

# A Decade of Trust



The First Ten Years of the  
Middlesex Land Trust

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of the  
Middlesex Land Trust



Written by  
Thomas Ladny  
1998

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### Year 1:

**March 1987 to  
May 1988**

**I**t was a perceived need that led to the formation of the Middlesex Land Trust in 1987, just a decade ago. The "boom years" of development in the late eighties exposed a critical lack of land trusts in northern Middlesex County. The Land Trust was established *unofficially* on March 16, 1987, at a meeting convened by Middletown Attorney William Howard to explore the possibility of establishing a land trust, and accept the Fenner Dam property in Middletown. The property was deemed unacceptable due to liabilities, but a seed for the formation of a land trust was planted. This was the catalyst that encouraged Andy Zepp of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in Middletown to form a land trust for the area.

Andy was a well known conservationist. A former member of Middletown's Inland Wetland Commission, he held the position of Land Steward at TNC, and was Chairman of the Middletown Conservation Commission. He was heavily involved in a broad variety of land protection projects and was respected for his ability to form and organize effective environmental groups for various causes. It was his

desire to form the Middlesex Land Trust because, as he stated in the Trust's first newsletter, "As development pressures increase throughout our region, it is clear that we must act now in order to protect this area's finest natural areas. With this goal in mind, The Middlesex Land Trust was born."

In the spring of 1987, Andy assembled a group of volunteers and conservationists to form a multi-town land trust in northern Middlesex County, for the towns of Cromwell, Durham, East Hampton, Middlefield, Middletown and Portland. This group formed the first governing body and consisted of twelve members: Andy Zepp, Anne Bickford, Eric Hammer, Ron Klattenberg and Susan Cooley of Middletown; Jim Gibbons of Durham; Steve Dyson of Middlefield; Patricia Leavenworth of Higganum; Mark Peterson and Matthew Roth of Portland; Ann Street of Hartford; and Dave Titus of Cromwell. The board's first officers were Andy Zepp as President, Anne Bickford as Vice President, Eric Hammer as Treasurer and Jim Gibbons as Secretary. With the governing body and officers in place, they set out to officially establish the Middlesex Land Trust.

The governing board's first task was to formalize the organization of the Trust. On May 11, 1987, at its first Board of Directors meeting at the deKoven House in Middletown, the Board approved its By-Laws and Certificate of Incorporation, thus *officially* forming the Middlesex Land Trust, Inc. The new Board of Directors and officers were as mentioned previously.

A Certificate of Incorporation for the Middlesex Land Trust, Inc. was filed with the Secretary of the State on May 13, 1987. The nature of its activities and purposes were listed as:

1. To promote for the benefit of the general public the preservation of natural resources principally in, but not limited to, the County of Middlesex. These resources shall include land and water resources, the plant and animal life thereon, and unique scenic, natural and historic sites;
2. To engage in and promote the scientific study of and education regarding natural resources;

3. To use all properties held or controlled by the corporation and the net earnings thereof for the benefit of the general public and for charitable, educational, recreational, conservation, scientific and historical purposes.

President Zepp submitted an application for tax exempt status from federal income tax on June 19 and received exemption under section 501 (c)(3) on September 17, 1987. The Trust's first "office" was at TNC in Middletown. A base membership was established and efforts were focused on acquiring two tracts along Spruce Brook in Middletown, and one tract along the Coginchaug River on the Middletown and Middlefield border. On December 17, 1987, the Trust acquired its first property, the 20 acre Leaska-Pearson Preserve along the Coginchaug River in Middletown. The Trust received much press coverage from the Hartford Courant and the Middletown Press.

*Andy Zepp*



Also, in May 1987, the Trust began developing its first membership brochure. In July a publicity flyer was put together and completion of

the brochure and development of a land trust logo was being discussed. After the Trust's incorporation in May, a \$1,000 grant from Rockfall Corporation provided start up funding for a number of projects, such as logo and brochure development, and to cover printing and mailing costs. In December, the logo was finalized and the brochure was sent out for printing. Two-thousand copies were received in February 1988.

The first two issues of the Trust's newsletter, *The Middlesex Landscape*, were published and distributed in February and April of 1988. Its name was decided at the January 1988 Board meeting. The new brochure's first bulk mailing was in March. President Zepp was also busy spreading the word with presentations, first to the Midstate Regional Planning Agency in February, and to the Cromwell Historical Society in March. The By Laws were amended on April 12, 1988. Among the changes: the President became the Chairman and the Vice President became the Vice Chairman.

The Trust held its first Annual Meeting on May 18, 1988, at the deKoven House in Middletown. Les Corey, Director of the Connecticut Chapter of TNC, was the featured speaker. He spoke on "Middlesex County's Vanishing Landscape: The Challenge For Open Space Conservation." After guiding the fledgling Middlesex Land Trust to a degree of success unusual among new land trusts, founding father Andy Zepp stepped down from the Board to travel the country, and to seek a Master's degree in Natural Resource Policy at Cornell University in the fall. Susan Cooley assumed the Chairman's role. Susan was the Director of Investment Services of Farmvest and past Director of Stewardship for the Connecticut Chapter of TNC where she wrote the guide, "Country Walks in Connecticut". Lee Rogers and John Friar of Middlefield joined the Board. Lee replaced Jim Gibbons as Secretary. By this time membership had grown to 106 members. Thus ended the historic and highly successful first year of The Middlesex Land Trust.

