



The Lyme Land Conservation Trust

2016-17 Winter Newsletter

... And the Rest of the Story Highlights Founders

By George Moore
Executive Director

Much has been said and written about the PBS video featuring Lyme and the Lyme Land Trust. Now there is a sequel called *... And the Rest of the Story*.

The PBS video, produced for a national audience, didn't adequately address our history – the founding years and the early decades; it was about the present.

One question is often asked, "Why is the Lyme Land Trust so much more successful than most others?" Surely, the motivation to preserve land was, and is, the same. How did we, working with our conservation partners, help preserve over half the land in Lyme? How did we attain such a high level of support from the residents in town? If we could answer these questions, we would have a story worth telling.

A few years ago, Shirley Howard was interviewed for our newsletter. To the best of our knowledge, she is the sole surviving founding member. The late Arthur Howe, a past president, was also interviewed. When talking with land trust pioneers, they often mention the increased amount of land conserved while the late Rufus Barringer was president.

The new video tells this story: the vision of the founders, the wisdom of exercising patience, working to gain trust, and their outstanding leadership.

Concentrating on the first few decades, we gathered a group together to be interviewed about those formative years and asked Visionaries, a not-for-profit documentary video producer, to come back to produce the sequel, to



Photo by The Visionaries.

A montage of still photos from *... And the Rest of the Story*. Clockwise, from upper left: Cynthia and George Willauer, Ralph Eno, John Friday, Jr., Judith Duran, Anthony Irving, Beverly Crowther, Shirley Howard, George Moore, Fritz Gahagan.

commemorate our 50th anniversary. A generous foundation provided funding.

We led off with founder Shirley Howard who has a daughter, granddaughter and great grandchildren living in Lyme. Shirley spoke, with marvelous recall, of how a small group from Fairfield County moved to Lyme to escape the rapid urbanization taking place at that time.

We learned how, 50 years ago, they founded the Lyme Land Conservation Trust to help preserve the rural charm they had discovered here. The challenge they faced was that although the landowners loved their land, they weren't quite ready to have outsiders tell them how to protect it. Patience and community involvement was required to gain their trust. Art Howe's time in office was a good example of that.

The turning point, according to

those interviewed in the video, came under president Rufus Barringer, who was able to take a more proactive approach, and this started a steady increase in the acreage of land under the protection and stewardship of the land trust.

Ralph Eno, Lyme's First Selectman, described the important role the Land Trust played in the early days, before the town government was organized to participate in land conservation. Ralph said of our founders and their vision: "They were the white knights." High praise indeed!

You might ask, "How will I get to see *... And the Rest of the Story*?" We are sending everyone in town a DVD that includes both videos. No charge, no obligation, only our request that you watch them. You'll be glad you did.

Planning for Spring's Gypsy Moth Outbreak

By Anthony Irving
Land Trust Director

Not since the early 1980s has southeastern Connecticut witnessed such a year for gypsy moths. It was hard to miss the hordes of caterpillars climbing up and down tree trunks in the summer of 2016 and the subsequent appearance of squadrons of brown moths in early summer. Next year doesn't look any better and may well be worse. The fungus *Entomophaga maimaiga* that attacks gypsy moth caterpillars did appear last spring, but it didn't fully develop as the late spring and early summer were too dry. You may have noticed numbers of dead caterpillars hanging from tree trunks due to the partial appearance of this pathogen, but the hordes of moths showed that large numbers survived. Over the last few years, this condition of unusually dry spring weather has allowed for the steady gypsy moth buildup resulting in this year's population breakout. If next year's caterpillar crop is larger, it could be bad news for our trees.

Most deciduous tree species can survive one to two years of defoliation, but trees already weakened by other stresses such as this year's drought are more likely to succumb. Add to that the banner acorn year last fall which depleted stored food reserves in the tree, making for a triple whammy of stresses for our oaks. White oak, especially, is the preferred gypsy moth menu item. Next in line in our area are sugar maple and beech, followed by birch. However, ash, tulip poplar and the hickories are typically left alone.

