

THE TRAILS ARE OPEN!

Stepping out of your car onto an unfamiliar property can be a bit daunting and thrilling at the same time. Questions like ‘What will I find?’ ‘How long will I be here?’ and ‘Who will I meet?’ might cross your mind. We encourage you to take that leap and explore the East Quabbin Land Trust’s preserves. Descriptions and maps are found on our website, www.EQLT.org.

Following the trail is often a great introduction to the land. Trails are designed to highlight special features on the landscape. At Mandell Hill, on Barre Road in Hardwick, the trail wanders through the woods and all of a sudden there are stone walls along either side of the trail. Why would anyone build parallel stonewalls in the woods? The answer is found in the history of families that used the land before; like most of Massachusetts the area was once cleared for grazing and the walls must’ve been part of the cattle or sheep fencing used to help move livestock safely from one pasture to another.

Down at the Moose Brook Preserve, on Brook Road in Hardwick, if one takes the right-hand fork on the yellow loop trail, you’ll cross several small streams over boardwalks. It’s not until you turn to head up hill that the source of the second stream becomes visible. The small depression, known as a vernal pool, collects water just long enough to allow peepers, wood frogs, fairy shrimp and other small critters dependent on temporary ponds and pools to thrive free from predatory fish. Vernal pools are especially magical to visit in late March or early April when the frogs and salamanders breed.

At the Frohloff Farm, on Church Street in Ware, the trail brings visitors to the oak bluff looking over the Ware River. Belted-kingfishers, Great Blue Herons, Canada Geese, Wood Ducks, and Mallards are often seen sharing the river with a fly fisherman or two. Barn swallows, Tree swallows, and Big Brown Bats put on impressive aerobatic displays if you’re there at the right time of day during the summer.

The trails on EQLT’s preserves all follow the contours and curves of the landscape. Most climb hills, pass through boulder fields, and cross streams. The exception is the Mass Central Rail Trail. The trail is basically level because it is a

manufactured linear corridor built 140 years ago when the railroad first opened up between Boston and Northampton. We bought this section of old railroad bed in Hardwick and New Braintree in 2007. Since then the focus was to repair the bridges and open the trail. A nearly two-mile section is ready for your visit. The easiest parking is at the site of the former New Braintree train station along West Road, just east of the Ware River crossing at the silver bridge.

If you are a runner, please join us for the inaugural race of the Station Loop Ramble 5-miler on October 14th at 10 am.

This is a great opportunity to see the rail trail and surrounding lands in their full fall foliage. If you don’t run, please come volunteer at a water stations along the race course, and at the registration desk. Please call 413-477-8229 if you want to help.

Because of the terrain, the Mass Central Rail Trail is the EQLT preserve where individuals with limited mobility can fully explore the area. Electric power-driven mobility devices are permitted at the rail trail provided the mobility devices do not exceed 36 inches in width, speeds over 4 miles per hour, and weigh over 500 pounds. Visitors using other power-driven devices may request a single use day pass.

A new trail loop is under construction at the Deer Park Preserve. This trail will meander through the fields, woods and wetlands around Fish Brook, looping up to the Coxhall Kitchen Garden, and back along Simpson Road. The five to six foot high walled structure made of stone is the signature feature on the loop, originally built by Brigadier General Timothy Ruggles in the 1760’s. Red maples and Japanese barberry have invaded the space that once was cleared for, but never used, as a kitchen garden to provide microclimates for better vegetable production and reduce animal damage within the planned garden. It’s fascinating to stand inside the wall enclosure and envision what might have been.

Be sure to take time this fall to visit EQLT’s network of preserves. Nature hikes and other activities are planned throughout the year. Do join us. We’d love to share our enthusiasm for the natural world with you as we pick up colorful leaves, touch the bark of a grand old tree, and smell the change in seasons together on the land.



Jeff Smith mowing the trail at Mandell Hill with the new DR mower purchased with grant funding from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation

MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



The East Quabbin Land Trust is pleased to announce the dedication of the Chuck Kidd Interpretive Trail at Moose Brook Preserve in Hardwick on Sunday, October 28, 2012 at 1 PM.

