

SHERIFF'S  
MEADOW  
FOUNDATION



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

# Newsletter

Winter 2017

MOSHUP BEACH DUNES

Issue No. 54



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Founded in 1959 by Henry Beetle Hough  
 and Elizabeth Bowie Hough

**Lonely Island**



It's Ash Wednesday and I find myself quite alone. The Island is at its emptiest. It is the middle of the winter break week for the Island schools,

and those who can have left. The Friday evening ferries were filled with families bound for somewhere else. Some were headed to New Hampshire or Vermont to ski. Many head south, far south, to Caribbean islands, from St. John to Barbados to Puerto Rico. Others visit friends or family; others simply decamp to some other mainland venue to escape.

Some remain. Some are ill. Others find traveling too expensive, or have binding work or family commitments, or have children with varsity basketball games, or have other good reasons to stay. An unspoken sense of solidarity binds those who stay, tinged with a bit of envy for those who have left.

Those who stay find a very quiet island. A misty rain falls in West Tisbury in the morning, and about three dozen turkeys amble about on the side of the road. They peck their way from Mid-Island Auto all the way to the Field Gallery, and a few peck on the lawn of the Town Hall.

On a typical weekday afternoon, the Swartz Family YMCA bursts with the exertions of high school athletes and mothers and fathers exercising while their children are swimming and people lifting weights after work or lining up for yoga classes. Not this week, though. It's a bit surprising that anyone is here at all. Off-duty Sheriff's deputies spot each other at the bench press. A few young women use the elliptical trainers. Three men swim in the Olympic-sized pool, one of them wearing flippers. For those who don't care to socialize while exercising, this week is a joy, as there is no wait for any of the equipment.

On the mild days, the sanctuaries and beaches call. A whale vertebra lies upon the

beach at Quansoo. Whales themselves, endangered right whales, have been spotted off of Nomans Land and Gay Head, and some just off the south shore. My "whale alert" app, however, shows that these are now feeding off Provincetown. Pinkletinks have roused themselves, and some of them have been reported calling near Lambert's Cove. The red-winged blackbird showed up at Sheriff's Meadow. Hazelnut blossoms at the Wakeman Conservation Center.

Most of the time, though, the mid-winter Island remains windy, raw, and even bleak. This is why those who can, leave, even if just for a few days.

I find myself alone at night at Quansoo. My family was set to return tonight, but got stranded off-island when the boats were cancelled. Ours is usually a busy, humming household. There is the din of conversation and piano practice and dishes in the kitchen. But not now. Now there is just the sound of the pounding surf and a howling wind scouring the plain.

At times like these, I think about the elegant carving of ships, etched into the wall of the borning room at the Hancock-Mitchell House next door. I don't believe that these were carved by children, in awe of their father, the master mariner Capt. Samuel Hancock. And I don't believe that they were carved by the Captain, reminiscing about one of the vessels he commanded. At times like these, I am convinced that they were carved by Mrs. Hancock, Frances Hancock nee Townshend. Frances married Samuel in Liverpool, and then emigrated to America, to Quansoo.

On this midwinter night, I can picture Frances alone, while Samuel was far away at sea. I can quite well imagine her shutting the door and sitting in the borning room, alone. I can hear the fierce winds that rattle the windowpanes and whistle around the eaves. And I can picture Frances, feeling quite marooned on some Ash Wednesday long ago, carving into the wall a drawing of a square-rigged ship, a vessel that could, if only it would come to Holmes Hole, sail her back to Liverpool.



# Trails of Martha's Vineyard Mobile App

*Due to Launch Summer 2017*

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is creating a new application for mobile phones and communication devices entitled "Trails of Martha's Vineyard." The app will allow anyone with a mobile device to see where one is anywhere along the trail, to track where one has been, and to learn about the land and the natural history of Martha's Vineyard.

Sheriff's Meadow has hired Trailhead Labs to create the app. Based in San Francisco, Trailhead Labs and its CEO, Ryan Branciforte, have developed a platform called OuterSpatial on which the app will be based. In addition to the app, Trailhead Labs is working with graphic designer Kathleen Forsythe of Forsythe Design, Inc. to create a new website for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and an interactive map. The website and interactive map should be launched in the spring of 2017, while the app will be launched during the summer.

