

A photograph of a snowy landscape. In the foreground, a sandy path is partially covered with snow and some dry, yellowish grass. Several trees are scattered across the middle ground, their branches heavily laden with a thick layer of white snow. The background shows a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and wintry.

SHERIFF'S
MEADOW
FOUNDATION

A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

Newsletter

Winter 2018

CAROLINE TUTHILL PRESERVE

Issue No. 58



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

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Founded in 1959 by Henry Beetle
Hough and Elizabeth Bowie Hough

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Adam R. Moore*

Ground Truth

Unblinking, unflinching, unbiased truth.

So often truth is sought. In the winter on this Island, some people read, devouring book after book from library shelves, seeking truth in the written word. Some walk, taking long rambles beneath the Gay Head Cliffs, seeking truth in a happenstance finding of a fossilized shark tooth. Some converse, seeking truth in after-dinner dialectics, with tongues loosened by wine on dark and windy winter nights.

In such ways we seek the truth, but to find the truth, though, simply unfurl a survey. I find the land survey so refreshing because it so frankly presents the truth. Here I own the land, there I don't. In metes and bounds, in distances and bearings, in lines and arcs, land surveys present the truth about the land. In reading a survey, I find myself awash in trigonometric nostalgia and my eyes opened to questions answered.

Surveys reveal errors. In some cases, I find that I have erred: I have mowed a part of someone else's property. I apologize, and mark the boundary so that the mistake does not recur. In other cases, the survey reveals that someone else has erred. When also marked upon the ground, surveys reliably and amicably settle matters between neighbors.

Though a stamped survey presents the truth, a hidden journey of seeking this truth precedes the stamping of the map. Truth-seeking for land surveys is the domain of a contingent of surveyors and paralegals and title researchers and lawyers and their assistants and apprentices who toil away throughout the year in a continuous quest to define and describe each acre of this Island.

The Registry of Deeds for the County of Dukes County houses some of this toil. One may read current deeds online at masslandrecords.com, but to read the critical old ones, one must go to the Registry. To visit the Registry, it is best to park outside of downtown Edgartown, and to walk into town along the brick sidewalk. One passes the Old Whaling Church and, if arriving on the hour, one hears the pealing of one set of church bells and then another. One walks up the Courthouse steps, passes through a metal detector, and walks down a hallway.

First one enters an anteroom, where two clerks work beside a vault that contains the oldest books of deeds. Then one enters a library.

The library walls are ringed with shelves. The shelves bear upon them rows and rows of broad books. Each book has a number on it that hangs from the cover. The books are bound with metal rings, and one may remove pages for photocopying. In the center of the room are tables, and at these tables the researchers labor, noting book and page and the references to landowners, and sometimes taking a break to look up probate records at the other end of the hall. In the older books, the deeds are written in cursive script, handsome, yet difficult for the unaccustomed eye to read.

Some surveying truth-seeking takes place in the woods and fields of the Island. It is better to undertake field reconnaissance in the winter, when leaves don't block the view, but surveyors have sanction to seek the truth in the woods with a machete, wherever the truth may lead them. In seeking land marks, they look for piles of stones, drill holes in rocks, iron rods, faint ridges on flat plains, wire fences, cedar posts, granite pillars, concrete bounds. They pencil field notes into bound books made of waxed, waterproof paper. They use staff compasses and surveying transits and global-positioning equipment. They wear Carhartt clothing and thorn-proof chaps and pluck the ticks off their skin after a long-day in the greenbrier. They reckon with the changing location of magnetic north, and the declination of the compass.

Through that work the surveyor arrives at the truth, or arrives as close to it as he can get. And some find that, through surveying, they find a greater truth. One might ponder the fact that, when he was not living deliberately at Walden Pond, or exploring Cape Cod or the Maine Woods or the Merrimack River, Henry David Thoreau had "travelled much in Concord" as a land surveyor.

Indeed, in Walden, Thoreau wrote, "Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth." Few American writers have come closer to the truth than Thoreau. Could that be because he knew the woods and farms of Concord as a surveyor?



