



# Little Compton Landscapes

Newsletter of The Sakonnet Preservation Association

Winter 2005

## Conservation Easement Protects 20 Acres between Round Pond and Long Pond

The owners of 20 acres abutting both Round Pond and Long Pond recently donated to the Sakonnet Preservation Association (SPA) a conservation easement that will permanently protect the entire parcel from further development. The conservation easement was conveyed in December 2004 by The Meadow, Inc., a corporation owned by members of seven families who own other properties in the vicinity of the parcel.

Preservation of the Meadow, as the land is known to its owners, will protect the watersheds and wildlife habitat of the two coastal ponds. The property has frontage on Long Pond to the east and Round Pond Road to the west. In addition to providing for the maintenance of the land in its current open condition, the terms of the conservation easement also permit continued use of the property

by local fisherman, who store equipment and dry nets on the land. The conservation easement also allows agricultural uses of the property as well as the maintenance of structures for the enhancement of wildlife habitat, such as stands for osprey nests. The easement does not provide for public access to the property.

The 20-acre conservation easement generously donated to SPA by The Meadow, Inc. reinforces conservation efforts by other property owners in the immediate vicinity of the newly protected land. Roswell and Joan Perkins in 1985 donated to SPA a conservation easement on a lot overlooking Round Pond at the corner of Sakonnet Point Road and Round Pond Road. The late Carolyn Haffenreffer in 2001 donated to SPA conservation easements on a 3.75-acre parcel on the west shore of Round Pond and another 3.75 acre parcel fronting on the ocean. The Haffenreffer family has also donated land and conservation easements on other nearby property to the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, the Nature Conservancy, and the State of Rhode Island.

## Cooperative Effort Will Expand Preserved Shoreline Area

A transaction scheduled to take place early this year will result in the acquisition and protection of an 11.5-acre parcel on South Shore Road. The project, involving four conservation organizations and agencies, will expand to more than 130 acres a shoreline complex of conservation lands and protected property at South Shore and Goosewing Beaches and at Tuniper's and Quicksand Ponds.

Late in 2004, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) signed an agreement with Philemon T. Marvell and Rhonda Marvell to purchase the property on the north side of South Shore Road. The land abuts parcels to the east (3.1 acres) and west (2.3 acres) that the Marvells had previously donated to the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust (LCACT).

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## **Sakonnet Preservation Association**

### *Officers*

Heather Steers, *President*  
Terence Tierney, *Vice President*  
Sheila Mackintosh, *Secretary*  
Jana Porter, *Asst. Secretary*  
Chris Burns, *Treasurer*

### *Directors*

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Gerry Billings  
Alli Brady  
Thomas Buffum  
Piper Hawes  
Leutia Carter  
Jana Porter  
Lucy O'Connor  
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### *Advisors Council*

Stetson Eddy  
Roger Greene  
David Borden  
Michael Forte

### *Newsletter Editors*

Larry Anderson  
Jana Porter  
Karen Richmond

### *Design*

Karen Richmond

### **SPA**

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The property includes important maritime woodland, coastal thicket and coastal salt pond communities, and some upland meadow, as well as sweeping scenic views. Under the terms of the agreement, the newly acquired land will be called the P. T. Marvell Preserve, in memory of the Marvells' late son.

The acquisition is the result of a cooperative management and fundraising effort involving TNC, LCACT, the Sakonnet Preservation Association (SPA), and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM). Upon its acquisition of the property from the Marvells, TNC will convey to LCACT, SPA, and DEM a conservation easement that will provide public access to the property, including the creation of trails and a small parking area for use by the public.

SPA, LCACT, and DEM have all pledged funds for the acquisition of the conservation easement from The Nature Conservancy. Ongoing cooperative fundraising efforts are also planned to support TNC's commitment to purchase the property. Further details about the acquisition and management plans for the P. T. Marvell Preserve will appear in future issues of Little Compton Landscapes.

