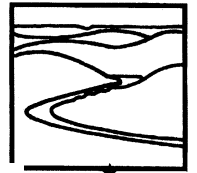


Highlands Journal



WINTER
2003

Quarterly newsletter of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy
dedicated to preservation of open space and environmental quality in Wayne
and Pike counties, PA & Sullivan and Delaware counties, NY



HISTORIC NEW YORK PROPERTY IS NEWEST EASEMENT



Ken Knapp and Barbara Yeaman

By any measurement, the Knapp property is very special combining both outstanding historical structures and significant land. Straddling Route 10, just outside of the Delaware County Seat of Delhi, the Knapp 220 acres presents ideal acreage for commercial development. One can easily imagine a strip mall, a super store, or a service station conveniently sited between the highway and the beautiful West Branch of the Delaware. Ken Knapp has been approached by many interested in "a piece of land". He has always said no. Instead, after discussing his ideas about preservation with his two daughters, Kenna and Karen, he decided to place a conservation easement on the property and donate the easement to DHC, thus preserving important agricultural lands (designated as New York State as prime soils – the best possible) and 2/3rds of a mile of river frontage. But the best is yet to come. Sited facing the junction of the Little Delaware River and the West Branch of the Delaware, is the 200 year old, 29 room homestead of attorney Samuel Sherwood, who served as a congressman during the administration of James Madison.

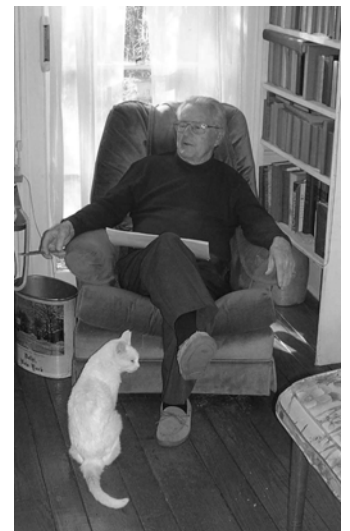
When the Knapp family moved from Casper, Wyoming in 1944, it had been vacant for 19 years, essentially abandoned by the great-granddaughter of Sher-

wood. She left everything in the house . . . furniture, books and trunks of clothes. Among the treasures found in the house were several first editions and an invitation to a Madison White House party. Also found was a letter from Dolly Madison politely declining an invitation to visit the Sherwood home. Ken and his family moved into the house that war-time winter when coke was in short supply, forcing Ken to cut dead trees to feed the five fireplaces and steam boiler.

The house is now on the New York State Historic Register as well as the National Register. Recently state historians enthusiastically surveyed the entire house determining dates of additions and changes and finding the attic rafters to be numbered as if they had been pre-assembled on the ground.

Ken Knapp, a spry 89, lives in the house with his 20-year-old cat. He and his daughter fondly remember the day Ken caught 94 trout when they were washed down the "stocked" Little Delaware during a spring freshet. Neither of them likes trout to this day after that overindulgence. Ken has always fished the West Branch – a fly fisherman who admits to using worms at times. Native trout and browns abound. Fifty years ago Mr. Knapp leased a small parking and access area adjacent to the bridge to NYSDEC for the convenience of fishermen.

The conservation easement on the Knapp property conserves all the historic and natural attributes of the property including historic integrity, scenic value, agricultural and woodland productivity, wildlife habitat and water quality. Only uses compatible with the natural



Ken Knapp with cat

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Delaware Highlands Conservancy

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Upcoming Meetings:

Land Protection March 8
Board Meeting April 11

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



To all; it will be another exciting and challenging year for our land trust. This year your board has unanimously voted to move forward with the hiring of a full time Executive Director. The reasons are compelling. Our region of interest continues its phenomenal growth and that brings with it pressure on open spaces and sensitive lands. The rate of increase in inquiries from private landowners to preserve land has stretched our all-volunteer capabilities. Your Board has been planning for this eventuality and is now in an active search for a director. We have defined the position and identified the director's job description, the relationship to the Board, and set the goals for the first year. Our objective is to complete the search and fill the position by the end of June 2003. The Board believes that this new direction will greatly expand our capabilities and ensure future sustainability. We look forward to making our choice known soon. As always we encourage input, so if you have comments please share them with us through our office.



DHC OFFERING TWO SCHOLARSHIPS

This spring DHC is offering two \$1,000 scholarships to honor Barbara Yeaman. Seniors in three New York high schools: Hancock, Sullivan West and Eldred; and three Pennsylvania high schools: Wayne Highlands, Delaware Valley, and Wallenpaupack are eligible. All of these school districts are on or in the near vicinity of the Upper Delaware River. Applications are due the end of March and the winners will be announced in early May.

These scholarships have been made possible through the generosity of the First Union Foundation, our membership and individual donors. It is hoped that these \$1,000 scholarships will stimulate interest in careers related to land stewardship and environmental sciences applicable to the needs of the Upper Delaware River valley. The three members of the blue-ribbon panel who will review applications and make the award decisions are: Greg Belcamino, Ann Rhoads and Patricia Bradt. Greg is a DHC Board member and an environmental attorney in New York City. Ann Rhoads is the Director of Botany at the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia and a frequent leader of walks for DHC. Patricia Bradt is a professor of environmental studies at Muhlenberg College, in Allentown and has a home on Fairview Lake, PA.

