

## Land trust acquires a unique historical property in Wayne

KLT's newest property is the generous donation by Albion Besse of 55 wooded acres on the Old Winthrop Road in Wayne. This property will be known as the Besse Historical Conservation Area in recognition of its ownership by generations of the Besse family.

Mr. Besse says of his ancestor Jabez Besse Jr., who in the 18th century came first to Hallowell from Sandwich, Massachusetts, and then in 1788 moved to Wayne to settle on a lot granted by the Kennebec Proprietors. "I want this land to remain as primitive as when my ancestors settled the property," he said.

Land Trust President Jeff Pidot said, "We are excited to receive this property and a noteworthy piece of Kennebec Valley history. It represents the roots of the Besse family here in Maine and will be maintained by KLT as a testament to Mr. Besse's generosity to future generations and his desire to keep the property in its undeveloped state."

A sign denoting the Besse Historical Conservation Area will be placed on the property along



*Woods in Besse Historical Conservation Area*

the Old Winthrop Rd. Marancook student, Steven Webb of Manchester and Industrial Arts Coordinator Art Poole will create the sign. KLT is appreciative to all these volunteers for their efforts.

The Besse's desire to pre-

serve the land and the record of its early history is already being appreciated by students at the Wayne Elementary School. The students in Jennifer Baack's fourth grade class are studying the agricultural history of the Besse land this year. Beginning with a long-term perspective, the students have been studying Indian land use history since the melting of the last glacier 12,000 years ago. Albion Besse has passed along a family story of finding evidence of Indians living on the land, shortly after the family moved to this Wayne property. The fourth graders are also learning about other artifacts found in the region, which indicate that a hunting and gathering culture was present in

this area for thousands of years. This school project has been planned by KLT member Theresa Kerchner and is supported by the Helen and George Ladd Charitable Corporation.

The Besse homestead on the Besse Road abutting the donated parcel has been sold to a private party and is not part of the Besse Historical Conservation Area.



**KLT Board of Directors**

Jeffrey Pidot, President  
Hallowell  
James Connors, First VP  
N. Monmouth  
Robert Mohlar, Second VP  
Readfield  
Sandra Crockett, Treasurer,  
Winthrop  
Norm Rodrigue, Secretary,  
Manchester  
David Courtemanch  
Mt. Vernon  
David Dominie  
Readfield  
Diane Friese  
Vienna  
Glenn Hodgkins  
Gardiner  
Ann Judd  
Fayette  
Cynthia Kuhns  
Mt. Vernon  
Howard Lake  
Readfield  
Diana McLaughlin  
Wayne  
Jeffrey Musich  
Monmouth  
Collin Therrien  
Augusta  
Paula Thomson  
Fayette  
Clyde Walton  
Fayette  
Robert Weston  
E. Winthrop

**President's message**

When traveling, I like to compare my foreign surroundings with my home territory of Kennebec County and ask myself what lessons each might offer the other. Recently, I had occasion to travel about 150 miles up the northern California coast from San Francisco to the town of Mendocino, which is less than half the size of my hometown of Hallowell. Northern California combines dramatic scenery, unexpectedly small and rural communities and cool, foggy weather. The area seems like a caricature of Maine, which explains why the TV series *Murder, She Wrote*, supposedly set in Maine, was in fact filmed in Mendocino!

From this trip, what impressions did I come away with that seem relevant here? Unlike northern California, Maine is the real McCoy, gentler, subtler, oddly more populated and diverse, more historic, and yet more struggling. I loved visiting Mendocino but it is not my *home*. One thing it does have, which Maine sadly lacks, is a considerable degree of protection of its beautiful natural surroundings. It is striking that in much of California, the very best landscapes have been publicly acquired and protected. By contrast, Maine has nearly the smallest proportion of publicly protected land of any state. It is this fact that is relevant to the work of a land trust.

