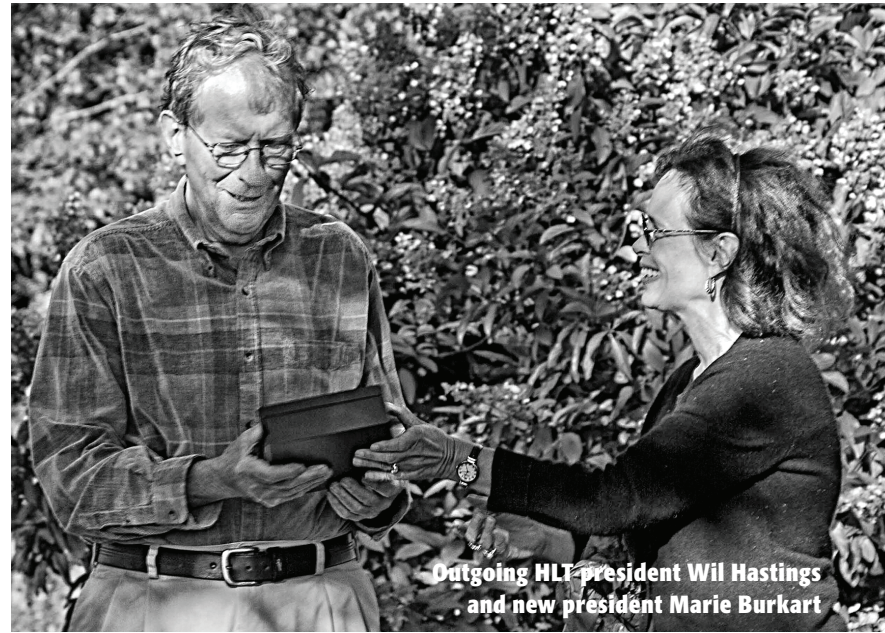


HLT Board of Directors

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Outgoing HLT president Wil Hastings and new president Marie Burkart

JOIN US

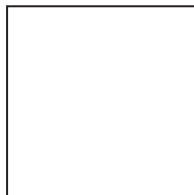
ASK A FRIEND OR TWO OR THREE TO JOIN US, TOO. BETTER YET, GIVE THEM THE GIFT OF A MEMBERSHIP TO THE HILLTOWN LAND TRUST.

HILLTOWN LAND TRUST
332 BULLITT ROAD
ASHFIELD, MA 01330

- \$35 PER YEAR (OUR BASIC "LAND LOVER")
- \$50 PER YEAR
- \$100 PER YEAR
- \$500 PER YEAR
- \$ ____ (OTHER) PER YEAR

NAME

ADDRESS



Onward and Upward with the Hilltown Land Trust!



"When Wil joined the Board we noticed that he spoke and spoke frequently! He has a gift for finding the words that a situation needs, and he soon became our voice." ~Lincoln Fish

"He brought with him an ability to see the big picture—a broad perspective." ~Ruth Pardoe

September 16, 2012 marked the final step in putting Hilltown Land Trust on its future path and allowing **Wil Hastings** to retire after 17 years as president.

At a sunny hilltop gathering at Ruth Pardoe's Joy Hill Farm in Huntington, the reins were handed to our new president, Marie Burkart from Worthington.

Also retiring, after at least 20 years with the Land Trust, was **Ruth Pardoe**. That property—Joy Hill—was HLT's first completed conservation restriction.

Wil said: "We have a new management team in Marie and a now-seasoned veteran, Sally Loomis, as executive director, in addition to new directors Russell Peotter of Chesterfield and Suzanne Kulik of Worthington. I'll still be causing trouble from the shadows, but I expect to see good changes and good energy from the new team."

Wil brought a legal background and an appetite for complexity. He took our all-volunteer young land trust and transformed it into a major land conservation force in our Hilltowns. He fondly remembers creating a completely new form of documentation for securing private financing to purchase from a Federal bankruptcy trustee agricultural preservation restrictions on 200 acres of Albert Farms' Worthington potato fields Wil is now helping to prepare HLT for eventual accreditation by the national Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

Lincoln Fish notes that when Wil first joined the board, "we had always firmly and comfortably believed in ourselves as a small, unknown hillbilly kind of land trust . . . that if given a chance, could probably do great work. Wil completely ignored this view, got the Trustees and a bunch of dynamic people to join us and raised an astounding amount of money to fund an executive director position. The result is a new HLT making a significant contribution to land protection in Western Massachusetts and poised to do a lot more. Thanks, Prez!"

