



BREWSTER CONSERVATION TRUST
P. O. Box 268
Brewster MA 02631

ABOUT THE TRUST:

The Brewster Conservation Trust was founded in 1983 to preserve open space and the natural resources of Brewster. The Trust is a 501c3 non-profit organization supported by hundreds of Brewster families. Since its beginning, the Trust has preserved more than 800 acres throughout Brewster. The Trust is not affiliated with Town government, though sometimes it works closely with the Town on projects of joint interest.

For more information about the Trust, visit the website: www.brewsterconservationtrust.org.

LOWER ROAD: *A pleasant place to focus*

The Trust has been able to preserve 25 separate parcels totaling more than 100 acres of scenic greenbelt and wetland drainages along both sides of Lower Road. No other neighborhood in Brewster has felt the Trust's impact in preserving green space more than Lower Road. We like to think it is what makes it such a quiet, rural road even into the busy 21st Century. We thank the many, many land-owners who have contributed to this effort. *(See complete list at end of the expanded trail guide.)*

Leading the way were the Eddy Sisters. As youngsters, Mary-Louise Eddy (1915-2002) and Ruth N. Eddy (1921-2005) spent summers with their grandparents Augustus Thorndike and Cora Nickerson Thorndike at the family farm "Pinecroft" at 667 Lower Road. By 1955 Ruth and Mary-Louise built their own cottage on the Bay shore at the north end of Pinecroft. Later, they retired back to the adjoining c. 1780 farmhouse at 593 Lower Road, the Capt. Willard Higgins House, which they called *Silvermead*. In 1974 the sisters donated a conservation restriction to the Town on 32 acres of the farm, all of the vacant land running north from Lower Road to the Bay.

RUTH N. EDDY



*"Dedicated
Service"*

CANDIDATE FOR SELECTMAN

TOWN OF BREWSTER ELECTION—MONDAY, APRIL 13, 1987

TOWN SERVICE

Police & Dispatch Study Committee—Secretary
Finance Committee
Town Clerk, Treasurer, Tax Collector
Personnel Board Chairman
Golf Course Study Committee
Government Study Committee
Executive Secretary Search Committee
Golf Commission—current

NAUSET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Treasurer—2 years
Current Chairman Middle School Building Committee

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Brewster Citizens Group for Brewster's first Zoning By-law
Past Treasurer, Brewster Ladies Library, Brewster Board of Trade,
Brewster Historical Society, Brewster Baptist Church
Current Treasurer, Brewster Conservation Trust

MEMBERSHIPS

Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
League of Women Voters of the Lower Cape
Garden Club of Brewster
Massachusetts Audubon Society
Cape Museum of Fine Arts
Brewster Taxpayers Association