Initially, the app and interactive map will feature the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation

properties that are open to the public and a series of carefully researched curated bicycle rides and long-distance hikes. In the second phase of app development, the app and the online, interactive map will expand to include all of the open to the public conservation lands on Martha's Vineyard. A working group consisting of staff members of the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission, the Martha's Vineyard Commission, the Trustees of Reservations, Massachusetts Audubon, the Vineyard Conservation Society and the Manuel F. Correllus State Forest has been assembled to address technical details and to make sure that the trails are properly mapped.

"We are very excited to be building this app and can't wait for people to try it out," said Executive Director Adam Moore. "It will really help people find their way and avoid getting lost. We hope that this becomes the one app that people need to enjoy the outdoors on Martha's Vineyard."

Using an app on an iPhone or an Android

mobile devices is different than simply accessing a mapping website on such a device. The difference is that the app allows the user to access all of the features that are built into each device – the GPS ("Global Positioning System") feature, the compass, the camera – and more. Once downloaded, the app will work even where cell signals and wireless services are lacking, as the phone will still be able to receive communications signals from satellites through its GPS feature.

Sheriff's Meadow also hopes that users of the app will take photographs of the land, and will share these photos with Sheriff's Meadow in an effort to better illustrate and document the properties. The app should also allow for users to easily interact with other social media sites, such as Instagram, Facebook or Strava, on which people already share their outdoor experiences.

Those interested in learning more or in contributing to the second, wider phase of this app are asked to contact Adam Moore at [moore@sheriffsmeadow.org](mailto:moore@sheriffsmeadow.org).



Winter Public Guided Walk at the Phillips Preserve

# News at Nat's Farm

## *Supporting Island Agriculture*

In late 2016 and in the first months of 2017, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation entered into leases of the South Pasture of Nat's Farm with the new Martha's Vineyard Community Horse Center and the Grey Barn Farm.

Nat's Farm is a 50-acre property found along Old County Road in West Tisbury. Conserved by work of the Langmuir family and the Vineyard Open Land Foundation, and doubly protected by a conservation restriction held by the West Tisbury Conservation Commission, Nat's Farm is one of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's most scenic properties. Abutting Nat's Farm directly to the South is the Martha's Vineyard Community Horse Center, formerly Misty Meadows farm.

As the earth of Nat's Farm is considered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service to be prime agricultural soil, Nat's Farm also ranks as one of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's most important agricultural properties. For several years now, a section of the North Pasture of Nat's Farm has been leased to Mermaid Farm, and sections of the South Pasture had been leased to Misty Meadows Farm for horse pasture and to North Tabor Farm for agriculture.

In 2016, the Martha's Vineyard Community Horse Center was established as a new, charitable organization. Jerry and Carol Kenney, owners of Misty Meadows farm, then donated all of Misty Meadows farm – the stable, barns, house and an exceptional indoor riding ring – to the Horse Center, in an extraordinary act of philanthropy.

The South Pasture of Nat's Farm is integral to the Horse Center, as it offers pasture and riding area with fencing, water, and shelter within eyesight of the Horse Center facility. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation leased 15 acres of the South Pasture for continued use as pasture. On the easternmost 9.5 acres of the South Pasture, Sheriff's Meadow will lease this land for use both as a certified organic hayfield for the Grey Barn Farm and as pasture for the Horse Center after the first cutting of hay.

"We think that this is a great opportunity to support island agriculture and the new Horse Center on the same piece of land," said Executive Director Adam Moore. "I thank the Grey Barn Farm and the Horse Center for their cooperative spirit and enthusiasm."



## Grants for Signs

Through generous grants from the Permanent Endowment for Martha's Vineyard and the Cedar Tree Foundation, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation will be able to create and install new signs on properties across the Island.

The Permanent Endowment grant of \$6,000 will fund welcoming signs at property entrances, maps to be mounted on kiosks, "you are here" mini-maps to be installed at trail junctions, and other signs needed here and there on the trails and properties. The Cedar Tree Foundation grant of \$5,000 is specific to Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary, and it will fund new signs and additional fieldwork at that property.