Charles T. Kidd was better known as Chuck to his family, friends and acquaintances. Chuck was always affable, whether you stopped by his frame shop, were exploring the theme of the latest book during a book group discussion, or met on a chance encounter along the trail.

Chuck gained an early appreciation for the natural world during Michigan summers that were spent hiking and fishing with his family. After spending several years as a photojournalist on the Oregon Coast, he moved with his wife Ann to Hardwick in 1973. Here he became enamored with the people, the woodlands and waterways of New England and happily resided for the rest of his life.

As a professional and fine-arts photographer, Chuck spent many hours hiking the area seeking that perfect moment and capturing the obvious and subtle beauties of the local landscape. The image below is a prime example of his detailed and nuanced black and white photographs that capture the essence of New England.

Walking along Moose Brook was a frequent and favorite year round joy for Chuck, his wife, and children. Chuck was constantly astounded by the beauty of this place and appreciative of the nature that surrounds us.

The interpretive trail starts at the Preserve parking area on Moose Brook Road, one mile north of the turn off from Prouty Road. A stone bench is positioned in a natural fern-covered amphitheater at the highest point looking down over the trail. The trail runs through an area of rich mesic woods, with sugar maple, white ash, basswood and a wonderful assortment of wildflowers and ferns.



Groundcover by Chuck Kidd 1986

THE EAST QUABBIN LAND TRUST

works to foster the sustainable use of our natural and historic resources for the benefit of all generations through the conservation and stewardship of the farmlands, woodlands and waters in our region of Massachusetts.

As a non-profit organization the East Quabbin Land Trust envisions a regional community that continues to care for its natural environment and supports a sustainable local economy, ensuring a high quality of life for generations to come.

We welcome your thoughts, articles, and photographs on events in our area. For more information about the land trust, to become a member, or request a change of address, please contact our office at:

East Quabbin Land Trust

120 Ridge Road, PO Box 5
Hardwick, MA 01037-0005
413-477-8229 (tel & fax)
email: eqlt@comcast.net

Visit our website at www.eqlt.org

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CHARLIE WHITNEY: Volunteer Profile of an Outdoor Enthusiast

By Judith Jones

I sat down with Charlie Whitney of New Braintree, to talk to him about his involvement with the East Quabbin Land Trust. I wanted to know how he came to be a volunteer and understand how three passions in his life—cross-country skiing, biking, and running—have come to benefit our organization.

Charlie has stepped up to direct our newest fundraiser: The five-mile road race we are calling the “Station Loop Ramble”. This race, the first in what we plan will become an annual event, is, in part, to celebrate the opening to the public of the first two miles of the Land Trust’s rail trail. After a multi-year effort, this section boasts a wide, smooth, stone-dust path and beautifully decked bridges.

Charlie became interested in the rail trail four or five years ago when he was using the un-improved trail for cross-country skiing. He was involved with the local snow mobile club and had the capability of setting ski tracks with his snowmobile. He says, “I heard about the midnight ski the Land Trust was putting on from Lazy Mary’s to Mandell Hill. I offered to set the tracks for that. And, also, on the rail trail itself. The trail still had ties in place, and the bridge wasn’t decked.” He asked the snow mobile riders to stay to the side for the event because they ruin the ski tracks in the snow as soon as they go over them. Charlie recalls: “I’d be the last person down the trail on my snowmobile at night, and the first on the trail in the morning on skis, for my own satisfaction.”

The rail trail is a wonderful local resource for his family. Charlie has four children, ages nine to 15, and he says: “We bike on it, run on it. It’s great.”

The Station Loop Ramble idea came about one day when Charlie was out mountain biking. He recalls, “I was really thirsty and I stopped at the EQLT for a drink.” At that point the talk was of a bike race that Rick Romano was planning. Says Charlie, “We started to talk about the loop race on bikes. I live on Unitas Road and I knew how hard

that would be on bikes with all the potholes. I suggested a road race instead.” With that, the idea was born. And with that, Cynthia made Charlie the director. Says he, “I’ve been in charge of the starting gun. I’ve never been put on a race as the director before.” Despite that, he feels up to the challenge.

