



Brewster Conservation Trust

www.brewsterconservationtrust.org

Spring 2019

Brewster Conservation Trust welcomes its first Executive Director

As the Brewster Conservation Trust's activities in land preservation, stewardship and community outreach have expanded, the BCT Board decided to move from volunteer driven to a more professionally run and more effective organization. The Trust took big step forward by hiring Amy Henderson as the organization's first Executive Director. Honored to have been chosen as the first Executive Director of BCT, Amy looks forward to moving BCT's mission forward through the protection of Brewster's Natural Resources as well as increasing outreach to Brewster residents and visitors.

Amy brings a diverse background in environmental conservation, land management, volunteer management and administration. "I feel each position I have held has led me here today," she said. After two years with AmeriCorps and six years as a Forestry Technician with the Cape Cod National Seashore, Amy helped establish an AmeriCorps FireCorps serving the Cape Cod National Seashore. Most recently before joining BCT, Amy was the Program Director for Senior Corps RSVP of Cape Cod and the Islands, a national service program sponsored by Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands.

Amy fell in love with nature while backpacking as a child with her father and two older brothers in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. She enjoys time at the beach but is more likely found walking on the wooded trails of Cape Cod. Her favorite walk in Brewster is the



BCT Executive Director Amy Henderson and BCT President Hal Minis

Eddy Bay Trail. "I love that you get this diverse mix of history, woodlands, and a beautiful overlook onto Cape Cod Bay," Amy said.

Born in Massachusetts, Amy spent her formative years living around the world which led her to love traveling and going on new adventures. "It has been nice to put down roots here in Brewster. I have now lived in Brewster longer than I have lived anywhere," Amy stated. Besides enjoying the beauty of Cape Cod, Amy is an avid curler. She has been curling at the Cape Cod Curling Club in Falmouth since 2009 and last year helped to organize and start a Curling Club in Orleans at the Charles Moore Arena. Amy's other hobbies include beekeeping, gardening, and cooking.

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brewsterconservationtrust.org

— OUR MISSION —

"To preserve open space, natural resources, and the rural character of Brewster, and to promote a conservation ethic."

Aerators on Canoe Pond

Another way to protect clean water

**The best things can sometimes take a while.
They may take patience, skill and fundraising.**

First, gather the facts. From 2001 to 2007 volunteers from PALS (Pond and Lake Stewards) monitored Brewster ponds. Analysis showed most were impaired in some way and six were chosen for further study. One was Canoe Pond. Canoe is on the smaller side of a designated Great Pond with a surface of nearly 14 acres and a depth of about 13 feet. It had problems with clarity, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll, phosphorus, and nitrogen. The report of 2009 only confirmed the observations of the homeowners around Canoe Pond. But on Canoe Pond, it began before that.

In 1993 concerned residents already knew their pond had problems. The pond had frequent algae blooms and sometimes an unpleasant odor. The homeowners had begun to consider clean-up methods. About 50 families donated \$20,000. They met with experts, researched solutions and held community meetings. The BCT Newsletter in the summer of 2013 reported on the Canoe Pond Village Association's consideration of dredging, use of alum or bio-mats, and their decision to try aerators. Aerators pump water up a vertical column, recirculating and adding oxygen.

In the 2009 report the dissolved oxygen at the surface was about 7 ppm and the pond was anaerobic in the bottom 2 – 3 feet. Without oxygen fish would die. Now, after nearly 10 years of aerators the oxygen level is 10 ppm both at the surface and at depth in the spring. Furthermore, Secchi disc measurements show the pond is clear to 10' in spring and 8' in fall.



The community has put in a water garden. The numbers for phosphorus are not yet known. The increased growth of pond lilies is both good and bad – they indicate clean water and help remove phosphorus but add to the level of decaying matter in the colder months. The community is working with the Conservation Commission to use the Town's harvester to remove the tops of some of the pond lilies while leaving the roots.