EDUCATION

Graduate of Wheaton College, Norton, MA

BUSINESS BACKGROUND

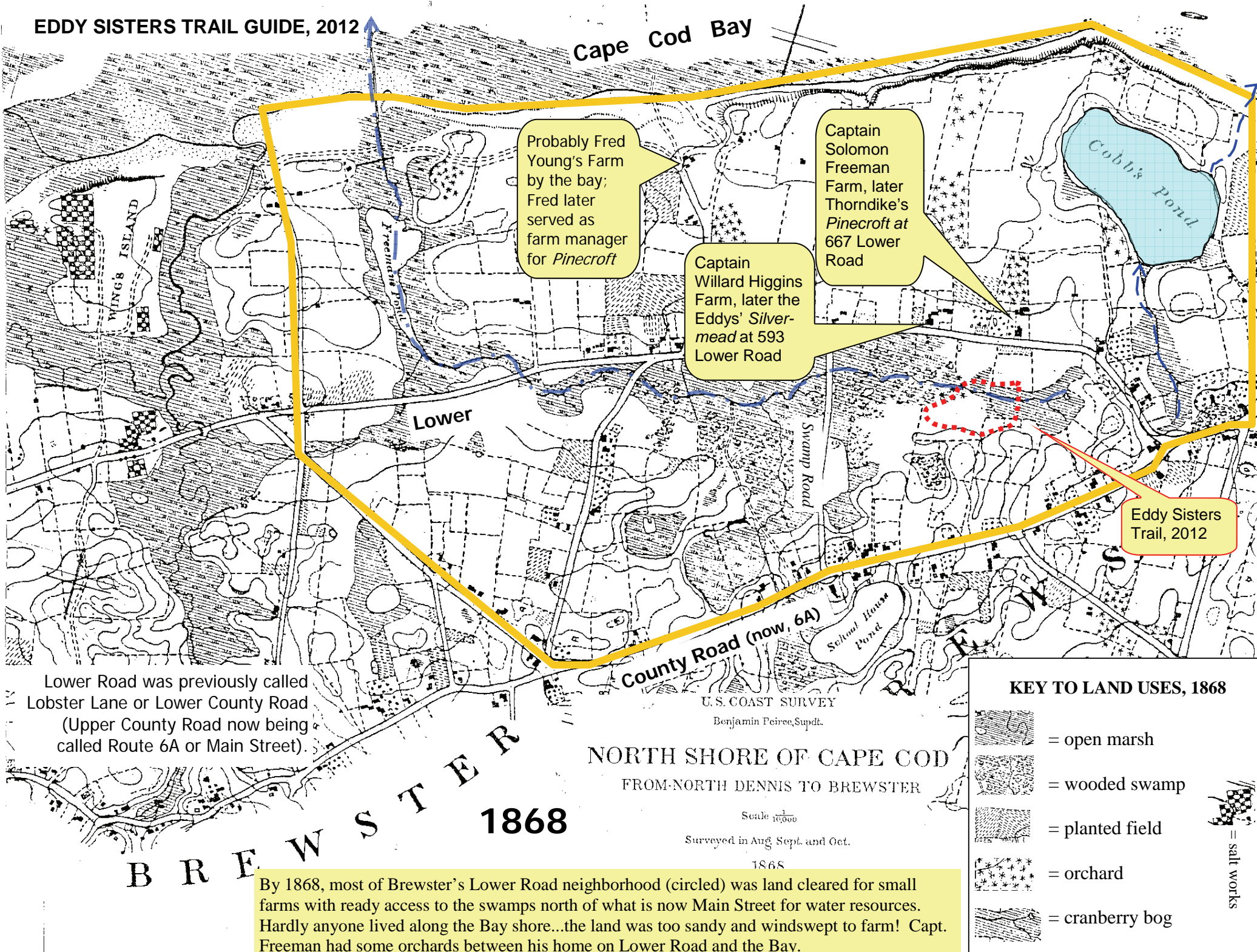
Insurance Business 20 years—Life and Casualty
Financial Officer of Church & Community Organizations
Brewster Voter 30 years Paid for by Comm. to Elect Ruth N. Eddy

In 1983 Ruth and Mary-Louise Eddy were founders of the Brewster Conservation Trust and one of its first land donors, contributing the 18-acre Thorndike Bog, the anchor of our community garden and new nature trail. In 2000, the sisters donated title to the 32-acre forest running to the Bay to the Trust. The Eddys donated fully half of the acreage preserved by the Trust near Lower Road.



Ruth, Mary-Louise & Jean Eddy at Pinecroft, Winter 1926

The Eddys were an integral part of the Brewster community for many years, serving in roles with town government, the Ladies Library and the Baptist Church, in addition to the Board of the Brewster Conservation Trust. The Town honored Ruth and Mary-Louise by naming the new elementary school after them. A philanthropic foundation bearing their names continues to make grants to Brewster organizations, including the Trust.



from: *Brewster Ship Masters*, J. Henry Sears,
C.W. Swift Co., Yarmouth, Mass., 1906

On this map, we can see that Cobbs Pond had not yet been put to use as an irrigation source for the Lower Road bogs of Capt. Freeman. Swamps drained north into Cobbs Pond and the outlet stream discharged directly to the Bay. Using Cobbs Pond's water to flood the bogs was an idea whose time had not yet come.

Map source: *Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts*,
George H. Walker & Co., Boston, 1880.