Putting on a good event, he explains, “one with sponsors, it’s important to get people to run”. Says he, “It comes down to the day. It has to be a good day with sun to start to get people out to register, and ideally overcast to begin the run.” That way, it’s not too hot. Asked about the distance of the race, Charlie explains:

“Five miles is an attainable distance for every runner. Our course is challenging, it starts with a mile climb up West Road, then turns onto Unitas. It’s got good hills, a tough course. We’ve been joking that it’s got that flat, fast finish.” Flat because the last two miles are rail bed!

As we talked about this race and road races in general, Charlie shared what he likes about running races in different towns: “There is an unknown to every race you go to. Part of the fun is to get there, talk to people, and get cues as to what to look for.”



Charlie Whitney

I asked Charlie what he thinks the EQLT means to him and the community. He spoke of the increased access to nature and open space that the EQLT has helped facilitate. “They’ve opened areas I couldn’t get to before.” He appreciates that.

Charlie’s interest in biking includes a background in bicycle maintenance, dating from his days growing up in Colchester, VT and working at The Ski Rack in Burlington, VT. He has ideas for other events, such as bike rides or bike maintenance clinics, to be done in conjunction with the East Quabbin Land Trust. And, of course, there’s next year and the 2nd Annual Station Loop Ramble!

STATION LOOP RAMBLE 5-MILER

Sunday, October 14, 2012, 10:00am

Depot Road, at the intersection of West and Hardwick Roads, New Braintree

*A hilly road and trail race with a flat fast finish on the **Mass Central Rail Trail***

Race begins and ends at the site of the former New Braintree Train Station, travels past scenic farmland, and through deep woods, and skirts the Ware River. Adults must accompany children running this course. Each mile is marked and mid-run water stop provided. Post race refreshments and free raffles to all entrants.

Entry fee: \$20.00 per adult -- \$10.00 for children age 13 and under
All fees are none refundable.

Registration: Begins at 8:30am and ends at 9:30am on October 14th.

Make checks payable to: East Quabbin Land Trust, Inc.

Mail to: East Quabbin Land Trust

P.O. Box 5, Hardwick, MA 01037-0005

Age Groups: 18 & under, 19-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+

Prizes will be awarded to the overall first place male and female finishers, and the top finishers in each category... plus a prize for the youngest participant!

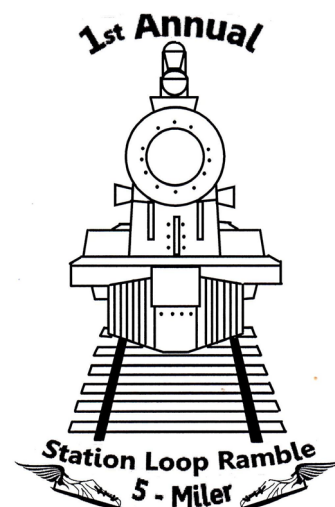
For more information, contact Cynthia Henshaw, 413-477-8229, chenshaw@eqlt.org

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Name: _____

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Waiver of Responsibility must be signed for registration to be considered valid.

I agree to assume all responsibility for all risk of damage or injury to me as a participant in this event. In consideration of being accepted as an entrant in the East Quabbin Land Trust's Station Loop Ramble 5-miler, I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, release and discharge all organization and individuals associated with the race from all claims, damages, rights of action, present or future, whether the same be known, anticipated, or unanticipated, resulting from or arising out of, or in incident to, my participation in this event. I hereby certify that I will not participate in the run unless I am physically fit and sufficiently trained for completion of the event. I also give permission for the use of my name and/or picture in any broadcast, photograph or other account of this event.

Signature (required) _____

Parent Signature (if under age 18) _____

FROHLOFF FARM YOUTH GARDEN

By Kelly Wheeler

This past year, the children attending The KidStop School Age Program of the Carson Center in Ware partnered with the East Quabbin Land Trust to build a vegetable garden at the Frohloff Farm. This was accomplished in part by grants given by the Ware Local Cultural Council and Edward J. Urban Foundation to purchase tools, compost, and everything needed to start the garden. The Frohloff Farm Youth Garden is intended to connect children with the food that nourishes their bodies while reinforcing the importance of a local food economy and healthy eating habits. The Frohloff garden was also focused on teaching youth about Native American culture and their agricultural techniques such as Three Sister's polyculture.

