september 2007 HIGHLANDS JOURNAL newsletter of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy

Dedicated to conserving the natural and cultural heritage of the Upper Delaware River region in New York and Pennsylvania

2,400 ACRES OF FORESTLAND PROTECTED

By Barbara Lewis and Barbara Yeaman

The members and supporters of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy can take great pride in our organization's phenomenal accomplishment of helping to protect two huge blocks of forested land in Pike County. George Stone, a private landowner, has protected over 1,200 acres with a conservation easement which assures that the family land he lives on and enjoys for fishing, hunting, and wildlife protection is preserved for his heirs. Peter Pinchot and his siblings, carrying on the family's conservation ethic, have protected nearly 1,200 acres in the Milford Experimental Forest to benefit the greater community through environmental research and education and water quality protection

FORESTLAND'S HIGHEST VALUE -TIMBER, DEVELOPMENT, OR WILDLIFE?

George Stone describes his land as host to "a Northeastern hardwood forest of cherry, ash, beech, basswood, soft and hard maple, red oak, and hemlock." His woods shelter native species like white tail deer, black bears, pileated woodpeckers, bluebirds, red-tail hawks and Monarch butterflies. Stone takes particular pride in showing visitors the 350-yearold hemlocks still thriving on his property. This forest is not uncommon in Northeast PA where our glaciated soils provide ideal conditions for valuable timber trees. What is uncommon is the way Stone and his forebears chose to manage this splendid forest. Instead of cutting timber or building home sites, he made a decision to forever protect his land from commercial uses. He has insured the protection of his forest's wildlife habitat.



George Stone (seated) with Sue Currier, Helle Henriksen and Lou Cusano

(Continued on page 3)

MILFORD EXPERIMENTAL FOREST



Peter Pinchot, fostering sustainable forestry

Compelling questions are arising from individual forest landowners both here in Northeast PA and across the United States, whether their holdings are 20 acres, 50 acres, or 200 acres. "How can we afford to keep our forested land and resist selling it to developers?," these landowners ask. "If we pass our land on to our children and grandchildren, how can we assure that the land won't be fragmented and subdivided and sold off in later years?" Troubling questions, these!

A local land conservation group and a Pike County family with a huge tract of forested land and a long legacy of commitment to forest conservation may be able to help these concerned landowners find some answers to these difficult questions.

Delaware Highlands Conservancy

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Upcoming Meetings:

Annual Meeting October 20 Land Protection November 10

A LOOK FORWARD



It has been a very busy year for the Conservancy.

A very busy year.

We are currently on track to close more conservation easements in 2007 than in any other year prior. Three times more. Land in all four counties we serve — Pike and Wayne Counties in Pennsylvania, as well as Sullivan and Delaware Counties in NY. Land from 20 acres to 300 acres in size. Forested land, farm Carson Helfrich, President land and diverse wildlife habitat.

It is a testament to the number of landowners in our community who love their land and want to see it protected for future generations.

Our accomplishments are only possible because of the support of our members, donors, and volunteers. Thank you.

Some of those volunteers are members of the Board of Directors. The Board meets regularly and is actively involved in setting the strategy and direction for the Conservancy. I am pleased to announce that the Board appointed two new board members: Denise Frangipane and Mike Uretsky this past month. Both will be up for election for their first term at our Annual General Meeting on October 20. Denise and Mike have been members of the Conservancy, actively involved in the region, and interested in helping further our work. Welcome Denise and Mike.

ONE PERCENT FOR THE CONSERVANCY

Financial support is also a critical component to our accomplishments. 1% for the Planet (www.onepercentfortheplanet.org) is an alliance of businesses who pledge to donate at least 1% of their annual sales to environmental organizations worldwide. Earlier this year, we received a letter from Keith Fitzpatrick saying he was pledging to give back to the community where he lives and works. With the letter, came a check from Keith Fitzpatrick Custom Carpentry. We were honored to be the recipients of his donation and thank him. We thank Keith for the donation, for giving back to the community and for promoting the work of the Conservancy to his customers. Thank you.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: BARBARA LEWIS

Barbara Lewis, is a freelance writer and photographer from Honesdale Pennsylvania. A member of the Conservancy, Barbara stopped in one day in late last year to find out how she could be more involved with our work. It was a fortunate day for the Conservancy. Since then Barbara has interviewed and written about several landowners protecting their land. Her articles, press releases and photographs have appeared in local papers, the leffersonville Journal, Milford Magazine, and in our own newsletter and website. Her work helps promote the Conservancy's mission and work — and has resulted in several new inquiries from local landowners looking to protect their land. Thank you very much Barbara for all your help.



Barbara Lewis at work

Volunteers are a critical component of our success whether it's a couple hours a week, a month, or a quarter. To find out more about how you can help, call the Conservancy at 570-226-3164.

