

Mountain Views

News from Stowe Land Trust

Fall/Winter 2016

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Outings Calendar



THE MAYO FARM: *Looking Back on Stowe Land Trust's First Project*

By Caitrin Maloney

I don't think anyone would say it was simple.

Or clean. In fact, during the heat of the debate over who could use what land at the town-owned Mayo Farm, articles in the Stowe Reporter read like war stories. It was the conservationists vs. the business community vs. the recreationists, all battling for territory. And the proposed management plan and conservation easement – brought forth more than a decade after Mayo Farm was purchased – was aptly referred to as “the Mayo Farm peace plan”.

Passing by today, there are few clues as to the varied and sometimes controversial history of Mayo Farm. Owned by the Town of Stowe, the farm is now home to a wide variety of community uses - from soccer tournaments to Oktoberfest, from pasturing

cows to walking dogs on the Quiet Path. Indeed, this beloved gem is enjoyed by many, many people, and is front and center in the Stowe community.

History of the Farm – From “Town” to “Town”

The farm was in agriculture from the early 1800's through 1986. As if to hint at the future town acquisition, a map from the 1850's listed the farm as owned by H.F. Town. Later in the 19th century the Benson family acquired the property and grazed 30 cows. The Mayo family bought the farm in 1925, and operated a dairy farm for the next 60 years until 1986, when the federal government offered an out for struggling dairy farmers across the state and nation – through the Whole Herd Buyout Program.

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Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the conservation of scenic, recreational, and productive farm and forest lands for the benefit of the greater Stowe community.

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STOWE LAND TRUST

Letter from the Executive Director



Greetings,

Harvest time is one of my favorite times of year, and this particular harvest season is especially sweet here in Stowe. This year we can celebrate a hard-earned victory for local food and small farms, with the successful transition of a family farm down in Nebraska Valley – from retiring farmer Christine Kaiser to the energetic young couple Annie and Andrew Paradee. The Paradees have wasted no time, and have already built quite an operation in just one growing season, called

the Long Winter Farm. Stopping by Long Winter Farm this fall, one can choose from a variety of gorgeous, healthy vegetables, or pick up a dozen eggs from pastured hens. Fattening pigs can be found rummaging around in their pen, each having already been chosen for purchase by a lucky family through the CSA. And if you didn't have a chance to stop out at the farm stand, you may have picked up some Long Winter greens or other yummy produce from the farm at Commodities Market.

This project – the very first Farmland Access project in all of Lamoille County was only possible with the hard work of many volunteers, and with your generous support. Congratulations on the conservation “win”, and thank you!

Warmly,

Caitrin Maloney

P.S. Great seeing you at Annual Meeting last month, which we were excited to hold overlooking another newly conserved piece of farm land – Hunnewell Meadow. It's been a big year for Stowe farms!



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Many thanks to those of you who have already sent in your donation.

The Mayo Farm continued

With the closing of the farm operation, the future of the land became uncertain. The Mayo family was approached by numerous developers, and rumors ran rampant. Would it become a condo development? A golf course? A commercial horse farm? None of these options seemed particularly palatable for many community members, who felt that keeping the land open and in traditional uses was critical to preserving the rural character of Stowe.

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A Movement is Born

Led by lawyer John McVikar, a core group of concerned citizens mobilized to protect the farm. Over the course of a couple years, the group formed Stowe Land Trust and arranged the purchase of the farm in 1989 for \$1.4M, after a close 472 – 436 bond vote. Subsequently, the property was transferred to the Town of Stowe. At the time, the 235-acre farm was the single largest parcel of land ever purchased by a Vermont municipality solely for conservation and agricultural purposes. The land trust wrote protective covenants into the deed before transferring the land to the Town. The language was intended to preserve the open space at the farm, and protect the land for primarily agricultural purposes – stating that the Town will “maintain the lands herein conveyed primarily as open green space and will continue to use it primarily for agricultural purposes”.

