



SHERIFF'S  
MEADOW  
FOUNDATION

A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

# Newsletter

Fall 2017

QUANSOO FARM

Issue No. 57



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

#### Board of Directors

Brien O'Brien, *President*  
Peter Getsinger, *Vice-President*  
Walter Looney, Jr., *Treasurer*  
Susannah Bristol, *Assistant Treasurer*  
Molly Glasgow, *Clerk*

Christopher Alley  
Michael Berwind  
Jennifer Blum  
Peter Brooks  
Kim Burns  
Susan Crampton  
Mary Lou DeLong  
Keith Dodge  
Robert Egerton  
Patricia Favreau  
Lisa Foster  
David Grain  
Kathryn Ham  
Ellen Harley  
Carol Hillenbrand  
Bill Howell  
William Maloney  
Hillary Noyes-Keene  
William Plapinger  
Nancy Randall  
Alan Rappaport  
Phil Regan  
Thomas Robinson  
Peter Rodegast  
John Schaefer  
Samme Thompson

#### Honorary Directors

April Hamel  
Edo Potter  
Rez Williams

#### Staff

Adam R. Moore  
*Executive Director*  
William Bridwell  
*Property Manager*  
Nevenka K. Daniels  
*Office Manager*  
Kristen Fauteux  
*Director of Stewardship*  
Susan Hughes  
*Development Associate*  
Marc Macfarlane  
*Property Manager*

Founded in 1959 by Henry Beetle  
Hough and Elizabeth Bowie Hough

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, *Adam R. Moore*

## Fireside Bonds

Fire forges bonds.

Its embers and flames, its heat and its glow, forge common bonds among any who gather around.

Fire forges bonds of family. On this blustery November Sunday, the words "I'm cold" were all that I needed to hear.

The bunches of switchgrass beside the dirt road bent over double in the breeze. Waves of wind rippled the sea of little bluestem that blankets the Quansoo plain. I lopped branches off a dead pitch pine for kindling, and split a few black oak logs into quarters, and stacked the wood beside the wood stove.

With a lit match and a couple of paper bags for tinder, we soon had a fire to last the night. In my view, a snug home on a stormy day makes for a perfect Island afternoon. A pot roast simmered. Popovers baked. The fire burned. Heat radiated from the stove, as did a general feeling of good cheer, enough even to extract my teenage daughter from her room.

The fire warmed us, and drew the children to the living room, and kept the children gathered around the stove after dinner. Orange tongues of flame – shaped much like the leaves of the black oaks that burned within – licked the panes of the stove windows. Darkness fell. The lights flickered, the power went out, yet still, the fire burned, and the embers cast a warm glow late into the night.

Fire forges bonds of friendship. About two weeks earlier I'd lit another fire, this one out upon the Quansoo beach. As part of a longstanding exchange program between the West Tisbury School and the Bridge-water School in Warrington, England, my family was hosting exchange students for the week. Our students were identical twin girls. For our Saturday evening activity, I figured that a fire on the beach was the best Island pastime that I could introduce them to.

Friends gathered, and before long I had loaded five kids and a dog into my truck and set out for the beach. We walked the sandy path over the dune, turned left, and found a good spot in the sand for the fire. We built the fire teepee style, and tended

it as it burned the black oak logs down to glowing coals. I baited a hook with squid, and cast it into the surf, hoping for a striped bass.

More English and American children gathered, sitting and talking around the fire, set right beside the broad Atlantic that separates one island from the other. An Orionid meteor streaked across the sky. Chili simmered in the cast iron Dutch oven. Leftover pizza, wrapped in tin foil, sizzled on the coals. I ladled the chili to the hungry children, who flattered me by asking for seconds. The kids played glow-in-the-dark capture the flag. They romped around the beach with the dog. They roasted marshmallows, and scarfed down s'mores, and laughed and sang around the fire.

Fire forges bonds of community. One evening in early November, the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) hosted an annual environmental conference for the ten tribes of New England. I was honored to attend as a guest. The dinner that evening was the very first to be held in the Tribe's Community Center. Inside the building a banquet awaited: cranberries, sliced venison on crostini, punch made of mint and maple syrup and blueberries, warm Indian pudding. Before the evening program, we were asked to gather outside for grace before dinner.

It was the loveliest November night. Some 75 people stood beside the fire. To one side burned the logs and the coals that had been raked away from atop a pile of stones. Having been heated by the fire for hours, these stones now formed a base for cooking. Piled atop the hot stones was a clambake, a great heap of the Island's bounty: lobsters, quahaugs, mussels, corn, and potatoes. Seaweed was placed atop this feast, and tarps covered it all. Beneath the tarp, the clambake steamed.

