



P.O. Box 49
Old Mystic, CT 06372

Avalonia Trails

DEDICATED TO PRESERVING
LAND AND WILDLIFE HABITATS

SPRING 2007

NEW BRIDGE AT THE YANNATOS PRESERVE COMPLETED

by Duncan Schweitzer

It was cold but at least it wasn't raining, yet a few of the crew did get wet on the March morning when the Yannatos bridge went up. After standing around for a while staring at the tiny paper plan, the crew moved the first stone into place. A piece that was mostly concrete was placed behind the first stone, between it and the bank. The concrete was to be covered by better looking stone later but in the meanwhile it would keep the bank from being scoured by the stone movement. The first stone was placed a ways out from the bank, so as to stop the concrete piece from rolling out into the middle. The base of the farthest pier was dragged across the river by a line passing through a snatch block on a red maple. Harry's tractor pulled the line with little effort. The middle pier base was placed next in the same way. Now all three pier bases were in place. The crew decided that a smaller second stone would be put on the far pier first. It proved to be the most troublesome. It was more triangular than square and this shape allowed the chain to slip off at the last moment. Two of the crew had waders and it fell to them to try and lift the stone up onto the pier base. They couldn't do it until David waded in without boots and added the needed muscle. With that behind them the crew next tackled the middle stone. This time an overhead block was rigged to a tree limb. It was hoped that this vertical lift would help bring the stone up onto the pier base and it did. Placement of the large bridging stones involved planks upon which to slide the stones and rollers cut from a tree limb. The overhead line, the pulling line and a rear control line were all used along with pry bars and hands. There was a tense moment when the first bridging stone seemed to be going off track, but slowly a recovery was made. The second bridging stone was placed on log rollers and moved over the first and on to planks. The planks were later removed by prying the stone up with bars. The last bridging stone had to wait until the next day as the crew was a bit tired. Not a bad day's work for an "older" gang. My thanks to Harry Tobiassen, Joellen Anderson, Mac Turner, David Bainbridge and Mike Goodwin. We all hope that the clearing and bridge help achieve Constance Yannatos' wish that the children of the area have a place to play, and perhaps Bob Jones's hopes for his gift.



Harry Tobiassen directs a particularly tricky maneuver, aided by Duncan Schweitzer and Mike Goodwin. Note creative use of ancient Egyptian-era technology.

Duncan Schweitzer tests the completed bridge. Volunteers Mike Goodwin in foreground, Mac Turner in background. Many more pictures are available on:

www.avalonialandconservancy.com



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OFFICERS

President.....Anne Nalwalk
Vice-President.....Harry Tobiassen
Treasurer.....Rowland Stebbins III
Secretary.....Anne Roberts-Pierson

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Acquisition.....Harry Tobiassen
Stewardship.....Bruce Anderson
Finance.....Rowland Stebbins III
Development.....Ellen Fossum
Membership.....Vicky Connor

DIRECTORS

Griswold	Stonington
Scott Dawley	Stuart Cole
Groton	Kate Robinson
Brae Rafferty	Rowland Stebbins III
David Scott	
Ledyard	Directors at Large
Ellen Fossum	Anna Coit
Anne Roberts-Pierson	Rusty Morrison
Harry Tobiassen	Gerald Stefon
North Stonington	
Anne Nalwalk	Honorary Directors-
Mac Turner	Carole Clark
Preston	Lois Tefft Van Deusen
Robert Chapin	Hugo Wilms
Margaret Gibson	
Mary Ann Melgey	

Avalonia Phone: (860) 887-6786



Directors needed

We have vacancies for directors in Griswold, Groton, Voluntown, Preston and North Stonington. If you admire the work that Avalonia does and would like to contribute more actively in this or in any other capacity, please contact us.

President’s Corner

Welcome spring! The birds are arriving, flowers are blooming, the amphibians are busy (even without a good spring rain), and the woodcock and osprey are active. Soon the trees will join the displays and Avalonia’s preserves will be magical to visit. Please take time to explore and enjoy the places, both large and small, that you have helped to preserve.

Please, if you bring your dog, be a friend to the preserve and come prepared with a plastic bag to clean up after him or her. Please remind others to be considerate also. Remember, small children also walk our trails. It spoils our pleasure in protecting these parcels when they are abused.

Thanks again for your help and support. We hope to see you on some of our Spring walks. See what projects are completed or underway— Amazing!

Anne Nalwalk



A note from the editor

Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles to this issue of “Avalonia Trails”. Your comments on the finished product are always welcome. If you would like to contribute an article, notice or photo to our next issue, please e-mail it to me at janiceparker@netscape.net by **August 1st, 2007**. For preference, send text documents as attachments, so they can be pasted directly into the newsletter without re-typing. Thank you.

Janice Parker

39th Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 16, 2007, 7 p.m.

Denison- Pequotsepos Nature Center

There will be a short business meeting followed by the evening's program:

Kevin Essington,

Director of the Nature Conservancy's

Pawcatuck Borderlands Project

FOREST CONSERVATION: PAWCATUCK BORDERLANDS AND AROUND THE WORLD.