Who, What, Where – the land use battle ensues

While those statements of intent seem fairly clear, a subsequent clause in the deed that the land was acquired for “conservation for public purposes” introduced ambiguity, and left the door open for other community uses. The business community pushed for access to the land to host large events, advocating for relocating the events field to high ground that would offer more space and better drainage. Conservationists argued that this change in location would destroy the best agricultural soils. Other various proposals for new uses cropped up throughout this time period, many of which were rejected by town vote. Stowe Land Trust backed away from the community debate, asserting that their role was to enforce the deed restrictions, not to engage in the fray.

Peace Plan

In 2001, after more than a decade of often bitter dispute, the Selectboard tasked two members of the Stowe Conservation Commission with developing a conservation easement for the farm. The easement would be in place for 25 years, and was meant to clear up the ambiguity of the deed restrictions. A subsequent management plan developed by the Conservation

Commission would spell out in detail how the farm could and could not be used, with the terms of the easement in mind.

Approved by the voters in 2002, the conservation easement was touted as a well-written compromise. No one group got 100 percent of what they asked for – the proposal left 60 percent of the land in agriculture and dedicated 23 percent

to recreation and 15 percent for events. The conservation community had asked for 70 percent of the land to remain in agriculture, and the recreation community only received 36 acres of potential recreation-only fields when they had requested 70. The events field stayed in the current location on Weeks Hill Road, which is not what the business community had originally proposed.

Roots in Community

The conservation easement was signed by the Selectboard in 2003, and the management plan was subsequently adopted in 2005. The plan is reviewed on a 5-year cycle, with the most recent update in 2013. While the process of updating the management plan was long and became heated at times, opening up some old war wounds, I see it as a positive – an indicator of how engaged and invested this community is. When we as neighbors enter into debate and work out compromises through an open process, this is the essence of community. Sometimes it gets really messy - and we don't get everything we want - but that's OK because we know that the whole is always greater than the sum of the parts. The bottom line is that Mayo Farm is protected open space that benefits the entire community. This is a wonderful outcome made possible by conservation and community involvement.

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Meanwhile, in the national land trust scene “community conservation” has become the newest catch phrase and trend. Over the past few years, I have attended numerous talks by experts and conservation leaders from across the country touting the benefits to land trusts of becoming better integrated into the community and getting people engaged. Stowe Land Trust's first project – protecting the Mayo Farm – was a long, messy, often trying (but thoroughly engaging) process rooted in community. Proudly, we can say that “community conservation” is nothing new to Stowe or SLT - it's been our thing since the beginning.

Mayo purchase is one of a kind in Vermont

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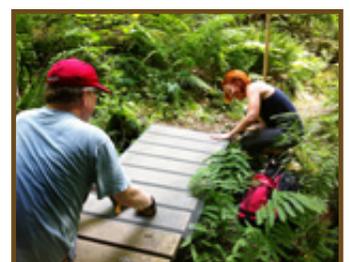
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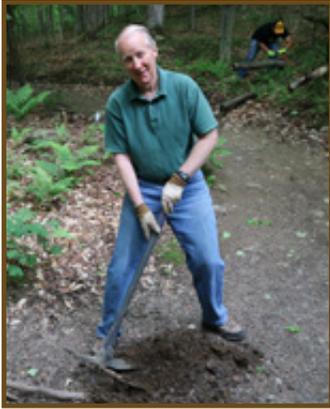
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 Bowie and Helen Duncan
 Land Trust Alliance
 State of Vermont
 Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

Program Partners

Apple Tree Learning Center
 Green Mountain Technology & Career Center
 Hunger Mountain Coop
 JCOGS
 Lamoille County Hikes for Tykes
 Laraway School
 Learning Ladder

Mountain River School
 Mountain Village School
 Mud City Adventures
 Nation Life Group
 Rugged Adventures
 Stowe Bible Camp
 Stowe Conservation Commission
 Stowe Elementary School
 Stowe High School
 Stowe Mountain Bike Club
 Stowe Mountain Resort Adventure Camps
 Stowe Nordic
 Stowe Parks and Rec Summer Camps
 Stowe Parks and Recreation Afterschool Program
 Stowe Parks and Rec Rascals
 Town of Stowe
 Trapp Family Lodge
 UVM Rubenstein School
 Vermont Housing and Conservation Board
 VT Department of Forests, Parks & Rec

This list includes all donations made between October 1, 2015-September 23, 2016. If we have missed or incorrectly listed your name please let us know!