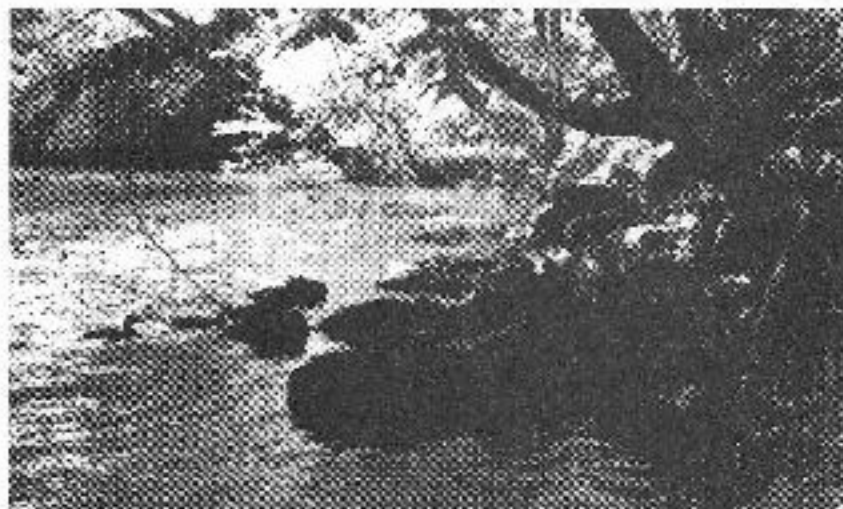
## **Year 2: May 1988 to May 1989**

**T**he second year of the Middlesex Land Trust could be characterized as reformation and establishment. With new leadership, the Trust endeavored to find and establish itself with the public. The Board

developed goals for the coming year for land acquisition and stewardship planning, and the membership committee developed a plan to double membership to 200. In July, the Board's regular meeting schedule was set for the first Monday of each month.

For publicity, the Trust co-sponsored a canoe trip with the Mattabesek Audubon Society on October 1 to Wilcox Island on the Connecticut River in Middletown. A large silver maple was found and measured to have a 197" circumference. In the November 1988 newsletter, Jim Gibbons wrote an article defining what a land trust is, and highlighted the importance of the Middlesex Land Trust to county municipalities. Members of the Board of Directors participated in the sixth annual Convocation of Land Trusts held at the University of Hartford. The Board also endorsed the Middletown Urban Forestry Project and a draft "Stewardship Plan of the Leaska-Pearson Tract" was developed by Trust members in the spring of 1989. Preservation efforts now extended to all six towns and several site visits were conducted. Another *Middlesex Landscape* newsletter was distributed in the spring of 1989.

A highlight for the year involved the dedication of the Trust's first acquisition, the Leaska-Pearson preserve, on Earth Day, April 22. This



*The Leaska - Pearson Preserve and Coginchaug River in Middletown*

dedication set an upbeat atmosphere for the Board of Directors, members of the Land Trust and the donors. The ceremony was well attended and publicized. After the dedication, Phil and Bob Merriam of Merriam Tree Farm provided refreshments and tree seedlings to all attendees.

The second annual meeting was held May 23 at the deKoven House. The Executive Director of the Franklin Land Trust, Mark Zenick was the keynote speaker and he spoke on "Integrating Affordable Housing with Open Space Preservation." Four new Directors were elected to the Board; Mary Ann Dickinson, Lynn Johnson, Tom Ladny and Glenn McNamara. The officers remained the same. Membership of the Land Trust was reported at 114 members.

### **Year 3: May 1989 to May 1990**

**A**cquisition possibilities were now being pursued actively in most of the six towns within the Land Trust area, and education and outreach efforts were on the increase. Membership lists from partner conservation organizations were sought to increase the mailing and recruitment base. Slowly, membership increased to 138 members by the end of 1989.

The Trust sponsored a presentation in October on Birds of Prey given by Dick Lucius. In January, the goals set for 1989 were again adopted for 1990. It was at this meeting that the Whitney family first indicated their interest in preserving their property in Durham. This parcel eventually became the Trust's Mica Ledges Preserve. A Stewardship plan for the Leuska-Pearson Preserve, prepared and completed by Trust members Patricia Durnigan, Beth Lapin and Lee Rogers, was presented at the February meeting. A new *Middlesex Landscape* newsletter was distributed in the spring of 1990.