Edo Potter on the History of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation

Edo Potter, a longtime Chappaquiddick resident and dear friend of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation died on January 24, 2018 at Pimplymouse Farm on Chappy. She served as a Director of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation from 1969 until 2001. Below is an excerpt from a piece she wrote in June of 2009 about the creation and early years of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation.



Edo Potter and Ruth Welch Photo: Sara Piazza

In 1959, when Sheriff's Meadow Foundation was chartered by the State, the IRS would not accept it as a charitable foundation because they didn't consider conservation a valid reason for a 501(c)(3). Fortunately times have changed. With the help of Allen Morgan, chairman of MassAudubon and Tom Mendenhall, "education" and "living museum" were added to the mission statement, and thereby satisfied the IRS. It was still a very simple mission statement that included not only education but "all lands that represent the beautiful, rural and natural character of the island."

Henry and Betty created the Foundation to hold the 10 acres of Sheriff's Meadow Pond. I am sure they never imagined what their organization would become.

The first Board of Directors included only five members, mostly family. Betty Hough (Henry's wife), Jack Hough (Henry's nephew), Jack's wife, Mally, and William Roberts, a close friend and an employee of the *Gazette* made up the Board, with Henry as Chairman.

They met in Henry's living room, once a year. Life was simpler then. After Betty's death in 1965, Henry expanded the Board to include Edie Blake and Anne Hale.

Thanks to my friendship with Anne, I was invited to be on the Board in 1969. How well I remember my first meeting in Mr. Hough's living room. I was intimidated by the reputation of Mr. Hough. His eloquence, skill and excellence as a newspaper editor was legendary, but perhaps the most important legacy was his conservation ethic.

Henry's management style was informal. He did all the work, raised all the money

needed and kept the records, although Edie Blake kept the minutes of the short yearly meetings, to satisfy the State. Henry hand-picked his successor as Chairman, Tom Mendenhall, mostly because Tom had the same informal approach to meetings that Henry liked.

Henry didn't want a membership organization. He believed that it was a waste of time, effort and money and required too many meetings. He ran the foundation out of his hip pocket or I should say, out of his living room.

Anne Hale succeeded Tom Mendenhall and was a wonderful, imaginative Chairman for many years. When Anne was chairman, we met on her front porch at Hines Point in Vineyard Haven.

At one momentous meeting that I remember vividly, Anne suggested we hire Tim Simmons as Executive Director. The work load for the chairman had become onerous. She suggested that we pay Tim \$10,000 a year, plus give him the use of the newly finished house at Cedar Tree Neck.

There was a chorus of "how will we get the money? How will we pay him?" Anne responded firmly, "We will find the money," and we did, miraculously. Henry's eloquent writing in the *Gazette* had laid the ground work for island-wide support of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, the first local conservation group on the Vineyard.

How did we manage to raise the needed funds? Henry did it with his persuasive writings in the *Gazette*. Inspired by the success of Sheriff's Meadow Pond, he was emboldened to preserve the north shore, that part of the island where he had spent so much time as a boy and adult. One winter he had an article in every *Gazette* from January through April describing the beauty and conservation value of Cedar Tree Neck.

I thought that was a terrible time to be asking for money, after Christmas and during Income Tax time, but Henry was confident that the summer people would be reminded of what it was like here in summer and support the Vineyard, even in the winter. Henry

raised \$75,000, very quickly, to purchase Cedar Tree Neck; a huge amount in those days.

As the foundation grew, Anne Hale, Edie Blake and I took on the job of fundraising. Backed up by Henry's eloquence in the *Gazette*, it seemed to work. The three of us would meet for lunch to dream up ideas. Eventually we called ourselves "We Three." Some of you may remember receiving letters, signed from "We Three." It worked!

Beside the letter we had other ideas: tailgate parties at Cedar Tree Neck, a birthday party on November 8th at Henry's beloved Fish Hook house in West Tisbury and best of all making a list of all the donors in the past year, not just a sheaf of papers, or a birthday note book but a scroll. We typed every donor's name on 8x11 sheets of paper, taped the pages together, (the end of one taped to the top of the next page), and then wound the full length up into a scroll with a ribbon on it. This was Henry's birthday present.