Barbara is a founding member of the DHC and has earned the respect and admiration of those associated with the Conservancy as well as the Upper Delaware River community. She has given a great deal of herself to this organization and continues to shape the future of our growing land trust as a Board member and chairman of the Land Protection Committee. The DHC Board is pleased to honor Barbara Yeaman by offering these educational awards. Contributions can be sent to the DHC office earmarked for the DHC/Yeaman Scholarship Fund.



Barbara Yeaman drafting easement

(Continued from page 1)

historic and rural character are permitted. The property can be sold but not sub-divided. Commercial logging, following an approved forest management plan, may be conducted provided soil erosion and adverse impact on wetlands, streams and steep slopes are minimized.

Let's jump ahead a few years, to say 2060, and read an article in the travel section of the New York Times.

Take a weekend trip to Delhi, N.Y. and visit the new Congressional Inn, a boutique bed and breakfast occupying the former home of Samuel Sherwood, member of Congress during the administration of James Madison. Walk in the private park along the West Branch of the Delaware. Wake up in one of the 10 historic bedrooms, have breakfast in the formal paneled dining rooms or use the secret door behind the fireplace leading from the spacious living room into Congressman Sherwood's private library. Most rooms in the Inn still contain the original Sherwood furniture. Sit in the formal garden or play tennis on the original tennis

courts. Fishing is an excellent option as is horseback riding from the stables now located in the former icehouse. A separate innkeepers residence has been built where the old carriage house stood before the fire 125 years ago.

This property was recently purchased from the Knapp family (only the second owners of the property) who had the foresight 50 years ago to preserve this unique treasure through a conservation easement. This easement is held and monitored by The Delaware Highlands Conservancy, one of the largest land trusts in New York preserving over a quarter million acres in the four counties of the Upper Delaware River region.

This imaginary newspaper article illustrates a possible future use of the property when it inevitably must change owners or use. The Conservancy would become a partner in interpretation of easement restrictions and work with the new owners to insure that the conservation values were maintained.



Dining room of Knapp home



Looking toward Knapp property on the West Branch of Delaware River

ATTENTION GARDENERS: Two sources of native plants have been brought to our attention. **Ernst Conservation Seeds** in Meadville, PA specializes in native wildflowers, grasses and legumes. For information call 800-873-3321 or visit their website WWW.ERNSTSEED.COM. **Redbud Native Plant Nursery** in Glen Mills, PA specializes in native trees, shrubs and perennials for the backyard conservationist. They can be reached at 610-358-4300.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: Mark Anderson, Sara and Paul Beinstein, Robert C. Hoch, Paul Romaniello, and Fox and Elsie Stoddard

OFFICE NOTES: Thanks to Fred Studer for the handy postage scale.

DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP FORM

I want to conserve natural open space and support the Conservancy with my tax-deductible membership donation of:

___ \$25 Student; ___ \$35 Basic; ___ \$60 Sponsor; ___ \$100 Protector; ___ \$250 Sustainer; ___ \$500 Conservator; ___ Other

Please make checks payable to **Delaware Highlands Conservancy**. Mail this form and donation payment to:
Delaware Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 218, Hawley, PA 18428-0218

NAME: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS: _____

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I would like to volunteer to help the Conservancy with _____

Delaware Highlands Conservancy is a tax-exempt organization as provided by IRS regulations. The official registration and financial information of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free, within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Saturday, May 3 Wildflower walk. Gather at the Butterfly Barn at 10 a.m. for a 1 1/2 mile stroll along John Davis Road with Ed Wesely.

Friday evening, May 9 Star Watch. Amateur astronomers Al Schultheis of Narrowsburg, NY and Norm Sullivan of Beach Lake, PA will have telescopes trained on the heavens. In addition, Bill Yeaman, of Rock Creek Park Nature Center's planetarium in Washington DC, will guide visitors through the constellations visible in the spring sky. Join the Conservancy for a evening of exciting stellar discovery. Rain date is Saturday, May 10.

Saturday, May 17 Birding Expert Peter Wulfhorst will lead an early morning walk through meadow, riverside, country lane and forest to listen and watch for spring migrant birds, which live in this area. It is not unusual to see an eagle, many kinds of warblers, pileated woodpecker, orioles and occasionally a mother merganser with her ducklings. We will have coffee and doughnuts for hardy souls who meet at 7 am at the Butterfly Barn for this always rewarding walk. Binoculars are a must. We have several pairs to share if you have none. Dress for some rough walking.

Tuesday, May 20 Environmental Landscaping with Marci Mowery, Education Chair, PA State Audubon. This program is sponsored jointly by the Audubon Society of Northeast PA and Delaware Highlands Conservancy. The program will be held at 7:00 PM at the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce Community Room in Honesdale, PA. This program is free and open to the public.

DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

P.O. Box 218 Hawley, PA 18428-0218



Historic Knapp home on new easement property