The third annual meeting was held on May 31 at the new Connecticut Forest and Park Association building in Middlefield. Speaker Carolyn Hughes, the Coordinator of Connecticut's River Management Program, presented a slide lecture about the state program and what could be done locally to protect rivers in Middlesex County. Membership had



increased to 172 members. Four new Directors joined the Board; Margaret Morice, Jane Brawerman, Phyllis Gerard, and Kim Platt (O'Rourke). The Land Trust participated in the twentieth anniversary festivities of Earth Day with an exhibit at Wesleyan's Eco-Fair and numerous educational activities in several towns.

#### **Year 4: June 1990 to June 1991**

**D**uring the election of officers at the Board meeting on June 4, Sue Cooley stepped down as Chairman. John Friar was elected as Chairman, Glenn McNamara as Vice Chairman and Mary Ann Dickinson as Treasurer. In September, Sue Cooley announced that she was leaving the Board to take up dairy farming in northern Vermont. That month, the Land Trust cosponsored a multi-town meeting for town officials, land use commissioners and interest residents in the Coginchang River basin to share concerns and solutions for the river corridor.

Land Trust acquisition activities continued in earnest in all six towns. Discussion between the Board and the Pocotopaug Community Corporation in East Hampton regarding the preservation of a large parcel north of Lake Pocotopaug was the main focus in the spring of 1991. Also, a Goals and Purpose Statement was developed and adopted by the Board. The Board's Standards and Practices were also developed and adopted in June.

The fourth Annual Meeting was again held at the Connecticut Forest and Park Association building on June 5. A presentation on Middletown's Urban Forestry Program was given by Foresters Stan Watson, Bruce Sparran and Robert Ricard. John LeShane and Frank LaBella were elected to the Board while Beth Lapin resigned. Membership was reported at 186 members.

Two newsletters were distributed by the Trust during the year. The year ended with a June 8 canoe trip to Wilcox Island that was cosponsored with the Mattabesecck Audubon Society to celebrate Rivers Month.



*Dr. George Whitney*

## **Year 5: June 1991 to June 1992**

**T**he year started off with the reelection of the same officers and the addition of Kim O'Rourke as Secretary at the July 1 Board meeting. In October, Julianna Barrett, a Field Biologist with TNC was elected to the Board as a representative for East Hampton. The November 1991 Board meeting was to have one of the biggest impacts on the Land Trust for many years to come. It was during this meeting that Dr.

George and Mrs. Whitney attended to talk about a 106 acre parcel in south Durham and north Madison that they owned and wanted to protect from development. This parcel contained part of the Blue Trail, a 6 acre pond, ridge tops with scenic vistas and habitat for endangered reptile species.

Directors John LeShane, Tom Ladny and Lynn Johnson hiked the parcel on November 11 and brought back a glowing report to the December Board meeting. The Board set acquisition of the Whitney's parcel as its highest priority at its January 1992 meeting. It also set a high priority on increasing membership and public awareness through an ambitious list of public events. Part of that awareness was to continue its Board meetings at the libraries within the 6 towns. The first full Board site visit to the Whitney and adjacent Gulielmetti parcels was conducted on April 4, 1992. Also in April, the Board voted to pursue the acquisition of its second parcel, adjacent to the Paley Farms subdivision in Portland. This 6 acre parcel included floodplain, a woodland stream and wooded terrace slopes adjacent to Wangunk Meadows.

In June, the Trust sponsored a Mountain Laurel walk along the Mattabesett Trail in Middletown and also participated in the Rose Town Celebration in Cromwell. The fifth Annual Meeting was held on June 4



*The first visit to Mica Ledges*

in Middlefield. Dr. Nick Bellantoni, Connecticut State Archaeologist, gave a spirited presentation entitled "Old Bones and Open Space: Connecting Archaeology to Land Preservation in Northern Middlesex County." Six new Directors were elected; Attorney Bill Howard, Diane Moore, Greg Warren, Stan Watson, Tom Wells and Nancy Woolhouse-Mueller. The last four of the founding Directors, Anne Bickford, Jim Gibbons, Ann Street and Ron Klattenberg stepped down from the Land Trust Board. John Friar also stepped down as Chairman and the new officers to be elected were Tom Ladny as Chairman, John LeShane as Vice Chairman and Frank LaBella as Treasurer. Kim O'Rourke continued as Secretary. Membership was reported at 124 members. Two newsletters were published during the year.

Thus ended the first 5 years of the existence of The Middlesex Land Trust. What started on a fast track the first year, soon followed with 4 years of transitional changes, new challenges, foundation building and renewed promise for the coming 5 years.



*Dedicating the Abe Temkin Preserve*

## Year 6: June 1992 to June 1993

By the start of its sixth year, the Land Trust was very active in site visits and land acquisition activities. Up to this point, only one parcel had been acquired, but that was soon to change. Negotiations for a 6 acre parcel adjacent to the Paley Farms subdivision in Portland continued through the summer. The transfer was completed in late December 1992. It was named the Abe Temkin Preserve. By August, the Board had acquisition interests in 13 other parcels.

July 1992 proved to be a big turning point for the Land Trust. The Trust acquired its first official home in an office within the deKoven House in Middletown. No more were records and files to be kept around the county in milk crates! Through the generosity of the Rockfall Foundation and a couple of local businesses, the Trust now had an office with furniture, and file and map cabinets. The Trust became established.

