



# Brewster Conservation Trust

[www.brewsterconservationtrust.org](http://www.brewsterconservationtrust.org)

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

**Fall 2023**

**Celebrating 40 Years of  
Land Preservation, Stewardship & Outreach  
1983-2023**

## **A Special Part of Brewster ...at a Special Price**

The old bog is reverting to its natural state, shrubs and trees filling in what used to be productive cranberry habitat. It does not have a natural water source. It is not connected to a pond or to Cape Cod Bay. The bog is in a natural low spot and is considered a wetland, but the cranberry farm depended on three wells on the upland of the property. As BCT prepares to take ownership of the parcel, the future of the bog area is unclear.

Surrounding the bog lies a wooded area once filled with smoky campfires, canvas tents, and mosquito-bitten campers. Like the bog, the campground has long been dormant, but with trails already winding through the hardwood trees, it has clearly decided its future will be as a public hiking trail.



View of Washington Chase bog from Route 6A

With 5.04 acres of wetland and 8.85 acres of dry upland, the property has been appraised at \$1.24 million. David Dalgarn, the present owner and son-in-law of Washington Chase, has agreed to sell the property for \$700,000. By protecting the land and the habitat he also honors the memory of his family and their long association with the property.

The community will benefit from the scenic view and walking trails and David will receive a charitable donation tax benefit for the difference between the appraised value and the sale price. The terms also allow David to live in the house on the property. When he leaves BCT will determine its best use.

BCT has contributed to the lasting beauty of Route 6A by protecting Windmill Meadows and ensuring the permanence of Quivett Marsh Vista. It has partnered with the Town to acquire the Sea Camps property, and now we have an opportunity to further enhance the scenic quality of Route 6A with this purchase. Please help with this effort to keep Brewster the Conservation Town by making a donation to protect this special part of Brewster.



The 8.85-acre parcel sits between Rte. 6A and the Cape Cod Rail Trail

# A Man, a Time, a Place to Remember

Since 1942 the Washington Chase bog on the north side of 6A has marked the changing seasons in East Brewster. And now it is changing hands.

Washington “Washie” Chase was born in 1912 and by fifth grade he knew he wanted to be a cranberry farmer. He worked for cranberry growers whenever he could and joined the Grange at 14. There were diversions. Henry Crocker employed him at what is now the Brewster Store; he worked with the Civilian Conservation Corp during the Depression and served in the army from 1942-46. But it was always cranberries that were on his mind. He owned a couple of small bogs but bought the main one, the one BCT now hopes to purchase, in 1942.

Farming is a chancy business. Cranberries might be \$14/barrel one year and ten cents a barrel another. Washie needed other work to support what his wife Mick called his cranberry habit. Together they ran a 20-site tenting campground and he worked at Nickerson State Park for some 20 years. But he ran the cranberry bog until the late 1990s and died in 2008, perhaps the last of the old-time cranberry farmers.

It had been a family affair. Mick and their daughter Mackie helped to sort and wash the berries. Eventually Washie’s son-in-law David Dalgarn joined the crew during vacations from teaching.

Mick passed away in 1991 and Mackie in 2022, leaving David with the land that meant so much to the family for 80 years.

He walks the old roads around the campground. He knows where the coyote dens are and where you might spot a fox or a fisher cat. And he wants them to be there in the future, which is why he began thinking about conserving the land. David had been a volunteer on the BCT work crew, so it was BCT he turned to for a plan for this special part of East Brewster.

The old bog is growing up into the swamp it once was with only the memory of Washie pushing his wheelbarrow over the cranberry plants he loved.



Photo courtesy of David Dalgarn



## President’s Letter

I hope by now all our friends and neighbors have had an opportunity to view BCT’s video, A Seed Planted. It is a beautiful evocation of everything we love about our Town. It is also a reminder that we and our children’s children can continue to enjoy Brewster’s forests, marshes, meadows and ponds only because of the powerful conservation spirit residing here. The consensus among our citizens and the collaboration between BCT and the Town for over four decades proves that conservation values are Brewster values. Through this spirit of cooperation and with your generous support, BCT has been able to protect – forever! – over 1600 acres of open space. In this, the 40th anniversary year of BCT’s founding, we look back on that heritage with pride and forward to the coming decades with optimism.