The Nature Conservancy's efforts to assess the status of the world's habitats, especially its forests.

Before coming to Connecticut, Mr. Essington was Director of the Montezuma Land Conservancy in Cortez, Colorado. He holds an M.S. in Environmental Policy from the University of Denver, in Denver, Colorado, and a B.A. in history from the University of Michigan. He lives in Griswold with his wife and two children. His office is in Holly Green, Route 2, North Stonington.

Pedestrian possibilities at Hewitt Pond

by Anne Roberts-Pierson

There's nothing like a good dose of camaraderie achieved through a little sweaty volunteer team labor to make one feel that all is right with the world, or at least heading in the right direction. That is a feeling I recently came away with on the bright, but chilly Saturday, March 31 after such an endeavor.

The team players this day included members of Trout Unlimited, Avalonia Land Conservancy, and CT Forest & Parks Association. We banded together this particular day to begin to prepare the site for a long-awaited new steel pedestrian bridge that will allow foot traffic over the stone dam on Hewitt Pond in North Stonington. You see, Hewitt Pond is a lovely little body of water that you arrive at when hiking this section of the CT Blue Trail system. This bridge will facilitate crossing the waterway over the dam versus having to cross the wide stream bed below. This soon-to-arrive structure was purchased through a state grant that Trout Unlimited, Thames Valley Chapter (Mike Goodwin, President) worked long and hard to obtain; several years having gone into the planning of this venture.

With the help of a New Holland brush-hog owned and operated by ALC VP Harry Tobiassen and over a dozen tool-wielding individuals on the ground, we were able to clear the indicated area around one side of the dam that spills water into the Shunock River. As many of our readers clearly understand, heavy infestations of invasive plants such as autumn olive, oriental bittersweet, and Japanese barberry are most efficiently tackled (i.e. grubbed and cleared) with the aid of large equipment of the type that Mr. T. could offer.

The acronym T.E.A.M (Together Everyone Achieves More) really applies in these situations and we all went home feeling like we had accomplished something that would benefit the entire community. There is still much to do, like setting the footings for this bridge so it can be put into place, but our goal for the day was successfully met and we all had a good time reaching it as well! So the next time the opportunity presents itself to participate in such work parties, if able, I urge you all to jump right in! You will be glad that you did!

Connecticut Trails Day, June 2

NORTH STONINGTON:

Tefftweald 282 Grindstone Hill Road

Sat. June 2, 10-12 a.m. with heavy rain date for Sun. June 3 same time. Join us for a lovely, easy 2 mile hike through woodlands, meadow, ledges and brook-side. Bring a lunch to enjoy at the pavilion of this former Girl Scout Camp. No dogs please. Directions: At intersection of Rtes 184 and 49 take Rte 49 north for 0.9 mile to second left, Hangman Hill Rd. Continue 0.4 mile to a 4 way stop and go straight for 1.6 miles. At hard corner Hangman becomes Grindstone Hill and #282 is 0.5 mile ahead on right. Contact Lois Tefft Van Deusen at 535-3634 with questions.

Reed-Mitchell Preserve. Sat. June 2, 9 to noon. Tour 215 acres of diverse woods, stunning rock outcrops and Main Brook. Easy/moderate. Bring beverage, wear sturdy shoes. Anne Nalwalk and Mac Turner will make this an interesting walk. Meet at 371 Northwest Corner Road; park on the road. For directions/registration, call Anne Nalwalk at (860) 887-5878. Heavy rain cancels.

LEDYARD/PRESTON:

Canoe Trip, Poquetanuck Cove. Discover this significant coastal habitat and designated state bird sanctuary. Learn about ongoing efforts to control of the invasive plant, Phragmites, now threatening this special place. Sat., June 2, 10 a.m. to approx 1 p.m. Bring a canoe or kayak, portable flotation device, lunch/beverage. Meet at end of Royal Oak Dr. (off Arrowhead Dr.), Ledyard. Please pre-register, call Anne Roberts-Pierson at (860) 464-8101. Heavy rain cancels.

STONINGTON:

Hike Paffard Woods. Sunday, June 3, 9 to 11a.m. This hike will showcase a wide variety of landscapes: a steep glacial valley, wetlands and a coastal marsh; moderate difficulty. Meet in parking lot at 9 a.m. on west side of North Main St., 0.5 miles north of Rte 1.

MYSTIC

Moore Woodlands Work Party, Sat. June 2, 9 to 11 a.m. Avalonia received an LIP Grant Award to restore this early successional habitat. We will continue work by removing invasive vines and remnants of an old turkey farm. Bring work gloves loppers etc. Meet at Capstan Ave. cul-de-sac. Rain or shine. More information call Joellen Anderson 445-2563, co-leader/project coordinator, David Scott.

