



RELC News
2004
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Arthur Weyhe Easement

On December 9, 2003 Arthur Weyhe of Spillway Road, W. Hurley and New York City placed an easement on 224 acres of primarily farmland in Hurley and Marbletown. But the property is much more than farmland. It includes two large open water wetlands fed by a brook that has been dammed on and off by beavers. Several fields are surrounded by mixed hardwood and softwood forests. Remnant bluestone quarries dot the landscape.

Of special interest to the Conservancy are the open water wetlands. Wetlands are largely lands flooded or saturated at or near the ground surface for varying periods of time during the year. Arthur's wetlands are ponds surrounded by shallow water zones. Wetlands are valuable because they are particularly good at 1) Filtering out nutrients, wastes and sediments from surface water before it seeps into the ground to become the groundwater that feeds your well. 2) Acting as "natural sponges" to absorb flooding water and store it. In agricultural areas, wetlands help reduce the likelihood of flood damage to crops. 3) Providing critical habitat for various animal and plant species. An estimated 43 percent of the Nation's threatened and endangered species rely directly or indirectly on wetlands for their survival. Almost all recreational fishes, including bass, spawn in the aquatic portions of wetlands.

The Conservancy worked with Arthur to develop a plan to provide for future building within a "building envelope." The envelope surrounds two existing houses, barns and out-buildings. Arthur, his heirs, or the property's future owners can construct two additional one family dwellings, one dwelling to be located within the Town of Hurley and one within the Town of Marbletown. Arthur (and all those who succeed him in owning the property) can construct additional barns, sheds, swimming pools and gazebos. He may maintain, renovate or replace either of the two single family residences, barns and associated improvements, utilities, septic systems, yards, gardens, landscaping, accessory structures, and driveways.

The Conservancy encourages donors, whenever possible, to place their dwelling in a building envelope so subsequent building, gardens and landscaping activities are contained. This ensures that future building is controlled, while open space value is maintained. It also means activities within the building envelope are not controlled or monitored by the Conservancy. All parties know and understand what the allowances and limitations of the easement are. This is what the negotiating process is all about...meeting both parties' needs. In this instance, Arthur retains the option to build and the Conservancy continues to protect the vast majority of land as open space.

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Weyhe from page 1

Other activities permitted under the easement include cutting firewood, farming—including pasturing, grazing and feeding and care of livestock, removing bluestone for personal use, maintaining open fields and recreational trails, and the creation of additional ponds.

Every day, Arthur and his friends walk or cross-country ski over the fields offering spectacular views of the Catskills. When we asked him why he put his land under easement he said, "I just couldn't imagine this space filled up with houses."

Thank you, Arthur, for the opportunity to protect such a beautiful open place that one day would surely have become highly developed.

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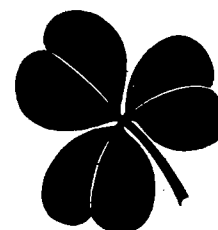
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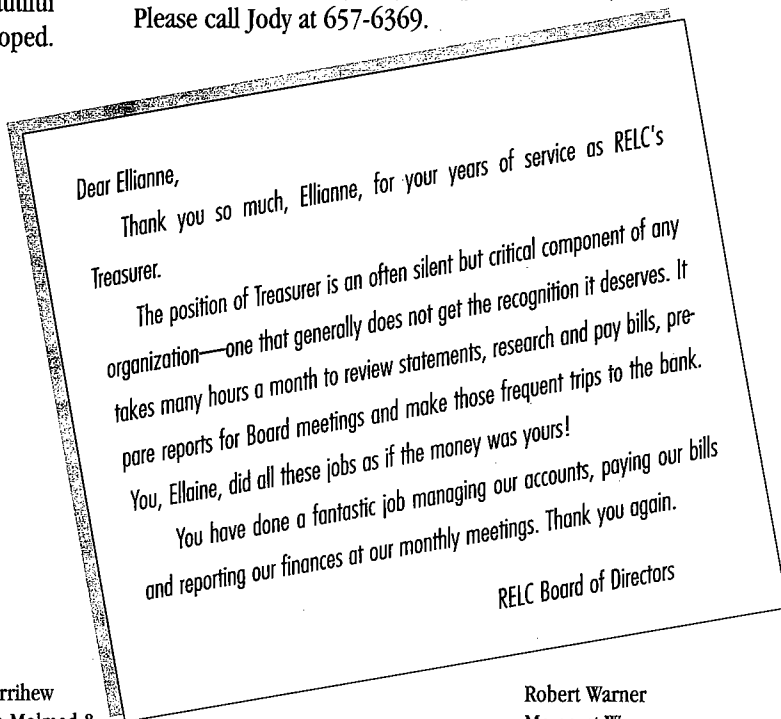
Our Apologies. We sincerely regret any errors or omissions in recognizing our supporters. If you see an incorrect spelling or a missing name, Please call Gary at (845) 657-8303