(Continued from page 1)

George Stone's woods and streams were acquired by his father over a period of more than twenty years. Returning from World War I in 1919, James K. Stone bought land with a clear-running trout stream in the area where, as a young boy, his father taught him to fly fish. In 1927 he showed similar foresight in business when he pioneered the building of first U.S. shopping center "Suburban Square" in Ardmore, PA. As James Stone's fortunes improved, and contiguous lots came up for sale, he added to his Pike and Monroe County forest land. Today it covers over a thousand acres, including the headwaters of the Paupack Creek, a major tributary to Lake Wallenpaupack..

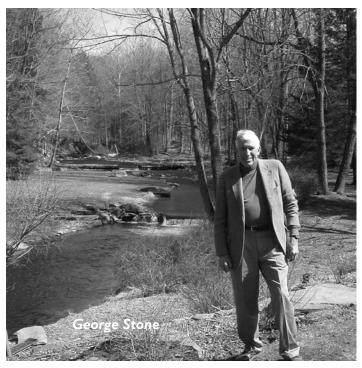
During World War II, the Stone family moved to their country home, and young George attended school in Greene-Dreher Township for six years and renewed his love for fly-fishing and forest wildlife. After college, and newly married, George and Cissy Stone lived in the Northeast before his textile business necessitated a move to South Carolina. Now they commute frequently between their home in the South and their woodland retreat in Pennsylvania.

Throughout the years tantalizing offers for the forestland persisted. He is contacted many times a year by both local and out-of-state companies with sights on his acreage. "The timber people would love to come in here and cut," said George. "They'll use any excuse." Others offer Stone an additional way to make handsome profits on his holdings. "Developers know the property exists, and they pursue it," Stone continued. "Last summer a Texas real estate firm was interested in building a resort in this area.

Why did George Stone resist these rich real estate opportunities and decide, instead, to protect his land from commercial timbering or development? "We love this area so much. If it were ever cut or broken up and developed,



Hemlocks along the Paupack Creek



Photos by Barbara Lewis

everything would go downhill from that point on," he said. Stone also believes that keeping his acreage intact protects adjacent real estate values and preserves the rural character of the whole region.

Throughout the years the Stone family used the property for flyfishing, hunting, picking wild blueberries in the summer, and boiling sap into maple syrup in the spring. Now George and Cissy's children and grandchildren come to enjoy the same recreational activities. "We like to maintain this piece of property in its entirety for their benefit...and we want to ensure that it stays that way," explained Stone.

In 2006 George Stone placed over 1200 acres of his forestland in a "forever wild" conservation easement with the Delaware Highlands Conservancy. This specifies that no timbering will be allowed on his land except for "salvage cuts" of damaged or downed trees. Attaching this easement to the property deed also assures that the land cannot be subdivided or developed, whether the land stays with Stone's descendants or is sold to another buyer. While placing this perpetual easement on his acreage essentially removes a most valuable use (subdivision) and thus may lower the monetary value of the property, it does provide a compensatory tax advantage. Donating a conservation easement to the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, a charitable organization, may entitle the donor to a federal income tax deduction. The conservation easement now makes the property attractive and affordable to a buyer who is looking for an undeveloped tract, and assures the preservation of precious wildlife habitat for the future.



Thank you one and all for helping make our 11th annual celebration in the Meadow on the shores of the Upper Delaware a success.

Our grand prize winners of the raffle are:

3rd Prize a \$50 gift certificate

for Alice's Wonderland: Roger Howell

2nd Prize a Fishing PFD: Laurie Stuart

Ist Prize a Kayak courtesy of

Alice's Wonderland: Betsy Fitzpatrick

Early Bird Prize: Framed Print by Dave Soete was

won in August by Barbara Homsher





Once again a BIG thank you to our sponsors: Alice's Wonderland and Photographer David B. Soete and to all individuals and organizations who donated to our silent auction:

Agway Honesdale Farm & Garden, Amy Long,
Amy Strapec, Art's For Him, Barbara Brenner
Barbara Yeaman, Beach Lake Bread,
Blooming Grove Hunting and Fishing Club,
Bunting's Nursery, Ceasars Pocono Resort,
Central House, Cindy & Robin Wildermuth, Claude Briere,
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Dave's Super Duper, David B. Soete,
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National Park Service, Nature's Grace,
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Sigrid Wilshinsky, Teeter's, The Fireside,
The Kitchen Center, The Settlers Inn,
Tick-Tocks Restaurant, VanGorder's Furniture,
and Woodloch Pines.





Thank you to all participating individuals and organizations—presenters and entertainers alike who joined in our celebration on the river. Special thanks to Zoot—Woodstock Sound and Stage, Janet Burgan, Sandy and Amy Long, Barbara Yeaman, Mike Vreeland, and The Pharm.