There are continued expenses: electricity to run the compressor, maintenance, repairs and for every improvement there are fees. The group is grateful for the support of the Conservation Commission and especially of Chris Miller, Director of the Natural Resources Department. But the expenses are the responsibility of the Association. It's a study the homeowners of other ponds might follow closely. There are expenses, but less than alum or dredging and more permanent. We all owe thanks to these intrepid experimenters who have shown us another option to clean our impaired ponds.

Announcements

Cape Cod's Edible Plants with Russ Cohen at Wing Island

June 17 @ 5:00 pm

co-hosted with Dennis Conservation Trust

Space is limited,
please call 508-694-6720
or email:

dorria@brewsterconservationtrust.org
to make reservations.



SAVE THE DATE!

8th Annual Brewster Conservation Day

Saturday, July 13, 9:30 am – 2:00 pm

at Drummer Boy Park



This FREE event just gets better & better.

Come join us for a fun day of activities where the whole family can explore and learn about conservation & our natural resources.

The organizers of this event include: Brewster Conservation Trust, Brewster Historical Society, Brewster Department of Natural Resources, and Brewster Water Department.

Brewster Conservation Trust's Annual Meeting: Thursday, August 15, 6:00 pm at CCMNH



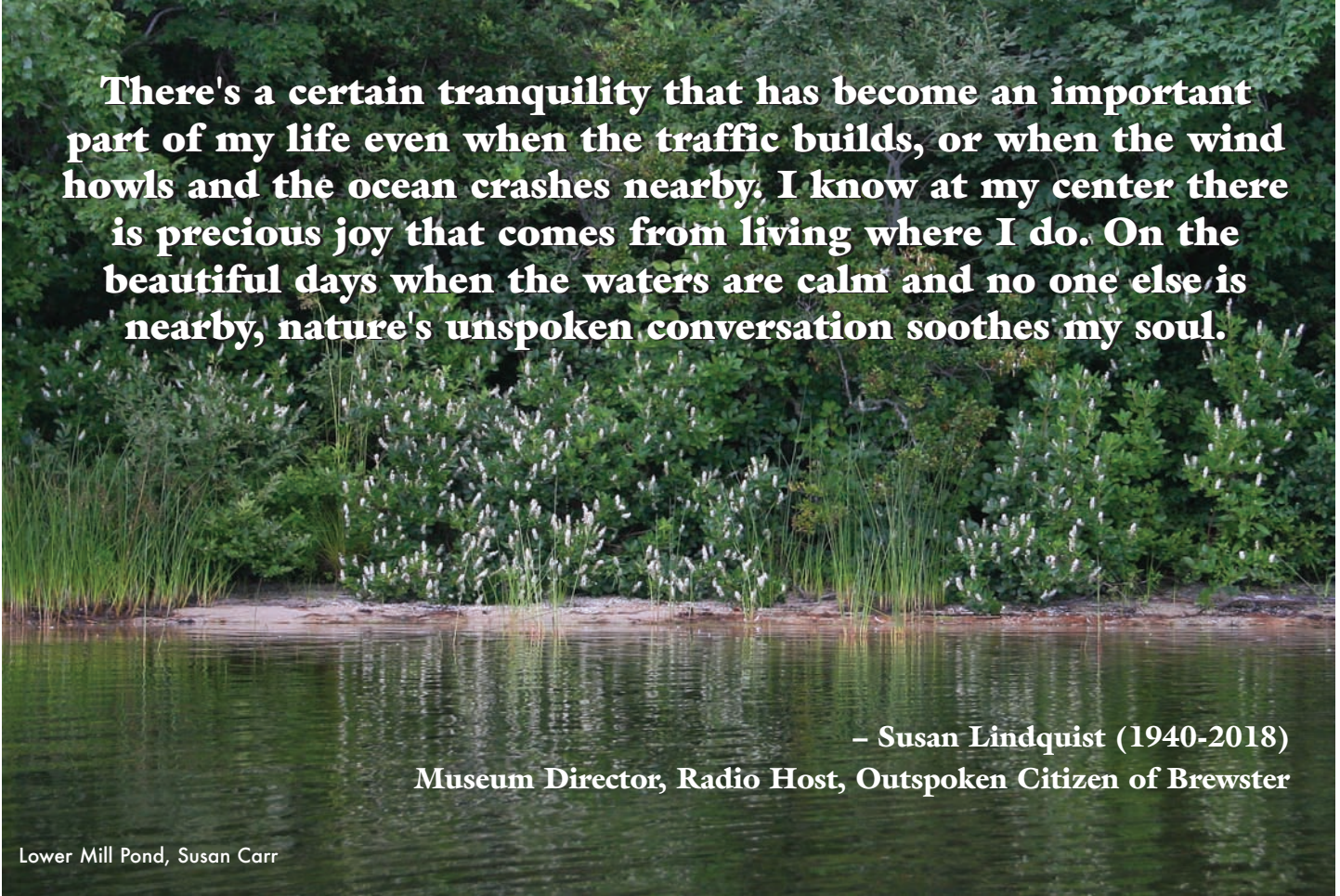
President's Message

Brewster has a well-deserved reputation as a conservation town. Protected land is a vital part of the Town's character; we have high quality drinking water, and our miles of walking trails are appreciated by year-round residents and seasonal visitors alike. Nothing illustrates the mind set behind this reputation better than the historic effort to protect hundreds of acres in the Punkhorn in the late 1980s, 30 years ago.

Town meetings in 1987 and 1988 approved a massive land acquisition program that is unparalleled on the Cape. The 1987 Town Meeting approved four articles for the acquisition of 586 acres in the Punkhorn and the 1988 Town Meeting approved seven articles for 127 acres. These were added to 50 acres purchased shortly before on Upper Mill Pond. Also in the years just before the Town bought 19 acres for the Castiglione property which is now known as Spruce Hill and in 1989 purchased 17 acres for what has now become Drummer Boy Park.

