



Summer 2017 • www.wellfleetconservationtrust.org

WCT PRESIDENT DENNIS O'CONNELL TO RECEIVE THIS YEAR'S ANSEL B. CHAPLIN AWARD

Wellfleet Conservation Trust President Dennis O'Connell is this year's recipient of the Ansel B. Chaplin Award, given each year for excellence in open space preservation. The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc. will grant the award given in the name of the founding president of The Compact at their Annual Meeting on August 28, 2017.



Dennis O'Connell became president of WCT in 2004, only the third since its inception in 1984. He follows his mentors, Durand Echeverria and Robert Hankey in this role. He keeps alive the values and high standards they set for the Trust. Robert Hankey was our first recipient of the Ansel B. Chaplin Award in 2007.

In mid-May Cape Cod Compact Director Mark Robinson announced the decision of The Compact's Board of Directors, who vote on nominations submitted from all participating Cape towns. Mr. O'Connell's nominations came from past AmeriCorps members, the Open Space Committee, Audubon and the WCT Board of Trustees.

Their testimony highlighted his dedicated service in all aspects of the Trust, starting with the 375 acres now under the protection of WCT. Acquisitions during his tenure include the Drummer Cover Trailhead with the addition of the Link Lot, the Clover property, the Walker property, and the Head of Duck Creek, nesting habitat for the diamond back terrapins and the milkweed area for Monarch butterflies.

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ANSEL B. CHAPLIN AWARD, CONTINUED

AmeriCorps members Maggie Gardner and Sasha Berns attested to his engagement with their program. The Wellfleet Open Space Committee noted the strong partnership forged with the Trust, citing Mr. O'Connell's attendance at all their meetings. Robert Prescott of Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary agreed with the Open Space Committee that this was a well-deserved award.

The Board of Trustees recognizes his scrupulous attention to every detail whether it be running a meeting, representing us at wider-ranged conferences, attendance at Compact meetings, making land acquisitions or conservation restrictions happen, joining in the Annual Guided Walks, maintaining trails, or pitching in with our Adopt-A-Highway cleanups. This was summed up well by one member's praise, "He inspires us all."

WCT LAND WITH AN OCEAN VIEW

When Eric and Mary Ellen Meyer faced the reality that time and space were running out between ever-nearer top of the dune and their summer home on Cliff Road, South Wellfleet, they started making plans to move their house and offer the land to the Conservation Trust. The land, inside the National Seashore, situated between Maguire's Beach at the end of LeCount Hollow Road and Whitecrest Beach to the north, was one of the small 50 ft. by 100 ft. lots created by the Wellfleet-by-the-Sea subdivision early in the twentieth century. There were 5 lots between it and the backshore beach at that time.



The Myers purchased another lot on the other side of Cliff Rd. with a semi-abandoned house, which they demolished for their house's new location. They donated the ocean front lot, accepting the Conservation Commission conditions that the site be completely cleared of all remains of house, well and septic system and that site be revegetated.

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RICHARD DELANEY FEATURED SPEAKER FOR ANNUAL MEETING



You are invited to our Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 19, 2017, at the Wellfleet Senior Center at 10 a.m. Richard Delaney, President and CEO of the Center for Coastal Studies, is our featured speaker.

Before joining the Center for Coastal Studies in Provincetown, Richard Delaney was a delegate to the Paris Climate Accord. He was the founding director of the Urban Harbors Institute at UMass, Boston. He has served as Assistant Environmental Affairs in Massachusetts under Governor Dukakis and was National Chair of the Coastal States Organization in Washington, D.C. He has provided consultations to government in over 20 countries.

Currently Mr. Delaney serves on the board of Directors for the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and chairs the Stellwagen National Marine Sanctuaries Advisory Committee and Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission.

If you missed his presentation at the Wellfleet Public Library in March, our meeting provides another opportunity to hear his talk on Climate Change. A short business meeting precedes his talk. Light refreshments are offered at this free event. We hope you will join us on August 19th.



Saturday, August 19
Annual WCT Meeting, 10 a.m.
Wellfleet Senior Center
Featured speaker – Richard Delaney,

Saturday, September 9 (Rain date September 10)
11th Annual Guided Walk
9 a.m. Gull Pond Landing (gathering place)
Closer to the date, more information will be provided
on our website and by our e-mail blast.