All of the new signs are being designed by Kathleen Forsythe of Forsythe Design, Inc. They will feature the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation logo, which was designed by Lucy Mitchell, and will use the same attractive, uniform design standards now being put into practice on all Sheriff's Meadow Foundation signs, print publications and electronic publications.

"We are very grateful to the Permanent Endowment for Martha's Vineyard and to the Cedar Tree Foundation for their generous support for these practical projects," said Executive Director Adam Moore. "I think that it is worth mentioning that we have had a very positive response from the public to our mini-maps in particular. They are helpful yet unobtrusive, they are all oriented north, and they have been so well-received that we hope to install them on all of our properties."



Nat's Farm



# Help Us Conserve this Land on Moshup Trail

*A 2.5-acre Property Abutting Atlantic Ocean*



Land that Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is raising money to conserve. *Photo: Adam Moore*

Please help Sheriff's Meadow Foundation conserve a beautiful swath of dunes, streams, bayberries and wind-sculpted oak trees between Moshup Trail and the Atlantic Ocean surf. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is trying to raise \$50,000 to purchase this land for its permanent conservation.

If you contribute, your gift will help in two ways. First, your gift will go directly toward the purchase price of this 2.5-acre property. Second, as the land being purchased is owned by the Vineyard Conservation Society, your purchase will also help the Vineyard Conservation

Society in its effort to protect rare heathlands along Moshup Trail.

Why is the Vineyard Conservation Society, another conservation organization, selling land? It is selling land because it was given this land specifically as "asset land" that could be sold to raise money. VCS is using the money from the sale to defray the costs of its successful lawsuit to protect lands along Moshup Trail from development.

The land we are striving to conserve directly abuts a beautiful stretch of Atlantic Ocean beach owned by Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. Now inaccessible, if Sheriff's

Meadow can successfully complete this purchase, a trail will cross both properties and connect the beach to other conservation lands along and near Moshup Trail. A path will stitch these lands together, and will offer you access to one of the most beautiful seaside landscapes on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

All contributions of all sizes are welcome. If you wish to contribute, or to learn more, or to obtain additional maps or information about the land, please contact the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation office at (508) 693-5207 or at [moore@sheriffsmeadow.org](mailto:moore@sheriffsmeadow.org).

## Katherine O'Brien and Megan Zeilinger Win Award at Science Fair

With their project entitled "How Salt and Sand Affect the Health of Grass," Katherine O'Brien and Megan Zeilinger won the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation award at the 2017 Science & Engineering Fair at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School on February 11, 2017. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation congratulates Ms. O'Brien and Ms. Zeilinger on their excellent work and original research.



*Photo: Kris O'Brien*

# Flat Point Farm to Host Summer Benefit

*Monday, July 17, 2017*

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is very pleased to announce that Arnie Fischer and Eleanor Neubert will host the 2017 Annual Summer Benefit at Flat Point Farm in West Tisbury.

From the mouth of Pear Tree Cove, the wide-open fields and pastures of Flat Point Farm stretch along the shoreline of Tisbury Great Pond. Through the work of the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank and the conservation planning and dedication of Mr. Fischer and Ms. Neubert and their families, much of Flat Point Farm is conserved for nature and for agriculture, and forever protected from future development.

A two-mile long loop trail that begins on Tiah's Cove Road connects it all, and gives the walker a chance for a ramble along one

of the most scenic landscapes on Martha's Vineyard. The trail crosses Short Cove Preserve, which is conservation land that the land bank purchased from the Fischer family, and also crosses the fields of Flat Point Farm, which is still family-owned but protected by a land bank agricultural preservation restriction. From the trail, one can see clear across the Tisbury Great Pond to the Atlantic Ocean beyond.

The Summer Benefit will take place on **Monday, July 17, 2017**. Guests will have an opportunity to see this beautiful working farm, to stroll the path along the shore, and to enjoy a delicious dinner being prepared by Buckley's catering. Guests will learn about the land, its history, and its conservation future.