Male gypsy moths are the brown moths flying in great numbers around the trees in early July. The females, slightly larger and cream-colored, don't fly, but rest on the tree bark after pupating, waiting for the males to pay a visit. Hundreds of eggs are laid in a single brown mass covered with a light brown wooly coating.

Knowing that there may be a large infestation next spring, here are some steps you can take to minimize defoliation of your prized trees. You

can spray everything, but this takes a toll on many insect species, most of which are beneficial to our environment. Even the biological pesticide Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), which is the least toxic and safe for humans, pets and most insects, still targets certain other



moths and butterflies. But, if you must spray, Bt is the way to go. This kills caterpillars, so it needs to be done in May before they pupate; mass spraying must be done by professionals.

Here are some steps you can take that don't involve chemicals. The first is to destroy the easily recognizable egg clusters in the winter with a surfactant oil spray that soaks through the mass, suffocating the eggs. Apply a mixture of 50 percent soybean oil and 50 percent water in a hand sprayer. (Soybean oil is often labeled as vegetable oil in the supermarket; some vegetable oil contains other oils as well so check the label. Also note: those with peanut allergies should not handle soybean oil.) Keeping the mixture agitated, use the stream setting (like a water pistol) and completely soak each egg mass. Although most are found on the lower trunk you won't reach them all, but you do have until spring, so there's plenty of time to roam your yard in search of "the low hanging fruit." Egg masses may also be found in other places on your property: on pottery and plastic containers, in wood piles, and on rocks, particularly the undersides of stone walls and glacial erratics.

If you have very tall trees, you won't be able to reach the majority of the egg masses. If this is the case, or if the caterpillars seem likely to denude your trees, hire a tree care professional

to spray your problem trees.

For those egg masses you can't reach, the next step is to minimize damage from caterpillars when they appear in the spring. They move around a lot, crawling up and down trees daily, mainly feeding at night. During the day, they seek protection in shady, cool sites, usually on the ground. This behavior allows you to intercept the caterpillars during their travels.

Here are a couple of methods using barrier bands. To prevent staining of the tree bark and damage to younger trees, use duct tape, snugging it around the tree double wide, sticky side to the tree, and then apply Vaseline or Tree Tanglefoot. Caterpillars hate crossing over the line and will bunch up on either side. When first installing the bands, put them up before evening to stop those on their way up for their nightly feed. In the morning, the ones congregating above or below the tape should be destroyed by crushing them, or putting them into a soapy water or bleach solution. Caterpillars should not be touched with bare skin; they can set off allergic reactions in many people. Leave the tape up through most of July and check them daily – twice a day is best, in the morning and evening.

The second barrier-band method involves 12-inch burlap strips. Tie a string tightly around the tree, insert the burlap and fold it over the string, stretching the band completely around the tree. Caterpillars seek safety by hiding under the burlap. Check twice daily, ideally in the evening and the morning, picking them off and putting them into a soapy water or bleach solution.

The combination of these methods will greatly reduce the number of gypsy moth caterpillars and could aid in the long-term survival of your trees. Each method by itself will make a considerable difference. Combine them and you will have a formidable defense. To make homemade moth traps, see http://www.gypsymothalert.com/traps_homemade.html. Further information may be found at the CT Agricultural Extension Service website: gypsy moth fact sheet 2015.pdf.

The Lyme Land Conservation Trust Newsletter

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Letter from the President

— On the Occasion of the Land Trust's 50th Anniversary —

They had a vision, our Founders, and we and future generations are its beneficiaries; as are the land itself and the creatures who inhabit it.

They envisioned that Lyme need not meet the fate of the rampant and uncontrolled development some had fled, and that all could see too close at hand.

They envisioned that Lyme could retain its quiet, rural and scenic character; and that farms, colonial homes and woodlands could continue to dot our beautiful country roads.

To realize their vision, they incorporated the Lyme Land Conservation Trust in 1966 and held their first meeting of members in 1967.

Their idea was that the Land Trust would be a vehicle for receiving donations of land and conservation easements from citizens who wished to preserve forever the unique character of their properties. And so it was in the Land Trust's early days.

Later, another generation of Land Trust Board members realized that this model would not be sufficient to preserve Lyme's character.