Wil himself would add that he has had the constant support of incredible people, friends and neighbors all along the way.

Ruth Pardoe

Ruth, now in her late eighties, and her late husband David Pardoe played a major role in land preservation in the hilltowns, starting well before there was a HLT! She had

long wanted to preserve her Huntington neighborhood and nearby Pisgah Road from development, and made great progress talking to her neighbors and friends about the possibilities for conservation and how to conserve their lands. Anyone nearby on local undeveloped land who has not yet done a conservation restriction (CR), is well aware of how to do it and whom to contact when ready!



Will Hastings, Ruth Pardoe, and Marie Burkart

Ruth serves as a model for citizen-to-citizen communication on the values and methods of conserving land that the Highland Community Initiative encouraged in many area towns. She was and is the angel behind no less than three CRs besides her own, and for the outright land gift of nearly 400 acres from the Frank Stevens family.

She does not plan to stop prodding her neighbors, even if she is no longer a Board member. Ruth has been a "constant inspiration for our cause," says Wil. **See page 2 for news about our new president!**

Onward and Upward: Our New President

Marie Burkart, our new president, lives in Worthington with her husband, Scott Heyl. Marie and Scott have been Hilltown residents since 1983, with time out in the New York City area. Marie grew up outside of Boston and studied regional planning at UMass/Amherst. After working in several planning positions in western Massachusetts, she took a position in Yonkers, New York working on the city's housing desegregation order. From there she took a job at New York University's Real Estate Institute.

Marie and Scott returned to Worthington in 2000, and for five and a half years, Marie was the executive director of the Hilltown Community Development Corporation in Chesterfield. She has since worked as an independent consultant, researcher and grant writer focusing on affordable housing and financial literacy issues.

Marie is a long-time member and supporter of the Trustees of Reservations and HLT, and has become increasingly interested in land conservation. When asked if she would take the job as president of HLT's board, she enthusiastically accepted. Marie is looking forward to focusing on Board development, solidifying our TTOR partnership, and initiating greater community outreach. She would particularly like to involve younger generations in the preservation of our incredible landscape, with a special focus working farms and forests and their contribution to a healthy local economy. Marie has the knowledge and the skills to take the land trust forward to the next phases of its evolution. Welcome to your new role Marie!



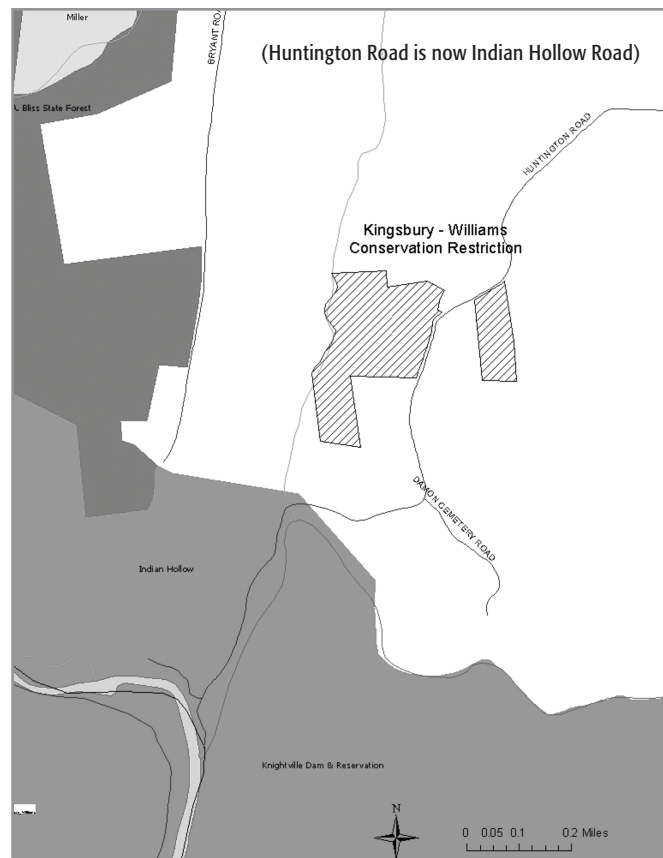
Marie Burkart

Our Newest CR: Indian Hollow Road in Chesterfield

If you journey down the rugged Indian Hollow Road in Chesterfield, you will likely pause at an old farm with a spectacular view to the west toward Gilbert Bliss State Forest and the Knightville Dam area. That view and the surrounding landscape will soon be permanently protected as Hilltown Land Trust's 29th Conservation Restriction.