Edie Blake climbed the stairs and from the top step, let the scroll unroll down the stairs. It was a huge success and each year the scroll reached further down the stairs. We stopped when it was long enough to reach the bottom step!

I cherish those memories of the early years of the Foundation. Henry taught me a lot. He taught me about Frost Bottoms, about how the Glaciers formed the island, about the woodlands, the native shrubs, about the Great Ponds, their creation and their value and why the south shore is so different than the north shore.

I often think of Henry. He was the first to establish a conservation ethic on the Vineyard. It is hard to describe how much he loved the Vineyard and what he did to preserve it. How lucky the Vineyard was and how fortunate that we have the Foundation as his legacy. It would be a different place today without it. For fifty years Henry's Foundation has grown and evolved with the changing time, continuing to be a powerful force for conserving Henry's beloved Vineyard.

Strategic Plan Summary

January 1, 2018–December 31, 2022

Summary of plan adopted by the Board of Directors of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, December 8, 2017.

Mission

The mission of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is to conserve the natural, beautiful, rural landscape and character of Martha's Vineyard for present and future generations.

Vision

Our vision encompasses the next 25 years, while our strategic plan addresses the work we plan to accomplish over the next 5 years in support of that vision.

Our primary focus is on the land that we have been entrusted to care for forever, but our vision extends to the entire Martha's Vineyard community.

- We will maintain a diverse and talented board that represents the year-round and seasonal community.
- We see a future where conservation is in balance with the Island's priorities in land use, affordable housing, and cultural diversity.
- We envision a well-mapped and well-maintained trail network that connects conservation lands and that has strong, year-round appeal.
- We seek to become the leader in land conservation, habitat management, property monitoring, trail maintenance, mapping, and communication while meeting the highest national standards.
- We will reach out to and engage with volunteers, schools, and non-profit organizations in all Island communities and in the academic community of Woods Hole.
- We strive to become the key resource for people seeking to learn about conservation.
- We will expand our partnership with each of the conservation organizations operating on the Island.
- We envision an organization that is

economically sustainable and financially secure for years to come.

- We envision maintaining our lands at the very highest standards for quality, and will expand our funding sources for land management, staffing, and organizational capacity.
- We will embrace diverse communications venues and technologies to reinforce our conservation ethic and educate the public about conserved lands.

Values

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation is a public charity operating for the public benefit. It conducts all of its business ethically, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation will:

- Maintain our lands at the highest quality and in a sustainable manner, while providing excellent stewardship of the lands and funds entrusted to us.
- Instill a distinct sense of place in and warmly welcome all those who visit our lands, walk our trails, use our app, visit our website, visit our office and buildings, and attend our events.
- Consider the impact of our property management decisions on neighbors and communicate with neighboring landowners.
- Maintain collaborative relationships with partner organizations and local, tribal, state, and federal agencies.
- Defend our lands and land interests and negotiate in a fair, professional, and transparent manner.
- Enforce our own conflict-of-interest policy, and adhere to the Standards and Practices of the Land Trust Alliance.
- Manage our resources carefully and plan for organizational sustainability.

Distinguishing Features

- We operate exclusively on Martha's Vineyard and serve the entire Island community.
- We own more land than any other non-profit conservation organization on Martha's Vineyard and hold more conservation restrictions than any other non-profit or public conservation organization.
- We open our lands to the public for free, on a no-fee, no-membership basis.
- We care for a broad range of lands and offer a broad range of services.

Progress to Date since 2011

- Conserved 99 acres of land in critical locations Island-wide.
- Became an Accredited Land Trust.
- Launched thriving education and outreach program.
- Began taking a leadership role in trails: blazing new trails, posting attractive maps and signs, and creating the TRAILSMV mobile app.
- Introduced an agricultural leasing program to support local farms.
- Expanded stewardship capacity.
- Increased operating revenues.



Caroline Tuthill Preserve
Photo: Keith Chatinover



Strategic Goals, 2018-2022

Conservation

Conserve land and connect trails in areas of conservation priority across Martha's Vineyard before these opportunities are lost, employing all conservation techniques and cooperating with conservation partners and affordable housing organizations.