They became proactive in identifying properties with conservation values and in raising the funds required to purchase them. The pace of preservation increased dramatically. This year, we celebrate our Fiftieth Anniversary secure in the knowledge that, thanks to its many volunteer Board members and to the generosity of our citizens, the Land Trust has become one of the most successful preservation forces in Connecticut, and that the Founders' vision for our beloved Town has been realized.

It is up to all of us, the current stewards of the Founders' vision, to ensure that it remains that way.

John Pritchard
President



Brockway Hawthorne: A New Preserve

*By Humphrey Tyler
past Land Trust Director*

In mid-November the Lyme Land Trust completed the fund raising for the purchase of its proposed 82-acre Brockway Hawthorne Wildlife Preserve in Hadlyme with the announcement by Gov. Malloy of a \$260,000 grant from the State of Connecticut for the project. The Land Trust will use the state grant as part of the \$400,000 purchase of the property.

The Land Trust's fundraising effort was focused on support for the project from the Hadlyme community. More than \$100,000 was raised through the Hadlyme Challenge Match Grant, in which an anonymous Hadlyme donor pledged up to a \$50,000 to match dollar for dollar individual pledges of \$1,000.

Along with the Hadlyme Country Market, the Land Trust sponsored a "Hadlyme



Heritage Day" celebration at the Country Market store on Labor Day weekend as part of the fundraising effort, offering live music, a remote onsite broadcast on iCRVradio.com, and walking tours of the proposed Preserve.

The balance needed for the Brockway Hawthorne Preserve purchase has been pledged by other local donors as well as by a local foundation. The Land Trust plans to complete the purchase early in 2017 and hopes to open the new preserve to the public in the spring.

The new proposed preserve is part of a forested landscape just south of Hadlyme Four Corners and Ferry Road (Route 148), and forms a large part of the watershed for Whalebone Creek, a key tributary feeding Whalebone Cove, most of which is a national wildlife refuge under the management of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The Land Trust plans to name the new nature refuge in honor of the Brockway and Hawthorne families, which have owned the land for several generations. The current owner, William Hawthorne of Hadlyme, has agreed to sell the property to the Land Trust at a discount from its market value.

"This new wildlife preserve will represent a triple play for habitat conservation," said Anthony Irving, chairman of the Land Trust's Preservation Committee.

"First, it helps to protect the watershed feeding the fragile Whalebone Cove eco-system which is listed as one of

North America's important freshwater tidal marshes in international treaties that cite the Connecticut River estuary as a wetland complex of global importance. Whalebone Creek, one of the primary streams feeding Whalebone Cove, originates from vernal pools and upland swamps on the Hawthorne tract and on the Land Trust's Ravine Trail."

"Second, the 82 acres represents a large block of wetlands and forested wildlife habitat between Brush Hill and Joshuatown Roads, which in itself is home to a kaleidoscope of animals from amphibians and reptiles that thrive in several vernal pools and swamp land, to turkey, coyote, bobcat and fisher. It also serves as seasonal nesting and migratory stops for several

species of deep woods birds, which are losing habitat all over Connecticut due to forest fragmentation."

"Third, this particular preserve will also conserve a key link in the wildlife corridors that connects more than 1,000 acres of protected woodland and swamp habitat in the Hadlyme area." Irving explained that the preserve is at the center of a landscape-scale wildlife habitat greenway that includes Selden Island State Park, property of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Silvio O Conte Wildlife Refuge, The Nature Conservancy's Selden Preserve, and several other properties protected by the Lyme Land Conservation Trust.

"Because of its central location as a hub between these protected habitat refuges," said Irving, "this preserve will protect forever the uninterrupted access that wildlife throughout the Hadlyme landscape now has for migration and breeding between otherwise isolated communities and families of many terrestrial species that are important to the continued robust bio-diversity of southeastern Connecticut and the Connecticut River estuary."

Irving noted that the Hawthorne property is the largest parcel targeted for conservation in the Whalebone Cove watershed by the recently developed U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Silvio O Conte Wildlife Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan.