✨ = 5+ Consecutive Year Donors
 🌲 = 10+ Consecutive Year Donors
 🏠 = 15+ Consecutive Year Donors

Thanks to our 200+ donors, the Kaiser Family Farm in Nebraska Valley was protected in April! Together we have protected a working farm and are supporting the next generation of Stowe farmers. Thanks to everyone who gave!

17th Annual Invitational Golf Tournament

The Stowe Land Trust Invitational Golf Tournament, held every year in August at the West Hill Golf Course in Stowe, is hosted by Lee and Alice Spencer. The golf tournament gives our members a unique opportunity to play on a spectacular private golf course while helping Stowe Land Trust protect Stowe's natural beauty.

The 17th Annual Invitational Golf Tournament held on August 5, 2016 was a great success, raising \$24,000 for Stowe Land Trust. Thanks to our sponsors and all who attended -- your support makes our work possible! With the help of over fifty local businesses and individuals who provided everything from gift certificates and golf balls to 5 - star dinners and gift baskets, we had a great time.

Save the date for the 2017 Tournament – Friday, August 4, 2017!

Congratulations to this year's winners!



1st Place Team - Sebastian Sweatman (captain), Jim Luke, Rob Norton and Sally Watts.

2nd Place Team - Jena Wood (captain), Harry Bonyun, Mike Priestley and Philip Scott.

3rd Place Team - Pall Spera (captain), Michael Diender, Julian Harrison and Faith Spencer.

Plan Your Legacy

For 29 years, SLT's goal has been to ensure that the Stowe area continues to be a strong and vibrant community, where the natural landscape plays a central role in the economy, where development respects historic traditions and natural resources, and where there are accessible open spaces and abundant wildlife habitat. If you share this vision, you can make the conservation of Stowe's exceptionally scenic landscape and rich ecological resources a vital part of your own legacy by making a planned gift to Stowe Land Trust.

We invite you to talk with us, whether you are simply in the early stages of planning, or have made your decisions. For more information, contact Stowe Land Trust Executive Director, Caitrin Maloney at caitrin@stowelandtrust.org or 802-253-7221.

Every day I am reminded that I live in a special and beautiful place. I feel a responsibility to help preserve and protect this beauty, which is why I support the Stowe Land Trust now and in the future with a bequest to help them carry on the valuable work they do.

-- Kitty Coppock

Thanks to the following individuals and businesses for their support of the 17th Annual Golf Tournament!

Hosts

Lee & Alice Spencer

Gold Sponsors

(\$1,000+)

Mark Ferguson & Elizabeth Yntema
Bob & Mary Rohr
Nicholas Skinner

Silver Sponsors

(\$500+)

Tom Brock & Mary Jackson
Hugh Durden

Bronze Sponsors

(\$250+)

Steve Adams
Thomas Amidon, Esq.
Brydon Beasant
Hillel & Mitzi Becker
Israel & Emily Brooks
Michael Roche
Sam & Beverly Scofield
Individual Supporters
Alan and Caryn Kovacs
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Tom Werts & Ellen Linck

Business Supporters

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Bear Pond Books
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Caledonia Spirits
City Market
Commodities Natural Market
Commodores Inn

Decisions
Doc Ponds
Edelweiss
Edson Hill
Edward Jones
Elmore Mountain Farm
Ferro Jewelers
Field Guide - Picnic Social
Fine Wine Cellars
From Maria's Garden
Green Envy
Green Mountain Inn - The Whip
Hannaford
Harrison's Restaurant
Healthy Living
Hobble Inn
Hunger Mountain Coop
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In Company
Lake Champlain Chocolates
Laughing Moon Chocolates
Mac's Market
Maxi's Restaurant
Michael's on the Hill Plate
River Arts
Sage Therapeutic Massage
Salon Salon
Seventh Generation
Shaw's General Store
Shaws Supermarket
Stowe Cider
Stowe Craft Gallery & Design Center
Stowe Kitchen, Bath & Linens
Stowe Mercantile