A hearty thank you to all the volunteers who gave hours of labor, creativity and inspiration that make this event a success.



All photos by Dave Soete

Meadow Party's Official Sponsors

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(Continued from page 1)

In December of 2006 the Delaware Highlands
Conservancy helped several members of the Pinchot
family, headed by Peter Pinchot, complete negotiations to
protect a tract of nearly 1200 acres of forested land,
known as the Milford Experimental Forest, with a
conservation easement. The protection of the property
was possible with the assistance of The Conservation
Fund, The Forest Legacy Program of the U.S. Forestry
Service and the PA Department of Conservation and
Natural Resources (DCNR).



Sawkill Creek — protecting wildlife habitat and drinking water

Placing this land into a conservation easement assures that it will never be subdivided or developed, and because of the large size of this parcel and its location adjacent to tracts of state forests and gamelands, this forest provides especially great public benefits. In terms of water quality, it protects the aquifers for the Milford area and the integrity of the Sawkill Creek, an important spawning and fishing ground for native trout. It provides opportunities for conservation education by allowing groups such as the Audubon Society and scout troops to take students on walks and talks through the Forest. In addition, it allows public access to the property via a trail system that will ultimately connect with a developing Pike County greenway.

But what about the benefit to the individual forest land-owners we started out talking about? As Peter Pinchot explains: "I proposed that we re-establish the Milford Experimental Forest (MEF) and re-tap into that legacy of research, {started by his great-grandfather James Pinchot, who founded the first research forest in the U.S. right here in Pike County back in 1901}...that we really focus on the unsolved problem of how private landowners can manage their forests sustainably and make money out of it, and also preserve biodiversity and water resources... that benefit the whole community."

The MEF is playing a pivotal role by being a centralized source of information for private landowners, especially through its partnerships with the U.S. Forest Service, the DCNR, the local Conservation District, with Penn State and the Yale School of Forestry, and with the Pinchot Institute, a non-profit forest policy institute.

How, specifically, can the MEF, in conjunction with these partners, benefit private landowners?

One big way, is that, as a research forest, they can do pilot projects, or experiments, about land conservation issues like deer management and forest management through sustainable timbering. "Somebody has to be the risk taker who tries new ideas out which are going to generate sources of income and reward sustainability," says Peter. "We are willing to be the one that makes the mistakes, falls on its face, picks itself up and says, 'Oh, that's not the way to do it. Let's try this way.' We don't want the average landowner who's depending on that income to have to make those mistakes, because that could be one of those triggers which says "SELL." We want to do that and then share the experiences."

Pinchot, while acknowledging that private landowners face financial challenges, is convinced that "There is tremendous opportunity to increase the economic benefits to private landowners" who choose to keep their forested lands. Besides the benefits to the water, the wildlife, and the aesthetics, tangible economic benefits



Peter explains deer exclosure

are accruing that will, collectively, he believes, help forest landowners make their properties economically viable. These benefits include everything from harvesting firewood to selectively cutting high quality timber; from receiving financial incentives for reducing carbon emissions (a practice already well established in Europe) to even possibly selling the protected tract of valuable forest to a buyer who appreciates its huge value and is able to pay handsomely for it.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 29 & 30 ~ Lenape Pow-wow II AM - 6:00 PM Stop by the Conservancy booth at the Lenape Nation Pow-wow in Bingham Park Hawley, PA. An educational fun filled day of Native American food, specialty dancers, music, crafters and artisan vendors. A Concert follows on Saturday evening at 7:00 PM.

Sept 30 ~ Earth Day in Autumn

Stop by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy booth at the Earth Day in Autumn Festival in Bethel at the site of the famous Woodstock Festival.

Oct II ~ Opportunity Knocks 7:00 PM

Michael Frank, Director, Community Planning from Heritage Conservancy, will explore the financial implications of open space conservation and its benefits as a community investment. Pike County specific examples will be used. This program is jointly sponsored by the Pike County Partnership and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Oct 13 ~ Fall Foliage Hike and Lunch 10:30 AM

Meet by the Raymondskill Falls outside Milford, hike along the ridge overlooking the Delaware River and have lunch at the historic Cliff Park Inn. Registration and \$20 prepaid lunch fee required. Call the Conservancy office at 570-226-3164 for information.

Oct 20 ~ Annual General Meeting 10:00 AM

We invite all Delaware Highlands Conservancy members to attend our Annual General Meeting. This is an excellent opportunity to hear about our progress; to vote for members of the Board of Directors; to ask questions of the Treasurer; to learn about our future plans; and to meet your fellow members, new and old. PPL Environmental Learning Center, Rt. 6, Hawley, PA.