In December, the Board developed the Middlesex Land Trust Mission Statement, later adopted in February. Dr. Whitney also dropped a bombshell by announcing that a developer had proposed an attractive offer for his parcel in Durham and the Board's hopes of acquisition started to fade. Membership had fallen to 106 members by early 1993.

Spirits picked up again in March when a third parcel was donated by the Jacksons in Middletown. This parcel was the first of several received along Sumner Brook, and resulted from a series workshops on the Sumner Brook watershed held in conjunction with the City of Middletown to interest landowners in the protection of the stream.



*Tom Ladny and donor John Jackson post the first sign at the Jackson Preserve on Summer Brook in Middletown*

Dedication of the Ahe Tomkin Preserve in Portland occurred on May 22, a joyous occasion! That month, the Trust also participated in the Coginchaug River Day festivities with a display at Veteran's Park.

The Sixth Annual Meeting occurred on June 7 where USGS Geologist Janet Stone presented "The Glacial History of Middletown/Connecticut River Valley Area." This meeting was well attended and one new Board member, Richard Sweet, was elected. Two newsletters were published during the year and membership was announced at 140 members.



*Cassa Preserve Dedication*

## **Year 7: June 1993 to June 1994**

**T**he summer of 1993 provided a brief relief for the Board and the opportunity to conduct site walks for potential acquisitions in

Portland and along Summer Brook in Middletown. The first preserve dedicated along Summer

Brook occurred in September for the Jackson Farms parcel. Also that month, the 7 acre Cassa property was acquired and the Board voted to accept a parcel in Portland donated by Luya Mead Hoar. The Cassa parcel directly abutted and enhanced Middletown's 98 acre Guida Farm Conservation Area. In November, the Board voted to accept the Charles Johnson 12 acre parcel located within Pecauset Meadows in Portland. Final closure on four parcels occurred in December. The Luya Mead Hoar and Charles Johnson parcels in Portland, and two parcels donated by the Palmer family, one located in East Hampton and the other in Portland. In all of 1993, the Land Trust had acquired 6 parcels of land comprising approximately 32 acres.

Land Trust visibility and publicity efforts continued with the purchase of a Downing display board to be used at Land Trust functions and events. The first opportunity came in November when the Land Trust and East Hampton Conservation Commission co-sponsored a presentation of "Preserving Family Lands" at East Hampton's Community Center. Guest speaker Stephen Broderick, a Forester with the UConn Extension Service, explained the importance of estate planning and various techniques to reduce tax liabilities when passing land on to heirs. Later that month, during the Trust's regular Board meeting, William Warner, Middletown's City Planner, and Melissa Levy presented the Sumner Brook Corridor Initiative and Middletown's Open Space Plan to the Board.

*Middletown Planner William Warner explains the Sumner Brook Corridor Initiative*



During December, the Board discussed the possible joint purchase of the Whitney parcel with the Madison Land Trust. Membership was at 173 members. 1994 goals were set to increase membership to 300 members, produce 3 newsletters, and complete the Land Trust's Standards and Practices document.

The draft Stewardship Plan for the Abe Temkin Preserve was presented for review and adoption in the winter of 1994. Also during this time, three workshops were conducted in cooperation with Middletown's Planning and Zoning and Conservation Commissions. These workshops focused on the natural resources of the Sumner Brook valley in south Middletown to identify and recommend lands worthy of preservation. Results of these meetings were presented to the Board in May by William Warner.