Irving said the Land Trust hopes to create hiking trails on the property with access from both Brush Hill Road on the east and Joshuatown Road on the west, and connection to the Land Trust's Ravine Trail to the south and the network of trails on the Nature Conservancy's Selden Preserve.



Remembering Joan Hitchcock Rich

Joan Rich, better known as Ning, served on the Lyme Land Trust board for many years, and was instrumental in the creation of the Grassy Hill Preserve.

By Ann Rich
Land Trust Director

Joan Hitchcock Rich, known to friends and family as Ning, died on August 27, 2016.

Born in 1927 in New London, Ning grew up in New York City, but Lyme, and more specifically, the area of Grassy Hill Road, would remain the place closest to her heart.

Ning met her future husband, Norman Rich, while working at the International Herald Tribune in London. They lived and traveled throughout Europe, eventually settling in Michigan where their three daughters were born. In 1968, Norman's job took the family to Providence, Rhode Island. Ning's love for city planning, art and architecture steered her to the Providence Preservation Society (PPS). In her near-decade on the staff, Ning was recognized for her pivotal role in turning PPS into a city-wide organization, expanding PPS' reach to all of Providence's historic neighborhoods. Her example of leading by doing inspired all who intersected with her at PPS and throughout the city of Providence.

After retiring from PPS, Ning and Norman moved to Lyme full time where Ning brought her passion for planning and making a difference to the community. She was very active with the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Lyme Democratic Town Committee, and served on the Board of the Lyme Land Conservation Trust from 1993 to 2003 – as Vice President from 1997 to 2003.

Perhaps the contribution closest to her heart was the creation of the Grassy Hill Preserve at the top of Grassy Hill Road. She and a small group of dedicated neighbors came together as a members of the Friends of Grassy Hill to raise money to preserve the land next to the Grassy Hill

Congregational Church when it was threatened with development. Without



Ning's patient hard work, it might not have happened.

Tony Irving, board member of the Lyme Land Trust remembers her fondly. "When Hiram Maxim stepped down as president, Ning Rich, who was the vice president, called to ask if I would step in. I told her that I didn't feel qualified as I was so new to the trust, but she assured me that the two of us, along with Bob Barney who was treasurer, would do fine. For the next eight years, the three of us worked happily together. I concentrated on land protection, Bob handled finance and membership, and Ning focused on the newsletter and outreach. Her background in planning added to our ability for education around the values of land protection and its relation to the cultural and historic preservation of the town's character. The Lyme Land Trust has over the years attracted dedicated board members with a knack for knowing what's important and getting it done. Joan Rich was one of those, and the town and our open spaces are better off because of her."

Ning's commitment to civic engagement and her deep conviction about the significance of place was a common thread throughout her life and remains her legacy. She will be remembered for her graciousness, her competence, her ready smile and her passion for preserving beautiful spaces. She is

survived by her devoted husband of 64 years, Norman Rich; her brother, John Hitchcock; her daughters, Margaret, Ann, and Pamela; her son-in-law, Dirk Rosen; and her grandchildren, Samara, Nina, and Maya.

The Lyme Land Trust expresses our condolences to the Rich family and our gratitude for the family's suggestion that those who wish to might make a donation in Ning's honor to the Land Trust.

Editor's Note: *Ning's daughter Ann Rich recently joined the Lyme Land Trust Board of Directors, the third generation of her family to serve on the Land Trust, following her mother, and her grandmother, Margaret Hitchcock, who served as a Director in the early years, from 1972-1979.*

Volunteers Improve Trail

Hard-working volunteers have been busy on the Ravine Trail: the existing red trail has been cleared, and a blue trail has been blazed on the overlook. The white trail has been abandoned for safety reasons. A new red trail segment has been completed.

The new section moves the Ravine Trail entrance to almost directly across Joshuatown Road from the Selden Creek Preserve parking area, providing safer road access for hikers, and a gentler approach to the preserve. Even better, it will connect directly into proposed trails for the new Brockway Hawthorne Preserve.

Thanks to volunteers Humphrey Tyler, Parker Lord, Regan and Jim Stacey, Bob Haglund, Jim Murphy, Chih-Wu Su, and Sherry DiGiovanna, led by Liz Robinson of the Nature Conservancy and Wendolyn Hill of the Lyme Land Trust.

