



Brewster Conservation Trust

www.brewsterconservationtrust.org

Spring 2021

History Remembered with land dedicated to parents and family memories

“In 1661, at the June session of the Colony Court, Thomas Prence, the Governor, residing at Eastham, was allowed permission to purchase land of the Indians at Sauquatucket for his mill there.”

And so *The History of Harwich* signals the first taking of land by the Plymouth Colony in what is today Brewster. In 1663 Gov. Prence acquired roughly 50 acres from Sachemas, chief of the resident Sauquatucket Indians. *The History* describes the boundaries: “Bounded upon the west by the Mill brook (Stony Brook); on the south by the Great pond (Lower Mill Pond); on the easterly side with the Indian fence running from said Great pond to a little pond called Poquagoo (Smith Pond); and from said little pond through a small valley and swamp to Stoney brook river.”

Those 50 acres contain some of the highest ground in Brewster. Summer breezes keep mosquitoes away and in the low areas there is protection from cold winter winds. And best of all, an alewife run in spring provides food and fertilizer.

It was perfect for commercial use, too. Governor Prence recognized Stony Brook as a “descending water” dropping 28 feet from a handful of large ponds to Cape Cod Bay - textbook site for a water mill. Prence acquired Stony Brook to build the first mill; but he bought 50 acres, much more than just the mill site.

It could be because Prence saw not one but two descending waters: Stony Brook on the western side, and a smaller seasonal stream on the eastern boundary, running from Smith Pond through the swamp and little valley, then flowing into Stony Brook. With water at hand, the knolls flanking the little valley were taken early as homestead sites. Later, the water was used to irrigate cranberry bogs.

In 1958, almost 300 years after Prence made this purchase, a clergy family with three young boys bought a little summer cottage just back from the beach facing the Brewster Flats.



It was the joy of their lives for many years. In 1992, the eldest of those sons, Paul Gasek, bought his own house on Stony Brook Road and settled in. Loving history, it didn't take him long to discover that his house, built in 1741, sits on one of those knolls abutting Prence's first purchase. And he realized the little stream along his western boundary is a remnant of the stream described in *The History of Harwich*, still flowing seasonally as it did long before Europeans ever came to Cape Cod.

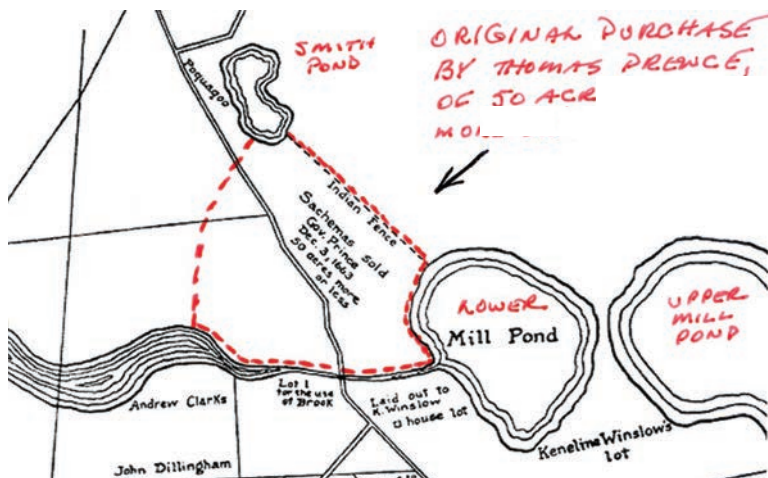
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--- OUR MISSION ---

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

Most of the stream was still in friendly hands, protected and cared for. But one stretch, the last and wildest piece, was vulnerable. Gasek made the case for conservation of this last stretch of the old waterway. In 2019, the BCT bought the land and protected it forever.

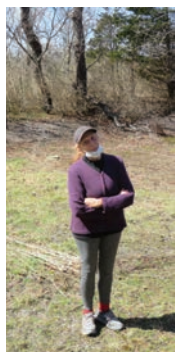
Time and history fly by. In 2020, after 62 years in their family cottage off the Brewster Flats, the three Gasek brothers decide to sell their parents' cottage. It was very hard; it had meant so much for so long; it brought them to Cape Cod, shaped their lives. With the sale, the 62 years of love and life the cottage represented seemed wiped out. Everything their parents built, planted, and cherished would be gone. No trace of them would remain on Cape Cod.



So, Gasek took some of the proceeds from the sale of the family cottage and reimbursed the BCT the price of the last piece of land along the little stream in Prence's Purchase and dedicated it to the memory of those parents, Stanley and Mary Ellen Gasek.

Now they will forever be on Cape Cod, in Brewster. And the whole length of the historical stream from Smith Pond to Stony Brook is in friendly hands. Stanley and Mary Ellen would like that!