Around the fire and the clambake all gathered. All joined hands, including the evening speaker, Sally Jewell, former Secretary of the Interior. Medicine Man Jason Baird led all in a prayer of thanksgiving.

The clambake steamed. The fire burned. And the steam, and the smoke, and the November full moon, rose above the twisted branches of ancient Aquinnah oaks.



# Report of the Treasurer

Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation’s ambitious agenda for fiscal year 2017 included the completion and unveiling of the Hancock-Mitchell House, the development of our new website and a new trail app, the expansion of our educational programs, and the extension of our trail system, as well as our ongoing property acquisition and stewardship activities. This agenda posed greater than ever financial challenges for us, but with the strong support of our many loyal donors we finished the year successfully and in a healthy financial position. Our future plans are no less ambitious, so we look to you once again for your help in achieving our important Vineyard mission.

The following discussion highlights certain financial information about our fiscal year ended June 30, 2017. Our complete audited financial statements are available on request.

## Assets and Liabilities

Our total assets at June 30, 2017 were \$65.93 million, compared with \$64.59 million at the end of the 2016 fiscal year, an increase of \$1.34 million.

The largest components of our assets are the land and land improvements we hold. These totalled \$55.95 million at the end of fiscal 2017, up from \$55.90 million at the end of fiscal 2016, reflecting the purchase of 2.5 acres on Moshup Trail in Aquinnah. Our land holdings are reflected on our financial statements at their fair value at their acquisition date. Over time the value of our land has appreciated significantly, so that the current value of the land significantly exceeds its balance sheet valuation.

Our investments are the second largest component of our assets. Cash and cash equivalents and investments as of the end of fiscal 2017 were \$7.50 million, compared with \$6.67 million at fiscal year-end 2016. The increase of \$0.83 million reflected both strong securities markets and increased support from our donors during the 2017 period. Our current endowment distribution policy provides for the withdrawal of about 4.5% of our average available investment balances each year to support our program activities. Our finance committee reviews our distribution policy at least annually in

the light of earnings expectations and cash needs.

Our total liabilities at fiscal year-end were \$0.41 million. We have no outstanding indebtedness.

## Revenue and Expenses

Our total support and revenue in fiscal 2017 was \$2.45 million, compared with \$2.43 million during fiscal 2016. Although we received no land contributions during fiscal 2017, compared with \$1.16 million in fiscal 2016, gains in our endowment made up for nearly all of that difference.

We received cash donations of \$1.71 million in fiscal 2017 and \$1.64 million in fiscal 2016 (a portion of which were restricted as to use). Unrestricted cash contributions are critical for meeting our land acquisition, stewardship and on-going objectives. We depend heavily on the President’s Circle, our Annual Fund appeal and the Summer Benefit to provide our funding, and we continue to look for ways to broaden our support. Our endowment provides funding to supplement annual giving to some extent, but until we can grow our endowment significantly we will continue to rely mainly on our annual donors.

Our expenses in both fiscal 2017 and fiscal 2016 were \$1.19 million, reflecting once again our strict attention to cost management. The components of our expenses are outlined in the chart below.

Although we carefully control our stewardship expenses, and in fact lowered them in fiscal 2017, we expect those expenses will increase in the future as we maintain and enhance more land, improve accessibility to properties, build trails, and strive to provide exceptional management for our properties.

We are enormously grateful to the more than 2,000 donors and volunteers who support Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Walt Looney

Treasurer



## Functional Expenses

	2017	2016
Land acquisition	\$ 75,562	\$ 44,869
Land stewardship	482,274	503,808
Education and Advocacy	26,616	31,042
Administration and general	429,770	429,336
Fundraising	179,940	185,879

## Assets

	2017	2016
Current Assets	\$ 2,695,760	\$ 2,390,676
Land and Buildings, at cost	\$57,651,959	57,641,514
Other Assets	5,578,061	4,555,260
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>65,925,780</b>	<b>64,587,450</b>

# Report of the Executive Director

*On the year concluded June 30, 2017*

The fiscal year concluded on June 30, 2017, proved a very strong one for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation in every respect. The Foundation purchased additional conservation land, hired a new staff member, launched new efforts related to trails, and improved its finances.