These were bold and visionary actions which we should now celebrate. They have left an important legacy for us, and for our children and grandchildren to appreciate. But the job is not done. Only 40 percent of the land from which we draw our drinking water is protected. While approximately 30 percent of the Town is developed and 30 percent is in conservation, the remaining 40 percent undeveloped land is being converted to developed uses far faster than to conservation. We are losing the balance between development and open space that is so much a part of the Town's character.

Moving forward, we must recognize that there are particularly sensitive areas, such as our drinking water supply zones, where we must assign priority to conservation. At the same time we must recognize that there are many other areas in town in which housing and expanded town services can most appropriately be developed. Town meetings of the 1980s left us a valuable legacy of protected sensitive lands. We should not forget that lesson.



There's a certain tranquility that has become an important part of my life even when the traffic builds, or when the wind howls and the ocean crashes nearby. I know at my center there is precious joy that comes from living where I do. On the beautiful days when the waters are calm and no one else is nearby, nature's unspoken conversation soothes my soul.

**– Susan Lindquist (1940-2018)
Museum Director, Radio Host, Outspoken Citizen of Brewster**

Lower Mill Pond, Susan Carr

The Punkhorn: Planning for the Future ... Thirty Y

The 1970 census gave Brewster's population as less than 1,800, although that was probably an undercount. By 1985 it was close to 7,000.

In the early 1980s Ocean Edge proposed a new scale of development that the Town had not encountered: condominiums on the north side of 6A and The Villages on the south side. In other parts of town trees and meadows were turning into subdivisions.

Town Manager Charles Sumner, Selectmen Robert Wilkinson, and Pat Hughes saw that change was coming, and realized that now was the opportunity to direct the change. The Water Department knew that greater population would require more wells and identified south west Brewster as a potential site.

Bob Finch and Paul Wightman, members of the Conservation Commission, were in a position to see that rapid growth would change the character of the town.