Our mission has evolved: from simply protecting available open space to targeting our limited resources to those properties with the most important conservation values (and, most especially, to protecting water quality) to opening and maintaining appropriate properties for public access and enjoyment, to restoring native plants and habitats, and to offering educational programming to children and adults.

Looking ahead, we will continue those priorities, while also working to foster a broader sense of conservation in the community. We want to expand our programs for volunteers in ways that will enrich their involvement with BCT and with each other. We want to expand our programming to encourage our neighbors to adopt native, pollinator-friendly landscaping practices. We want to be more mindful of our share in the rich history of Brewster’s land – from the indigenous peoples who lived their reverence for nature to the generations of families, farmers, and fishermen with deep roots in our soil. But, as always, our overarching mission is to earn and maintain your support by helping to sustain Brewster’s unique status as The Conservation Town.

Tino Kamarck,  
*Brewster Conservation Trust President*

# People Spotlight



## Katie Spengler

She's fought forest fires, been threatened by a wild boar, hunted rattlesnakes (for survey purposes only), and had close encounters with alligators. Meet Brewster Conservation Trust's new Land Stewardship Director, Katie Spengler.

Katie graduated from Northern Michigan University with a B.S. in Environmental Studies and Sustainability. She is also a former AmeriCorps member, first in Florida and then in her home state of Michigan.

Says Katie: "I am lucky to be here at BCT and looking forward to taking the Land Stewardship Director role to the next level!"



## Marc Derosiers

When Marc Derosiers retired, he wasn't beckoned by local golf courses but by the woods, trails, and open spaces of Brewster Conservation Trust.

As BCT's 2023 Volunteer of the Year, Marc wears many hats, including property monitor and work crew member. He also finds extra ways to help and is currently rebuilding the doors on BCT's maintenance shed.

The real source of Marc Derosiers' commitment to BCT is the people he gets to work with. From the other volunteers to the BCT staff, Marc enjoys being part of "the team".

"I would do more if I could just squeeze it all in," he says.



## Ann and Peter Lambertus

Ann Lambertus has a heart for wildlife. So it's only fitting she would offer them a home.

Ann and her husband Peter were recognized as BCT's 2023 Conservationists of the Year for donating an 11.2-acre parcel of land to Brewster Conservation Trust. The couple had purchased the property early in their marriage with plans to build a house there. But life, as it often does, intervened.

After years of walking the property in its natural state, Ann and Peter realized that although it hadn't become their home, it was home to a whole community of wildlife, from foxes and coyotes to birds, frogs, and more. And they wanted to preserve those homes. BCT thanks Ann and Peter Lambertus for their generous donation.



**Brewster Conservation Trust**  
1983 – 2023



# 40 Acres in our 40th Year



Support our 40 in 40 campaign and help us preserve Brewster's ponds, marshes, and meadows for future generations.

**WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN 2024**  
Some first quarter happenings to brighten your winter

JANUARY <b>01</b>	<b>FIRST DAY HIKE AT CALF FIELD POND</b>
FEBRUARY <b>20</b>	<b>ECO-EXPO AT CC MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY</b>
FEBRUARY <b>27</b>	<b>PLAN YOUR GARDEN LECTURE WITH C. L. FORNARI</b>
FEBRUARY <b>29</b>	<b>TREE AND SHRUB PRUNING WITH RUSS NORTON</b>

MORE INFORMATION TO COME OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[WWW.BREWSTERCONSERVATIONTRUST.ORG](http://WWW.BREWSTERCONSERVATIONTRUST.ORG)

**GET OUR e-NEWS!** Sign up to receive BCT's e-newsletter and see our latest news on upcoming walks, talks, and special events! Sign up on our website: [brewsterconservationtrust.org](http://brewsterconservationtrust.org)