Stowe Mountain Resort
Sun & Ski Inn - Stowe Bowl
Sushi Yoshi
The Bench
The Body Lounge
The Country Store
The Pizza Joint
The Stowehof
The Swimming Hole
Trattoria La Festa
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Well Heeled

Committee Members & Volunteers

John Douglas, Chair
Charlie Berry
Alice Dana Spencer
Trowbridge Elliman
Walter Frame
Meg Kauffman
John Merrill
Jack Patten
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Kory Legrand
Mike Leikert
Mila Lonetto
Jason MacDonough
Kacie Miller
Ron Philo
Deb Pucillo
Will Spencer
Susan Spera
John Tewhill
Tom Werts
Sherry Wilson



Thanks to all the members of the Stowe Land Trust Board of Directors who donated bottles of wine.

THANK YOU!

Stowe Farmland Conserved in 2016

SLT is proud to have completed two important farmland protection projects in 2016 thanks to generous support from landowners, partners, donors, and the Stowe community.



Annie Paradee (pictured) and her husband, Andrew, purchased the newly-conserved Kaiser Farm in Nebraska Valley this spring and lost no time starting their new business, Long Winter Farm. The fall harvest is in and they are already planning for next season.



Willard Hunnewell (pictured here on his land with SLT Executive Director, Caitrin Maloney) and his sons donated a conservation easement on 12 acres of their farmland along Weeks Hill Road this summer. This land is currently used by the Percy dairy farm as a heifer pasture.

Volunteers Improve Trails

Thanks to help from our great volunteers, Stowe Land Trust's trails got some love this summer. Stowe Bible Camp and Stowe Mountain Resort Adventure Camp helped to replace the decking on two bridges at Wiessner Woods. National Life Group volunteers opened up a new footpath at the Burnham Farm in May. We also got lots of help from our Volunteer Land and Trail Stewards and local summer camp groups doing general maintenance throughout the season. Thanks everyone!



Stowe Bible Campers help fix a bridge at Wiessner Woods in June.

AmeriCorps Supports SLT Naturalist Program

Thanks to generous support from Helen & Bowie Duncan and other SLT members, we were able to partner with AmeriCorps for the first time to hire Stewardship & Outreach Assistant, Brenna Toman, who ran our Summer Naturalist program this season. Brenna engaged over 700 youth, families, and others in enjoying and caring for our conserved lands. Season highlights included leading a Full Moon Hike in April, getting outside with



Stowe 2nd graders explore with SLT's Naturalist, Brenna Toman.

all of Stowe Elementary School's 1st - 4th graders, and creating an online Naturalist Journal. She also helped out with volunteer coordination, media & outreach, and easement monitoring. We'll miss Brenna and wish her the best!

DuMont Meadow Restoration Underway

With assistance from Mike Bald of Got Weeds?, over 30 volunteers - including employees from Hunger Mountain Coop and members of JCOGS - cut back and pulled over 500 honeysuckle plants from the 7-acre DuMont Meadow throughout the summer. As part of this effort to restore native plant diversity and improve wildlife habitat on the property, we also brushhogged the meadow this fall and are partnering with the Intervale Conservation Nursery to plant additional native trees and shrubs along the river next spring. We'll also continue our invasive plant control efforts next growing season - all without the use of herbicides. This restoration and community outreach project is being made possible with a grant from the Davis Conservation Fund.

Volunteers from Hunger Mountain Coop cut back invasive honeysuckle at DuMont Meadow this summer.



New Directors Elected

Three new board members were elected by Stowe Land Trust's membership at the 29th Annual Meeting celebration held on Sunday, September 25th at Mayo Farm & Hunnewell Meadow in Stowe. Doren Dolan, Darsey Moon, and Ryan Percy will join nineteen existing board members responsible for governing the community conservation organization. Each year SLT has a limited number of openings available in its volunteer board. New members are recruited based on an identified need within the organization. The diversity of the Board is meant to represent the broad perspectives of our community and strengthen SLT's position as a community asset.