As Chair of the new Land Acquisition Committee, Bob guided the creation of a Wetlands Protection Bylaw. The Land Acquisition Committee had the charge to "preserve indispensable areas of open space for the protection of basic natural resource systems and for the less easily definable, but equally important components of the landscape that constitute the quality of life for its inhabitants." Town meeting supported hiring a Conservation Administrator, purchasing Spruce Hill and the Castiglione house.



Upper Mill Pond

The Town's enthusiasm for land and water protection grew, and in 1986 the Town acquired another 89 acres in the "ecologically sensitive 'Punkhorn' section." Punkhorn comes from old usage for punky, soft wood used as kindling. The small west Brewster area around Stony Brook had long been informally known as "punkhorn" indicating an outback area, in the sticks. But it soon became a term of affection.

Beautifying Brewster

Hooray to all the volunteers that came out to celebrate Beautify Brewster. Luckily the spring rains held off as the Town of Brewster, neighbors and volunteers spent two hours picking up 2,000 pounds of trash along the sidewalks and roadways in our town on Saturday, April 27th. BCT had several volunteer groups filling bags of road side litter that were collected along Stony Brook, Lower Road and Route 137. The town-wide day of service and cleanup culminated with an Appreciation Luncheon at the Brewster Baptist Church. Many thanks to all the businesses, neighbors and volunteers that donated their time and services to this town wide cleanup effort.



Years Ago ... and Today

In 1987 and 1988, another 713 acres were added making the Punkhorn a contiguous 800-acre open space park, two miles of pond shoreline, kettle hole ponds, wetlands, abandoned cranberry bogs and sites for future wells. Appropriations for Punkhorn purchases were \$5.758 million and were approved nearly unanimously by Town Meeting, and ballot approval exempted the appropriations from the limitations of Proposition 2½.

This was accomplished even while Town was dealing with other expenses. The land for Drummer Boy Park was purchased. Affordable housing was a priority and in 1989 Belmont Park was established through the research



of the Land Acquisition Committee. Town Hall needed serious repair and maintenance. The elementary school was overcrowded.

In the 1980s there was no Land Bank or Community Preservation Act. This was the people of the Town agreeing to work and to sacrifice for its character, its water protection, for the fragile habitat of animals and endangered species.

Thirty years ago the citizens of Brewster had a vision for a better future. They planned it for all of us who are now living in their future. Now is the time to plan for the future of 30 years from now. The concerns of drinking water, town character, and open space for habitat and passive recreation are similar. The pressures of development are still with us. As before we must work together meet the challenge, to preserve the best of Brewster for us now and for the future.



Bruce Brockway spent most of his life traveling between Massachusetts and Maine. Born in N. Attleboro, he went to college in Maine, earned his Master's degree in Forestry and spent his working life in forestry services

there; but upon retirement his daughter and her family lured him to Cape Cod. His early working years were spent in the woods, and after management responsibilities led him to computers and office work he was happy to join the BCT trail maintenance crew and get back to the real outdoors. His responsibilities as a BCT land steward lets him explore all over town as he visits the eight properties he monitors.

BCT Volunteer

BCT doesn't take up all his time. His 40 years in Rotary strengthened his belief in service and his first activity in Brewster was going on archaeology digs with Fred Dunford at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. Since then he has helped discover Native American and colonial artifacts at the Taylor Bray Farm in Yarmouth and the first Nickerson home in Chatham.

Jeff Thibodeau, BCT's Land Acquisition and Management Specialist, is deeply appreciative of Bruce's help. "He is very dependable and always such a gentleman. We rely on his calm presence to keep us all focused and his strong environmental acumen and background in forestry to get the job done right. Always helpful and hardworking, he is a pleasure to work with and we are grateful to have him on our team."

If you would like to join Bruce and the trail crew, contact Dorria@brewsterconservationtrust.org or call 508-694-6720.