RI Land Trust Council, RI Assoc. of Conservation Commissions, RI Rivers Council  
present the

### **SEVENTH ANNUAL LAND TRUST CONFERENCE**

### **Rhode Island Land and Water Conservation Summit**

**SATURDAY, March 12 8:30 - 3:30 PM**

URI MEMORIAL UNION BUILDING  
URI, Kingston Campus

featuring

**25 different workshops:**  
Land and Watershed Conservation Tools,  
Organizational Development

**keynote speaker, Peter Forbes**  
"The Soul of the Land"

**RI legislative update**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND!**

**For information or registration:**  
401. 331. 7110 ext. 39 or email: [rfriday@tnc.org](mailto:rfriday@tnc.org)  
\$25 pre-registration by March 1



## First Little Compton Land Rally Honors "Conservation Heroes"

The SPA joined with the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust and The Nature Conservancy to host a town-wide celebration of the town's preserved land on Saturday, July 24, 2004. The first Little Compton Land Rally featured 21 preserved sites that were included on a descriptive map sent to every town resident.

The day was designed to showcase the town's preserved land, to honor those who have contributed its preservation, and to educate the public about the cooperative efforts of the three organizations. Their joint efforts to protect properties facilitates the leveraging of funds from other public and private sources and ensures a coordinated effort to maintain Little Compton's rural character.

Suggested bike, car, and walking tours allowed visitors to view the sites at their own pace, stopping to read about each site on their way. Locations ranged from Simmons Mill Pond Management Area to Goosewing Beach, emphasizing the diversity of Little Compton's protected areas.

As part of the Land Rally activities, an early evening party was held on property on South Shore Road owned by Philemon T. Marvell and Rhonda Marvell. The three organizations are cooperating in an effort to raise funds to protect the 11.5-acre property, which abuts parcels already owned by the LCACT.

The party honored those land preservation heroes who have donated or sold land to one of the conservation groups hosting the event. Music by "The Scorpions," ice cream, hero sandwiches, and speakers from each organization were part of the festivities.

Representatives of SPA, the Agricultural Conservancy Trust, and the Nature Conservancy will meet in January to discuss joint educational efforts for the coming year.



View from the tower.



TNC board member, Judith Danforth (left) and RI TNC director, Janet Coit.



Sheila Hughes from TNC talking with Sam King of Little Compton.



Center, artist Karen Richmond with Bill and Clara Richmond under the logo and banner she designed for the rally. Left, Miles Harnett enjoying the free ice cream.



## Cycling Sakonnet: National Conservationists Come to Little Compton

by Alli Brady

The 17th Annual Land Trust Alliance Rally took place in Providence over Halloween weekend. This was the first time that the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), the umbrella group for America's land trusts, held its convention in Rhode Island. The four-day event was attended by more than 2,000 people, including ten members of the Sakonnet Preservation Association (SPA) board of directors, who participated in the workshops, seminars, speeches, field trips, and festivities on the Rally program.

Among Rally highlights was a field trip organized jointly by SPA and the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust (LCACT). Many months before the October Rally, representatives from the 37 land trusts across Rhode Island formed a host committee to help organize the convention. In addition, many of the land trusts submitted proposals for a field trip. Only ten were selected. SPA and the LCACT partnered in proposing a bike ride/clambake that would give attendees a true taste of Rhode Island. Our field trip was selected!



On Friday, October 29, forty-nine active and adventurous attendees arrived at Pardon Gray Preserve in Tiverton in the misty, grey morning. Hot coffee donated by Coastal Roasters in Tiverton greeted the riders along with pumpkin nut muffins baked by Wilhelmina's Catering. Bicycles and maps of the local area (including protected lands) were provided for field trip participants. Off they went for a scenic tour of Tiverton and Little Compton.

A short loop brought the riders past the Emile Ruecker Wildlife Refuge and back onto West Main Road. A longer 22-mile loop brought the riders down to Sakonnet Point. SPA was able to feature some of its protected properties, including: the Ponderosa, the Shaw property, the Meehan property, and East and West Islands. The majority of the participants were from the West Coast, and they were quite impressed with the large tracts of land we have been able to protect. They were also awed by the stone walls and the picturesque Commons. For me personally, I was once again able to view our town through the eyes of strangers and realize just how spectacular Little Compton truly is.

The riders reconvened at Sakonnet Vineyards for a lobster boil lunch prepared by ClamJams. They were first treated to a tour of the vineyards and a winetasting; then they sat down to stuffies and delicious clam chowder. (The majority of riders had never heard of a stuffed quahog.) The main fare consisted of steamed littlenecks, lobster, and lemon corn bread. Wilhelmina's Catering provided a delicious dessert of pumpkin and apple pie served with Gray's ice cream. Over coffee and hot cider the riders shared stories of past LTA Rallies. They then boarded their bus for a quick guided tour of Sakonnet Point before heading back to Providence, to learn more about the business of land conservation.