If you would like to be on the email list to be notified about walks or trail work volunteer opportunities, please send an email specifying which activity you'd like to participate in to openspace@townlyme.org.

Environmental Director Looks Forward to New Projects

Sue Cope of Lyme has been busy this summer and fall. When the Lyme Land Trust's former Environmental Director, Lisa Niccolai, moved to New Hampshire last summer, Sue took over the position, and has been learning the ropes and thinking about new projects.

A Connecticut native and avid nature lover, Sue's education and experience will be a great fit for the Land Trust: a B.S. in Natural Resource Management and Engineering from UConn, and an M.A. in Environmental Communications and Sustainability from Ball State. To top that off, she has an Associate's degree in Nursing, and is a clinically trained cardiac RN.

Sue has traveled extensively: studying land and wildlife management during a cross-county trip of the U.S.; collecting data for NASA in Colombia to help them check the accuracy of their LIDAR mapping technology; and, while working on her M.A., in Germa-



ny, Austria, and Poland, to study their natural resource management techniques. She has also visited Patagonia, her favorite, three years in a row, and hopes to go back some day.

Sue admits that it will be challenging to relearn some skills from her college days, while working to maintain the high standards required by the Land Trust Alliance for re-accreditation. So far, her plans include increasing the Land Trust's social me-

dia communications, developing more family-friendly and kid-friendly activities and adding more educational elements to the LLCT programs. This will include work on an educational nature trail in Banningwood Preserve planned for the future Diana and Parker Lord Nature and Science Center. Sue feels that it's especially important to work with the local and regional communities to expand opportunities for kids to get outside.

"I'm excited to return to working towards things I have always been passionate about: educating the public about our environment and natural resources and their value, and working and playing with kids outside."

Sue and her husband, Bob, and three-year-old son, Parker, moved to Lyme in October 2015. In February, a second son is due to join the family, which also includes a Chihuahua named Luna, and eight chickens.

Annual Photo Contest Deadline: January 31

Hank Golet, an amateur wildlife photographer, was happy he had his camera with him on an early morning kayak trip on the Duck River near Watch Rock Preserve in Old Lyme. He happened on a rare sighting of the elusive yellow-crowned night-heron. The young bird paused long enough for Hank to get the beautiful photo that won the Mitchell Environmental Award in the 10th Annual Land Trusts Amateur Photo Contest. The muted pastel colors in the marshland background perfectly offset the exquisite detail of the feathers and face of the magnificent bird.

Amateur photographers of all ages are invited to enter their favorite photographs taken in the towns of Lyme, Old Lyme, Essex, Salem, and East Haddam in the Land Trusts Photo Contest. Participants need not live in these towns, but the photos must be of scenes in one of these five towns,



whose land trusts sponsor this event. Children are encouraged to enter in the Youth category.

It's easy to enter: to get the entry form and rules, send an email to

photocontest2017@lymelandtrust.org. Then submit matted 8 inch by 10 inch prints and digital files of your photos, between January 1 and January 31, 2017. See the contest rules for submission details and photo categories. Go to <http://www.lymelandtrust.org/news/photo-contest/> for more information.

Contest awards are being funded with the generous support of our commercial sponsors: *RiverQuest*/Connecticut River Expeditions, Ballek's Garden Center in East Haddam, Essex Savings Bank, Evan Griswold at Coldwell Banker, Lorensen Auto Group, the Oakley Wing Group at Morgan Stanley, and Alison Mitchell in memory of her husband John G. Mitchell.

All entered photographs will be displayed, and winners will be announced at a public reception on Friday, March 10, 2017.

How to Assess a Stream (and Have a Good Time Doing It)

By Mary Guitar
Newsletter Editor

In early November, Patricia Young, Program Director at Eightmile River Watershed (ERW), and new ERW board member and ecologist Kim Bradley, assisted by her three-year-old daughter Samantha and myself, conducted a stream assessment in a section of Roaring Brook in the Banningwood Preserve. Data from this kind of study are used to assess whether a watercourse is meeting aquatic life support goals.

