

SHERIFF'S
MEADOW
FOUNDATION



A MARTHA'S VINEYARD LAND TRUST

Newsletter

Summer 2018

Issue No. 60

LAMBERT'S COVE

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Founded in 1959 by Henry Beetle
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Portrait of a September Night



Storm-topped pitch pine logs burned on the beach. Their aromatic smoke curled skyward, blowing over the dunes, dissipating into the sky. Past the drifting smoke, the distant clouds - perhaps floating high above Chappaquiddick, or over the Muskeget Channel, or even further out in the Atlantic - were painted by the setting sun into great swirls of vermillion. To the south-south-east, the planet Mars shone forth, the first of all the heavenly objects to shine on this September night.

On this night, friends and family had gathered on the beach for an end of summer cookout. Slowly the daylight faded, and a lovely September day dissolved into a night that was lovelier still. A cast-iron Dutch oven emblazoned with the scouting fleur-de-lis kept warm a pot of chili. Bowls filled with cole slaw and baking pans filled with corn bread were set atop a folding table. Two hurricane lamps flickered with the warm glow of burning lamp oil. Unfazed by the dwindling light, children dashed in and out of the surf until parents called them to the shore. The children wrestled on the sand, and played Spikeball, and then played a game of glow-in-the-dark capture-the-flag on the beach.

Darkness fell, and on this moonless night the broad band of the Milky Way came clearly into view. In one vast, celestial arc, our galaxy stretched from the waters of the Atlantic to the south, to high above the barrier beach, to the northern horizon,

where the Milky Way blended into the glow from the Martha's Vineyard airport. One friend noted just how long it had taken for the light of the Milky Way to reach us. To the east, a red light shone from atop the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution buoy offshore, car headlights shone from a vehicle on the oversand trail at Norton Point Beach, and lights of houses glowed through windows at the southernmost tip of Martha's Vineyard, Squibnocket Point.

"Where is the North Star?" asked one youngster. I pointed out the Big Dipper, and showed how the two stars forming the side of the pot that is opposite the Dipper's handle point to Polaris, the North Star. After bidding farewell at the gate to some of our guests, I walked back down the Crab Creek Road toward the beach, alone, and in the darkness, and without a flashlight.

How blissful is a walk in the darkness on such a night. Mars led the way. Our nearby planet, perhaps the site of humanity's next space exploration, shone brightly to the south, and held steady just above the sandy dirt road. Thickets of viburnum and hazelnut and stunted scrub oaks formed tight hedges on the sides of the road. As I walked, I heard the symphony of a thousand crickets chirping a chorus, and the drone of a legion of katydids, and the percussion of an unceasing rhythm of breaking waves and ripping surf. As I crossed the sandy parking lot, I saw the beam of the Gay Head Light sweep across the sky.

continued on page 3



Portrait of a September Night
continued from page 2

Crab creek bubbled with life. I could smell the creek before I reached it, as the entire area smelled distinctively of fish. Mars was reflected on the water, and everywhere along the length of the creek jumping herring broke the placid surface. Minnows dashed to and fro, and blue crabs paddled just below. I crossed the wooden Crab Creek Bridge, strode across the dunes, and rejoined friends and family at our fire, now just a pile of glowing red embers.

In the life of many families, September brings change. In my family, one child will soon head across the Atlantic to university in Falmouth, England, another will enter her senior year in college, another will begin high school, and our fourth will begin seventh grade. I find that at such times, embracing the darkness of night can be comforting. The smell of the fish calls forth memories of fishing outings past. The sound of the sea can be a bit of a lullaby. The lights of the constellations become friendly, and familiar, and serve as guideposts to the uncertain journey ahead.

With a bucket of seawater we doused the fire, as well as another fire further down the beach. We gathered our belongings, and made our way over the sandy path across the dune. The hurricane lanterns swayed as we walked. We walked over the rickety footbridge, and back to our cars at the parking lot. And with Mars at our backs, and the Big Dipper guiding us, we walked off into the September darkness ahead.



Photo: Virginia Morris

Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting held on June 15, 2018

The Board of Directors of Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation held its Annual Meeting on Friday, June 15, 2018 at the Wakeman Conservation Center in Vineyard Haven. At the meeting, the Board elected Directors, Officers, and members of the Executive Committee and Nominating Committee, and thanked those Directors who completed their service on the Board.

The Board elected three new Directors. Elected to a first, three-year term on the Board were Elizabeth Packer, Sara Tucker, and Jim Vercruysse. Biographies and photographs of each new Director are included in this newsletter. The Board re-elected Mary Lou DeLong and Alan Rappaport to second, three-year terms as Directors, re-elected Michael Berwind, Susan Crampton, Peter Getsinger, and Bill Howell to third, three-year terms as Directors, and re-elected Chris Alley, Susannah Bristol, and Kathy Ham to fourth, one-year terms as Directors.