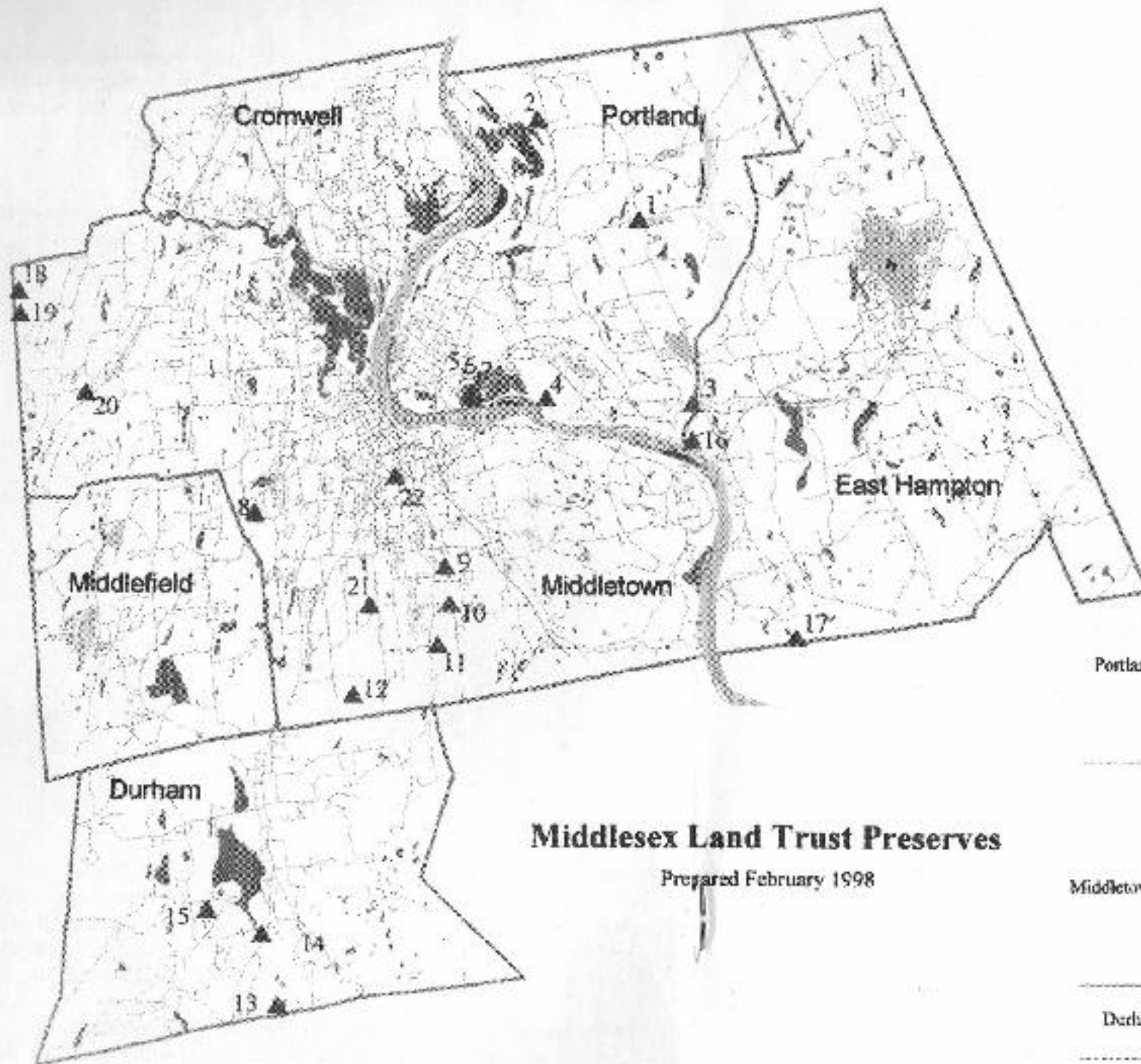


*The Brady Parcel and  
Sumner Brook*

By March, the asking price for the Whitney parcel had doubled to \$2,000 per acre and the Board was now seeking to combine acquisition and fund raising efforts with the Madison Land Trust. Also, the Bradys of Middletown offered a section of a parcel that included an agricultural field, a few hundred feet of Sumner Brook and a scenic wooded slope.

With the numerous acquisitions during the previous year came dedication activities. Three dedications were held within two days: the





**Explanation**

- ▲ Land Trust Preserve
- Town Boundary
- ⋄ Roads
- ▨ Flats
- Island
- ▩ Marsh
- ▧ Water

Preserve Name	Number
Hoar	1
Temkin	2
Taylor Brook	3
Caplin	4
Johnson	5
Kalinowski	6
Harper	7
Pierson-Lenska	8
Harris	9
Jackson	10
Longworth	11
Casa	12
Benson	18, 19
Behling	20
Arbutus Street	21
Marino	22
Mica Ledges	13
Coginchaug Quarry	14
Narwald	15
Cobalt Landing	16
Holmgren	17

**Middlesex Land Trust Preserves**

Prepared February 1998

Portland  
Middletown  
Durham  
East Hampton



General John Hoar (Luva Mead Hoar) Nature Preserve on May 13, and the Charles Johnson, Taylor Brook (Palmer), and Cobalt Landing (Palmer) Preserves on May 14. A third newsletter for the year was also distributed during May.



*John LeShane assists Luva Hoar post the General John Hoar Preserve*

The seventh Annual Meeting was held June 13 in Middlefield at the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association building. Key note speaker Attorney David Platt from the law firm of Murtha, Cullina, Richter and Pinney highlighted the importance of estate planning in land preservation. Former Chairman John Friar was presented with an Appreciation Award by the Board for his Land Trust dedication and leadership while on the Board of Directors. Kent Ritter from Cromwell joined the Board, and Tom Ladny stepped down after two years as Chairman. The newly elected officers included John LeShane as Chairman, Diane Moore as Vice Chairman, Frank LaBella as Treasurer and Tom Ladny as Secretary. Since the previous June, the Board acquired five parcels totaling 28 acres and held four dedications. Three newsletters were published and membership grew to nearly 200 members. Year seven turned out to be one of the busiest and productive years thus far.