1880

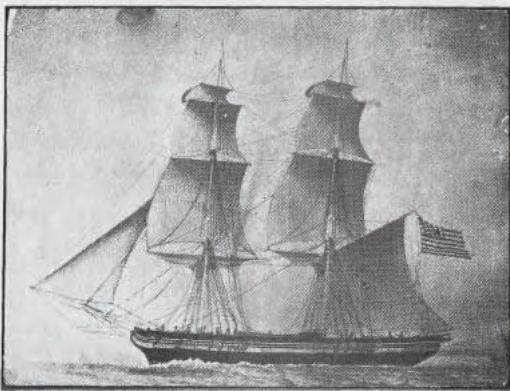
Eddy Sisters Trail, 2012

CAPTAIN SOLOMON FREEMAN of Brewster

Born in Brewster in February 1800, he went to sea at 16 and later had command of several ships including the brig "Margaret" (shown here) and the ship Malabar. When he retired to Brewster he became active in town affairs and served several terms in the state legislature. He died in Brewster in April 1887. His son Solomon Jr. (b. 1833) was also a Brewster sea captain. The family home was at what is now 667 Lower Road.

Capt. Freeman was obviously a man of stern mien, as indicated in this essay he wrote in 1861 (long after being retired from the sea) on the topic of "demon rum":

My personal experience as a seafaring boy and man extends over a period of 37 years, 32 years of which I was in the capacity of commander of different vessels to various parts of the globe and in voyages varying in length of time from a few months to even two years. A bare synopsis of the many incidents and circumstances of which I was cognizant during that period bearing on the subject of Temperance would only be a repetition of the same yarn which you would obtain from every old salt of like experience and which you have already frequently listened to until disgusted with its hideous sameness of crime, misery and degradation. You might almost really call in question the wisdom of God in so constituting man as to be even capable or liable so far to efface his image as drink has done by making him a demon in human shape alike dead to every duty which God has commanded and to which reason and his better nature impels—until you have been compelled to leave the mystery where he has left it—in the declaration that God had created man upright but that he had sought out many inventions and if any one of these inventions has been the cause of ruin more than another it is intoxicating drink.



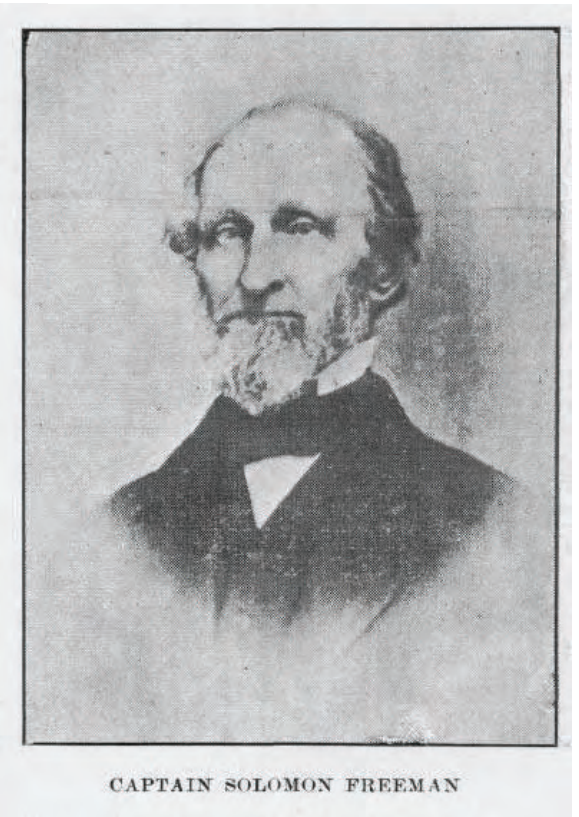
BRIG MARGARET

When I first commenced my seagoing life in 1816 and from that period until about 1826 it was the uniform practice at sea and on shore for men to drink freely, and rum brandy and gin were considered in a

per day with an occasional nipper called in sailor parlance "splicing the mainbrace" whenever any extraordinary exertion was required such as reefing topsails &c., or a bumper to sweethearts and wives on Saturday nights or on leaving or making land or any other joyful occasion. The officers drank when and as often as they pleased and not unfrequently to excess. I have crossed the Atlantic with a captain who was not sober for one single day on the passage after ten o'clock in the forenoon, thus greatly endangering the lives and property entrusted to him and this was by no means a solitary case—on the contrary it was quite common.