*Alli Brady, a member of the SPA board of directors, organized the October 29 LTA field trip in cooperation with LCACT Chair, George Mason.*



## Voters Support \$70-Million State Conservation Bond

by Heather Steers

*President, Sakonnet Preservation Association*

Rhode Islanders, at the November 2 general election, overwhelmingly endorsed Question #8, the \$70-million Open Space, Recreation, Bay, and Watershed Protection Bond. The funding initiative received the support of 71% of voters statewide. In Little Compton, 75.3% of voters approved the bond.

The \$70-million bond is critical for Rhode Island's future. Population growth and expansion into rural areas are causing pressure on open space, water quality, and recreational resources. Anne Marie Ignasher, president of the Rhode Island Land Trust Council, stated that "without this program, there would be no state money available to land trusts for land protection for the foreseeable future, and the next 5 years in a critical time for land protection in Rhode Island."

The Bond will provide \$25 million for Open Space programs, which includes \$10 million for the Local Open Space Grants Program. \$18 million will be used for State and Local Recreational Development, and \$19 million will support Narragansett Bay and Watershed Protection. The remaining \$8 million will allow the state to acquire land that permanently protects groundwater and public drinking water supplies.

The success of the campaign to support Question #8 was due to the efforts of a board coalition of individuals and organizations that contributed their time and efforts. The SPA and the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust sought and received endorsement of the bond from the Little Compton Town Council.

Several local conservation groups, including SPA, jointly submitted a

letter to the Sakonnet Times seeking voter support for Question #8. And representatives of SPA and the Tiverton Land Trust met with the editor of the Sakonnet Times, who subsequently published an editorial that encouraged voters to support the \$70-million bond.

## Save the Date! April 27th

On Wednesday, April 27, at 7 pm, Ted Clement, the Land Acquisitions Director for the Aquidneck Island Land Trust, will offer a presentation to

Little Compton land planners and to the community on

"Strategic Conservation Ground Rules."

The event will take place at the Little Compton Community Center and will emphasize the importance of long-range, big picture planning for land protection.





## Well Water Workshop Was Well Attended

On November 16, the SPA and the Conservation Commission co-hosted a well water workshop at the Community Center. The program was sponsored by the RI Dept. of Health and the URI Cooperative Extension in an ongoing effort to keep private well owners informed regarding healthy drinking water for their homes.

An excellent demonstration was made by Alyson McCann from the URI Cooperative Extension showing how groundwater pumped by private wells is directly affected by what happens on the land. About 10% of Rhode Island families have private wells. In Little Compton the percentage is much higher because the town does not have a municipal water system. These wells are not regulated by the EPA /Safe Water Drinking Act therefore private well owners are responsible for the quality of their own drinking water. It is recommended that private wells be tested annually for the more common contaminants. The routine test should include a test for; total coliform bacteria, nitrate, sodium, turbidity, color and pH. This can be done by a private licensed lab or the RI Dept. of Health in Providence.

Holly Burdette, also from URI, led a discussion of well types, well problems and filter solutions. The evening closed with Richard Amirault from the RI Dept. of Health giving an update on RI Private Well Legislation that could, in the future, require the homeowner to bring a well up to drinking water standards before the sale a home.

## Private Well Additional Information

### University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Home\*A\*Syst Program

Offers assistance, information, and publications on private well protection.

401. 874. 5398     [www.uri.edu/ce/wq](http://www.uri.edu/ce/wq)

### RI Dept. of Health, Office of Drinking Water Protection

Offers assistance, information on testing and state licensed laboratories.

401. 222. 6867

<http://www.health.ri.gov/environment/dwq/privatewell.htm>

For a listing of RI Dept. of Health certified private labs in Rhode Island:

<http://www.health.ri.gov/labs/waterlabs.htm>



## Sakonnet Preservation Association

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME  
A NEW MEMBER.

*Enclosed is my tax deductible  
membership contribution.*

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Member	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Member	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Member	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Gift	\$_____

## Sakonnet Preservation Association

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Summer phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address \_\_\_\_\_



## **SPA Annual Meeting: Doing the Business of Land Conservation**

More than 80 members and guests of the Sakonnet Preservation Association (SPA) gathered at the Stone House Club Barn on July 8 for the SPA's Annual Meeting. Those attending honored several long-time directors who were stepping off the SPA board, learned from a regional conservation leader about the challenges of protecting land in New England, and heard about the progress of the SPA's efforts during the previous year.