*Nancy Woolhouse-Meuller, John LeShane and "Snuggy" Kalinowski at the Snuggy Kalinowski Preserve dedication*

## **Year 8: June 1994 to June 1995**

**T**he new year started off with news that the Land Trust membership was now more than 200 and climbing. Funding from the state's Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust program was being investigated for the Whitney parcel. The Land Trust received its second parcel located in Portland's

Pecaussett Meadows. This 2.65 acre parcel, donated by Joseph "Snuggy" Kalinowski, was located south and adjacent to the 12 acre Johnson Preserve.

Fall brought closure for two parcels. The Cassa Preserve was dedicated on September 24 at the entrance to the Guida Farm Conservation Area. This dedication received much press and was attended by two of the Guida Brothers. The dedication of the Snuggy Kalinowski Preserve took place on October 29 with a walk through the flood plain meadow. Both dedications were well attended. The fall newsletter was also distributed in October.

On October 14, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection dedicated the Connecticut River Estuary and Tidal Wetlands Complex as a Wetland of International Importance, especially as waterfowl habitat. This wetland complex, which includes Pecaussett Meadows, was one of only 15 such designations for the United States. Because of the Trust's properties in Pecaussett Meadows, the Board was represented by two Directors at this historic signing.

The Land Trust held a "Summit Meeting" on October 16 inviting the public to come and visit the Whitney and Gulielmetti properties to appreciate these unique and scenic parcels. The turnout was overwhelming. Later, on November 5, the Middlesex Land Trust was recognized with an Honorable Mention Award as a revitalized and dynamic land trust, and for its preservation efforts and accomplishments within Pecauset Meadows during the awards ceremony at the Annual Land Trust Convocation.

*Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt speaks at the Connecticut River Estuary and Tidal Wetlands Complex meeting*



The year ended with a donation of \$1,365 from the STOP (Stop Trashing Of Portland) organization for preservation of land within Portland. A third parcel in Pecauset Meadows was received from Peg Harper, and membership was at 221. A goal of 300 members was set for the next year.

Winter and spring activities included a March walk on the Whitney and Gulielmetti parcels with Nick Bellantoni, Connecticut State Archaeologist, and several more walks for the public in April. Tree planting at the Abe Temkin Preserve occurred on April 29 and dedications for the Peg Harper and James Longworth (Brady) Preserves occurred on May 20. The membership was up to 240 members by the end of May when the spring newsletter was published.



*Planting trees at the Abe Temkin Preserve*

Acquisition efforts were now concentrated on reaching an agreement with the Whitneys for their parcel. They proposed a five year payment schedule and rejected the use of funds from the state's Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust program for the purchase. No clear consensus could be reached by the Board to purchase the parcel without financial assistance at a special meeting held on April 10. As a result, the

*State Archaeologist Dr. Nick Bellantoni describes conditions at the pest house near Mica Ledges in the 1700's*

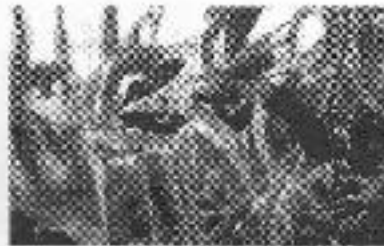


*The Brady's celebrate the dedication of the Longworth Preserve with friends*



Madison Land Trust met and indicated a willingness to consider a combined effort of both Land Trusts to co-acquire and co-own the property. At a joint meeting on May 1 at the Durham Library, the two Trusts met to discuss the proposal. After the presentation, the Middlesex Land Trust voted to acquire Whitney's parcel together with the Madison Land Trust.

The eighth Annual Meeting occurred on June 12. Dick Bowerfield, a Board Director of the Connecticut Forests and Parks Association, gave a talk and slide show entitled "The First 100 Years". He discussed their leadership role in the state's effort to preserve its natural heritage through its parks and 700 mile blue trail system. Tom Ladny and Lynn Johnson left the Board and two new Directors, Dorothy DiPiro and Lynn McKenna were elected. John LeShane stepped down as Chairman and the newly elected officers were Richard Sweet as Chairman, Diane Moore as Vice Chairman, Frank LaBella as Treasurer and Tom Wells as Secretary. June membership was announced at 269 members. Four dedications and two new parcels totaling 6 acres had been acquired during the year. Two newsletters had been published and distributed.





## Year 9: June 1995 to June 1996

The new year brought a large responsibility to the Board and new Chairman; raising the funds for the newly accepted Mica Ledges preserve in Durham. The Land Trust Board had formally committed to the acquisition of this parcel, however, the agreement with the Whitneys and the Madison Land Trust had not yet been finalized or signed. The hike up the mountain had just started.

In September, the Board voted to accept four new parcels. It also completed transfer of the 15 acre Martinez parcel in Durham along the Coginchaug River, named the Coginchaug Quarry Preserve, and the 3.2 acre Zaiantz parcel, named the Holmgren Preserve, in East Hampton. Alan Hurst joined the Board as an interim Director from East Hampton.

October 22 was the day of the "Hike-A-Thon", drawing attention to the efforts to save the Whitney and Gulielmetti parcels. In November, the Holmgren Preserve was dedicated. The Board launched its Pecausett Pond Initiative by mailing letters to all land owners in the Pecausett Meadows area introducing them to the Land Trust and inviting their consideration to donate property to the Trust.