About 1826 the necessity of reform at sea as well as on shore was apparent by the philanthropic endeavors of certain individuals and the evils were made so apparent that the wonder was that it had been suffered to exist so long without any effort to correct it. Many owners and ship masters of Boston were induced to try what was then deemed an experiment on shipboard. Their success far exceeded their expectations.

I well recollect my first attempt I was one-fourth owner and master of a good brig bound for Surinam Without acquainting the principal owner, who was a distiller of New England rum, I omitted rum in my list of stores and shipped my crew with an agreement in large letters on my shipping articles—"NO GROG ALLOWED ON BOARD"—and I found no difficulty in shipping good and able men on these terms, but after the vessel was loaded and headed in the stream, the principal owner walked with me to the end of the long wharf to take a look at the vessel. I then informed him of the circumstances. He answered me that I should not succeed, said it was a visionary scheme of mine and insisted on sending a barrel of New England rum on board to be kept a secret from the crew to meet the emergency of not succeeding, which he was sure would be



CAPTAIN SOLOMON FREEMAN

the case. His arguments were so pressing, his plea so plausible, that I consented. Rum can be known by other means than the taste and that barrel of rum was soon smelled out by my steward and was the cause of so much trouble and wrong doing that I knocked the head in and had the contents pumped out with the bilge water. And thus ended the trouble and I have never put rum on board of a vessel as stores since.

From: The American Sailor's Magazine, Vols. 33-34, American Seamen's Friend Society, November 1861.

667 Lower Road, 2012

EDDY SISTERS TRAIL GUIDE, 2012

Pinecroft Farm, c. 1890, a year after Augustus Thorndike purchased the Lower Road operation from Captain Solomon Freeman's family. This composite view, looking west along Lower Road, shows the sandy lane for horse and buggies, a stroller on the sandy sidewalk, the farmhouse, windmill and barn. Note the open fields across the road behind the fence.

Augustus Thorndike at the 667 Lower Road dining room, c. 1900. Before coming to Brewster as a gentleman farmer, Mr. Thorndike was the Massachusetts State Banking Commissioner and ran unsuccessfully for State Treasurer as a Democrat in 1912. (Photos donated to Brewster Historical Society by Ruth Eddy.)

Pinecroft, the Thorndikes take over one of Brewster's oldest farms

After Capt. Freeman died in 1887, the farm was acquired by Augustus L. Thorndike (1861-1922), once the state banking commissioner, who resided in Boston but summered here in Brewster. Mr. Thorndike had married a Brewster woman, Cora Nickerson, of one of the Cape's leading families. They named the farm ***Pinecroft*** ("croft" being a Scottish word for farm.) Perhaps the name was tongue-in-cheek for the penchant of the Cape's sandy soil being best suited to grow pitch pines.

Thorndike pioneered many innovations in commercial cranberrying with Brewster native Fred Young, his long-time farm manager. In 1913 they engineered a lift-pump system to irrigate the Lower Road bogs using water from Cobbs Pond. The entire wetland drainage of Lower Road flows west emptying into Freemans Pond and then out to Paines Creek and into Cape Cod Bay. Augustus and Cora Thorndike were the Eddy sisters' grandparents.





Fred Young lived atop the bluff at the Cape Cod bay shore, one of the few braving the elements there. He served as the farm manager for the Thorndikes' Pinecroft in the early 1900s. He invented a mechanical cranberry vine pruner for use in the Thorndike Bog and received a U.S. patent for it in 1908 (at right).



Fred Young shows a young Ruth Eddy how to make hay in 1927 at Pinecroft

EDDY SISTERS TRAIL GUIDE, 2012

No. 881,039.

PATENTED MAR. 3, 1908.