Board Members Needed

Now, more than ever, we need you to step forward and offer to serve on our Board of Directors. The only requirements are to be open and thoughtful, to believe in our mission and be able to attend one Board meeting a month. (Generally our Board meetings end in November and resume in March or April.) We all do what we can at our own pace according to our work and family obligations. Please think about this and act now. Board members periodically rotate off the Board and must be replaced. The future existence of the Conservancy depends on your participation. Thank you.

Please call Jody at 657-6369.



SPRING FUNDRAISER AT HQ

On May 15, 2004 starting at 1 PM, the Conservancy will hold a fundraiser at its refurbished Headquarters in Alligerville. Featured will be "Wildman" Jack DiMuccio with a selection of reptiles and small mammals. Jack, a biologist by profession, has been working with and lecturing on wildlife for over 30 years. Jack's programs can include live reptiles such as snakes, lizards, crocodilians and turtles along with a presentation on NY State small mammals and the relationship they have to their environment. He might also bring mammalian and reptile skulls and teeth to show how these features determine the animals' life styles. Presentations are lively and usually include audience participation. Jack especially enjoys working with kids in order to instill in them the value of wildlife. It is never too early to teach children to respect and to protect the environment. As Jack's grandson, Jared, who works with Jack and hopefully will take up his mantle, says "Reptiles Rule." We encourage you to bring your children.

If you remember our last silent auction you won't want to miss this one. (Right? Laurie and Jay) Our friends have come through with wonderful items. Come early, bid often and win a treasure. Bidding will close at 4 PM. **YOU MUST BE PRESENT AT 4 PM TO WIN AND PAY FOR YOUR ITEM. CASH AND CHECKS ONLY.**

We need items to be auctioned. If you have a new, barely used, antique, collectible, vintage item/s, please call one of the following numbers for pickup. We will provide you with a tax donation slip.

Laura Travers	Olive	657-8303
Jan Leas	Stone Ridge	687-9555
Art Markle	Accord	687-0307
John Adams	Wawarsing	647-5626

\$10.00 suggested donation at the door includes refreshments. RELC Headquarters, 7 Creek Road, Alligerville, NY. 845-687-7553 Phone is answered day of the event only.

DIRECTIONS: From Rt. 209 North or South. Traveling South on 209 make a left onto Kyserike Road South of Marbletown, continue past Rondout Valley High School, pass over Lucas Avenue and continue to Creek Road on your right, (at Fire Station) turn right onto Creek Road and Headquarters is on your left. If you go over the Rondout Creek you have gone too far.

DIRECTIONS FROM NEW PALTZ: Leave New Paltz on Route 299 and make first right onto Route 7. Make a left onto County Route 6 and follow signs for Mohonk. Stay on Route 6 over Mohonk and at the bottom of the hill after a sharp hair pin turn bear Left staying on Route 6. (Follow signs to Alligerville.) Cross over Rondout Creek and Headquarters is on your left. Make Left onto Creek Road to access Headquarters.



RELC WELCOMES NEW PRESIDENT, JODY HOYT, JR.

At the September meeting of the RELC, Lindsay (Jody) Hoyt, Jr. was voted in as the new RELC President replacing Laura Travers. According to RELC's by-laws, an individual may only be on the Board for three two-year terms. At that point, the Board member must leave the Board for at least one year. After that one year period the individual may be invited back onto the Board. This does not preclude the individual volunteering (like everyone else).

RELC would like to thank Laura for all her hard work and dedication to protect open space in Ulster County. We hope she continues and remains an integral part of accomplishing this vital work.