During the business meeting, following a brief financial report from Treasurer Nick Long, SPA President Heather Steers recognized and thanked some of the SPA's generous recent supporters, including Christopher Burns, Letitia and John Carter, the Haffenreffer family, Anne Hutchins, the Little Compton Municipal Trust, the late David Meehan, Dudley Millikin, the Rhode Island Foundation, Alison and John Stedman, John Whitehead, and Debbie Wiley.

Steers also expressed the SPA's gratitude to property owners who donated two conservation easements to the organization during 2003. Mr. and Mrs. H. James Field, Jr. donated an easement on a 2.3-acre open field located off Indian Hill Road; the parcel provides valuable wildlife habitat. Catherine and Joseph F. Sherer donated a 3.5-acre easement bordering the Sakonnet River. The property includes an open field, a small pond, and a coastal thicket, all important features for migratory birds.

Mrs. Steers recognized the contributions and service of four members of the SPA board of directors who were leaving the board at the end of their terms. She cited Phoebe Cook for her organizational abilities. During her five years as a director, Phoebe served as Treasurer, Planning Committee Chair, and Finance/Fundraising/Membership Committee Chair. Stetson (better known as Tack) Eddy, a real estate attorney, joined the SPA board in the early 1980s and recently served as Secretary for three years. He has also been a member of the Little Compton Conservation Commission; and he was a founding member of the

## **SPA Receives Funds from Commons Cottage Gallery Opening**

The Sakonnet Preservation Association recently received a gift from the Commons Cottage Gallery, which celebrated its opening on Sunday, Nov. 21, at its location directly behind the SPA office.

Organized by Josie Richmond, the gallery features a range of work from local artists and will be open several days a week beginning in May.

Gallery artists agreed to donate 10% of the opening's profits to SPA, resulting in a gift of over \$450 to the organization.

Over 100 art lovers attended the event to view and purchase paintings, ceramics, collages, sculpture, jewelry and other works of art, including a custom designed surfboard by Mike Kinnane. Participating artists included Josie Richmond, Betty Hathaway, Nancy Eames, Lee Eddy, Meredith Cornell, Ian Silvia, Claire Bowen, Johanna McKenzie, Karen Richmond, Michael Goulart and Miriam Scott, among others.

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Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust, on which he served for 13 years. Roger Greene, an environmental scientist who works for the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, served as an SPA director for over 26 years. A member of the Little Compton Conservation Commission for many years, he was the commission's representative to the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust for 12 years. Elinor Hough, a director for seven years, served most recently as Planning Committee Chair. Under her leadership, the committee guided the board into initiating the ongoing Strategic Planning process. As a token of appreciation for their service to SPA, each of the outgoing directors was presented with a framed, hand-colored etching created by Little Compton artist, Josie Richmond Arkins.

SPA members also elected officers and new directors for a one-year term, approving a slate presented by Nominating Committee Chair Lucy O'Connor. Elected as officers were Heather Steers,

President; Terence Tierney, Vice President; Christopher Burns, Treasurer; Sheila Mackintosh, Secretary; and Jana Porter, Assistant Secretary. New directors are Gerry Billings, Piper Hawes, Jana Porter, and Jack Selvaggio. In addition, outgoing directors Roger Greene and Stetson (Tack) Eddy were elected to the SPA Advisors Council.

The meeting concluded with a lively presentation by Whitney Hatch, Vice President and New England Regional Director for The Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national conservation organization which has protected more than 329,000 acres in New England. Hatch's illustrated talk, titled "Land Conservation in New England: Critical Ingredients," described some of TPL's land transactions throughout the region. He also discussed TPL's work with individual communities to develop land conservation plans and to generate support for land-acquisition funds. In response to questions from the audience, Hatch also addressed the challenges of balancing land conservation with the creation of affordable housing.

Postal Customer

Our Mission  
The Sakonnet  
Preservation  
Association,  
a non-profit  
land trust,  
is dedicated to  
preserving the  
rural character  
and natural  
resources of  
Little Compton  
for the lasting  
benefit of the  
community.  
For information:  
401. 635. 8800



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