Protected land honors a long-time Brewster family



Pamela Baker never met her husband's parents, Warren and Helen Baker. They had both died before she met their son, Stephen "Stinger", in 1995. But she feels their presence all around her.

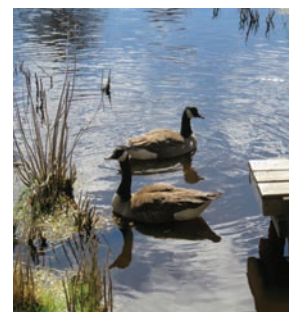
Warren Baker, Stinger's father, was the Brewster Shellfish Constable 1968 to 1972. He built a modest ranch house near Mant's Landing and with his son

Stinger turned an old cranberry bog into a brackish pond. His wife, Helen, made lists of the soils, birds, aquatic and terrestrial animals and plants. The land, the pond and the marsh were part of their lives.

Stinger died in 2009, but Pamela stayed in the house inherited from Warren and Helen. She enlarged the house and built a cottage (named for her granddaughter Phoebe) that she used as a respite place for veterans and for children who learned to love the natural world around the cottage.

As time went on, Pamela began discussions with the Brewster Conservation Trust about protecting a portion of her land. Eventually she sold the main house, moved into the cottage and worked with BCT to preserve 3.27 acres of wetland bordering the dunes in the north and Freeman's Pond in the south.

Pamela still walks the short path to the pond (named for her grandson Max) where the geese are almost part of her family. Each year she welcomes the return of the mating pair and watches expectantly for the goslings to appear.



BCT thanks Pamela Baker for preserving her family's history by protecting forever the land that meant so much to them. We invite others to celebrate their family traditions and the continuing appreciation of the wildlife around us.

SHARE US WITH YOUR FRIENDS! Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Check out our website to stay connected all year long! **brewsterconservationtrust.org**



President's Message

As I write this letter, the Spring equinox has recently passed, the days are longer and gone is that chilly bite in the air, the first daffodils are blooming, and we can start to dream of what the earth will produce in our gardens. It's a season of hope, particularly this year; hope with caution knowing we must continue to be vigilant; hope with thanks to the woods, ponds, marsh views, and trails that have helped sustain us during the dark past year. They bring us clean drinking water, buffer us from storms, and give us a sense of something larger we belong to.

Over the years, I have marveled at children's glee when they discover a salamander under a log, the pride they show when they can explain the layers that make up the earth under the forest floor or describe all the sounds they've heard in the woods after a moment of listening in silence – all part of the Eddy School's fourth grade exploration of the Hay Conservation Center, part of the Wellfleet Audubon program which BCT sponsors.

The woods, the ponds, the marshes are essential parts of the character of Brewster; it's who we are and why we love this place. The best way to give thanks for this is to protect it before we lose it. Much of the "green" space we love about our town is in fact simply private, natural land, ripe for development. That magnificent view up the marsh could be blocked by a trophy home, and the deep woods home to deer, mink, and ovenbirds' loud "teacher teacher teacher" call could be silenced by someone's vacation home.

There are large portions of town that are well suited for housing development, particularly housing for young families and our seasonal workforce. There are other places that are best suited for protection because they sit over our drinking water supply zones or are home to special Cape habitats. Please join BCT is helping protect these special places.

Hal Minis, *BCT President*

In a World Full of Turkeys, Be a Peacock Brewster Unites Behind a Wandering Peacock

Over the last several years turkeys have become a common sight wandering the roads and open spaces of Brewster. But sometimes you find yourself doing a double take as one of those turkeys is actually a peacock.

As we found ourselves stuck at home more over the last year, residents discovered turkeys and the peacock visiting their backyards. Reports and photos of these visitors brought joy during a time of uncertainty. Hanging out at home one Saturday night, longtime BCT supporter Amy



Woods came up with the idea to design a t-shirt that would honor the peacock, send a positive message and raise money for BCT. The idea was a success! The fundraiser raised more than \$2200, which will help support the acquisition of more open space for the peacock and turkeys to enjoy.



"I am proud to be a Brewster resident and raise my children here. We love to explore Brewster and take advantage of the natural beauty in our town. I am glad to help support BCT and to celebrate our mascot."

Amy Woods



What's Going on at Eddy Bay?

As you head out on the well-worn trail, you may notice a few changes: the Holly Grove seems more spacious and open, and a fence spans the length of the bluff overlook.

With the help of our incredible volunteers and AmeriCorps Cape Cod (ACC), the BCT has been hard at work maintaining the Eddy Bay area.