The Summer Benefit is the chief fundraising event for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. It has come to provide a significant support of our operating revenues. One of the reasons that this event has become so successful, and so enjoyable to those who attend, is that it is essentially a "thank-you" event, where all the money is raised beforehand, and no auction or other fundraising occurs at the event.

To keep it that way, we ask that you consider sponsoring this event at the highest level possible for you. We have included a list of sponsorship levels and corresponding benefits in this newsletter. We ask you to contact the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation staff if you have any questions at all.

*Thank you.*



Flat Point Farm ([www.flatpointfarm.com](http://www.flatpointfarm.com)) Photo: Albert Fischer



# 2017 Summer Benefit Sponsorship Levels

## **Cedar Tree Society – \$50,000**

- 16 complimentary tickets and reserved tables for 16
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice for 12 people.
- Private picnic at Hancock-Mitchell House at Quansoo for 8 people.
- Exclusive use of Cedar Tree Neck beach one evening in August for a picnic with your friends (limited to 16 people).
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

## **Beetlebung Tree Society – \$25,000**

- 12 complimentary tickets and reserved tables for 12.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice for 12 people.
- Exclusive use of Cedar Tree Neck beach one evening in August for a picnic with your friends (limited to 16 people).
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

## **Cherry Tree Society – \$17,500**

- 10 complimentary tickets and reserved table for 10.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice for 12 people.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

## **Beech Tree Society – \$10,000**

- 8 complimentary tickets and reserved table for 8.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice for 12 people.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

## **Pine Tree Society – \$7,500**

- 6 complimentary tickets.
- Private, guided walk of SMF property of your choice for 12 people.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

## **Sassafras Tree Society – \$5,000**

- 6 complimentary tickets.
- Invitation to President's Circle private reception.

## **Holly Tree Society – \$2,500**

- 4 complimentary tickets.

## **Oak Tree Society - \$1,250**

- 2 complimentary tickets.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation will gratefully acknowledge all of its sponsors onscreen during the event, in Foundation publications and materials and in print acknowledgements and advertisements.

*Please note that each complimentary ticket has a non-deductible value of \$75.00.*



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

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## Upcoming Events

### ANNUAL SUMMER BENEFIT

**Monday, July 17, 2017, 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm**  
Flat Point Farm, West Tisbury

Support Sheriff's Meadow Foundation by sponsoring or attending our Annual Summer Benefit. See this newsletter and visit [www.sheriffsmeadow.org](http://www.sheriffsmeadow.org) to sponsor or buy tickets.

### GUIDED PUBLIC WALKS

#### Toms Neck Farm

Sat, May 13, 2017, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Walk Toms Neck Farm on Chappy with Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and Land Bank staff. Check Sheriff's Meadow Foundation website for details about parking.

#### Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary

Thurs, July 20, 2017, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary on this guided walk of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's largest property.

#### Brightwood Park & Ramble Trail Preserve

Wed, August 9, 2017, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Explore these Vineyard Haven conservation areas and the ravine that they straddle. Meet at the parking lot on Causeway Road above Veterans Memorial Park and carpool from there.

#### Vineyard Golf Club

Sat, October 21, 2017, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Hike the all-organic Vineyard Golf Club and explore the unique frostbottom. Meet at the Vineyard Golf Club parking lot.

### HENRY BEETLE HOUGH SOCIETY WALKS

#### King Point and Armour Preserves

Wed, July 26, 2017, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Hike the King Point and Armour Preserves on the Edgartown Great Pond. See website at [www.sheriffsmeadow.org](http://www.sheriffsmeadow.org) for directions and parking information.

#### Stonewall Pond Preserve

Tues, August 15, 2017, 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Tour lovely Stonewall Pond Preserve and learn about the eastern box turtle. See website at [www.sheriffsmeadow.org](http://www.sheriffsmeadow.org) for directions and parking information.

### PUBLIC LECTURES

#### Virtual Tour of Caroline Tuthill Preserve

Thurs, July 27, 2017, 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
Edgartown Library

Enjoy a multimedia presentation by Adam Moore and Kristen Fauteux that will guide you through the marshes, forests, ponds and trails of Caroline Tuthill Preserve in Edgartown. See [www.sheriffsmeadow.org](http://www.sheriffsmeadow.org) for more information.