In December, after years of negotiation, the Land Trust essentially acquired the 3 acre Caplin et al. property in Portland. This was the fourth parcel received in Pecausett Meadows in Portland. Late that month, the deed for the 7.5 acre Narwald parcel in Durham was received, and the Winter 1995 newsletter was distributed.

Spring 1996 was relatively quiet. The Board indicated its support for the tri-town (Meriden, Middlefield and Middletown) effort to preserve their traprock ridges. Acquisition efforts for several parcels were escalating.

The Land Trust was also assisting the town of Durham in its efforts to purchase the Gulielmetti 28 acre offering as town open space. That purchase was completed in 1997.

The Annual Meeting was held on June 19 at the deKoven House. The guest speaker was Dr. Peter Patton of Wesleyan University who spoke on the changing Connecticut landscape and influences from natural forces. The four officers remained the same as the previous year, and Alan Hurst of East Hampton, and Brad Belisle of Colchester were elected to the Board of Directors. Membership was announced at 204 members. For the year, 4 parcels totaling 29 acres were received. There was one dedication and one newsletter published.



### **Year 10: June 1996 to June 1997**

**T**he last year of the Middlesex Land Trust's decade of existence started on a historic note. On July 13, 1996, the Middlesex and Madison Land Trusts co-signed the mortgage documents for the 88 acre Whitney parcel in Durham and Madison. This marked the first time in

Connecticut that two Land Trusts jointly acquired a parcel of land. In addition, the 11.4 acre Behling parcel in Middletown was acquired in July.

By September, the "Save The Mica Ledges" fund raising project was started with plans for a raffle drawing to be held in 1997. A hike of Mica Ledges was scheduled for October 26 to kick off the fund raiser. The last of 8 deeds for the Caplin et al. parcel were finally received after 4 years of owner searching. To end the month, the 6.5 acre Ted Benson parcel in Middletown was acquired.



In October, Stewardship Committee Chairman Alan Hurst introduced five student interns from Wesleyan University who were working on the development of Management Plans for several of the Trust's preserves. Later that month, the Middlesex Land Trust received the 1996 Natural Resource Conservation Organization Award from the Middlesex County Soil and Water Conservation District.



*A cave at Mica Ledges*

The Fall 1996 *Middlesex Landscape* newsletter was published and distributed in November. To end 1996, the Trust acquired 3 additional parcels in Middletown: the 7 acre Norman Benson Preserve, adjacent to the Ted Benson parcel on Lamentation Mountain, the 2 acre Marino Preserve off Main Street Extension, and the 36 acre Delbert Harris Preserve along Sumner Brook.

The spring of 1997 was equally busy with work parties held by the Trust on six of its preserves. The Trust also added to its holdings with the 6.7 acre Arbutus Street Preserve in Middletown, and the 1 acre Miles Homes Preserve located adjacent to

the James Longworth Preserve on Sumner Brook in Middletown. The Winter/Spring 1997 newsletter came out and on Earth Day, the drawing for the "Save The Mica Ledges" fund raising raffle was held at Durham's Town Hall. Prizes included an Old Town canoe, binoculars, and books.

In May, Eagle Scout Rob Rosenthal of Portland organized and conducted a work party at the General John Hoar Nature Preserve to clear a trail, install a large wooden trail and boundary sign and to remove trash and exotic invasive plants growing within the preserve. Development of this preserve as an outdoor nature education Eagle Scout project allowed Rob to reach his goal while helping the Land Trust reach its goal for this preserve.

The year ended as it started, on a high note with the donation of an additional 27 acres in June to the Abe Temkin Preserve in Portland by



Abe's son Steve. The Trust By-Laws were amended for the second time on June 9, 1997 by the Board of Directors.

The tenth Annual Meeting was held on June 9 at the deKoven House. Guest speaker Carol Millard of the Connecticut Audubon Society spoke about the songbirds of northern Middlesex County. Richard Sweet stepped down as Chairman and Alan Hurst replaced him as "the bridge" into the second decade of Land Trust existence. Diane Moore, Frank LaBella and Tom Wells remained as Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. New Directors elected to the Board included Jeff Walberg and Bill Earls of Middletown, and Laurie Giannotti and John Shomsky of Middlefield. Membership was reported at 218 members and 2 newsletters were published during the year. The biggest accomplishment was the acquisition of Mica Ledges along with 8 other parcels for a total of approximately 161 acres.

In the first decade of The Middlesex Land Trust, 24 parcels comprising over 290 acres were acquired as preserves in northern Middlesex County. This success is the result of the seed that was planted during that March 1987 meeting convened in Attorney Bill Howard's office that grew into the Middlesex Land Trust. Since joining the Board of Directors in 1992, Bill has provided the Trust with direction and legal advise. He has served as the "go to" person who quietly stepped up when needed during parcel acquisitions by volunteering his legal expertise for drafting deeds and closing on Trust acquisitions. He provided these services for all but the first parcel acquired by the Trust. For this, the Middlesex Land Trust is eternally grateful and appreciative of Bill's vision and involvement. It is fitting that this decade of history as a Land Trust begins and ends with the Board of Directors acknowledgement of Bill Howard for allowing us this Decade of Trust.