Want to receive emails from WCT?
Send an e-mail to info@wellfleetconservationtrust.org

LAND WITH AN OCEAN VIEW, CONTINUED



There is no beach access down the very steep dune at this location, but it is a wonderful viewing site of sunrise and moonrise over the ocean and a great observation spot for the passing seals, fish schools, whales and occasional shark fins. WCT plans to place a bench on the newly acquired property. The Meyers are happy to have extended the life of their summer place and stay in the same area.

It is a win-win situation. We thank the Meyer family for choosing the Trust as the stewards of their dune top property. We plan to enjoy it and open it to the enjoyment of all who visit our new ocean-front land.

WCT ANNUAL GUIDED WALK 2017 THE WOODS OF NORTHEAST WELLFLEET

Even before the last stragglers finished our 2016 guided walk around Lieutenant's Island, walkers were asking the big question, "Where are you planning to go next year?" During the winter a number of locations were considered before deciding on the woods of northeast Wellfleet incorporating the ponds, sandy roads, and trails.

The walk will take place on Saturday, September 9th, 2017 beginning at 9 a.m. It is open to the public free of charge, and will start at the Gull Pond parking lot. There will be stops along the route to examine the sluiceway between Gull Pond and Higgins Pond, hear about the some of the modernist and historic houses that border the ponds, observe the source of the Herring River as it flows into and out of Herring Pond, and see the site of Wellfleet's first schoolhouse. There are always surprises along the way.

The WCT Annual Guided Walk is a

tradition that began in 2007 for the public to experience the beauty of Wellfleet's open space and conservation lands while being guided by naturalists and local experts who share their knowledge of the history, geology, and ecology of the areas being explored. The uniqueness of Wellfleet has allowed us to continually find interesting locations for our walks. This one, our eleventh, will again be different from our previous ten.

Estimated time of the walk is 2.5 – 3.0 hours and will be about 3 miles in distance. Most of the walk will be in the woods. Comfortable walking shoes and clothing are recommended, and there is always the concern for ticks. Provisions will be made for those needing to leave the walk early. If necessary, a rain date for Sunday, April 10th at 9 a.m. will be announced on the WCT website by 7:00 a.m. on Saturday morning.

MEET BARBARA CARY, OUR NEWEST TRUSTEE

Our newest Trustee Barbara Cary joins a very special group of daughters, who continue their fathers' legacy on the Board of Trustees. Now that she has retired to Wellfleet full time, she has volunteered her considerable talents to the Wellfleet Conservation Trust.

Barbara grew up in Belmont, Mass, and lived in Concord Mass for thirty years or so until her retirement to Wellfleet. She came to Wellfleet as an eight-year-old in 1958. "I think it



was then I decided I wanted to live here," she says. I was one lucky kid, able to spend more and more time here, riding my bike everywhere, exploring the now long-gone oyster shacks at the railroad bridge over Duck Creek." She spent ten-hour days on the beaches and in the ponds and enjoyed sunset cookouts and bonfires at Duck Harbor. Her first real job was waitressing at Holiday House in 1969.

She finally moved to Wellfleet, as a full-time resident, in December, 2015. "What a joy it was, last year, not to need to drive away after Labor Day!" Her favorite things to do are spend time at Duck Harbor, all day, through to sunset (still!), swim in the ponds, watch and listen to the ocean, and walk the trails.

Barbara received her BA from American University in Washington, DC in 1972, majoring in Communications and Political Science and her JD from Suffolk Law Boston, Mass 1977. Mostly she was a corporate, in-house counsel at several high-tech companies in the Boston area, where she handled product-related, as well as employment litigation, software licensing and distribution. However, she says, "I often feel I missed my calling, in that I've always been enthralled by the natural world, (without a doubt inspired by Wellfleet!). I am passionate about habitat and wildlife conservation, and the climate change crisis, so I am very excited to be able to work with the Wellfleet Conservation Trust to preserve the land and habitat to the greatest extent possible, for the sake of future generations, and the planet itself."

Since landing in Wellfleet, Barbara has been a member of the Charter Review Committee, the Board of the Historical Society, the Outer Cape Chorale and the Wellfleet Democrats. She is looking forward to becoming more involved in climate change initiatives.