It is tempting to pass the split rail fence at the far end of the trail to get a closer look; but climbing and sliding down the bluff has trampled critical vegetation that holds the soil together and drastically accelerated the erosion. To mitigate these destructive impacts, the BCT has planted native grass seed and installed biodegradable jute netting along the off-trail paths. Because signage has not proven to be a sufficient deterrent, the Trust, with the help of ACC, installed a wire fence to further prevent bluff access and allow the vegetation time to grow and become established. We strongly urge all visitors to protect this rapidly eroding cliff by observing the restrictions.



The projects have focused on improving the health of the Holly Grove, clearing the trail of fallen trees, and implementing erosion control measures at the bluff's edge.

After ACC spent a day in February removing unhealthy holly

trees, volunteers came out for several workdays to fight back the climbing green brier and invasive shrubs in the understory. These efforts by our volunteers will free the healthier hollies from competition, giving them room to breathe and grow.



A lot of work has been done, but there is always more to do! Invasive plant species, climate change, and human impacts from misuse threaten the health and future of Eddy Bay as a premier walking trail and conservation site. If you'd like to know more about our management efforts and want to lend a hand, consider signing up to be a part of the work crew, and help steward the places you love. To join the trail crew contact Jon Bruce at Jon@brewsterconservationtrust.org.

BCT welcomes dogs on leashes on most of our trails, but it is important that you pick up after your dog and take the bag home. Plastic is a well-known pollutant and dangerous to wildlife. Pet waste, unlike that of wild animals, contains nitrogen that is one of the contaminants of our water. Your daily walks keep you and your pet healthy. Please keep our land, water and wildlife healthy as well.

Gardening Time

“Thistle” cheer you up. It’s gardening time! Like some of you, my family looks forward to gardening similar to parents counting the days for school to start. We of course begin way too early. Planning, fixing garden beds and starting seed, only to be disappointed when the light morning dewy frost damages our little sprouts. Not this year. For my benefit and yours, I have searched out the expert “sage” advice from Jennifer at Crocker Nurseries to guide me in planning my newly attained town garden plot.

A select few of you will jump start your veggie garden with at least four weeks of solarization. Laying black plastic over the soil will kill all the organisms, even the beneficial ones, which you will have to replace after testing the soil then adding back in the necessary compost, peat moss, limestone, cow manure, or organic ph amendments. You can purchase home ph kits or use the services from MA Dept of Agricultural Resources for testing. The rest of you have your own, not so scientific, way of prepping the soil that always yields the best crops.

It’s now time to “celery-brate” by planning your summer provisions. I am keen on using the Planter app. from Google Play or apple.com. Set your location and garden size then drag and drop the veggies and fruit! Easy to use and you

don’t have to pay a cent for planning. Come to find out I should have been starting my seeds inside already; guess I will have to give patronage to a local grower! Put some worm castings in the holes when you are planting and once they are thriving, use neem oil to control the insects/disease that would also like to partake in your delicious bounty. Remember to also protect your garden from the ravenous furry friends that are so happy you have grown food for them.

Good luck with whatever garden you are creating. I am “rooting” for you!

Christine Boucher



Connected to Our Community:

No Moss Growing Under Our Feet!



BCT Outreach efforts were put to the test last year. As in person events were cancelled, we continued to find new ways to reach out and stay connected.

This year started off with several webinars and by spring we were organizing a series of walks exploring

the various trails around Brewster. Now, we are busy planning new StoryWalks and more in person events as we transition into summer.

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT EVENT!

You can learn about our upcoming walks, talks and events at brewsterconservationtrust.org and sign up to receive our E-newsletter using the sign up link on our home page.

brewsterconservationtrust.org

SAVE THE DATES!

Brewster Conservation Day is a WEEK this year, July 10 through 16. Our theme is **All About Ponds** as we partner with the Brewster Ponds Coalition to bring you an exciting ‘hybrid’ event that will include virtual and in-person activities. You can find the Kid’s Passport Challenge on page 8 and see a full list of events on our website under **EVENTS**.

BCT Annual Meeting is scheduled for August 12 at 5:00 pm. Check our website for details.

Working Together to Protect Brewster's Open Spaces

The Brewster Conservation Trust recognizes our local Conservation Business Partners for their cash and in-kind contributions. We all recognize how special Brewster is and are grateful that they joined us in ensuring that we continue to have a beautiful rural landscape, clean water, and a vibrant economy. We urge our supporters to patronize these businesses.

Through its decades of work, BCT has created the type of place that people are longing to spend time in – a beautiful, rural landscape with lots of open space for wildlife and people to enjoy. We residents, of course, love it, and so do our visitors from around the world! At the Inn, I give each guest the BCT Trails Map, point out my favorites, and send them on their way! I couldn't imagine the town without BCT, and I encourage all local businesses to support their work for the benefit of all future generations and visitors.