The Board re-elected Brien O’Brien to a one-year term as President and re-elected Peter Getsinger to a one-year term as Vice-President. Walt Looney and Susannah Bristol were re-elected to one-year terms as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, respectively, Bill Howell was elected to a one-year term as Assistant Treasurer, and Hillary Noyes-Keene was elected to a one-year term as Clerk. Executive Director Adam Moore was re-elected to a one-year term as a voting, appointed Director.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Board bade a fond farewell to departing Directors Jennifer Blum, David Grain, and Samme Thompson.

“Take a Break” Campaign

Have you ever wanted to take a hike but found yourself concerned about being unable to complete the distance without stopping to rest? Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation wants people of all abilities to have access to the preserved paths and trails on the Island.

This past spring Susan Silk, a West Tisbury resident, approached Executive Director Adam Moore, with the idea of providing places to rest along the trails. With enthusiasm, Ms. Silk described her idea for a “Take a Break” Campaign. She asked whether it would be possible to place wooden benches at one-mile intervals on the Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation’s trails so that walkers can “take a break” and rest.

Ms. Silk explained that, years ago she created a Sunday morning women’s walking group. The group had the goal of walking every one of the paths described in the book *Walking Trails of Martha’s Vineyard* by William Flenders, published by the Vineyard Conservation Society. The group walked many of these trails during weekly, two-hour treks and kept at it spring, summer, and autumn for several years. Over time, however, many in the group became physically unable to complete the walks. They found that they needed places to sit down and rest – and found such places lacking.

Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation embraced the idea and the “Take a Break” Campaign was launched. The goal is to build and place 20 benches along 20 miles of trails on the Sheriff’s Meadow Foundation properties by the spring of 2019.

Following a design created by Island craftsman Doug Ruskin, the benches will be built by the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School woodworking students, local woodworkers, and youth organizations. The long-term goal is to provide benches at appropriate intervals along all of the public trails and bike paths on Martha’s Vineyard.



Photo: Adam Moore

Foundation Elects New Directors



ELIZABETH PACKER was born and raised on Martha's Vineyard. She was educated at Wheaton College, where she earned a B.A. in studio art. Liz also spent a semester at sea with the Sea Education Association. She has explored the Pacific Northwest, the Rocky Mountains, and has sailed extensively throughout New England and through the Caribbean. Liz established Springmoon Farm, a multi-generational, small family farm along Northern Pines Road in Tisbury, and she has protected her farm with an Agricultural Preservation Restriction held by the Massachusetts Farm Bureau. Liz is the proprietor of Smith Bodfish Swift, the grain store in Vineyard Haven – a place where farming, creativity, love of gardening and keen consideration for the environment connect.

Liz is an avid horsewoman, hiker, curious naturalist, and a seeker of quahogs in the shoals of Lake Tashmoo. She marks the new year with the arrival of osprey and spring lambs, inspiring poetry, testing convictions, and allowing for falling in love with her Island home once again. Liz shares her passion for the outdoors with her children Oscar and Lucy, who are both well-established in their own pursuits of conservation biology and forestry.



SARA TUCKER grew up coming to the Vineyard every summer with her parents and grandparents and now she and her husband and children have their own place in Vineyard Haven.

Sara's career has been focused on environmental conservation, including public lands management and water policy. She is currently a partner at Natural Resource Results, a consulting firm in Washington D.C. representing several non-profit conservation organizations. Prior to joining the firm, Sara served as a Senior Professional Staff Member on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. She worked for three consecutive Chairs – including Senator Bingaman, Senator Wyden and Senator Landrieu. Sara staffed the National Parks Subcommittee under the leadership of Senator Mark Udall from Colorado. Sara served as the Director of Government Affairs at Trout Unlimited before her time in the Senate.

She received her master's in environmental policy from the University of Michigan and a bachelor of science degree from Cornell University. She is originally from Philadelphia and now lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband and children.



JIM VERCRUYSE and his family are year-round residents of Aquinnah and have been for the past 30 years. They all love spending time outdoors gardening, biking, running, and walking on the beautiful beaches (all while dodging ticks).

Jim is originally from the South Side of Chicago. As a young man, he apprenticed in his family's third-generation cabinet shop learning furniture repair, restoration, and upholstery. He fell in love with woodworking and the comradery of shop life and has been working as a cabinetmaker ever since. He is currently the shop foreman at South Mountain Co., an employee-owned Design/Build/Energy Company in West Tisbury.