Jody has been board member and is now retired from captaining freighters around the world. He is also active in Trout Unlimited. Jody lives in Boiceville.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the family and friends of Marjorie and James Dunbar who both died this past year. Marjorie was an activist with strong convictions and not afraid to tell you all about them. She devoted her time and energies to causes she believed in. RELC was fortunate to be one of those causes. As long time supporters, Marjorie and Jim, made sure their land and the land of Jim's sister, Alice, was protected by easements. Marjorie worked to encourage recycling, the Rail Trail, open space zoning, and the protection of local history. Jim took interest in and wrote about the unique flora of the area.

Jim and Marjorie will be remembered fondly by all who knew them as hard working, no nonsense, straight talking individuals who accomplished what they set out to do,

(Laura Travers recently walked the James Dunbar easement with Genevieve, Marjorie's daughter, and the contiguous Alice Dunbar easement with the new owners. She assures us the land is in very capable hands.)

Group stops at Eva Stein monument for a little history



Right: Group meets back at "Stonehenge" for a reunion with friends and pets

FRIENDS APPRECIATION DAY

Far right: Jack stops to explain local ecology.



On October 25, 2003 Friends of RELC met at the home of Walter Levy and Gene Moncrief, second generation easement property owners for a walk on their 116 acre easement in Accord.

Before the walk Jack reviewed a map of the easement and the planned route. Walter, in his alien t-shirt, talked about the previous owner, Whitley Streiber, and his claim of being visited by aliens on the property. (Whitley Streiber author of the book and movie "Communion" claims to have been visited by aliens in his bedroom which is now Walter's. Walter has been waiting for the aliens to return but there have been no sightings as of yet.)

Jack Bierhorst, author and naturalist led the walk in search of the elusive endangered Appalachian Sandwort. When Jack looks for something he usually finds it...and he did.

The walk led hikers up thru a hemlock forest, past mountain laurel and high bush blueberry to the top of a ridge with exposed bedrock and dwarf pitch pines. The pitch pine ecology in this area has been designated by the Nature Conservancy as one of "the last great places". While on top, visitors viewed remnants of millstone mining,

native plants and trees and a gorgeous view west to High Point Mountain in West Shokan and the Catskill Mountains beyond. Eric Hertz told a wonderful story at a monument to Eva Stein, the original owner, about the beginnings of how this property was protected. (Eric was the driving force to put an easement on this property.) The walk then proceeded down the other side of the ridge to the Saunderskill Creek which was full and rushing. Some brave souls made a separate excursion to a particularly beautiful waterhole. Back up and over the ridge, the hike descended to "Stonehenge", a 30-foot circle formed by a ring of 16 huge stones aligned on a north/south axis built by Whitley. Walter had built a bonfire in the middle of the circle and we all had marshmallows accompanied by two divine cheesecakes made by Arthur Markle and refreshments donated by Saunderskill Farm and Davenport Farm.

We had great weather and great "friends" to share it with.

A special thanks to Walter Levy and Gene Moncrief, Jack Bierhorst, Eric Hertz, Arthur Markle, Saunderskill Farm and Davenport Farm.

Your Support Is Greatly Appreciated and Wisely Used..

We believe you can see from the information in this newsletter that our organization is effective in its mission. Your support of this mission through your contributions helps us continue its meaningful work.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your annual donation. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.



View from the top



Author Steve Hirsch standing in bed of lock.

A CANAL RUNS THROUGH IT

The Delaware and Hudson Canal, which opened in 1828 and was the first million-dollar private enterprise in the United States is generally acknowledged to be one of Ulster County's early major change agents. Constructed primarily to move coal from mines in Pennsylvania to New York City, the D&H Canal also moved other goods like bluestone, millstones, cement and forest products such as barrel hoops from the Rondout and Wallkill valleys to the Hudson River. By providing a means to transport these hard goods to market, the canal was instrumental in helping enlarge the area beyond its agricultural roots. And communities grew up along the canal route too, especially around the areas where locks were located, adding to the economy and providing additional business opportunities for local farmers.