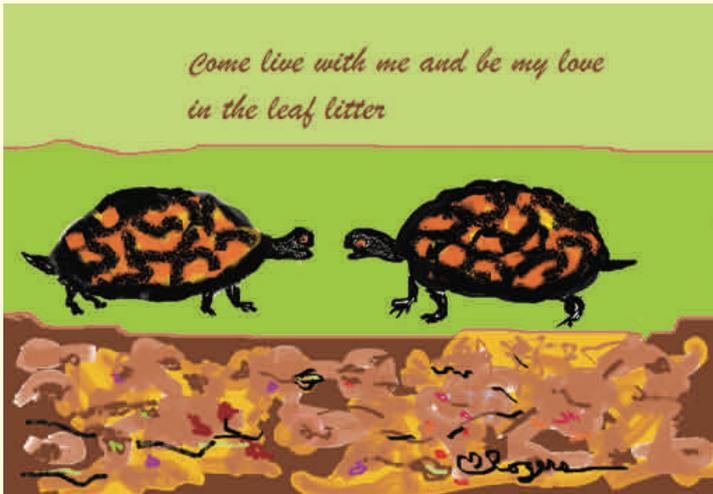
She remembers her father Herb Daith, "I am particularly honored to be able to follow in his footsteps. He loved the work, maintaining and inspecting the land, and working the swath along Route 6. He loved Wellfleet – as his 'table' at the marina says: 'Enjoy!' "

You can see why we are delighted to welcome Barbara Cary to the WCT Board of Trustees. We hope you get a chance to get acquainted with her in person too.

For a full version of Barbara's profile, please visit our website:
wellfleetconservationtrust.org

SPOTLIGHT ON... EASTERN BOX TURTLE

Anthropologists in the distant future will wonder about Wellfleet's veneration of the Eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*). An entire conservation area is named after the species and a church weathervane elevates the turtles' status in the town. The Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) designated most of Wellfleet as protected habitat for the Eastern box turtle, a "species of special concern."



You are most likely to encounter a box turtle after rain. These elusive creatures are terrestrial and hide out in damp, rotting logs or leaf litter in the woods but get on the move in light rain. Females also seek sandy soil in which to lay their eggs. You should never remove an Eastern box turtle from its environs. They stay within a 200m range in the woods their entire life. Development or fragmentation of the woods by roads endangers their zone of safety.



Box turtles are omnivores. They dine on insects, grubs, dead carrion, and vegetation including mushrooms. Mushrooms that are toxic to humans are edible to the turtles. They share a common love for garden tomatoes and cantaloupes, however. A box turtle that finds your garden will also provide a service of devouring slugs and snails.

You can tell the gender of an Eastern box turtle by looking at its eyes. The males have a very bright orange or red eyes while the females' eyes are a brownish color. The plastron, or underside of the body, also indicates gender: concave in the rear on males and flatter for females. However, it's best to leave the turtle alone and not pick it up. Just look it in the eye.

If you are lucky enough to have an Eastern box turtle as a neighbor or co-tenant on your property, count yourself as highly privileged.

FAREWELL & RECOGNITION FOR PETER HALL



Long-time Trustee Peter Hall and his wife Marieke are leaving Wellfleet. The Conservation Trust participated, on December 8, 2016, in a farewell reception to recognize all the service they have given to Wellfleet. Their many friends including the Trust, Friends of the Wellfleet Library, the Wellfleet Community Forum and Friends of the Council on Aging joined together to wish the Halls a fond farewell with speeches, refreshments, cards and Wellfleet remembrances.

WCT will miss Peter as one of our most dependable workers for over 20 years. He was always ready to help with trail maintenance and development, highway clean-up, and the Annual Guided Walks. We always appreciated his common-sense approach to issues raised at Board of Trustees meetings.

Good luck to our good friends, Peter and Marieke, as they embark on the new chapter of their life.

EARTH DAY NON-PROFIT FAIR AT PRESERVATION HALL



This year the Wellfleet Conservation Trust observed Earth Day, April 22, by joining around forty other groups for a first Non-Profit Fair at Wellfleet Preservation Hall. More “friend raiser” than fund raiser, the event attracted over 200 visitors not involved with any of the organizations represented.

EARTH DAY WCT’s booth featured a slide show of our conservation holdings, trail guides and copies of past newsletters. Trustees stationed at the booth had very positive conversations with visitors and added some new names to our email contacts.

In addition to the fair, the Trust had placed Earth Day signs at various locations around town as we have done in the past to keep attention on our presence and our mission of protecting the environment.