Giving back to the Vineyard Community as a volunteer is an important part of Jim's life. He has served on the Aquinnah Zoning Board of appeals for 25 years (currently Chairman) and the Aquinnah Volunteer Fire Dept. for 17 years. He was the elected member from Aquinnah to the Martha's Vineyard Commission from 1999 to 2006. Now back with Commission as an elected member since 2015, he is the current Chairman. Jim is happy to be able to continue working in his local community as a member of the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation Board.



Successful Summer Benefit at Wintucket Cove

Photo:Sara Piazza



On the evening of July 16, 2018, about 450 supporters of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation gathered on the land of Mike and Lisa MacKenty along Wintucket Cove in Edgartown for the annual Summer Benefit. Some strolled along the shore of Wintucket Cove and walked toward the old Camp Wintucket, a summer camp that a number of guests had attended as youngsters.

Following a Mediterranean-themed dinner prepared by Buckley's Catering, Executive Director Adam Moore officially welcomed everyone. Mr. Moore thanked Sheriff's Meadow's supporters and thanked the hosts, Mike and Lisa MacKenty. Mr. MacKenty then addressed the gathering, speaking about his family's history on and love for the land. The text to Mr. MacKenty's remarks are included in this newsletter. Following Mr. MacKenty, Summer Benefit Chair Ellen Harley spoke. Ms. Harley thanked Sharon Johnson for her creative design and thanked Lil Province for the beautiful flower arrangements. Ms. Harley acknowledged the Summer Benefit Committee and gave special recognition to Office Manager, Nevenka K. Daniels and Summer Intern, Anna Kohlasch, for their work in coordinating the event.

Mr. Moore then spoke further, noting the conservation restriction that John MacKenty had given to Sheriff's Meadow Foundation on land further down the Cove. Mr. Moore also drew attention to TrailsMV and

encouraged supporters to become involved in the Foundation's five-year plan for Island trails.

President Brien O'Brien next addressed the gathering. Mr. O'Brien described the work of the Foundation in some detail, noting the successful completion of the Taylor Gate trailhead at Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary, a gift made possible by the Adams Foundation through a bequest from Nancy Ann Taylor, and noting the significant efforts underway to restore the meadow at Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary. Mr. O'Brien also personally recognized and introduced each of the new members of the Board of Directors and recognized and thanked each of the outgoing members of the Board.

Mr. O'Brien then invited Samme Thompson to the podium. Mr. Thompson delivered a warm tribute to Executive Director Adam Moore, recognizing Mr. Moore for completing 10 years of service as the Executive Director of Sheriff's Meadow Foundation. Mr. Thompson presented Mr. Moore with a gift from the Board of Directors, an Allen Whiting painting of Lobsterville and Dogfish Bar.

Sheriff's Meadow Foundation thanks hosts Lisa and Mike MacKenty and our sponsors, supporters, guests, donors, interns, volunteers, committee members, vendors and service providers for making the 2018 Summer Benefit the most successful Sheriff's Meadow Foundation event ever.

Remarks by Mike MacKenty



Lisa and Mike MacKenty Photo:Sara Piazza

Thank you all for coming to this great event. It's a real privilege for our family to be able to host everyone on our farm. Sheriff's Meadow has done such a great job around this island preserving the character and openness that once defined Martha's Vineyard but is now threatened more each day.

I'd like to recognize the two individuals who are responsible for you being able to be here tonight and through them, tell you a little about our place. The first person is my Grandfather, John G. MacKenty, who first came to the Vineyard in the 1930's and fell in love with its rural character. An early conservationist, he planted most of the pines on this property and was instrumental in many state forest projects. In the mid 30s, he rented the Whiting cabins up on Tisbury Great Pond and then ended up buying his first parcel here in 1941 which included the Vincent House and several out-buildings. In 1944, my grandfather bought Alfred Hall's large farmhouse and the surrounding acreage including this field and then moved to the island permanently in 1945. He continued to buy more adjacent land to expand the farm through the 50s. He used the farm to pursue many of his passions. He was an avid hunter who had several duck blinds around the pond and an extensive target range where he trained the Edgartown Police on how to shoot straight. I understand that this was very necessary at the time. He also allowed Joe and Betty Robichau to use the old Wintucket hunting cabin as a day camp for many years. We have several Wintucket campers with us

continued on page 6

here tonight and I hope you were able to take a walk down memory lane and view the old cabin. My brother and I have been trying to restore it for the past 40 years and, unfortunately, still have several more years to go. At the time of my grandfather's death, Ashakoaksett, as the farm was called, consisted of about 400 acres with a couple of miles of shorefront on the pond.

