

Winter 1993



Preserving our past...
protecting our future.

NEWSLETTER
WINTER 1993

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Board suffered a great loss when Debbie Davis had to give up her role as President due to her new employment, which created time constraints. Debbie was a valuable asset to the Trust, with her energy and hard work, and will be sorely missed. Our best wishes go out to her in her new position.

Upon taking over the position as your President, I asked myself how I thought our current limited number of Directors could put their energy to better use. After much discussion, the Board met and decided that it was necessary to rebuild the Trust; that is, to increase membership and operate with a full number of Directors. The bottom line: we need your help to maintain and achieve levels of activities and accomplishments of the past.

At this time I am asking you, the members, to make an important contribution to your Trust. Since one of our goals is to increase our membership, I am asking each and every one of you to find a new member. How nice it would be to double our membership!! Please give the Trust your best effort!

Our annual meeting will be held on February 22nd. In the past few years our attendance has been low. This year let's try something exciting --- a pot luck dinner will be included as part of the meeting, with entertainment to follow. The Board

has planned an informal fun filled evening which will enable us to share our ideas freely. Bring your special dish and share the tastes and recipes with others.

At times, questions come to my mind about the Pascommuck Conservation Trust, such as "How important are we to this community?"; "As a property owner is my land more valuable because of the Trust's land preservation?"; "How much different would the community be if the Trust never existed?"; "Is all our time and hard work really worth it?"; I have to say "Of course it is!" I would not want us to think any differently.

So let us sit down with a good plate of food and discuss the direction and future of our organization. Your ideas are very important!

Many thanks to this current Board for their tireless effort and sincere dedication. We want to do much more but we need your help. I am asking two things from the membership. One, find a new member, and two, attend our Annual Meeting. I am looking forward to meeting with all of you February 22nd.

With regards,

William L. Burgart
-President, Pascommuck
Conservation Trust, Inc.

THE PASCOMMUCK CONSERVATION TRUST INC.
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

ACCOUNT BALANCES AS OF: January 1, 1992

\$ 18,893.83
\$ 1,507.00
\$ 787.63
\$ 774.50
\$ 2,137.27
\$ 5,206.40

INCOME: (1/1/92 to 12/31/92)
Membership
Interest
Gifts
Projects

TOTAL INCOME:

EXPENSES

Postage
Supplies
Printing
Projects
Land Maintenance
Insurance
Memberships/Fees

\$ 89.38
\$ 521.68
\$ 92.50
\$ 1,600.47
\$ 2,221.95
\$ 298.00
\$ 292.50
\$ 5,116.48
\$ 89.92

TOTAL EXPENSES:

NET CHANGE:

TRAIL MAINTENANCE REPORT
by JOHN BATOR

As expected, it has been another busy and productive season for trail maintenance:

OLD PASCOMMUCK CONSERVATION AREA:

Bob and Agnes Banas planted and maintained an attractive flower bed around the planter box sign, and Bob handled the grass mowing detail there throughout the growing period. Unfortunately, vandals damaged the picnic table, and we have not had the chance to make the substantial repairs needed as of yet. Towards Fall, we really got busy--- Bob and I, and occasionally joined by Ed Dwyer, raked and mulch/mowed leaves several times, then fertilized and limed the grass. I managed to plant some narcissus bulbs for spring flowers, just in time to beat a hard freeze of the ground.

THE LAKE STREET AREA:

Dave Poulin, often prodded by his wife Gail, diligently kept the large expanse of grass mowed; Stella Wierasz would sometimes show up to assist, pushing her infamous antique mower--- legend has it that she picked up the contraption at the very first tag sale ever held in this country! Ed, Bob, Dave and I were able to spread a good base of gravel over the parking lot and main pathway this year, and hope to add a final layer of stonedust this spring. We also spread a layer of bark mulch and wood chips along the entire nature trail, thanks to a generous donation of material by Chuck Shea of Shea Tree Service. Two projects we never got to start this season but hope to take care of this

spring are installing bollards around the parking lot and two wood benches along the main pathway. Bill Canon has promised to donate some lumber and create a suitable design for the benches.

Summer flowering bulbs and tubers of glads, dahlias, hybrid lilies etc. bloomed profusely. Canna lilies, day lillies, and mums planted later put the final touches on the landscape. Our thanks to Bill and Carol Mullen for volunteering to keep the flowers watered at both properties. Due to a special fall bulb sale by the Hampshire County Conservation District, we were able to obtain some tulips, daffodils, and narcissus --- look for their bloom this spring at both the parks! Some shrubs and trees were also added, including rhododendrons, blue holly, Kousa dogwood, flowering crab (donated by Dave), black walnut (donated by Bill Burgart), and maple leaf viburnum. Bill Burgart donated a mass of ferns, and these will be planted at Lake Street in a new bed close to the entrance to the nature trail. One sad note --- our kiosk at Lake Street was vandalized this fall. Gary Golas will design a new center panel that hopefully will withstand the mindless onslaught of the modern barbarians responsible for this wanton destruction.

My thanks and appreciation goes out to all our volunteers for their valuable time and labor in maintaining and improving our properties. Thanks also to Ken Larsen and John Watling, who offer their support whenever they can. Of course, new volunteers are always welcome!

THE RAID AT PASCOMMUCK
by Ed DWYER

Situated at the Old Pascommuck Conservation Nature Area, the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a monument in 1910 to commemorate the massacre by Native Americans (Indians) of the English colonists of Pascommuck in the year 1704.