Joining the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation Board of Directors at the June 17, 2016 Annual Meeting were Patricia Favreau of West Tisbury, Hillary Noyes-Keene of Chilmark, and John Schaefer of Edgartown. Chris Alley and Brien O'Brien were re-elected as President and Vice-President, respectively, Walt Looney and Susannah Bristol were re-elected as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, respectively, and Molly Glasgow was re-elected as Clerk.

On the evening of July 18, 2016, more than 400 supporters of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation gathered upon the Oyster Pond farm of Dick and Nancy Friedman for the Foundation's Annual Summer Benefit. This event was the first in a series of various events for the public and for Sheriff's Meadow Foundation donors, including a first-ever "virtual tour" of Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary held at the Grange Hall in West Tisbury and guided walks of Middle Road Sanctuary, Brookside Ridge Preserve, Oyster-Watcha Midlands Preserve, and Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary.

After a thorough process that involved the issuance of a request for proposals and the review of proposals submitted by several firms, the Board of Directors moved the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation endowment from Morgan Stanley to Vanguard. This process was completed in August of 2016.



Education Program, Photo:Samantha Look

At the end of the summer of 2016, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation posted the new position of Development Associate and began an extensive search process. The Foundation was very fortunate to conclude this process by hiring Susan Hughes, a longtime resident of East Chop. Susan joined the staff on November 7, 2016. She previously worked for the Charles River School and came to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation with a strong background in private philanthropy and fundraising.

In the fall, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission an application to list the Hancock-Mitchell House at Quansoo Farm on the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination paper was written by architectural historian Myron Stachiw, who also has written a comprehensive historic structures report about the house.

In December, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation amended a lease of five acres of the Lieberman property in West Tisbury, leasing this land for five years to Morning Glory Farm for use as a hayfield. The Lieberman property is situated south of the Edgartown-West Tisbury Road, near Blackthorn Road and Manter's Path. This amendment followed a request for proposal process, an extensive negotiation with the neighbors of the land, and a successful resolution of several questions resolving access to the property. In February of 2017, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation leased an abutting 1.5 acre property to Richard Anderson. The lease to Mr. Anderson provided Sheriff's Meadow Foundation with access to the Lieberman field for farm equipment and provided Mr. Anderson with land for pasture.

The year 2016 concluded with a delightful new event at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary. During the popular weekend of the Edgartown Board of Trade's "Christmas in

Edgartown" celebration, Sheriff's Meadow Foundation held an event at the Sanctuary featuring nature crafts for children, hot cider and mulled wine, and guided birding tours of the Sanctuary led by birder and naturalist Robert Culbert. The event was the result of the donations and encouragement of Lizzie Glidden Boyle and the efforts of Board member Ellen Harley and the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation staff. The event will be continued in 2017 and in the future, and was inspired by Board member Jennifer Blum, who, when her children were



Hancock-Mitchell House, Photo:Adam Moore

young, used to decorate the Sanctuary for the season with pine cone bird feeders.

Through the fall and into the spring the Foundation held nature education programs at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary and Caroline Tuthill Preserve. Education Coordinators Samantha Look and Kendra Buresch delivered classroom and field programs for preschool and grade school children. Funding from the Riverbend Fund made possible the preschool programs, with funding from both the Riverbend Fund and the Edey Foundation supporting the Kindergarten through fifth grade programs.

Walks continued through the winter and the spring. Director of Stewardship Kristen Fautoux led guided walks at the Wallen, Preston & Shands Preserve at the Gay Head Cliffs and Moshup Beach, at the Phillips Preserve along Lake Tashmoo in Tisbury, and at Toms Neck Farm on Chappaquiddick. The



Gay Head walk and the Toms Neck Farm walks were co-led by Julie Russell, ecologist for the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank Commission.

“Help Us Save this Land” read the headline in our 2017 Winter Newsletter, and Anne Lewis and several other generous donors did just that. With a very generous donation from Mrs. Lewis and a host of other gifts, Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation was able to purchase land on Moshup Trail for \$50,000 from the Vineyard Conservation Society. The Vineyard Conservation Society was selling this property as the land was given to the Society as “asset land,” land that could be sold. The proceeds from the sale are being used by the Society to defray the costs of its lawsuit to protect land on Moshup Trail from development. The land purchase was completed on June 5, 2017. The Foundation is now working on plans for a trailhead and trail to the beach.