As you are all aware, holding onto this type of property is very difficult on the Vineyard and we are fortunate to have organizations like Sheriff's Meadow to help preserve these great spaces. When my aunt and uncle sold their places, we were fortunate to see most of my Aunt's land purchased by Brian and Ann Mazar who have preserved it beautifully and placed conservation easements on the property. Likewise, Alfred Hall's place ended up with the Ed and Ellen Harley who did a magnificent restoration of the 1780 farmhouse. The Nature Conservancy owns much of the old hay field and Sheriff's Meadow holds the conservation easement on Andy and Betsy Forrester's property where they did a great job opening up the old field there. It is very nice that a lot of the character of the farm I knew growing up is still with us today.

The second person key to the story of how we ended up here tonight is my father, John E. MacKenty. His love of this place is legendary, and he has passed that down to his kids and grandchildren. Unfortunately, he could not make it tonight as he had wanted to, but he is listening to our fun from further on down this field in his house. For the past 30 years he has lived here full time with my mom and they have never tired of the beauty and diversity of the wildlife around them. Dad made the trade-offs necessary to hold onto this land and has now passed the stewardship of this place down to us. Lisa and I are so lucky to get to witness the beauty of this place on a daily basis. We certainly hope that we can follow in Dad's footsteps and allow future generations to enjoy this place as much as we do.

I hope you all enjoy the rest of the evening and this wonderful spot and thank you for all the good work that you do in helping preserve the unique beauty of Martha's Vineyard.



Adam Moore and Samme Thompson



Photos: Sara Piazza

Remarks by Samme Thompson

The board of directors wish to present Adam with a special gift in recognition for the many achievements and contributions he has made to Sheriff's Meadow and the entire Martha's Vineyard community since he joined the Foundation ten years ago.

Jennifer Blum and I joined the board at about the same time that Adam became the Foundation's new executive director....So, we have witnessed first-hand a long list of accomplishments and strategic milestones that now define Sheriff's Meadow Foundation, thanks to ten solid years of Adam's tireless leadership.

Here are a few noteworthy accomplishments:

- The Foundation's stewardship capacity has been increased three-fold and is now substantially upgraded.
- Operating revenues have more than doubled, while disciplined cost management has resulted in only modest operating cost increases.
- Sheriff's Meadow is now accredited by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission....which certifies that the Foundation adheres to the highest standards of stewardship, management and fiscal discipline.
- The historically significant Hancock-Mitchell House, located in Quansoo Farms is being completely restored.....and will eventually serve as an educational resource for the Island.
- An island-wide conservation education program was successfully launched, and is now thriving....and
- Most recently, the Foundation has assumed a leadership role in trails management, including the development of TrailsMV an island-wide mobile smartphone app that covers 200 miles of Island trails.

I might add that Adam is not only a nationally recognized conservationist....but to all of our surprise, he is also a published essayist. Many of you might have read copies of his book, entitled *A Year on Martha's Vineyard*, which contains a collection of essays describing the changing natural beauty of Martha's Vineyard over a twelve-month period.

So, please join me and the Sheriff's Meadow board in presenting Adam with this special gift of appreciation..... a stunning landscape painting by Allen Whiting.

Thank you to all our vendors who made the Summer Benefit a success!

A2D Productions, Araujo Brothers, Blue Coast Beverages, Bruno's, Buckley's Catering, Edgartown Police Dept., Mark Forbus, Island Water Source, Morning Glory Farm, Morrice Florist, Your Market, Sara Piazza, Tilton Tents, Tisbury Printer, UPS Store.



2018 Summer Benefit Sponsorship

We are very grateful to the following individuals and businesses for their generous sponsorship.

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Carol Hillenbrand
Sharon Johnson
Kate Lauprete

Lil Province
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Nancy Randall
Sara Tucker
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Sheriff's Meadow Foundation extends its sincere gratitude to our wonderful Summer Benefit volunteers.

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Upcoming Events

GUIDED PUBLIC WALKS

Brookside Ridge Preserve, Chilmark
Saturday, October 13, 2018
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Explore the Steve Crampton Trail and other woodlands paths and walk through a magnificent grove of American beeches. Meet at the trailhead for the Land Bank's Tiasquam Valley Reservation on Middle Road. Wear rugged hiking shoes and prepare for a walk over rough terrain.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Celebration for the Birds
Saturday, November 24, 2018, 1:00 -3:00 pm
Sheriff's Meadow Sanctuary, Edgartown

Plan to come to the Sanctuary to learn about birds and wildlife and celebrate the season. Seasonal nature crafts for children and refreshments for all ages. See www.sheriffsmeadow.org for more information.

Volunteer Appreciation Lunch
Friday, November 30, 2018
12:00pm - 2:00pm

Sheriff's Meadow invites its volunteers to enjoy a festive lunch at the Wakeman Center.



Middle Road Sanctuary Photo: Virginia Morris

Cover photo: Sheriff's Meadow Foundation Staff