SPRING “COD” DAY - MAY 4

AMERICORPS, WCT, CONSERVATION COMMISSION AND OPEN SPACERS PITCH IN FOR A “COMMUNITY OUTREACH DAY”

An enthusiastic group of five AmeriCorps members set out with Assistant Conservation Agent Doug Guey-Lee to join forces with eight others from the WCT Trustees, Conservation Commissioners, Open Space Committee members and a number of other volunteers to do spring maintenance at three joint WCT/ Town properties on May 4th. Prepared with appropriate

clothing, work gloves, hand clippers, water and bug spray, the undaunted groups faced their chores at a first COD day in Wellfleet.



At the newly acquired Cortes property at Goss Lane, one crew cleared locust trees that were spreading in the meadow. That crew encountered three Eastern box turtles, which occasioned the Spotlight On article in this issue of the Trust. (see page 6)

The group working on the Clover trails accomplished several maintenance projects, including cutting back the persistent

greenbriars, which snag passersby and overtake the paths if not trimmed one or more times a year.

The third group replaced the large pine log staircase on the Walker land. The new, sturdier stairs are made of garden timbers, which should hold up for many years.

Do go visit and enjoy the trails with an eye on nature but with a little gratitude to our industrious helpers and the organizers, Doug Guey-Lee and Meredith Ballinger, this year’s Wellfleet AmeriCorps member. Should you ever wish to help with our trails maintenance, let one of our Trustees know.

NEW WEBSITE DESIGN

www.wellfleetconservationtrust.org

When you next visit the Wellfleet Conservation Trust website (www.wellfleetconservationtrust.org) you'll see some changes. We've tried to make it more user-friendly and give it a more pleasing design with many more photos. It should now be more hardware independent. That means that it should look OK on a desktop computer, a laptop, a tablet, or a phone. We can also collect statistics on overall use of the site (but not on individuals).

You'll also see some new features. There's a search box on the top of the sidebar on the right. As an example, try "annual meeting" to see reports on all of our annual meetings, or "annual walk" for reports on all of the annual walks. If you type in just "meeting" or "walk," you'll get back a much longer list, one that's not restricted just to annual events.

There's also a blog, accessed through a link at the top of the page. You can view that on the site, or if you prefer, subscribe through the link at the bottom of the sidebar. Subscribers receive each new post via email and may unsubscribe at any time.

Upcoming events are now posted on the home page. The Documents section (linked in the sidebar) has been expanded to include more public information, such as trail guides and maps, by-laws, and a photo gallery.

We hope you enjoy the new site, and that it helps you understand, appreciate, and use the WCT. Please share any suggestions or questions through the website's "Contact us" page, linked at the top.

GIVE TAX FREE FROM YOUR IRA TO HELP WCT

If you are 70½ years old or older and have required minimum distributions (RMD's), you can transfer funds from your tax deferred Individual Retirement Account (IRA) as a gift to the non-profit Wellfleet Conservation Trust (WCT) and pay zero tax on the IRA withdrawal. You may donate up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to qualified charitable groups, including WCT. The charitable gift counts as part of your required IRA minimum distributions. The Funds must be transferred directly from your IRA institution to WCT. The gift does not generate taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize on your tax return. Contact the financial institution that manages your IRA and ask to make a gift to the Wellfleet Conservation Trust.

To learn more, check with your financial/tax advisor. This would make a nice tax break for you, and WCT would be most grateful for your support of the Trust's conservation work.

SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS LAND TRUST CONVOCAATION REMEMBERS ANSEL CHAPLIN

On Saturday, Feb. 4, 2017, six members of the Wellfleet Conservation Trust traveled to the Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School in Bourne to attend the Southeastern Massachusetts Land Trust Convocation. The 16th Annual Convocation brought together 110 members of the SE Mass land conservation community for presentations and workshops.



Ansel Burt Chaplin

One morning workshop discussed large land acquisition projects, which might appear at first too costly to pursue in terms of time, money or other resources. This echoed a tribute at the convocation to Truro's Ansel Burt Chaplin, who passed away in January.

Chaplin had co-founded the Truro Conservation Trust, leading coalition efforts to preserve High Head and many scenic spots along the Pamet River. Mr. Chaplin also worked directly with our founding Trustees to establish WCT as a qualified local land trust. In 1984 he began convening local land trusts on the lower Cape to learn from one another. This led to The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, the "oldest self-sustaining regional network of land trusts in the US."