Oct 24 ~ Green Building In the Home 7-8:30 PM

Have you been wondering how to incorporate renewable energy into your home without breaking the bank? Join Dick Riesling of Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development, as he gives an introduction to solar electric (photo voltaic), solar thermal, wind, micro-hydro and geothermal for your home. The program will include costs, production, grant information as well as a review of energy conservation. PPL Wallenpaupack Environmental Learning Center Auditorium. Registration is required. To register, contact PPL at 570-251-6196 or ppl/pre-serves@ppl/web.com

Visit www.delawarehighlands.org for the latest events

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Linda Hutton, Arie Krier, Brad and Erica Murray, Graham Rice and Judy White, and Susan Thompson

(Continued from page 5)

Pinchot also emphasizes the importance of landowners taking action as soon as they decide they have an interest in protecting their land. "Whichever generation first gets the idea...DO IT THEN! Do not transfer it on to your children and their children until you end up with people that have a widely differing set of ideas about what the best use of the land is, and then let them fight it out." Not only will this result in fragmenting the land, but it will create great dissension within the family, which is something that Peter has experienced first-hand and thinks should be avoided at all costs.

Pinchot also observes that, while leaving certain tracts of forest land "untouched" may be helpful for study purposes, for most individual landowners some intervention will probably be beneficial, not only financially but also for the good of the forest itself. Because of the unpredictability of changes from the

"outside," such as deer, invasive plants and insects, or fire, "You may have to manage it fairly intensively to get to some sort of stable old growth condition which has the ecological properties you'd like to have in it."

Placing a tract of land into a conservation easement can effectively protect one's land from subdivision or development forever, but it can also allow individual landowners a great deal of flexibility in how to manage their property for both the good of the land and their own benefit. Once their forest holdings are protected, landowners can continue to practice sustainable forestry. The Pinchot Family and the MEF, through their experiments and the sharing of their findings, can be an invaluable resource for helping such landowners find ways to produce income that will make their land financially viable, while also keeping it intact for posterity.

Photos by Barbara Lewis

LEAVEYOUR OWN LEGACY

Your support of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy can help protect our quality of life here in the Upper Delaware River Region. Our members and supporters ensure our work continues. Please consider these additional ways to help:

- Include the Conservancy in your estate plans
- Use your employers gift matching program to double your donation
- Give a gift of securities

Make a direct contribution from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA). If you are over 70-and-ahalf years of age, the law for 2007 permits you to direct contributions from your individual IRA to a charitable organization. These contributions may satisfy your IRA's required yearly minimum distribution and will be excluded from your federal taxable income.

To learn more on any of these options, call the office at 570-226-3164.

A WALK WITH DR. RHOADS

Acclaimed botanist and author, Dr. Ann Rhoads, led a walk through meadow, forest, and waterside habitat at the Dorflinger-Suydam Wildlife Sanctuary in early August. Dr. Rhoads shared her extensive knowledge of the plants and trees in the area with Conservancy members and others. Dr. Rhoads is the author of **The Vascular Flora of Pennsylvania** and co-author with fellow



botanist, Tim Block, of **The Plants of Pennsylvania: An Illustrated Manual.** She is the former Head of Botany at the Morris Arboretum and remains active in her work there.

Dr. Rhoads is a dedicated supporter of the Conservancy, donating her time to public programs as well as research on properties the Conservancy is working to protect. Thank you Ann!





The Delaware Highlands Conservancy lost a good friend, long-time member, volunteer and supporter on August 22, 2007. **Lynn Elfert**, whose own gardens reflected the care and love she had for the entire Upper Delaware River region, was overcome by a withering attack of asthma. Her friend Tom Kane said that "she breathed magic into her gardens." Indeed, she breathed magic into this entire valley. Her exquisite sense of style and constant good humor will be sorely missed by all who knew and worked with her.

Lynn Elfert, left, examines a flower held by Dr. Ann Rhoads during a Conservancy-sponsored Walk on Aug. 4th at the Dorflinger Sanctuary. Also shown are fellow walkers Floyd Schnakenberg, center, and Tom Dein.

Photo by Dave Soete

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ENVIROFEST

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy will once again participate in the annual Black Bear Film Festival's free EnviroFest to be held on **Sunday, October 14** at Grey Towers National Historic Site, in Milford. Our co-sponsor is the Grey Towers Heritage Association.

The free EnviroFest films will be screened in 2 locations at Grey Towers throughout the day. A photographic exhibit of the Wayne County Save Our Barns Project www.SaveOurBarns.org will accompany the film "Charlie Obert's Barn", which chronicles a grandson's quest to save his grandfather's barn from ruin. Other films include "Everything's Cool" about global warming; "Muskrat Lovely"; and "Birdsong & Coffee: A Wake Up Call", how coffee drinkers are linked to ecosystems in coffee-growing Costa Rica.

For information or a complete list of films visit www.blackbearfilm.com or call 570-409-0909.



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Photo by Daye Soete

Meadow Party Music

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