– And follow us on Facebook and Instagram –

# Stewarding for Sustainability

Over our first 40 years, BCT helped protect over 1,600 acres. Of this, we own, fee simple, more than 635 acres. We're proud of this success and preserving Brewster's environmentally sensitive lands will continue to be a priority into the future. But along with this accomplishment comes a challenge – how, as good stewards, to manage these lands. As we have done in the past, we will continue to monitor each property for encroachments, changes, and threats. Beyond that, we have recently set goals of restoring properties for native species and habitat, expanding public access on selected properties, and maintaining the ecological and environmental value and assets of properties, including their resilience in the face of climate change.



Windmill Meadows is groomed to benefit people and wildlife

Each property has its own characteristics, assets, and challenges so we look at our properties individually to determine the management needs and opportunities. For example, Windmill Meadows on Route 6A, provides a vista across the open field to the Historic Village and Drummer Boy Park. We will continue to manage this property as a meadow to maintain the vista and provide a public walking trail. Here are some other examples of what we have done on specific properties recently and which illustrate our evolving approach to managing land sustainably.

**The 22-acre Eddy Sisters property on Lower Road** features fields and meadows, wetlands and former cranberry bogs, and up-land forest. In addition to our first public trail, opened in 2012, it is also home to the Community Garden and Children's Garden. After an assessment of the condition of the natural environment on the property, our Land Stewardship team noted how much of the area, particularly the forest-field fringe, was overgrown with invasive species that choked the native trees and shrubs. BCT embarked on a major restoration effort to clean out the invasive species. Recognizing the public value of the Eddy Sisters property, BCT has started two other initiatives. First



New outdoor classroom will host learning events

is the planting of a small orchard of heirloom apples. With the help of the Barnstable County Extension Service, this project is a hands-on learning experience for volunteers who have already helped to plant the trees and who will continue to learn about pruning in the late winter. Other public apple events will take place as the trees mature.



An heirloom apple sapling is given a good start

Second, BCT is building a pavilion adjacent to the two gardens and orchard so that classes and workshops can be offered with some protection from the weather.

# Stewarding for the Future



Volunteers replace invasive vines with oak saplings

Located adjacent to the Brewster Cemetery on Lower Road, **the Dowling property** road frontage was overgrown with invasive vines and plants. A hard working crew of BCT volunteers and AmeriCorps members stripped away the invasives. BCT then planted oaks to restore the parcel to native vegetation.

In 2021, Steve Backus donated a half-acre parcel, including **the former E-Spa, on Main Street**. The parcel abuts other parcels BCT purchased from Backus, including the Vernal Pool trail used by the Eddy School.

In addition to the E-Spa, the historic Schoolhouse Number 3 is on the property. The Brewster Historic Society plans to move the schoolhouse to its Historic Village at Drummer Boy Park and BCT will take down the



The Old Schoolhouse Number 3

remaining structures. In their place, BCT will create a public park with a view over wetlands and a small pond, access to the Vernal Pool trail, and emphasizing accessibility – a spot for restful contemplation for bikers and pedestrians on Route 6A.



Wanting to practice what we preach, BCT is transforming our office and the entire **Hay Conservation Center** into a model of good ecological management. This past year we took up the lawn in front of the office and replaced it with native flowering plants to favor pollinators. We're also planting part of the back meadow in the same way. With concern for the overall health of the larger forested area, this past year, BCT commissioned a forest management plan. The plan, developed by a licensed forester, identifies the various forest types, recommends reducing the trail system, not clearing downed trees, and thinning specific tree stands, all to ensure the health of the forest ecosystem. BCT has also installed solar panels to make the building energy self-sufficient.

# Learning is Cool When There's a Pool by the School

What tree has this shaped leaf? What do you find if you dig down into the forest soil?

It all started in October 2016 when the Eddy School fourth grade visited BCT's Hay Conservation Center to learn about tree identification and forest soil and has become an annual tradition (with a pause for COVID). With the completion of the Vernal Pool Trail behind the school in 2018, BCT was able to expand the program to include purchasing equipment for the school's science program and funding for field trips to several BCT properties, including the Vernal Pool Trail.

