



NEWS 2002

CONTENTS

- Schoonmaker Easement1
- First Hurely Easement2
- Easement Criteria3
- First Esopus Easement3
- Hird Easement4
- Outreach At Olivebridge ...5
- Great Tax Myths5
- Easements Protect Endangered Species6
- Abell Easement6
- Join Us!8



Frank Macagnone and Keith Eddleman at their new home on the Rondout Creek.

Schoonmaker Easement

Virginia Schoonmaker, one of the Rondout Esopus Land Conservancy's (RELC) first board members and longtime friend of our organization, recently placed an easement on a portion of her farm on the Rondout Creek in Alligerville. Virginia, who has always been a great believer in our mission, placed the easement prior to selling the property.

Virginia was born in a big handsome brick house on Route 209 that is now Sparrowhawk Bed and Breakfast. She later moved to the Rondout Creek farm.

Virginia served as Executive Director of the National Society to Prevent Blindness, was President and later a board member of the Benedictine Health Foundation, and throughout her life worked for blindness prevention. She was instrumental in bringing about glaucoma screening and designed and launched the first home eye test for pre-school children.

In May, 1997 Virginia gave the Conservancy our headquarters building, with the surrounding field. It is across the street from the farm property. Until the 1950's the building was the Alligerville Post Office. Virginia's father built the post office

in the early 30's and her mother was the post mistress during the 30's and early 40's.

Raised on a farm, Virginia has regretted the steady loss of farmland to development in Ulster County. To do her part to preserve farmland she worked with the Conservancy and the buyer's attorney to craft an easement that would be satisfactory to all.

In the end, the Conservancy took an easement on 20 out of 32 acres. The important issue for the Conservancy was to protect creek frontage and lands across the creek; the new owners wanted to exclude the house and immediately surrounding land. Again, the Conservancy worked with all parties to make the arrangement work for everyone.

The easement includes the field past the large barn to the east and all the property from the Alligerville Bridge on Kyserike Road to past Church Hill Road along Tow Path Road (Berme Road). The new easement protects approximately 1,778 feet of Rondout Creek frontage.

This easement is truly the gift that keeps on giving to all of us, and to all those who will be all of us. Thank you, Virginia.