The Future of Conservation



AmeriCorps Member

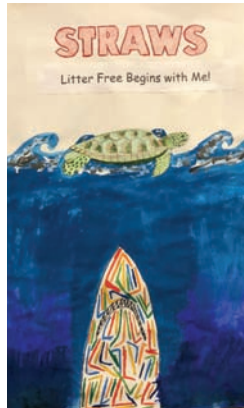
Catherine Pettinger, better known as CJ, is a town girl from Fargo, North Dakota but with a family legacy of farmers and ranchers. Perhaps it was that hard work family ethic that led her to choose biochemistry as her college major and then to undertake a challenging AmeriCorps assignment with the Brewster Conservation Trust and the Town of Brewster. For the 2018-2019 year her main work for BCT has been land stewardship, taking care of trails, trees and meadows, installing

benches and signs. This not-quite farm girl has worked with chainsaws, the heavy duty Billy Goat, and the weed wrench. The part she likes best, she says, is being outside with a team of friendly co-workers. "It's meaningful work," she says, "always busy and every day is different."

What do her co-workers say of her? "She is pleasant, hard-working, diligent and responsible." "We are lucky to have had her serving with us this year."

Anti Litter Campaign

Two students from the Stony Brook Elementary School were winners in the "Litter Free Begins With Me" campaign sponsored by the Cape Cod Art Center, Cumberland Farms, Cape Cod Media Group and several individuals. Emmett White and Steven Rose created posters illustrating the importance of preventing litter on Cape Cod and increasing awareness of how casually discarded trash spoils the beauty of Cape Cod and endangers wildlife. All participants were required to take a life-long pledge to never litter. Let's hope the rest of us will do as well.



BCT Summer Intern Mary Doucette

We would like to welcome our summer intern, Mary Doucette to the BCT Team. Mary was born and raised in Brewster and credits her up-bringing on Cape Cod for her passion of the environment. She is a senior at Eckerd College working towards a Bachelor degree in Environmental Studies and Sociology. Interested in pursuing a career in the environmental field, Mary stated that she's "eager to expand my knowledge of land stewardship and build upon past experiences." Last summer, Mary volunteered at the Dennis Conservation Land Trust and Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge.

Mary will be using her knowledge and developing new skills to help BCT with a variety of land management projects this summer. You may find her mowing the field at Windmill Meadow, clearing a hiking trail, GPSing boundaries of a BCT property, or helping to organize Brewster Conservation Day.



USE IT UP, WEAR IT OUT

It's a new era at the Brewster Conservation Trust headquarters. The telephone and power poles that lined the driveway since the 1940s are gone and underground lines have brought relief from worry that power could be lost in storms due to downed wires or failing poles. The old poles were used up for their original purpose, but they weren't quite worn out.



Tim Farrell of Farrell Electric removed all of the poles and delivered four of them to Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary to be used for osprey nesting sites.



Preserving the Rural Character of Brewster

You may know the place, the big farmhouse, one of the oldest houses in Brewster, on Brier Lane with a long attached barn running perpendicular to the road. Sheldon Brier said that his grandfather bought “a fair amount of acreage” in 1867 and paid \$500 for it, “quite a bit of money in those days.” It was a dairy farm with some cows and a few horses. Sheldon’s grandmother ran the boarding house with 12 sleeping rooms.

By 1947 the Brier family had other interests and the property was sold to Bill and Ada Wilson. Their three sons and their families enjoyed summers in the house and old barn, but over the years some house lots were sold until only Carol and Tom Garvey owned the house, barn and surrounding land.

The Garveys appreciate the long and distinguished history of the property. They like the woods that had grown up in the old pasture and the mowed path that leads to Fiddler’s Lane. They want others to be able to see something of what history and nature and simple appreciation can do. In 2018 they began talking with BCT and in 2019 they donated 4.71 acres to be preserved forever as part of the best of Brewster.

It is their tribute to the history of the land and to the Brier family and a legacy for others who will walk the path, admire the stately old farmhouse and the return to woods of the old pasture.

What will your legacy be? Do you appreciate the Town’s rural character, the trails, the high quality drinking water? Then consider including Brewster Conservation Trust in your estate plan. Gifts of any size will help BCT carry on its mission and ensure those same valued assets for the next generation.