That's exactly where eager students found themselves on a recent October morning, along with their clipboards and observations sheets. "The children learn so much more when they get out into the field and actually experience the natural world," said teacher Chelsea Smythe.

Thanks to BCT's partnership with MassAudubon-Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, these future conservationists were able to put their eyes and hands on beech nuts, fingernail clams, and salamanders hiding under logs.



## Brewster Conservation Day 2023



Brewster Conservation Day 2023 was one for the record books. Held on July 8th at Drummer Boy Park under sunny skies, we started with an all-time high of 45 exhibitors. Attendance was also record-setting for the day with over 1,100 people participating.



Experts in the speakers' tent and many of the exhibits spoke to the day's theme "Native Plants, Healthy Habitats" with information and activities about pollinators and native plants. Brewster Ponds Coalition received the best exhibit award, with second place to the Brewster Garden Club.

We thank our partners and all the volunteers who helped make the day a great success.



## How will you leave your legacy?

The Brewster Conservation Trust is committed to preserving the places people need and love to build healthy communities and protect our natural heritage. And we couldn't do it without individuals like you.

Because everybody benefits from a healthy, scenic, and sustainable environment, everybody can play a part in protecting and preserving it. If you're a landowner, you're in a position to ensure that future generations will be able to walk the same trails, enjoy the same views, and savor the same sights and sounds as you. Forever.

If you have other assets besides land, you can contribute cash or securities toward the preservation of open space so vital to the rustic beauty, natural setting, and rural character of Brewster. Gifts from your IRA can count toward your required minimum distribution. There are other ways to donate as well, such as by including BCT in your estate plan, which can provide you with tax advantages and BCT with needed support. Consult your professional advisor for information and guidance. Gifts of any size will help.



## 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](mailto:amy@brewsterconservationtrust.org).

### In Memory of

**Rose Mary Bowker**  
Leslie Bowker

**Dorothy Breckenridge**  
R. Warren Breckenridge

**Murva Deneen**  
Donald Deneen

**Timothy Hogan**  
Christine Ameele  
Janis Andrews  
Anonymous  
James & Beverly Boyle  
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Dora Clark  
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Phyllis Grigoraitis  
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David & Karen Whitney

**The Rev. Richard N. Johnson**  
Christine Johnson

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**Maureen Joyce**  
Gloria & Geoffrey Wager

**Lillian & Dick Mason**  
Lynn & Maclyn Lalor

**Bob Miller**  
Lynn & Thomas Swatland

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**Carol Parisi**  
Chip Parisi

**Christine Poltrock**  
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Eric Britton  
Marie Cunningham  
Theresa Falik  
Susan Hack  
Emily Tao

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Peter Johnson  
Beth Finch

**Geoff Wagner**  
Marc & Joan Zlotnik

**Sheila E. Wynne**  
Patricia Fortier

**George M. Yazejian**  
Jacqueline Yazejian

### In Honor of

**All Caregivers**  
Olga Sherry

**Sue & Elliott Carr**  
Bob & Marianne Hirschman

**Fred Dunford**  
Kathleen Sherman

**Debra Johnson**  
Sally Johnson

**Martin Kamarck**  
Pam King-Sams

**Beth Tobias**  
Annette & Robert Graczewski

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## Leave the Leaves

By now you have heard about the benefits of planting native plants in your yard. But have you heard about what you can stop doing to support a healthy environment?

Raking leaves for starters.

Yes, leaving those fallen leaves on the ground is a perfect way to protect soil organisms and plant roots against the winter weather. They also provide winter protection for a variety of pollinators like queen bumble bees. And ground birds will scratch around in the fallen leaves searching for insects to dine on.

So, before grabbing your rake this fall, consider mulching the leaves on your yard or raking them into flower beds, but don't haul them away. And while it's a good thing to leave the leaves, you should still pick up your dirty socks.

**Thank you to these  
businesses that support BCT**

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