- Conserve 300 acres.
- Add \$1 million to Land and Trail Fund.
- Collaborate with affordable housing organizations.
- Form creative partnerships with conservation colleagues.

Stewardship

Set the standard for stewardship on the island: caring for lands, trails, and natural, cultural, and agricultural resources while employing distinctive landscape design and the best professional practices.

- Write and implement master plans for key sanctuaries.
- Set and implement new standards for signage, trailheads, kiosks and the like.
- Expand stewardship capacity further through staff, contractors, and volunteers.
- Continue work in agriculture, forestry, and natural resources.
- Create camping program.

Trails

Establish Sheriff's Meadow Foundation as the leader for trails on Martha's Vineyard, engage the public with the TRAILSMV app, and expand trail stewardship beyond the boundaries of our lands.

- Launch and administer TRAILSMV app.
- Map, measure and photograph all trails.
- Set standards for trail construction and maintenance.
- Implement five-year plan for trail creation and connections; add 10 miles of trails by 2022.
- Create island-wide trail master plan with goal of complete connections.
- Help others with trails, including the State Forest.



Quansoo Farm Photo: Stephen Chapman

Communication

Expand, diversify, and enrich our outreach and communications to connect people to the land, instill in them a sense of place, and engage them in our work, ensuring that all who set foot on Martha's Vineyard know of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation.

- Create communications plan.
- Create and use style guide.
- Create Communications Coordinator position.

Education

Teach people of all ages about nature on Martha's Vineyard, and the role of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, through a growing, robust, school education program, public walks, lectures and presentations, and through research collaborations.

- Expand school and pre-school educational programs.
- Enhance educational opportunities on specific properties.
- Use TRAILSMV app for educational purposes.
- Establish partnerships with academic institutions in Woods Hole.
- Expand public walk and lecture program.



Sustainability

Secure the future of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation by growing the endowment to proper levels and by creating a diverse funding base that enables us to forever care for lands, trails, and conservation restrictions, conserve land, and sustain a strong organization for the long-term.

- Grow endowment to a level where it can fund 1/3 of operating budget.
- Reduce endowment spending policy to 3%.
- Grow donor base and increase average gift level.
- Establish friends groups.
- Broaden revenue stream.
- Develop strong cultivation programs.

Governance

Maintain a strong and diverse board that well represents the communities that make up Martha's Vineyard, maintain accredited status and a professional administration, and write a facilities plan to support, enhance and elevate our work.

- Develop three-year board progression plan that maintains a strong, diverse, and balanced representation.
- Achieve re-accreditation with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.
- Write complete Facilities Plan and Inventory.
- Seek strategic partnerships with other land conservation organizations.

A Rare Orchid Has Its Moment in the Sun

by Alex Elvin

Off a long dirt road in Chilmark, through an open forest where just about the only green leaves in February belong to American and Japanese holly, Kristen Fauteux crouches in the underbrush and carefully studies the ground.

A few small leaves – green with purple spots or stripes and solid purple underneath – have staked out this spot in the woods, where winter light filters through a latticework of bare oak branches above. All is quiet except for the distant buzzing of a chainsaw and some small birds in the trees.



Tipularia discolor Photo: Kristen Fauteux

Crane-fly orchids (*Tipularia discolor*) grow throughout the eastern U.S., but are considered rare in eight states, including Massachusetts, where they are listed as endangered. At one time, these humble orchids on a Sheriff's Meadow Foundation property in Chilmark had been overlooked, their brownish flowers or dark leaves blending in with the leaf litter. Now they are among a small handful of documented *Tipularia* populations in New England – all of them located on the Vineyard.

Kristen Fauteux, who is Director of Stewardship for Sheriff's Meadow, discovered the new population in 2012 while surveying another rare orchid, southern twayblade (*Neottia bifolia*) just a few meters away with ecologist Julie Russell of the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank.

"I don't know if we would have noticed it if we weren't already crawling around on the ground," said Ms. Fauteux, who recalled spotting the delicate flower stalk that summer. Its location among the highbush blueberry, swamp azalea, plethora, scrub oak, and poison sumac is now marked with a yellow flag.