LEAVE A LEGACY

Making a bequest to BCT in your will can have many advantages – you can reduce the taxable amount of your estate and avoid paying taxes and capital gains. Gifts can be made from your IRA that count toward your minimum distribution and are tax free. BCT can accept gifts of cash or securities. Consult your professional advisor for further information and guidance.

MEMORIALS & BEQUESTS Contributions to BCT honor the memory of a loved one; give a donation to the Brewster Conservation Trust “in lieu of flowers”. Address for donations: 36 Red Top Road, Brewster, MA 02631. For guidance on planning a bequest or gift, contact Amy Henderson at amy@brewsterconservationtrust.org.

In Memory of

Mike Ball

Joanne Ball

Karen Ticknor Bulwidias

John J. & Karen E. Bulwidias

Thomas H. Christmas

David A. & Maureen Christmas

Bill & Agnes Dowling

Richard & Susan Stewart

Ann Geary

Edward H. & Margaret M. Burdick
Bruce Williams
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Cora Elizabeth Greene

Brent & Barbara Bowers

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Doris Hollander

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Cheryl Raap

Richard L. Johnson

Martha Johnson

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Jane Sterling

Richard Lazarus

Leonard B. & Ellen L. Farwell

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Kathy Mogul

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Sylvia D. Stringer

James Twite

Alice Callahan

Art Stringer

Sylvia D. Stringer

James Twite

Alice Callahan

David Webster

Frederick A. & Kathleen T. Budreski

Bobbie Williams

Alfred G. & Gayle Williams

Marshall Yudin

Jack & Natalie Schuster

In Honor of

Katherine & Skip Atwater

Sarah DiPasquale

BCT Volunteers

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John J. & Karen E. Bulwidias

Brewster Police & Fire Departments

Robert B. & Marianne W. Hirschman

John & Carol Ericsson

Patricia E. Hughes & Henry P. Minis

Debra Johnson

Nancy Hilary Hays
Sally A. Johnson

Peter Johnson

Anonymous

Marie Knight

David C. & Sally B. Schrumm

Hal Minis

Brewster Ponds Coalition, Inc.
Bob & Sally Bullard
Peter A. & Barbara L. Schaible

Our neighbors in Sheep's Landing Assoc.

Gail A. Hanson

Don Schall

Roland & Nancy Wigley

Ruth Shapiro

Lucy De Vries Duffy

Carolyn Sprogell

Kathy Taylor & Jonathan H. Sprogell

Brewster Conservation Trust
508-694-6720
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Newsletter Contributors

Sue Carr, Beth Finch, Stephanie Foster,
Amy Henderson, Dorria Marsh, Hal Minis,
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Permit No. 601

Brockton, MA

Be a Friend of the Birds

Wild Care's Executive Director, Stephanie Ellis, shares some tips for how we can help our wild feathered neighbors!

- Nest boxes: Buy it or build it, and they will come!
- Save a tree, save an owl: Old trees and snags often provide homes for creatures including owls, woodpeckers, nuthatches.
- Leave your brush piles: Brush piles are a great place for birds to seek safety or respite from the weather.
- Prevent window strikes: To prevent birds from striking windows at high speed, place your bird feeders/baths within 15 ft of windows.
- Keep your bird feeders clean and stocked: In winter food is difficult to find. In spring and summer breeding birds need extra for for their young.
- Plant a native bird garden: Providing birds with the resources for feeding, nesting, protection, and roosting - will attract a variety of birds to your backyard year round.
- Don't use rodenticides: Anticoagulant rodenticides (rat and mouse poison) are harmful to raptors which become poisoned when they eat a contaminated rodent. Raptors are our best source of natural rodent control.
- Cats indoors: Cats are responsible for the deaths of over 2.4 billion birds in the U.S. alone, making cat predation the largest human-caused mortality threat to birds.



Janet DiMattia

For more complete information visit www.wildcarecapecod.org.

brewsterconservationtrust.org