F. YOUNG.
CRANBERRY PRUNER.
APPLICATION FILED DEC. 5, 1907.

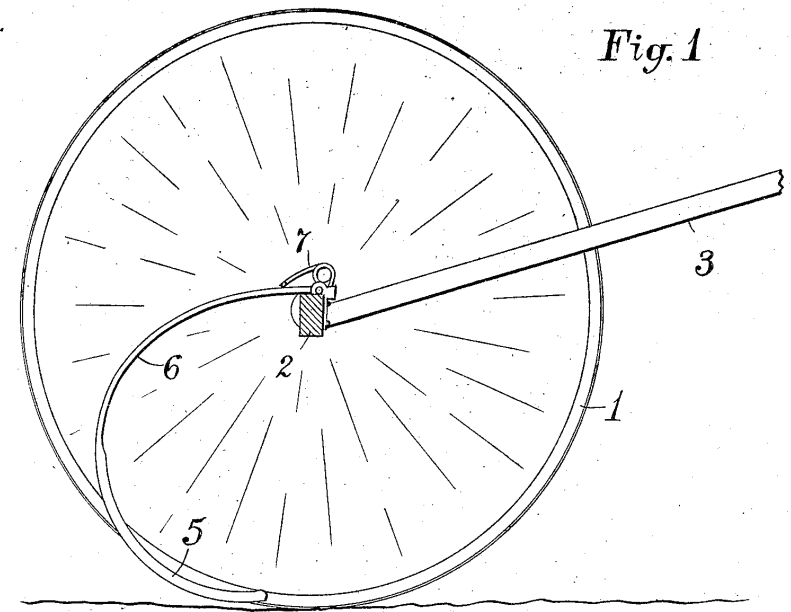


Fig. 1

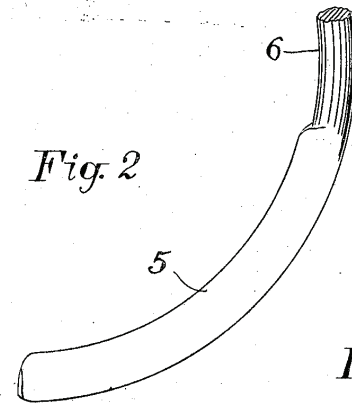


Fig. 2

Witnesses;

Walter Macomber.

J. G. Tilton.

Inventor,

Fred Young;

By S. B. Upham,
Attorney.



Brewster's students enjoy their own produce



Honoring the Eddy Sisters who gave the land to the Trust for community garden use



Growing crops and memories

THE BREWSTER COMMUNITY GARDEN: A place to grow

Soon after the Eddy sisters donated the old planting field on the south side of Lower Road to the Brewster Conservation Trust in 1984, the Town's Council on Aging approached the Trust to inquire about creating the Town's first community garden on the parcel. The Eddys, recalling their grandfather's crops, were delighted with the idea. The Council on Aging installed a well irrigation system and has administered the program for more than 25 years. In this century, the number of plots have almost doubled and a new partnership has been forged with the Master Gardeners of Brewster and Barnstable County, teaching Brewster schoolchildren the rudiments of gardening. With now more than 60 family plots, it is still the only community garden in Brewster and the only one on a local land trust property on anywhere on Cape Cod. We thank, in particular, Jean Sears, Director of the Council on Aging, for her many years in coordinating the gardens for all to enjoy. Al Saperstein founded the Children's Garden in 2006. Brewster master gardeners Steve Anderson, David Rogers, Trudy Steel, Anne Stewart, and Virginia Marhevka teach the children well.

Planting time in the spring



Harvest time in the summer



WELCOME TO THE EDDY SISTERS TRAIL: A lot to learn on a little path

In 2011, working with the advice of the Town Conservation Commission, the Trust embarked on the creation of its first formal interpretive self-guided nature trail. Located mostly on the land donated by the Eddys, it seemed natural to dedicate the trail to them in 2012. Volunteers from the Trust's Land Stewardship Committee, cut the trail and installed the new bridge over the stream in August 2011. Mark Robinson of The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, designed the trail loop. Mario DiGregorio, former Brewster Conservation Administrator, created the interpretation for the guide.