This assessment was part of an inventory of the natural assets of the Banningwood Preserve, the first step in finding out what is unique to this preserve, and developing educational and scientific programs for the property.

It was a warm, sunny day, and the ecologists did the

hard part: they pulled on waders and knelt in the riffles – the rocky, shallow parts of the stream – to spread out their nets. There they scoured the gravel, and turned over rocks, scrubbing them to dislodge any stream critters, also known as benthic macroinvertebrates: organisms without back-

bones that live underwater and which are large enough to be seen without a microscope. These arthropods, mollusks, and worms are the primary food source for many fish, and the presence of certain families indicate a healthy stream.

The contents of each net were dumped into flat white containers and Samantha and I crouched over them and attempted to catch the small wiggling fauna with tweezers and transfer them to ice cube trays with the help of plastic spoons. This is best performed with a keen-sighted three-year old on your team, though squinting and a magnifying glass helped a little. Our intention was to keep them separate by type, although identifying them and persuading them to stay where they were put was exactly as hard as it sounds. Luckily, Kim and Pat efficiently netted the six locations they had mapped out, and could then handle the final sorting and identification.

The caddisfly, stonefly, and mayfly family are the macroinvertebrates most sensitive to pollution or habitat degradation, so their presence, along with cold water and a neutral pH, are good indications of stream health. Pat admitted to a

personal favorite, the roach-like stonefly, about the size of a pinky fingernail, with a pollution tolerance value of “0.” Dobsonfly, dragonfly and damselfly larvae are slightly more pollution tolerant and are therefore not the best indicators for water quality conditions.

Pat noted after the final tally, “If we are correct, we found at least six different most wanted species, which means exceptional water quality. Of the 18 assessments I did this fall, this was our highest number of most wanted.”

One or two representatives of each type of macroinvertebrate were preserved in alcohol in vials and brought, along with the data sheet and pictures, to the state lab for final key-out using dissecting microscopes. Final results will be available in March.

This type of data has many uses: it appears in the state’s biennial report to the EPA to verify that a given stream is meeting water quality life support goals. “It’s also used to track changes over time, and as back-up for further protection recommendations,” Pat explained. “The state is also now beginning to put resources towards preserving excellent priority watersheds.”

The results of the assessment will also be useful for the Land Trust as part of grant applications to foundations to aid in the development of nature and science programs for the planned Diana and Parker Lord Nature and Science Center in Banningwood Preserve.

Watch for more information in future issues of our newsletter.



**Top, l-r, Pat Young and Kim Bradley net macroinvertebrates in the brook.
Bottom, Kim and her daughter Samantha sort out the catch.**

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

**We’d love to hear from you and about you.
What would you like to hear more about?
Post your pictures of favorite Lyme hikes,
or Land Trust activities you’ve attended.**



Lyme Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

PO Box 1002, Lyme, CT 06371

Spring and Summer Events: Save the Dates!

All events subject to change. Dates and times will be announced by press release & email, and will be posted on the Land Trust website and Facebook page. Consult the Upcoming Events page at www.lymelandtrust.org/news/events/ for the latest information. To receive email notifications, send an email to: info@lymelandtrust.org.

- **Photo Contest Reception, Friday, March 10, 2017,** 6:00-7:30 p.m., Lymes Senior Center.
- **Lyme Land Trust Annual Meeting, Friday May 26, 2017,** 6:00 p.m. Lyme Public Hall. A special program on the actual 50th anniversary of the first Land Trust meeting on May 26, 1967.
- **Land Trust's 50th anniversary celebration. June 24, 2017.**
- **LLCT 50th anniversary exhibit, July 3-4, Lyme Public Hall exhibit.**



Photo by Humphrey Tyler.

Boy Scouts from Lyme-Old Lyme Troop 26, led by Eagle Candidate Brendan Wright (olive tee shirt and jeans) spent a Saturday last September building a camp and picnic site in the Land Trust's 100-acre Banningwood Preserve in Hadlyme. Development of the site, which includes a tent platform, two picnic tables with benches, and a fire pit with benches, was the Eagle Badge community project for Scout Wright.

For most current information on Lyme Land Conservation Trust events: www.lymelandtrust.org