Those of us who live locally and many visitors to our area are familiar with the D&H Canal Museum and its 5 lock public walk located in High Falls. Less known, however, is that the D&H Canal runs through one of the Rondout Esopus Land Conservancy easements and includes the relatively well-preserved remnants of Lock 22. The Ira Stern and Franny Hertz easement off Towpath Road in Rochester was granted in June, 1988. It was one of the first easements negotiated by the Conservancy and is designed to protect forestland, a 1/4 mile of the Rondout Creek and D & H Canal and the wildlife habitat of species including fox, bobcat, countless birds, otters and other native creatures. When we asked Ira about his feelings for the canal area he said "This section of the Rondout and D & H Canal is very rich in wildlife and beauty and every time we walk along the towpath (which is quite often) we get so much out of it. Protecting it with a conservation easement is the least we could do to protect this special place. It has been a great experience and I urge others to protect special places they may own." In addition to the remains of the canal and the actual lock, the Stern property near Lock 22 includes evidence of considerable stone quarrying, building foundations, stone walls, a waste weir or dam to control water for the canal and a very well preserved portion of the towpath along the Rondout Creek which flows by about 30 feet below the level of the canal bed at this point.

Although much has been written about the D&H Canal, there is little documentation regarding Lock 22. Perhaps that's because it was located between Lock 23 at Port Jackson or Accord and Lock 21 in

Alligerville. Both these locks became small settlements and grew into hamlets supporting several businesses such as dry goods stores, hotels, boat and wagon building facilities and the inevitable saloons. And since Lock 22 was a short distance in either direction from these larger stopping points and since it was also not close to a major road, history has forgotten it somewhat. After all, the canal had 108 locks; there was a lot to write about. But we do know a few things. For example, all locks had names. Lock 22 was called Foley's Lock and it was located 14 miles from the canal starting point at Rondout. Exactly why it was so named, we don't know; but the records show a farmer by the name of James Foley who owned land contiguous to Ira Stern's property during the canal period, and there were stories about an "old Foley" who owned canal boats and was known to treat his "boat drivers" badly. Or perhaps it was the name of some forgotten lock tender.

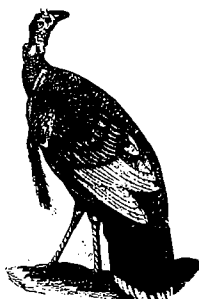
After its original construction, the canal was enlarged 3 times. The final enlargement, which occurred in 1848-49, increased the lock size to 15 feet in width, 90 feet in length and 6 feet in depth allowing boats to carry 130 tons (The first D&H Canal boats could carry only 20 tons). Of the 108 locks, some were constructed of fitted stone while others were wood lined with stone backing. Only 13 of the locks were of the stone masonry type, and Lock 22 appears to be of this construction. As it remains today, the upper (or southern) end shows evidence of having a drop gate, and the cut stone sides including gate recesses are in relatively good condition even though trees and other growth have taken over much of the lock area. The lower end of the lock has been filled in to create a roadway over to the towpath and Rondout Creek but probably had a standard paddle gate, which opened and closed like doors to control the northern end of the lock. The most remarkable thing about this particular remaining section of the canal is that you can stand on the towpath at Lock 22 and look in either direction for at least 50 yards and see a perfectly flat, well preserved path that seems almost unchanged from when mules used it to tow boats over 100 years ago. Cut stone walls that remain standing along the tow path are further examples of the enlargement project since these types of walls were installed to hold up the canal sides as it was made deeper. Like all the other locks, Lock 22 was designed to lift or lower boats 10 feet in elevation.

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Cooperative Effort In Conservation

Laura Travers, RELC; Ann Loeding, Friends of the Rondout; and Chris Olney, Catskill Center for Conservation and Development, meet at Delaware Woods in Kingston to discuss "an openspace protection plan."



Below: Alan White of Nature Conservancy; Chris Olney of the Catskill Center; and Laura Travers of RELC meet to plan a strategy to protect more of the Pacama Vly which lies in the Towns of Rochester, Marbletown, and Olive. All three organizations have a keen interest in protecting this fragile wetland ecology. (RELC currently protects two properties that include some of the Vly.)



The Year In Review

Everyone who helps with Conservancy work is a volunteer. We give our time all year long to work with landowners to acquire new easements and manage and monitor our existing easements. We answer inquiries, walk land, pay bills, have Board meetings, organize a newsletter and a fundraiser and meet with other like minded organizations and agencies.

Easements go through a process of identification, negotiation and finalization. We work hard to make sure that all parties are happy with the final arrangement. Since you heard from us last, we have been busy working on the following easements:

- A 79-acre wooded parcel in Olivebridge bordering the Pacama Vly.
- A spectacular 98 acre parcel, mostly wetland, in Olivebridge.
- Two easements in Stone Ridge with Esopus Creek shoreline.
- A 30 acre parcel, and our first, in the City of Kingston.
- Another 119 acre parcel in Hurley.
- And three contiguous parcels of mostly fields with three different landowners in Kerhonkson.