Eddy Sisters Trail



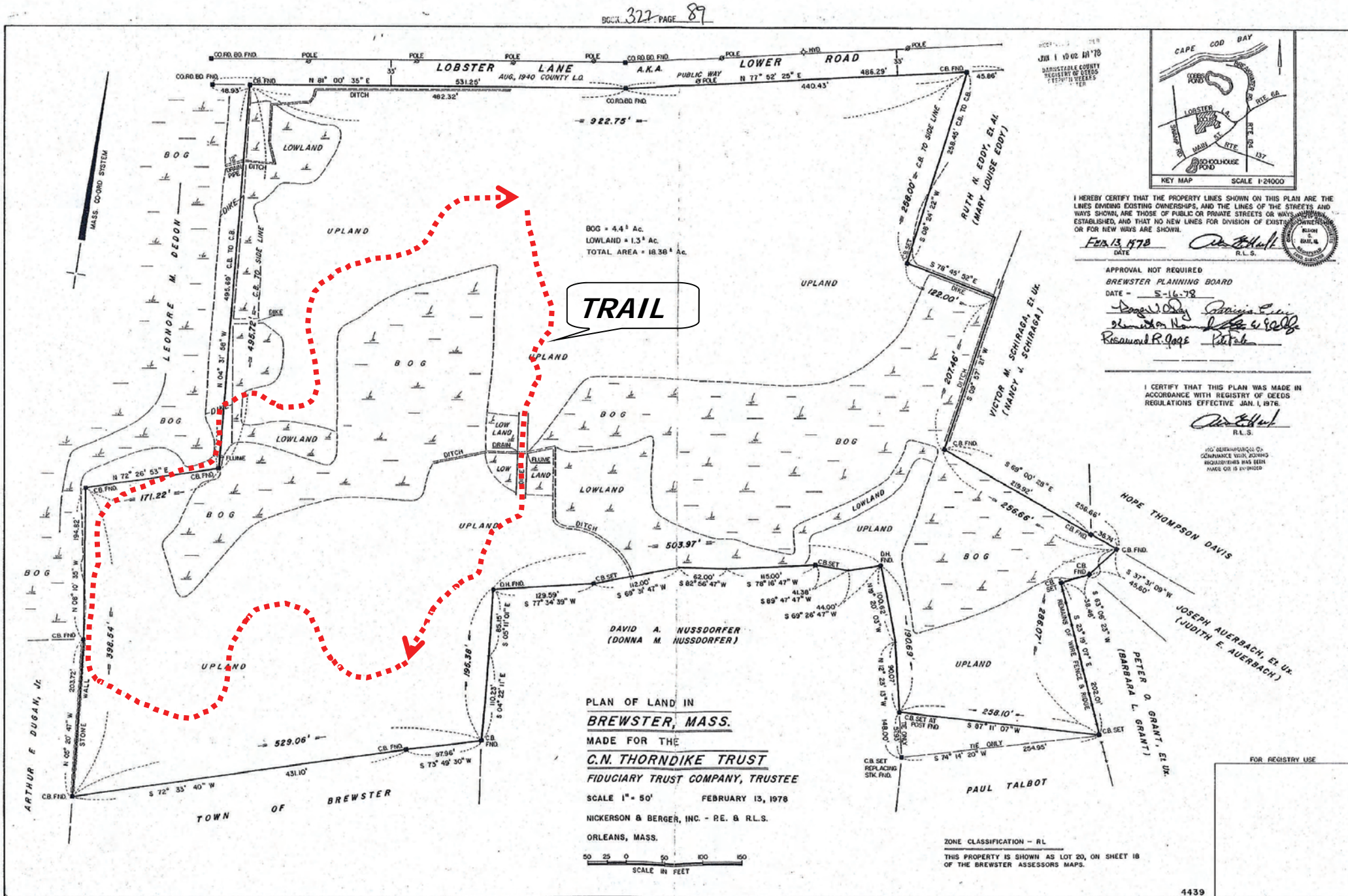
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George Thurber, Peter Johnson, Hal Minis, Myla Platt (canine), Brent Bowers, George Platt with their new bridge on the Eddy Sisters Trail, July 2011