The 38-acre property spans both sides of Indian Hollow Road (formerly Huntington Road) and protects exceptional water resources of Chauncey Brook and important forest habitat. It has been in the family of sisters Grace (Hunter) Kingsbury and Alice (Hunter) Williams since 1864. Their great, great grandparents Dexter and Mary Damon and their grandparents Egbert and Lilly Damon farmed the land until the 1950s. In the 1970s their parents, Robert and Myrtle (Damon) Hunter, retired there and did some light farming. Although the land is no longer in active agriculture, the CR allows for this use in the future.

The western boundary of this property is Chauncey Brook, a tributary of the Dead Branch and ultimately of the East Branch of the Westfield River, a federally designated Wild and Scenic River. The area surrounding Chauncey Brook is designated Biomap II Core Habitat. The remainder of the property is classified as Biomap II Critical Natural Landscape, recognizing the



important ecological resources of the stream and surrounding forest. Because of the ecological value of the land, this project qualified for a Massachusetts Conservation Land Tax Credit that will give back to the landowners half of the value of their donated CR, up to \$50,000. A grant from the Westfield River Wild and Scenic Advisory Committee helped HLT cover the transaction and future stewardship and monitoring costs associated with this project.

This new CR is near thousands of acres of state and federal conservation land and is a wonderful addition to HLT's 3,100 acres of protected land. We are grateful to Grace Kingsbury, Alice Williams and their family for ensuring this wonderful resource remains for generations to come.



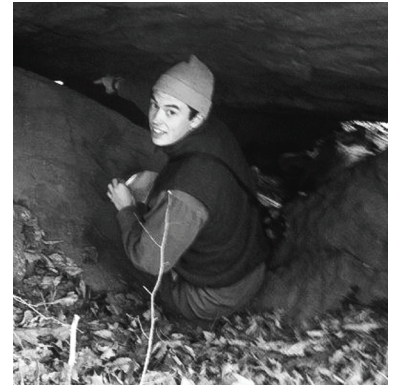
Chesterfield 1900: Howard, Lilly, Dexter, & Egbert Damon

Meet Our New Land Steward

Matthias Nevins comes to HLT as a Land Steward through the Mass. Land Initiative for Tomorrow (MassLIFT), a statewide AmeriCorps program funded in part by a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service and supported by the Mass. Service Alliance. Managed by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, the program involves 20 AmeriCorps Service members working at 16 conservation organizations across the state. HLT is delighted to be involved in this collaboration of regional conservation groups working to meet Massachusetts' needs for land protection. We're fortunate to have found Matthias, a talented addition to the HLT team.

As Land Steward, Matthias will coordinate monitoring of our 29 CRs, prepare baseline reports for new HLT conservation lands, help manage the properties owned by HLT and plan events to explore some of these properties. He will also be organizing training activities on topics related to monitoring conservation lands.

Matthias grew up in a small, yet thriving town in central New Hampshire, similar to the hilltowns. His undergraduate degree is in Conservation Biology from St. Lawrence University in upstate New York. He is interested in how humans are a part of the ecology of a landscape. Matthias reflects, "People's plans, laws, ethics, uses of the land, have near-term effects on an area, but long-term ecology also includes humans and their niche in that landscape. We are never only a benign force on our surroundings." Matthias brings experience in working with communities with a mix of preserved land and land in active use in the Adirondack State Park, parts of Kenya, and central New Hampshire. He says he is really enjoying working with a land trust with a local focus and small town decision-making, and feels New England is the place in which he would most like to pursue his conservation interests. You can find Matthias at most HLT events and hikes or helping Stewardship Committee members Tom Quinn and Waino Tuominen monitor our protected lands.



Matthias Nevins

Hilltown Hike

On a bright, warm November afternoon, about 25 people showed up on Pisgah Road for a great Hilltown Hike. Thanks to Bill Orr for sending these photos.