During the winter months we did a range of indoor activities with KidStop to help introduce the idea of growing food and preparing healthy meals with local ingredients. During one activity, the kids learned how the Native Americans ground corn into corn meal and baked bread. I brought in some dried corn still on the cob so they could see the whole process from corn kernels to bread. With a mortar and pestle the kids took turns grinding the corn into meal. At the same time, a Mason jar filled with heavy cream was passed around for the kids to shake into butter. After the bread was baked

and the butter churned and strained the kids sat down to have their snack. They all felt pride and excitement to have deeply participated in providing themselves and their friends with good food. As I reflect on my own

childhood, it is the small experiences such as this that can start a child on the path towards agriculture, cooking, or conservation. They are all interdependent: without conservation, farmers would run out of land to farm, without farms we will have no food.



*Kelly making pizza with the Kid Stop students.
The homemade sauce is in the pan on top of the toaster oven.*

As the spring turned to summer, Kid Stop began planting their garden. They planted a Three Sister's Garden of Corn, Beans, and Squash. They also planted a pizza garden with tomatoes, peppers, basil, oregano, onions, and parsley. They harvested garlic that was planted the year before and dried it. Much of the produce was also donated to the Ware Senior Center. After we were finished working in the garden we would explore the old barn or walk along the Ware River. Our final celebration of the gardens first year was a pizza party made with our own vegetables. The kids chopped all the ingredients for the homemade sauce and each child was able to assemble their own pizza. They loved it (even those that claimed they didn't like vegetables)! In the garden they learned that it is okay to not like some things but you must be brave enough to try it first. I have witnessed time and again that any child will try vegetables and actually enjoy them if they have a hand in growing or harvesting the food themselves. So moms and dads, if you have a picky child get out and garden with them.



KidStop students displaying their drawings of the Frohloff youth garden and barn

HUNTING: A Time Honored Tradition and Valuable Management Tool

By Caren Caljouw

Fall is a wonderful time of year to be outdoors. The air is crisp, trees are changing color, and biting insects are less bothersome. Whether your interest is hiking, birding, hunting, or just taking in the scenery - we hope you visit the East Quabbin Land Trust's properties this fall. The change of seasons is sure to provide and a new sense of wonder and appreciation for our natural world.

It's important to remember that this time of year is the start of the Massachusetts hunting season and many East Quabbin Land Trust properties are open for hunting. Whether you are a hunter, hiker, dog walker or birder - wearing a blaze orange cap and vest for visibility is highly recommended.

There's a long tradition of hunting passed on from generation to generation in the East Quabbin Region. Many folks rely on wild game as an important source of food and hunting remains a part of our culture, history, and economy in west central Mass. Lucky for us, this helps keep wildlife populations such as white-tailed deer "in check" so that we are not experiencing the dramatic decline in forest regeneration that many towns in eastern Massachusetts have experienced. The decline in forest health within many of those communities is due in large part to over abundance of deer and excessive browsing of understory vegetation including young trees, shrubs, and herbs. EQLT views hunting on our properties as a management tool to help reduce the threats of over-browsing and disease transmission in wildlife populations.

On any given day in the fall (and mornings of spring turkey season), it's not unusual for me to meet and exchange pleasantries with a bow hunter or turkey hunter leaving the woods after an early morning hunt on land trust property. We often share information and observations about birds, wildlife, the condition of trails, and other outdoor happenings. Many important natural history observations are made by these sports men and women. And of course, it's always exciting to hear about a successful hunt, such as the special youth turkey hunt at Mandell Hill last April!

EQLT's hunting policies are based on Massachusetts state policies and current scientific research. We ask all outdoor enthusiasts to familiarize themselves with the hunting season schedule as issued by MassWildlife, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. We also ask that you visit our web site at www.eqlt.org to review our

policies related to hunting, fishing, and recreational trail use on East Quabbin Land Trust properties. It's important for visitors to recognize that they are sharing the outdoors with a wide variety of other outdoor enthusiasts and this requires common courtesy, communication, and respect for others and the property.