Credit: Stowe Reporter

Darsey Moon

Darsey lives in Stowe with her husband Joe and her dogs. She has been a resident since 2005. Darsey is a master gardener with the UVM Extension program and serves on the Stowe Conservation Commission. She has served as a volunteer land Steward for the conserved Sunset Rock property for three seasons. Darsey loves getting out on SLT-conserved properties to hike, walk her dogs and ski.



Doren Dolan

Doren grew up in CT and skiing at Stratton. She graduated from Westover School and UVM. She began her career as a buyer for Bloomingdales and then switched to a career in Sports Marketing with The New York Times and AT&T. Her husband, John, and three kids moved to Stowe in 2007 and have been enjoying the Vermont life of hiking, skiing, yoga, biking, camping, and more with their dog, Oona. Doren has kept busy with volunteer work in town and in the schools. She is looking forward to serving on the SLT Board to help their efforts in keeping open space here in Stowe.



Ryan Percy

Ryan Percy was born and raised on his family's 500-cow dairy farm in Stowe which he manages with his father today. Ryan is the third generation of Percy farmers who have been farming in town since Ryan's grandparents moved here in the late 1930s. Ryan and his wife Courtney were married this June and along with their two daughters, Louisa and Lydia, call Stowe home. Ryan is looking forward to being involved in the organization that has protected many of the properties their farm uses and owns.

Farewell Harry Hunt and David Norden

After nearly a decade of dedicated service, we bid farewell to two board members, Harry Hunt and David Norden.



Harry Hunt joined the SLT Board of Directors in 2007. As a local architect, Harry quickly became invaluable by sharing his knowledge during the historic Mill Trail Cabin restoration. Serving on the Stewardship Committee for many of his years with us, Harry helped guide the organization as we undertook more stewardship projects.



David Norden, who joined the board in 2009, served as treasurer from 2010 through 2014 and became chair in 2015. Under his tenure and leadership, we added our first farm to our conservation portfolio and released a nationally recognized strategic conservation plan. David is moving to New Mexico with his family where he will be CEO of Taos Ski Valley.

Thank you both for all you have done for Stowe Land Trust over the years, and we wish you both well in all your future endeavors!

Show Your Support!

Stock up on old friends like our classic baseball hats (\$20) or our stainless steel Flip Top Water Bottle (\$20). Our eco trucker hats (\$20) are made with recycled polyester and organic cotton available in red, orange, green, navy, and charcoal/black. Stop by our office at 699 South Main St in Stowe or give us a call at (802) 253-7221 to order.

WWW.STOWELANDTRUST.ORG



What's Going On? SLT Outings and Events

These outings are free and open to the public! For full descriptions and registration information for our outings and events visit: www.stowelandtrust.org.

Volunteer Invasive Plant Work Day

Friday, November 11th, 9:30am - 3:30pm

Cady Hill Forest

Help us take care of Cady Hill Forest by putting a stop to the spread of invasive, Japanese Barberry, without the use of herbicides. Co-hosted with the Stowe Conservation Commission.

Fall Family Hike

Saturday, November 19th, 10am

Wiessner Woods

Don't let stick season get you down; get outside with SLT on a kid-friendly hike. All ages welcome!

Animals of the North: What Will Global Climate Change Mean for Them?

Wednesday, December 7th, 7pm

Green Mountain Club

Join us for an informative and inspiring slideshow & presentation by Sue Morse of Keeping Track®. Part of the Shutesville Wildlife Series.

Hikes for Tykes Winter Explore

Tuesday, January 24th, 10am

Mill Trail

Join SLT and Lamoille County Hikes for Tykes in exploring the winter world along the Mill Trail. Enjoy a fire and hot cocoa at the Mill Trail Cabin afterwards. Children ages 0-5 and their caregivers welcome!

Peak-a-View Snowshoe

Saturday, February 18th, 9am

Page Forest

Strap on your snowshoes and join us for a moderate hike on the trails of Page and Sterling Forests.

Apple Tree Pruning Workshop

Saturday, March 4th, 1-4pm

Come learn the basics of fruit tree pruning and care from Lamoille County Forester, Rick Dyer, at the SLT-conserved Burnham Farm.

For more information about an outing or event call 802-253-7221 or email info@stowelandtrust.org.



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