Maine's land trusts help fill the gap. They protect our best local and regional landscapes, the soul of our communities, that otherwise will not be protected. This makes the mission of a land trust like ours all the more vital to the well being of the communities and people we serve. As shown by a recent study of the State Planning Office, Maine is rapidly losing some of the best natural qualities that make it special. With your continued support, in its quiet way, your land trust is trying to make local headway against this tide.

Thank you, as always, for your generosity and conservation-mindedness.

*Jeff Pidot*

**Kudos to  
retiring Board members**

The entire KLT Board extends its sincere appreciation for the hundreds of volunteer hours our retiring board members contributed to KLT. Many thanks to Cynthia Bastey, Wendy Dennis, Ken Knight, Kenneth Spalding, and particular special thanks to the founding visionary of KLT — Jym St. Pierre.



*President Jeff Pidot gives founding and retiring Board member Jym St. Pierre a plaque at KLT's Annual Meeting in August*

## *Notes from the field*

Caring for KLT properties continued to occupy your stewardship committee throughout the summer. A sampling of their projects follows:

### **Wyman Memorial Forest (Monk's Hill), Readfield**

We harvested about five acres of dead and dying red pine damaged by the Great Ice Storm of 1998. The site will be allowed to naturally regenerate. We expect to net about \$3,000, which will be placed in the Trust's stewardship account. Thanks to Linda and Don Gifford for allowing us to cross their property to remove the wood. The Maine Conservation Corps provided a crew to remove ice storm debris from the site's only trail. (See related story p. 5)

### **Norris Island, Androscoggin Lake**

A local citizen's group, organized by Ken Spalding of Wayne, worked diligently throughout the spring to develop a management plan for Norris Island. The plan, which was immediately put into place, includes: the installation of sanitation facilities, overnight camping by reservation, appropriate signage and a stewardship/monitoring program. This comprehensive management plan will both protect the island's natural character and allow for public use and enjoyment.

### **Cobbossee Islands, Cobbossee Lake**

A similar planning process was used on Cobbossee Lake for Horseshoe, Hodgdon and Perry Islands. Several planning meetings with interested Cobbossee citizens, organized by Jeff Musich and Jessie Mae MacDougal, resulted in a plan that prohibits overnight camping and camp-

fires. Informative signs are being installed on the islands announcing these policies. In addition, a new Cobbossee Lake map will be distributed by the Cobbossee Yacht Club and the Department of Conservation. This map will identify KLT's island properties and explain its public use policies.

### **Mathews Woods, Fayette**

This 17-acre parcel, recently bequested to KLT by Alice Mathews, was damaged by the ice storm. Thanks to board member and neighbor Ann Judd and Ron Giard, along with help from the Maine Conservation Corps, these lovely woods and fields were cleaned up and provided a great walk for many KLT members during the annual meeting festivities.

### **Vaughan Woods, Hallowell**

In addition to the volunteer ice storm clean up mentioned in our last newsletter, George and Diana Gibson have spent many hours and employed professional help to restore the Vaughan Woods trails. Recently, the Maine Conservation Corps provided several days of work to further improve the trails. The Trust will continue to work with the Gibsons to help the Vaughan Woods to recover from Ice Storm 98.

This fall the stewardship committee is visiting KLT properties to assure that boundaries are properly marked. As always, we invite anyone who would like to help with stewardship to join us. Call Norm Rodrigue at (207) 622-6204 or e-mail to [normrod@mint.net](mailto:normrod@mint.net).



# *KLT establishes advisory board*

This edition of the newsletter proudly announces KLT's new advisory board members. They have graciously expressed a willingness to support KLT's work with their advice and counsel. In addition, we hope they will help be our eyes and ears in their communities. We welcome and thank these individuals and are greatly fortunate to have their support.