In the middle of the day, Jack Clarke, Director of Advocacy for Mass Audubon outlined the new challenges facing environmental protection efforts, nationally and internationally, while emphasizing the impact that local conservation can make. Mr. Clarke's presentation is available on our website.

TRAILS FOR ALL SEASONS

Wellfleet conservation lands serve many purposes, one of which is to provide opportunities for recreation. Most are full public access, meaning that people may linger to enjoy the views, observe the fauna and flora, or have pleasant times with family and friends. There are many short trails, often leading to benches for contemplation and open areas with beautiful vistas.

Although most visitors come in the summer and many walkers prefer warmer weather, the trails offer a special beauty in winter, with opportunities for crosscountry skiing, snowshoeing, winter birding, and even picnics.

The Wellfleet Conservation Trust has worked with the Wellfleet Conservation Commission and the Town Open Space Committee to create several contiguous properties for walking, photography, birdwatching, exercise, and other activities. These properties include longer, marked trails, some of which connect with National Seashore or other lands, thereby providing additional possibilities for exploring and even longer trails.

The Trust builds and maintains these trails, with the help of AmeriCorps members and others in the community. The trail building includes making a safe path, cutting branches and vines, pulling up trip roots, adding rustic stairs on steep sections, marking with blazes, placing benches, clearing parking spaces, and adding signs.

At the Wellfleet Public Library and other public locations, you can find a free packet of brochures with trail guides and maps. There is an activity guide for children. This material is also available on the website. Also, at each trailhead there is a sign with a QR code, which you can use with your smartphone to find a trail guide with map for the specific trail.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER - SUMMER 2017

Greetings to fellow conservationists:

The Wellfleet Conservation Trust conserves land in our town for the benefit of current and future generations of flora and fauna and to foster a way of life with which we are familiar and like, or even, love. We are fortunate to have over 100 parcels (about 375 acres) of land in Wellfleet we protect through conservation restrictions and outright ownership. In recent years, we have been adding two to five parcels per year through your donations of land and conservation restrictions and land acquisitions. We have received your funding donations to enable us to do our business which permits us to pursue welcomed grants. Over the years, more than 90% of our fundraising has resulted in acquisitions of fee property.

Our all-volunteer Board of Trustees runs this land trust to the best interests of the land. We have a Board with good skill sets and diversity, but there are certain practices we follow in order to do a good job. We have professional advisors who donate pro-bono services. We are a founding member of The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, from whom we receive expert advice on the aspects of land conservation and where we can compare experiences with other Cape Cod conservation trusts. Furthermore, the Board has re-affirmed our commitment to use the Land Trust Alliance's (LTA) revised "Standards and Practices" (S&Ps) as guidelines to conduct our business. As LTA states, these are the ethical and technical guidelines for the responsible operation of a land trust. The S&Ps cover activities like statement of mission; procedures for diligent acquisition; stewardship and maintenance of lands; legal and reporting compliance; and board accountability. It is part of our efforts to uphold your, and the public's, confidence through our operation of an important, qualified, non-profit local land trust. Land trusts are a respected and integral part of our nation's land conservation work. As land is threatened by global climate changes and ever-desired development, we must hold ourselves to the highest standards as we continue to conserve the places and nature we need and love.

I hope you can enjoy the trails and our lands. I had a great walk the other day on the Walker Trail, enjoying the clean spring air, verdant sights and cacophonous sounds. I recommend that you try many of our eight trail systems. You will enjoy peace, solitude, nature's wonders and refreshment. Again, thank you for your part in supporting our mission.

We hope to see you at our Annual Meeting on Saturday, August 15th.

Sincerely,
Dennis (Denny) O'Connell, President, Board of Trustees
508-349-2162 or dennyoc@comcast.net

P. S. As we were releasing this newsletter to our printer, I was thrilled, and humbled, to be notified of my receipt of the 2017 Chaplin Award. My response was "Wow!" This is especially meaningful knowing some of other Cape Codders being considered and knowing some of my predecessors, including my mentor, Robert Hankey. Thank you to those who nominated me.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We appreciate your donation using the enclosed envelope.



WELLFLEET CONSERVATION TRUST

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The Wellfleet Conservation Trust is an IRS qualified 501(c) (3) non-profit land trust.