While hunting is allowed on most EQLT properties, certain properties may be closed due to the special wishes of a donor, the property may be too close to residences according to public guidelines, or there is potential for damage to specific sensitive resources. Sometimes important

management activities require the temporary closure of a portion of the property so that logging, prescribed burning, or intensive grazing may occur. Always check the web site, notices at our information kiosks, and additional signs on the land for further information regarding visitation, current activities, and ongoing management projects.

We ask that all hunters respect the land and practice safe, ethical hunting practices.



Members of the youth turkey hunt at Mandell Hill



Chris Buelow with his daughter Vladia

SAFETY TIPS FOR HUNTERS VISITING EQLT PROPERTIES

By Caren Caljouw

- Be alert and courteous with other hunters and outdoor enthusiasts. Communicate and coordinate with others your intended route of travel and destination to ensure safety and avoid overcrowding.
- Be aware that hunting is not allowed on hiking trails and within parking areas and target shooting is forbidden on all EQLT properties.
- Practice basic hunter safety: treating every firearm as if it were loaded, keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times, and positively identifying your target and what lies beyond it.
- Wear an orange blaze hat and vest during fall hunting seasons and use extra caution (or wear orange) when walking in and out of the woods during the spring and fall seasons when camouflage is allowed
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- Carry a small pack with first aid items, matches, water, snacks, flashlight, cell phone, and extra clothing to help prevent small problems.
- Portable tree stands are allowed seasonally but spikes, nails, and screw-in stairs are not allowed. Permanent structures may not be erected. Cutting of saplings and trees is not allowed.
- Pick up shot gun shells and litter before leaving the area. Do not dump carcasses on EQLT lands or leave remnants of your hunt near any trails.
- Wildlife baiting is forbidden.
- Dog walkers should leash their pets during the hunting season to avoid accidents and minimize disruptions for hunters.
- Training of hunting dogs or field trials is not allowed.
- Respect other outdoor enthusiasts' rights to enjoy the property throughout the week and remember that hunting is not allowed on Sundays.
- Respect private property rights, adhere to residential safety zone distances, and exercise courtesy with EQLT as the landowner and with our abutters.
- East Quabbin Land Trust reserves the right to ask visitors to leave who are not compliant with our rules and regulations.

IMAGES FROM AROUND THE EAST QUABBIN REGION



Lindsay Ellison reading from Chris' writings at the dedication of the Chris Ellison Memorial Birding Platform



Tie dyeing t-shirts at the Hardwick Community Fair



Inspecting the onions and tomatoes at Landworks Farm



Volunteers enjoying a rest on the stone bench they installed at the Chuck Kidd Interpretive Trail on Moose Brook Preserve

East Quabbin LAND TRUST



Conserving the land, Preserving our heritage

P.O. Box 5
120 Ridge Road
Hardwick, MA 01037
Phone/Fax
413-477-8229
www.eqlt.org

**EQLT News
INSIDE...**

The Trails are Open!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER...

Sunday, October 14, Starting gun at 10:00 AM

Station Loop Ramble 5-miler, starting at the intersection of Hardwick and West Roads, New Braintree – A hilly road and trail race with a flat fast finish on the Mass Central Rail Trail. Entry fee: \$20 for adults and \$10 for children age 13 and under if received before September 14, 2012. For full details and to register go to www.EQLT.org under the Events tab or contact Cynthia at chenshaw@eqlt.org or 413-477-8229.

Sunday, October 28, 1:00 PM

Dedication of the Chuck Kidd Interpretive Trail, Moose Brook Road, Hardwick – The interpretive trail starts at the Moose Brook Preserve parking area, which is one mile north from the turn off from Prouty Road. The trail runs through rich mesic woods, crosses a small stream, and includes a stone bench. The Moose Brook valley was a favorite walking place for Chuck who was constantly astounded by the beauty of this place and appreciative of the nature that surrounds us. Boots and water are recommended for this moderate hike.

NOVEMBER...

Sunday, November 18, 1:00 PM

Forest Adaptations and the Changing Seasons, Patrill Hollow Preserve, Patrill Hollow Road, Hardwick – Join us for a leisurely walk along the woodland trails of our Patrill Hollow Preserve and learn about the special adaptations trees and other plants have to survive the changing seasons and long winter. We'll visit a variety of forest types, wetlands, and interesting features on the landscape. Sneakers or hiking boots recommended for this easy to moderate hike.