Amy Chesnut, Brewster By The Sea Inn

Outermost Land Survey, Inc. was pleased to be able to help the Conservation Trust. We decided to help because as Land Surveyors we understand how precious land is to everyone. And we want to be assured that the land dedicated to open space remains as open space and is not intentionally, or accidentally, used by those unauthorized to do so.

Donald T. Poole PLS,
Outermost Land Survey, Inc

BCT protects what is special about Brewster. It keeps what we love about our town intact and you have to be part of that.

Jimmy Baskin, Ace Hardware, Brewster

Thank you to these businesses that support BCT.

CONSERVATION HEROES

Brewster By The Sea Inn
Brian P. Daley Construction
Fran Schofield, Realtor, Robert Paul Properties
Ocean Edge Resort and Golf Club
Outermost Land Survey, Inc.

CONSERVATION PARTNERS

ArborTech	Crocker Nurseries
Brewster Ace Hardware	Kate's Seafood
Brewster Bookstore	Ryder and Wilcox
Cobie's Restaurant	Supfari Adventures

To learn about our Business Partnership Program, contact Amy Henderson at
amy@brewsterconservationtrust.org.

How will you leave your legacy? The Brewster Conservation Trust achieves its mission because of individuals, like you, who share a love for Brewster and want to see the natural and rural characteristic of the town preserved forever.

A gift of land makes sure that future generations will enjoy what you love about a special property. Any donation of cash or securities will be put toward the purchase of open space that will further protect water quality and habitat. Gifts from your IRA can count toward your required minimum distribution.

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. 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. Consult your professional advisor for further information and guidance. tax free. BCT can accept gifts of cash or securities. Consult your professional advisor for further information and guidance.





Glenna King Outwin (1952 - 2020) was a devoted environmentalist and an avid gardener who created lovely flower gardens everywhere she lived. These two passions merged and complimented each other. Glenna and her husband, Chris, first moved to Brewster in 1973. She worked at the Ladies' Library. Glenna and Chris volunteered in diverse service activities from the Nauset Workshop to the Rescue Squad Association. They purchased the Lucy Chapman house on Main Street with its beautiful flower garden. Here they started their family. Lucy Chapman was one of the earliest Brewster donors of land to be held in conservation, and her spirit seemed to have rubbed off on Glenna while she lived in Lucy's lovely antique home.

Glenna and her family moved from Brewster in 1985 and spent years living in various locales around the country, but she always yearned to live once again in Brewster. When they returned in 2018, she renewed her support of land conservation. They volunteered and supported the BCT, recognizing its critical role in preserving the town's quality of life.

MEMORIALS & BEQUESTS

Contributions to BCT honor the memory of a loved one; consider a donation to the Brewster Conservation Trust "in lieu of flowers". Send donations to: 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

Stuart Anson
Alan R. & Amyjo A. Bershaw

Susan Baker
Anne C. Hayes

Phill & Barbby Balasa
Barbara G. & Charles Frazier

Merton C. Bernstein
Joan B. Bernstein

Sylvia & Alcide Berube
Guy & Marie L. Berube

Pete Birnie
David C. & Sally B. Schrumm

Bob Boskus
Jack & Natalie Schuster

Dorothy J. Breckenridge
R. Warren Breckenridge

Thomas H. Christmas
David A. & Maureen Christmas

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Sue Ann Corrigan

Nancy Craemer
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William J. Doherty
Sharon & Tim Donovan

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John F. Murphy & Ellen S. Foley

Eugene A. Franciosi
Constance H. Franciosi

Roger Gandini
Audrey Gandini
Gary & Deborah LaFave

Stanley & Mary Ellen Gasek
S. Paul Gasek, Jr.

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Roger & Jeane Samuels
Joan S. & James E. Van Baalen

Cindy Lach
Michael W. Lach

Mazie & Global Climate
Chris Powicki and Liz Hooper

Hal Minis
Patricia B. Bertschy
Sally & Bob Bullard

Our faith in all our futures
William J. & Linda A. Mills

Our Grandchildren
Leah Betts & Vincent P. Pesce

Don Schall
Michael W. Lach

Betsy Unger-Warrior
Mildred A. Unger

Volunteers of BCT
John J. & Karen E. Bulwidias

Brewster Conservation Trust

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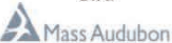






















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- 1) Complete any 5 Challenges
- 2) Take Photos of each completed challenge*
- 3) Enter to Win Prizes!
Email: photos along with name, age, address, email and phone number to: bct@brewsterconservationtrust.org
- 4) WIN! We will draw a winner each Friday from July 16 through August 20

BCD is a collaboration between Brewster Conservation Trust, Town of Brewster and Brewster Historical Society. For more info go to: brewsterconservationtrust.org/bcd2021/

*photos may be used by BCT