A crop of similar flags nearby marks a large number of *Neottia* plants that will flower in the spring. By then, *Tipularia* will have completed its winter photosynthesis and may be all but invisible until its flower stalk appears in July. Unlike most plants, its solitary leaf only grows in the fall and winter, when it has something of a monopoly on the sunlight, given the right conditions overhead.

Ms. Fauteux explains that milder winters and a more deciduous landscape may help explain why the species survives here but apparently not elsewhere in the state, where more snow cover and the shade from pine trees would limit its ability to photosynthesize in the winter.

Robert Wernerehl, State Botanist for the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, noted that it seems to prefer the richer, siltier soils up-Island. He confirmed that apart from one account in Barnstable about 30 years ago, it doesn't appear to exist elsewhere in the state, or recently anywhere north of New Jersey. And he isn't aware of any organized attempts to find the plant in Massachusetts, although he argues that it would be hard to miss. "A good botanist would immediately recognize the leaves," he said.

The purple spots and stripes – created by pigments known as anthocyanins – may act as a sort of sunscreen, protecting the plant's photosynthetic machinery from too much light in the winter. Some botanists also speculate that anthocyanins deter herbivores that prefer healthy-looking green leaves, or warn them against the presence of defensive compounds within the plant.

No one knows for sure when *Tipularia* first appeared on the Vineyard, but Wernerehl said it's likely a holdout from the Mid-Holocene Warm Period, about 6,000 years ago, when many southern plants spread northward. It often grows in clusters that



Tipularia discolor Photo: Kristen Fauteux

originate from a single plant. The species also includes edible corms that supposedly taste like potatoes.

Tipularia has a modest beauty all its own. The green and purple leaves appear in fall, overwinter, and die back in late spring. A flower stalk with 20 to 40 small, brownish-green blossoms with purple veins then appears around mid-July. Each labellum, or bottom petal, includes a long spur that extends backward, creating a weblike appearance on the stalk.

Along with milkweeds, orchids have evolved pollen masses known as pollinia, which in *Tipularia* adhere to the eyes of noctuid moths (left or right, depending on how the flower column is tilted), which pollinate the plant. These moths are common on the Vineyard, although Ms. Fauteux pointed out that they may have to fly some distance to reach another population.

First documented in 1828, *Tipularia* is among the earliest plant records in the state. Ms. Fauteux has observed it on several properties around the Island so far, but she said the NHESP, which monitors and protects rare species habitat, has recorded multiple other locations up-island, including on other Sheriff's Meadow properties.

The unassuming plant found itself in the spotlight when Vineyard mystery writer Cynthia Riggs featured it in her 2002 novel "The Crane-fly Orchid Murders," where its

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Dedham, MA Reception - April 5, 2018

discovery saves an Island property from development. The idea isn't so far-fetched, since even a new trail or garden within 46 meters of the plant would require approval from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

At least five other wild orchid species grow on the Vineyard and are considered rare or endangered. As with *Tipularia*, for example, *Neottia* is not documented anywhere else in the state. But Ms. Fauteux believes that could change if more people started looking for it. Just last year, she and Ms. Russell found a second population on a private property in West Tisbury, and she believes it could exist elsewhere in New England.

The best time to find *Tipularia* is in the fall and winter, when it's leaves are clearly visible at close range. Incidentally, Ms. Fauteux and Ms. Russell are working with dog trainer Karen Ogden to train a golden retriever puppy named Miles to find box turtles – a species of special concern in the state – and she said the same method might someday be used with *Tipularia*. But for now, it's up to humans to spot the telltale leaves or flowers in the woods.

“There is a possibility that if people knew what the leaf looked like, you could find it on any number of trails in Chilmark and West Tisbury,” Fauteux said, noting the extra sunlight that shines down along trails and roads, especially in the winter. “I’m always looking for it this time of year, on any property.”

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation to Host Reception and Presentation

Please join Sheriff's Meadow Foundation on April 5, 2018 for a reception at The MIT Endicott House in Dedham, MA. We will be gathering at 6:00 pm for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Executive Director Adam R. Moore and members of the Board of Directors welcome the opportunity to personally meet our supporters and to share with you the latest news about the organization.

