hosmer, Blanchard School's art director, had her students design artwork for T-shirts to be sold for fundraising by the BCT. 60 entries were received. A big cheer goes to the winning design, above, submitted by Tom Vickery, a fifth grader. Thanks Tom!

There are still a few 1998 T-shirts left. Be sure to get one to start your collection. There will be a new design each year. Come and see the winning entry for 1999 when it is announced at the annual meeting on March 21 (see box on page 2).

Boxborough
Conservation
Trust



462 Hill Road, Boxborough, MA 01719