Poquetanuck Cove Streamwalk Initiative

by Jean Pillo

As a part of the overall process of educating the public about the important natural resources located in Poquetanuck Cove in Preston and Ledyard, CT, including the ALC "Sedge Bed" in Preston, the Ad-hoc Committee for the Preservation of Poquetanuck Cove would like to invite the public to assist in gathering baseline data on water quality in all the tributary streams feeding the cove. Streamwalk training will be offered on June 30, 2007 in Poquetanuck section of Preston at St. James Church. The free training will begin at 9 a.m. and will last 3 hours. Below are FAQs about Streamwalks.

What is a Streamwalk? A Streamwalk is the collection of specific in-stream and stream-side observational data developed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Streamwalks can reveal potential problems that affect water quality, such as erosion and sedimentation, lack of adequate riparian (stream-side) vegetation, discharges into the stream or other signs that something may be wrong in the watershed.

How is it done? Volunteers are given a sheet to complete in the stream section they are evaluating. Volunteers will receive a free half-day classroom and field training session on how to fill out the forms, and then either be assigned a stream section to evaluate, or they may choose their own. Digital cameras and GPS units may be available for loan to photodocument and geo-reference the results.

When is this done? These observational surveys are conducted in the summer months, when the stream flow is usually lower. Ideally, each stream section will be reassessed once every 5 years.

What do we learn from the Streamwalk? Not only do Streamwalk participants learn about potential water quality problems, but also about the links between land use and stream water quality.

How is the collected data used? The Streamwalk surveys help to document water quality problems, which then can be useful to prioritize areas of concern that may need additional monitoring or remedial action. Local planning and regulatory officials as well as the CT DEP will review the results.

Recommended By-Law changes for ALC Annual Meeting on May 16, 2007

ARTICLE III, Sections 2, 3 and 4 and should be amended by deleting the words in [brackets] and inserting the words in *italics* – as follows:

2. [Election of Initial] *Town Directors*.

a. Initial Town Directors. The first Board of Directors shall be elected at the organization meeting of the corporation. The first Board of Directors *shall be Town Directors and* shall consist of twelve (12) members of which (3) shall be residents of the Town of Groton, three (3) shall be residents of the Town of Ledyard, three (3) shall be residents of the Town of North Stonington, and three (3) shall be residents of the Town of Stonington.

b.[3.] Additional Town Directors. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, three (3) additional *Town Directors* who are *all* residents or landowners in any *one* neighboring town may be elected upon written request of not less than ten (10) residents or landowners in such neighboring town.

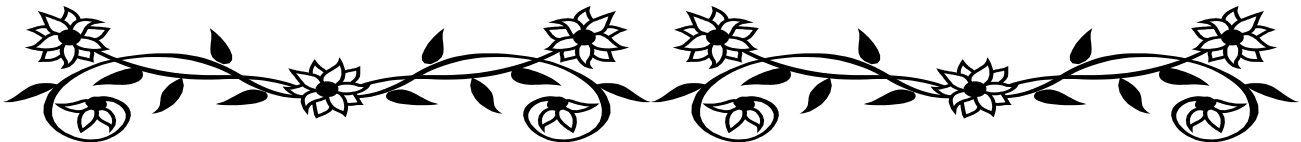
3. [b.] *Directors-at-Large.* Up to the limit of five (5) Directors-at-Large may be elected at the annual meeting.

4. Terms.

Initial Town Directors. The first Board of Directors shall serve until the annual meeting to be held in June or July of 1969. At said annual meeting

. . . . the intention being that, commencing with the annual meeting to be held in 1970, one Director representing each of the said towns shall be elected annually *to serve a three year term*. Directors shall be elected by a majority of members voting in person or by proxy.

b. Additional Town Directors. Any three (3) additional *Town Directors* elected from any one neighboring town under Section 2 of this Article III shall be elected for a one, two or three year initial term so that, after the expiration of such initial terms, one Director representing such neighboring town shall be elected annually for a three (3) year term.



(Poquetanuck Cove continued from page 4) initiative is available at their website: www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/communities/streamwalk_initiative.html For more information or to sign up for training please contact Jean Pillo at (860) 928-4948 or email her at trbp_jeanpillo@sbcglobal.net. More information will be posted on the ALC website as well as <http://www.thamesriverbasinpartnership.org> on their calendar of events.

Jean Pillo is Coordinator Thames River Basin Partnership and Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor Water Quality Monitoring Program



AVALONIA LAND CONSERVANCY, INC.

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Upcoming Events

Sandy Point Nature Preserve Conservation Workshop. Tuesday, May 15, 7 p.m. at Stonington COMO, 28 Cutler Street (535 2476). The Avalonia Land Conservancy and Stonington COMO wish to invite you and your family to an evening of talks, slides, displays, refreshments and children's activities relating to boating in Little Narragansett Bay, horseshoe crabs and nesting birds of Sandy Point. Guest speakers will represent CT DEP Boating Division, Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration

39th Annual Meeting. Wednesday, May 16, 7 p.m. at Denison-Pequotsepos Nature Center, Pequotsepos Road, Mystic CT. Details on page 3.

Connecticut Trails Day. Saturday, June 2. Avalonia is sponsoring a number of hikes and a canoe trip in and around Conservancy properties. Details on page 4.

Philadelphia Flower Show. March 2008. Watch for details next newsletter!