## *Advisory board*

Mary Ellen Avery Wellesley, MA	Ken Knight Augusta, ME
Jerry Bley Readfield, ME	Lincoln Ladd Wayne, ME
Seward Brewster Manchester, ME	Mort Libby Cincinnati, OH
Peter H. Burbank Wayne, ME	Jon A. Lund Hallowell, ME
Scott Cowger Hallowell, ME	Charles McCarthy Manchester, ME
Wendy Dennis Winthrop, ME	Rupert B. Neily Jr. Hallowell, ME
Caroline W. Farr Wallingford, PA	Diane Ryan Manchester, ME
George & Diana Gibson Hallowell, ME	Jym St. Pierre Readfield, ME
Lloyd Irland Wayne, ME	Bruce Schatz Augusta, ME
Jamie Isaacson Wayne, ME	Lila Segal Winthrop, ME
Judy Kane Hallowell, ME	Jane Smith Boothbay, ME
Roger Katz Augusta, ME	Ken Spalding Wayne, ME
Martha Kent Essex Jct., VT	Benjamin Townsend Augusta, ME

## *Do you have computer or website skills?*

The KLT Education Committee would like some knowledgeable assistance in developing a KLT web site. We need help in setting-up and developing a user-friendly, aesthetically pleasing site.

This is a unique way for you to help your organization reach more people so we can preserve additional land and lakes in central Maine. Please call Diane Friese at 293-2713 if you are interested in helping.





### *Welcome to new Board members*

David Dominie  
Diane McLaughlin  
Collin Therrien  
Clyde Walton

### *Wish list*

Screen for viewing slides  
Slide projector  
Dimensional lumber  
Flying services to take aerial photographs of KLT properties or donation of existing aerial photographs

## *Wyman Memorial Forest damaged during ice storm*

As with much private property in Central Maine, KLT properties were impacted by the Great Ice Storm of 1998. The post-storm reconnaissance by the KLT stewardship committee and other Board members revealed that most of our properties survived the damaging effects of the storm without significant damage. There were, however, two notable exceptions — the Vaughan Woods (discussed on page 3) and the Wyman Memorial Forest.

Devastation in the Wyman Memorial Forest was particularly widespread in a five acre red pine plantation in the southeast corner of the lot. Many trees experienced 100 percent crown loss or were physically snapped from the weight of ice.

The KLT stewardship committee consulted with Two Trees Forestry of Coopers Mills, Maine to investigate remediation options for the damaged areas. Two Trees Forestry specializes in environmentally sensitive, sustainable forestry under "green certification" guidelines. Two Trees assisted KLT in developing an environmentally sound harvesting plan to salvage the severely damaged tim-

ber in the Wyman Memorial Forest.

Salvage operations required an aggressive schedule to prevent damaged, standing timber from losing its marketable value due to parasites. The harvesting operation began in July (after our unusually wet June) and was completed in August.

Jeff Musich of the Stewardship Committee said, "The logger for the project, Donald Cole of Trees, Ltd. of Sidney, Maine did a fantastic job. Mr. Cole was attentive to the stewardship committee's concern that the work be non-disruptive to the plant community on the site, be sensitive to erosion and logging impacts and to minimize impacts to natural, undamaged areas in the forest."

The cleanup project was very successful and will begin the process of converting the former red pine plantation back to a natural, mixed hardwood forest environment. Proceeds of the harvest will go to KLT's stewardship account. If you would like more information about this project or would like to arrange a site visit, call Jeff Musich at 933-3159.



## Membership renewal

Just a reminder that all KLT memberships expire December 31. Notices will be sent later this month. Save KLT the postage for your renewal notice by sending your check now!

### Membership coupon

Yes, I'd like to join or renew with the Kennebec Land Trust and help protect the natural environment of the Kennebec River and Lakes Region. Please send me future newsletters.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student    | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sustaining    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Sponsor       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Protector     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Conservator |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the Kennebec Land Trust. Mail to: KLT, PO Box 261, Winthrop, ME 04364  
Phone: (207) 933-2220. Thanks!

*Thanks to the following contributors to this issue of the newsletter: Norm Rodrigue, Jeff Musich, Jym St. Pierre, Howard Lake, Jeff Pidot, Karen Fisk, Theresa Kerchner, Gail Rice (layout and design) and Diane Friese*



THE KENNEBEC LAND TRUST  
P.O. Box 261, Winthrop, Maine 04364