Tom Ladny, Director  
Middlesex Land Trust, Inc.  
December, 1997



*Bill Howard*

Past and Present Directors  
of the Middlesex Land Trust  
1987 - 1998

1. Andrew B. Zepp	May 13, 1987 - May 18, 1988	Middletown
2. Anne Buckford	May 13, 1987 - June 4, 1992	Middletown
3. Eric Hammer	May 13, 1987 - March 6, 1989	Middletown
4. James C. Gibbons	May 13, 1987 - June 4, 1992	Durham
5. Steven Dyson	May 13, 1987 - May 18, 1988	Middlefield
6. Ronald Klatterberg	May 13, 1987 - November 2, 1992	Middletown
7. Patricia Leavenworth	May 13, 1987 - January 21, 1988	Haddam
8. Mark Peterson	May 13, 1987 - July 1, 1991	Portland
9. Matthew Roth	May 13, 1987 - July 1, 1991	Portland
10. Ann Street	May 13, 1987 - April 6, 1992	Hartford
11. David Titus	May 18, 1987 - September 7, 1988	Cromwell
12. Susan Cooley	May 13, 1987 - September 4, 1990	Middletown
13. John Calvoceccisi	September 1987 - May 18, 1988	East Hampton
14. Lee Rodgers	September 1987 - December 2, 1991	Middlefield
15. Richard Brown	January 1988 - July 6, 1989	East Hampton
16. Beth Lugin	May 18, 1988 - June 5, 1991	Middletown
17. Mark Mininberg	May 18, 1988 - March 6, 1989	Durham
18. John Friar	May 18, 1988 - June 13, 1994	Middlefield
19. Thomas Ladny	December 5, 1988 - June 12, 1995 Alt. January 1996 - December 1, 1997 December 1, 1997 - Present	Portland
20. Mary Ann Dickinsen	December 5, 1988 - October 5, 1992	Middletown
21. Lynn Johnson	May 23, 1989 - June 12, 1995	Durham
22. Glenn McNamara	May 23, 1989 - June 12, 1995	Middlefield
23. Kim Platt (O'Rourke)	May 21, 1990 - June 5, 1994 Alt. June 13, 1994 - January 5, 1996	Cromwell
24. Jane Brawerman	May 31, 1990 - Present	Middletown
25. Margaret Morice	May 31, 1990 - December 3, 1990	Portland
26. Phyllis Gerard (Thomas)	May 31, 1990 - December 3, 1990	East Hampton
27. Frank LaBella	June 5, 1991 - Present	Durham
28. John LeShane	June 5, 1991 - Present	Portland
29. Juliana Barrett	October 7, 1991 - June 9, 1997	East Hampton
30. Diane Moore	June 4, 1992 - Present	Durham
31. Nancy Woolhouse-Muellet	June 4, 1992 - Present	Portland
32. Thomas Wells	June 4, 1992 - Present	East Hampton
33. William Howard	July 16, 1992 - Present	Middletown
34. Greg Warren	June 4, 1992 - June 7, 1993	Middletown
35. Stan Watson	June 4, 1992 - Present	Middletown
36. Richard Sweet	June 7, 1993 - Present	Middletown
37. Kent Ritter	June 13, 1994 - June 12, 1995	Cromwell

38. Donna Magnano (Monnes)	August 29, 1994 - Present	Cromwell
39. Dorothy DiPiro	January 9, 1995 - January 5, 1998	Portland
40. Lyane McKenna	June 12, 1995 - Present	Durham
41. Alan Hurst	September 11, 1995 - Present	East Hampton
42. Brad Belisle	June 19, 1996 - April 6, 1998	Colchester
43. Joe D'Eugenio	January 6, 1997 - January 5, 1998	Cromwell
44. John Stonsky	January 6, 1997 - Present	Middlefield
45. Jeff Walberg	June 9, 1997 - Present	Middlefield
46. Lauri Giannotti	June 9, 1997 - Present	Middlefield
47. Bill Earls	June 9, 1997 - Present	Middlefield
48. Carlton Winslow	March 2, 1998 - Present	Middletown
49. Stuart Winquist	March 2, 1998 - Present	East Hampton



## OUR MISSION

*The Middlesex Land Trust's mission is to preserve open space in Northern Middlesex County by identifying, protecting, and maintaining significant natural features such as wetlands, scenic areas, critical wildlife habitats, prime farmland, and unique geological formations. The Land Trust accepts donations of property as well as conservation easements to ensure that these lands remain in open space for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.*



Middlesex Land Trust, Inc.  
27 Washington Street  
Middletown, CT 06424

Layout by Tom Wells

Map by Lauri Giannotti, Middlesex Soil and Water Conservation Service