This year we have also focused on cooperating with other groups. RELC believes cooperation between like-minded organizations is critical to the success of all.

Below: RELC meets with open space minded individuals regarding the future of Camp Epworth.



Welcome Jac Conaway: New Board Member and Treasurer

Jac is originally from the western Maryland Appalachian Mountain area. He spent his childhood in the rural southeast, moved to Phoenicia in 1975 and Olivebridge in June 1991. Jac studied Soil Science from the University of Maryland, earned a Ph.D. in Geophysics at the University of California, Riverside, after which he worked for NASA doing land surveying from space. He changed course and became a psychotherapist, setting up a private practice in Phoenicia and New York City. He is on the faculty of the Institute for Core Energetic Therapy. He is a certified Financial Analyst, Director of the New York Pathway in Phoenicia and Treasurer of the Friends of Eastern Caribbean, an organization of Peace Corp volunteers from that area. Jac is married and has two children.

Jac succeeds Ellianne Odom as RELC's Treasurer. We all thank Jac for volunteering to take on this detailed and demanding job.

This letter was in response to our 2003 fundraising appeal. Charlie Niles even conserved paper by returning this lovely note on the back of our appeal letter. Thank you Charlie and everyone else who responded so generously.

The ancestors of my wife (who recently passed away) and myself have been residents of the High Falls, New Paltz, Rosendale, and Kingston area since the late 1600's. I have fond memories of some of my relatives that lived during the D&H canal days and the cement industry days. I am now 82 yrs old on a fixed income, but I am glad to send this small amount.

Charlie Niles

A Canal Runs Through It

Continued from page 4

Walking the Stern property today, there is ample evidence that Shawangunk conglomerate stone was quarried next to the canal. Because of its close proximity, some of this stone must have been used in construction of Foley's Lock and nearby supporting walls. Some might have been used to make millstones, an active local industry in those times, which could have been shipped to market right from the dock at Lock 22. There are several partial foundations of the same stone material in the area. One foundation most certainly supported the lock tender's cottage, which was built by the canal company using a standard plan of one size, style and pattern. This cottage was generally located beside the towpath in a central part of the lock; the lock tender needed to be nearby since lock tending was a 24-hour a day job. There is also evidence of a cut stone loading dock near the canal berm.

More foundations in the nearby woods are thought by some to be the remnants of the hamlet of St. Josen also shown on some maps as St. Joseph. Other than a solitary sign along Towpath Road, little is known about the exact location or fate of this very small population center. But there are records of a store located at Foley's Lock owned by an Ira Davenport who traded millstones and barrel hoops for book accounts of groceries with the millstone

cutters and hoop makers that lived within a few miles of Foley's Lock. Ira later purchased two canal boats which he operated between Ellenville and the Rondout during the last days of the canal's operation; and after the canal closed, he bought a building in Accord near the railroad station and moved his store there.

The D&H Canal closed to through traffic in 1899 although the section from High Falls to Eddyville continued to operate for a few more years supported by the cement trade. Finally, in the early 1900's, the canal closed entirely and was replaced by railroads. With its demise, some of the settlements that had grown up alongside the locks also disappeared. Such seems to be the case with Foley's Lock. However, we are fortunate that the conservation easement placed on this property by Ira Stern and Franny Hertz enables us to preserve this most visible example of our area's historic past.

Our thanks to Ira and Franny for allowing access to his property and to Jeanne Bollendorf, Executive Director of the D & H Canal Historical Society and Museum, for providing the photograph and assisting with research resources.

Steve Hirsch

If you have any history to add, please call Laura at 657-8303. We are trying to

collect as much information about the canal and nearby residents as possible. There are still several foundations we can not identify.



There is evidence that a structure like the Paymaster's building shown above may have been at new Lock #22.

Photo courtesy of D&H Canal Museum



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- Other \$ _____

- Enclosed is my employer's matching gift form
- For my donation of \$100 or more please send me a RELC Tote bag.

Please make your check payable to RELC,

and mail your tax-deductible contribution to:

Jac Conway, Rondout-Esopus Land Conservancy, 51 Tongorekill Rd.,
 Olivebridge, NY 12461

Please contact me regarding preservation of land in my area:

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Address _____

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