There will be a brief presentation by Mr. Moore at 7:00pm.

If you would like to attend, please RSVP by March 26, 2018 to Susan Hughes at hughes@sheriffsmeadow.org or call 508.693.5207.

TRAILSMV Launch June 2, 2018

SAVE THE DATE!



The TRAILSMV app will launch on National Trails Day, June 2, 2018, with the app available to download in the app store. Sheriff's Meadow Foundation will celebrate the launching of the app with the opening of a photography show entitled “Exploring the Vineyard.” “Exploring the Vineyard” is a show that features the best of the work of each of the 22 volunteers who photographed all of the Island's open-to-the-public conservation lands for the TRAILSMV app. The show will take place at the Art Barn at Featherstone Center for the

Arts in Oak Bluffs. The show will open on June 2, and will remain open for the next two weeks.

Please check our website at www.sheriffsmeadow.org for specific information about “Exploring the Vineyard” and about TRAILSMV. The photo show will include instructions for downloading and using the TRAILSMV app. In addition, we will demonstrate how to download and use the app at each of the guided hikes and walks that will take place this year.

We give a special thanks to all of the individuals and organizations who have made possible the TRAILSMV app and those who have donated to the “Exploring the Vineyard” photo show.

Spring is coming!

Enjoy the milder weather and take a walk on one of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's properties. Look for red maples blooming in wet areas of Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary and Caroline Tuthill Preserve. Look for dwarf willow in the open grassy areas of Quansoo Farm and Nat's Farm.



Red Maple Photo: Kristen Fauteux



Dwarf Willow Photo: Kristen Fauteux



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Upcoming Events

GUIDED PUBLIC WALKS

North Neck, Chappaquiddick

Saturday, March 17, 2018
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Explore beautiful North Neck on Chappaquiddick, including a conservation restriction donated by the Self family and land protected by the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission. Please visit www.sheriffsmeadow.org for directions and parking information.

Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary, Edgartown

Saturday, May 19, 2018
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Experience Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's first property, which offers a loop walk and views of John Butler's Mudhole, Eel Pond and Nantucket Sound. Meet at the Kiosk on Plantingfield Way. Please carpool or walk, as parking is limited.

Caroline Tuthill Preserve, Edgartown

Thursday, July 26, 2018
9:00 am - 11:00 am

Join us for a guided walk and explore the woods, salt marshes, and shoreline at one of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's largest sanctuaries. Plan to meet at the kiosk which is located 0.4 miles west of the Triangle in Edgartown.

Middle Road Sanctuary, Chilmark

Tuesday, August 14, 2018
9:00 am - 11:00 am

Hike the rugged moraine at Middle Road Sanctuary. Explore this property's oak forest, enjoy views of glacial erratics, and enjoy a long-distance view of Tisbury Great Pond. Meet at the trailhead on Middle Road, and please carpool as parking is limited.

HENRY BEETLE HOUGH SOCIETY WALKS

The Henry Beetle Hough Society walks are offered for donors who contribute \$500 or more in a given fiscal year.

West Chop Woods and Meadow

Tuesday, July 24, 2018
9:00 am–11:00 am

Enjoy a guided hike of the ancient pitch pines of West Chop Woods and a walk to the Vineyard Haven Harbor shoreline of West Chop Meadow. Meet at the Franklin Street trailhead. Please carpool, bicycle or walk to the trailhead, if possible, as parking is limited.

Sunset Walk, Cedar Tree Neck

Thursday, August 9, 2018
6:30 pm

Join us for an evening guided walk of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation's largest property. We will watch the sunset from the beach, overlooking the Elizabeth Islands and the Vineyard Sound.

PUBLIC LECTURES

A Virtual Tour of Quansoo Farm

Wednesday, September 5, 2018
5:00 pm–6:30 pm, Chilmark Library

Enjoy a multimedia presentation by Adam Moore and Kristen Fauteux that will guide you through the history and landscape at Quansoo Farm. See www.sheriffsmeadow.org for more information.