This 1978 land survey shows the anchor parcel of the Community Gardens and Eddy Sisters Trail, about 18.5 acres Source: Plan Book 322 Page 89 in Barnstable County Registry of Deeds





At left, Mark Robinson of the Compact of Cape Conservation Trusts talks about the irrigation of the cranberry bogs at the footbridge on the Eddy Sisters Trail. Staff photo by Rich Eldred

Trail honors conservation-minded sisters

By Rich Eldred
reldred@wickedlocal.com

—ENVIRONMENT—

BREWSTER — They gave their name to the Eddy Elementary School and now to the Brewster Conservation Trust's first nature trail.

The trust dedicated the Eddy Sisters Trail, on the site of their old farmhouse and Brewster's current community gardens on Lower Road last Thursday evening. Eddy cousins Cathy, Steve and Roy Jones and Larry Houghton cut the ribbon on the quarter-mile long trail just after 5 p.m.

"This property was given by the Eddy family for use in public service," Peter Johnson, president of the trust said.

That was in 1983, when Ruth and Mary-Louise Eddy donated 18 acres of what had been the Thorndike cranberry bog, to the Trust. Ruth (born in 1921) and Mary-Louise (born in 1915) spent their summers at the grandfather's (Augustus Thorndike) farm "Pinecroft" on Lower Road. In 1955 they built their own cottage there along the Bay and soon moved back to the adjacent farmhouse at 593 Lower Road. The sisters gave the town a conservation restriction on all 32 acres, running from Lower Road to the Bay, in 1974.

Ship Captain Solomon Freeman (1800-1887) was the original owner of the land and

Thorndike bought the land from his family after his death. Thorndike had been the state's banking commissioner and ran for state Treasurer in 1912 but he also became a "gentleman farmer" after marrying Cora Nickerson of Brewster. It was Thorndike who upgraded the cranberry operation, pumping water from Cobb's Pond into the bogs. His farm manager, Fred Young, invented and patented a mechanical cranberry pruner in 1908.

It was the council on aging that came up with the idea for the community garden in 1984 — and squash, beans, tomatoes and cucumbers were all growing splendidly in the evening sun last week.

Next-door neighbor Lenore Dedon donated an additional 2.5-acres of wetlands a few years ago.

Mark Robinson of the Compact of Cape Conservation Trusts suggested to the Brewster Conservation Trust that the forested land might also make a fine nature trail. The cranberry bogs are now overgrown and filled with luxuriant cinnamon and royal ferns, numerous sedges and large tupelo

trees sheltering blueberries, sweet pepper-bush and swamp azalea. The upland portion showcases old stonewalls, towering white and black oaks and tiny shinleaf hidden in the shadows.

"The volunteers cleared the poison ivy and we have nice interpretive stations. [Botanist] Mario DiGregorio walked the trail and gave us a list of interesting things to talk about," Johnson said. "Jim Gallagher gave us wetlands help and Chris Miller supported us, we have a nice collaborative relationship with the town."

They also got help with the trail work from AmeriCorps.

Robinson led the first official walk on the trail and explained that the site was a planting field for the Saquatucket Indians.

"So this land has been in farming and agriculture for hundreds of years," Robinson said.

A sizeable chunk of land near the gardens is being kept open as meadow for butterflies and wildflowers, mowed once a year in November. In the fall the field is filled with rough-leaved and Canada goldenrods and Joe Pye weed. In mid-July the field is mostly green, enlivened by flashy purple knapweeds and yarrow.

The trail is a pleasant wander over a footbridge though cool fern-flecked woods into a quiet corner of Brewster history.

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EDDY SISTERS TRAIL DEDICATION, July 12, 2012

About 30 people attended the official opening of the trail and several of the Eddys' cousins cut the ribbon at the event.

Later, Mark Robinson led the group on the first official guided tour.