The year 2017 marked the 50th Anniversary of Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary, as the first significant gifts of land at this Sanctuary were given in 1967 by the Daggett family, the Norton family, the Hough family, and by Georgina Stevenson. The Foundation celebrated the anniversary with three more showings of its virtual tour at libraries in West Tisbury, Vineyard Haven, and Oak Bluffs, with a lunch for neighbors hosted by Brien O’Brien and Mary Hasten, and by naming the red trail the Maria Daggett Trail and the brown trail the Obed Daggett Trail.

In a great unveiling, in May a team from the Cooper Group and Early New England Restorations removed the protective semi-cylindrical tent from above the Hancock-Mitchell House. The tent itself was delivered to John Keene Excavation,



Quansoo Farm, Photo: Steve Chapman



Moshup Trail, Photo: Adam Moore

Inc., in exchange for construction work that had been performed on the house and the grounds at no cost. The house has since weathered in beautifully.

One of the most exciting and promising activities of 2017 was the creation of a new trail app. Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation worked with Trailhead Labs of San Francisco both to create a new website for the organization and to create a best-in-class mobile app for trails. The website was launched in the spring of 2017, and it features striking photographs of many of the Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation properties. The app is now under development, with a public launch scheduled for June 2, 2018. The app is entitled “TRAILS MV” and it will feature all of the trails on the Island that are open to the public, and not just the ones maintained by Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation.

The fiscal year concluded with the annual meeting of the Board of Directors on June 16, 2017. At this meeting, the Board welcomed new Directors Peter Brooks, Lisa Foster, William Plapinger, and Peter Rodegast, elected Brien O’Brien as President and Peter Getsinger as Vice-President, re-elected Walt Looney as Treasurer, Susannah Bristol as Assistant Treasurer, and Molly Glasgow as Clerk, and bade farewell to Directors Terry Guylay, Rob McCarron, Alley Moore, and Sarah Thulin.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Adam R. Moore  
Executive Director

## TRAILS Update



The TRAILS MV trail app has made significant progress under the stewardship of Project Manager Kate Warner and the entire Trail App Team.

Led by volunteer amateur photographer Cassie Murray, some 24 photographers have volunteered their time and expertise to take photographs to illustrate the app. With each photographer assigned several specific properties to photograph, the entire team has now documented all of the open-to-the-public conservation lands and trails on the island of Martha’s Vineyard. These properties number over 100 in total.

The TRAILS MV app will be made available to the public, free of charge, on June 2, 2018, which is National Trails Day. In celebration of this occasion and in recognition of the work of these volunteer photographers, we are very pleased to announce that the photographs will be exhibited at a special display in the new art barn at Featherstone Center for the Arts in Oak Bluffs. The show will begin on June 2 and will last for two weeks. The work of each photographer will be represented, and photographs will be available for sale.

Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation also extends a very special thank-you to Chris Seidel and the Martha’s Vineyard Commission. The Geographic Information Systems Coordinator for the Commission, Ms. Seidel has served as the chief cartographer for the trail app. She has created and uploaded digital geographic files for each segment of each open-to-the-public trail on Martha’s Vineyard. The Foundation offers its sincere gratitude to Ms. Seidel and to Executive Director Adam Turner and the Martha’s Vineyard Commission for its strong support of TRAILS MV.



# Make a Gift today and for the Future:

*Consider including Sheriff's Meadow Foundation in your estate planning.*



Caroline Tuthill Preserve, Photo: Steve Chapman

To help us accomplish our mission to conserve the natural, beautiful, rural landscape and character of Martha's Vineyard and to leave a legacy of conservation for future generations, please consider making a planned gift to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. There are many types of planned giving and we would be pleased to discuss the options with you.

For more information contact:

Adam Moore  
Executive Director  
PO Box 1088  
Vineyard Haven MA 02568  
508-693-5207  
moore@sheriffsmeadow.org

## Upcoming Events

### GUIDED PUBLIC WALKS

#### **Cove Meadow, Chappaquiddick**

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

Explore the beautiful Cove Meadow lands 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](http://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

#### **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 2, 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

#### **Virtual Tour of Caroline Tuthill Preserve**

Tuesday, February 13, 2018  
3:00 pm–5:00 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.



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Leominster MA  
Permit No. 17

PO Box 1088  
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568  
[www.sheriffsmeadow.org](http://www.sheriffsmeadow.org)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Printed locally on recycled paper  
using 100% vegetable-based inks



Quansoo Farm, Photo: Alison Shaw



Nat's Farm, Photo: Isabel Moore

Cover photo: Steve Chapman