During that time, the Trust's East Street property was farmland, and was part of the home lot of the family of Moses Hutchinson, one of the settlers of this area. These settlements were part of a gradual process that began in 1635, when William Pynchon established Springfield, and people began to farm land along the Connecticut River. John Webb was the first settler in what is now Easthampton. He arrived in 1664, and settled near West Street. More families settled the area. In addition to farming, a saw mill, grist mills, and a lead mine were all operated by the early settlers.

By 1699, the Village of Pascommuck was settled by five families. Besides Hutchinson, the families of John Searl, Benoi Jones, Samuel Janes, and Benjamin Janes also lived here. By 1704, there were 33 inhabitants.

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This is the first of what is hoped will be a continuing article concerning both fundamental and key concepts, ideas, latest news, perhaps some gossip, but mostly factual information focusing on land protection and preservation. The Pascommuck Conservation Trust has a broad scope of environmental directions and interests; but, we are, first and foremost, an organization that focuses on the conservation and acquisition of land within our own community of Easthampton. It is with these few simple axioms that we embark...to "educate" our readers; or, better still, entice all to participate with their comments and expertise. This is your newsletter, your town, your land... and we share in our desire to preserve open space in our town.

Just to name a few primary references that we maintain in our Chestnut Room Library which will be used in these articles:

- (1) The Conservation Easement Handbook--Janet Diehl, Thomas S. Barrett, et al.

- (2) Land Saving

- (3) Action--Symposium...Edited by Russell L. Brenneman and Sarah M. Bates.

- (4) The Massachusetts Conservation Restriction Handbook---"A Sampler and Guidelines" --- The Commonwealth of Mass.

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.

- (5) Appraising Easements---The Land Trust Alliance---2nd Edition.

- (6) Preserving Family Lands

We often think of land as having a value based upon what someone else is willing to pay for it - it's market value. But land has a great variety of values that may be assigned to it. Certainly the aesthetic value

is often considered when assessing the value of property. Mineral rights, historic preservation, farming arrangements, timber, recreational, scenic/open space and many more tangible and intangible values may be assigned to real property.

Our future articles will concentrate on "conservation easements". This is a rather broad, all inclusive or generic term that includes: historic preservation easements, agricultural preservation easements, scenic easements, open space easements, forever-wild easements, conservation restrictions, restrictive covenants, etc. In short, "conservation easements" will encompass all easements or values granted for conservation purposes.

Conserving Easthampton land in perpetuity for its own sake is the fundamental basis for a property owner to grant a conservation easement or an outright gift of land to the Pascommuck Conservation Trust. There is also a business basis: a charitable contribution deduction for the gift of a conservation easement has been allowed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) since 1964. Federal Law governing the deductibility of the conservation easements are cited under title 26 of the Code of Federal Regulations (26 CFR) Tax Rules (IRC § 170 (F) (3), (B) (iii) and 170 (H)).

The Trust welcomes your inquiries. We would especially like to hear from land owners who about the Manhan River, as one of our long term goals is to establish a continuous nature walk along this primary waterway.

There were hostilities between the English settlers and Native Americans. During King Phillip's War of 1675-76, Northampton was attacked. Further hostilities occurred during King William's War in the years 1689 to 1697. European affairs effected the Colonies. When Charles II, King of Spain, died in 1700, he willed his Empire to France. An alliance of England, Holland, Austria, and the Holy Roman Empire went to war with France and Spain to prevent France from becoming Europe's dominate power. By 1702, French and English colonies were also at war.

A raiding party of Canadian Indians attacked Pascommuck in early May 1704. In the raid that ensued, 19 of the 33 inhabitants were killed. They are probably buried on Fort Hill Road. Three escaped during the attack. Eight were later rescued by a militia, which counterattacked. Three more settlers were taken to Canada.

**WHAT IS AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTION?
By STELLA WIERNASZ**

Agricultural Preservation Restriction or APR is a program established under Chapter 132 A Section 11 of the Massachusetts General Laws in 1977. The Commonwealth working closely with cities and towns may acquire active agriculture land, preserving such agriculture lands in perpetuity.

Landowners submit their request for funds to their cities or towns and the town government in turn submits this request to the Commonwealth. An APR committee made up of the Commissioner of Food and Agriculture, the Secretary of Environmental Affairs, the Secretary of Communities and Development along with two farmers appointed by the Governor all serve as the APR selection Committee. They in turn will evaluate the request using the following major criteria:

- 1) The suitability of acreage for agriculture.
- 2) The fair market value of land in question.
- 3) (Most important of all)

The degree to which the land would serve the agricultural potential of the Commonwealth.

This method of preserving land has proven to be very popular within the past few years. However, due to budget restrictions, the Commonwealth has limited funds for this program. Hopefully, increased requests from cities and towns throughout Massachusetts will encourage the Commonwealth to increase financial support for preservation of farmlands through the APR program.

MEMBER'S NAME _____

Pascommuck Conservation Trust Inc.
Post Office Box 806
Easthampton MA 01027

Please check appropriate membership and level of support:

_____ Limited income _____	\$ 6.00
_____ Individual _____	\$ 10.00
_____ Family _____	\$ 18.00
_____ Contributor _____	\$ 25.00
_____ Patron _____	\$ 60.00
_____ Corporate _____	\$ 100.00
_____ Sponsor _____	\$ 150.00
_____ Life Member _____	\$ 1,000.00

_____ I would like to be active in the Trust, helping with activities.

My new member is:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

**PASCOMMUCK CONSERVATION TRUST
POST OFFICE BOX 806
EASTHAMPTON MA 01027**

