“Blueberry fields forever…”
by Mike Huguenin

Do you ever get a song lodged in your mind? Remember the 1967 Beatles’ song “Strawberry Fields Forever”? After our first year of restoring the Brownell Blueberry Patch, we can’t stop singing a variation - Blueberry Fields Forever …

As many know, MLT acquired the Brownell Preserve, including an overgrown blueberry patch, in June 2011. During the acquisition process Linda Brownell and Sharon (Brownell) Spector both shared recollections of working in the patch while growing up; those memories are reported in past issues of The Heron. In their day hundreds of pounds of blueberries were harvested each summer from the approximately 1500 bushes. Sounds tasty! We began to consider how to restore the blueberry patch.

When MLT acquired the property forest had reclaimed the entire patch. We found white pines and red maples up to 30 feet tall, plus a dense understory of bittersweet, wild rose, poison ivy and similar plants. Figure 1 is a photo of the patch as it looked around the time of our purchase. Believe it or not, there’s a blueberry patch in there!

A careful examination of the patch during the summer of 2012, conducted mostly on our hands and knees, revealed that virtually all of the standing wood on the blueberry bushes was dead. Not surprising given the shading and competition from larger trees and understory, but sobering nonetheless. This particular mountain suddenly looked steeper than expected but we started climbing.

Our first steps were to conduct internet research on growing and restoring blueberry bushes, and to talk with local horticultural experts. The web provides a wealth of blueberry information from organizations like the University of New Hampshire, Cornell University and Ohio State University to name just a few. We contacted local landscape designer (and past MLT President) Charlie Duponte and Sonia Schoemann, the Small Fruits Specialist at the UMass Amherst Agricultural Extension Service. Charlie and Sonia were generous with their time, and their recommendations were consistent with what we were reading: remove the trees and understory, cut the blueberry bushes to 12 inch stumps, and hope for new growth from the roots. But given the scale and density of forest to be removed, the job required heavy equipment, strong backs and the knowledge of an arborist.

During autumn 2012 we raised money to fund clearing the patch, and sought information from a number of local tree experts. The tree experts all agreed with our intended actions and Dan Shea, who has provided tree removal and pruning in the past for MLT, was able to offer a very competitive price to complete the needed work. With funds in hand, partly thanks to a grant from Eastern Bank, work began in January 2013. Dan and crew moved equipment to the work site, cleared access and work areas, and started cutting. They made great progress until the Blizzard of 2013 buried them along with the rest of us. Of necessity work paused for a few weeks.

By late winter Dan and crew had cleared an area of about 0.9 acre, and left us with 29 rows of blueberry stumps as well as piles of wood chips and hardwood and softwood logs. Most of the wood chips were spread as mulch over the cleared patch or placed on the access trail from Route 6. What a difference to stand at the corner of the patch and gaze 200 feet to the new edge of the woods and see row upon row of blueberry stumps. We were excited to say the least…and it was only April!
As the ground warmed we dug soil samples and sent them to the UMass Amherst soil testing laboratory. With results in hand we consulted again with Charlie Duponte and with Craig Canning of Progressive Growers in West Wareham. The combined wisdom of these gentlemen and the UMass folks suggested that we amend the soil with elemental sulfur to lower the pH and with a slow release granular fertilizer to support new plant growth. We did this in May and waited to see what might develop.

The early summer of 2013, with plenty of rain and heat, provided ideal conditions for energizing old blueberry bushes. We began to notice new sprouts on an increasing proportion of the stumps, and by late July we counted roughly 400 blueberry plants with new top growth. But of course blueberries were not the only plants trying for a comeback. Bittersweet, wild rose, poison ivy and all their weedy pals emerged again to enjoy the sunshine. We used mowers between the rows to control vegetation, but our unwanted guests also grew up within many of the recovering blueberry bushes.

During the last week of July, we pruned each recovering bush to remove these weeds so that the bush could gain the full benefit of moisture, sunshine and soil amendments. This was a slow process as the work needed to be done on hands and knees, and we were working during one of the hottest weeks of the summer. We then applied liquid humic acid to the recovering bushes. Humic acid is a soil amendment that assists in breaking down organic matter and making micronutrients available. Craig Canning had suggested this amendment during the spring but we waited to focus the treatment on those plants that had new growth. Humic acid must be applied as a liquid, so we were fortunate to be able to utilize a 100 gallon watering tank and other equipment loaned by Roland Cote, Mattapoisett’s Tree Warden, and Barry Denham, the town’s Highway Surveyor. If you would like to see and hear more about the July pruning and humic acid application, please view the video available on the MLT website and Facebook page.

The dry conditions in August slowed the recovery of the blueberries, but overall the first summer of restoration has gone very well. Figure 2 shows the patch in September, from roughly the same vantage point shown in Figure 1. Quite a difference! Figure 3 shows one of our healthiest recovering bushes in late September. The dramatic recovery seen in Figures 2 and 3 would not have been possible without the generous support of the people mentioned above, as well as David McIntire, Jr. and Mahoney’s Building Supply, David Mendell of Bartlett Tree Experts, and members and friends of MLT who have contributed both time and financial support. Thank you one and all for your wisdom and ongoing assistance!

In the last few weeks we completed a detailed mapping of the patch which shows 492 blueberry bushes with new growth, another 223 stumps without new growth, and roughly 250 additional spaces where bushes probably once grew. This fall we will complete a final mowing to control vegetation between the rows, and we will again remove any weeds that have grown up within the bushes. As our thoughts turn to 2014 we will consider how best to replace dead stumps and empty spaces with new bushes. In spring 2014 we will plant new bushes, and prune the new growth on each recovering bush to encourage the strongest six or eight canes. Then the cycle of soil amendments, mowing and pruning will begin again. The future looks bright, although we are still several years from blueberry pies. We welcome your continued assistance as we work to ensure blueberry fields forever at the Brownell Preserve!

**MLT Receives a Complicated Gift**

by Gary P. Johnson

Several years ago the MLT was contacted by Frank Pownall from California who asked whether or not the MLT would be interested in accepting a gift of a 5-acre woodlot that lay within the boundaries of the Bay Club. The land had been passed down to the grandchildren of Sarah Sparrow and the heirs had decided that it was best to find a resolution to the question of what to do with the land before more generations and more individuals were involved in the decision. We offered to investigate the parcel to determine whether or not it would be appropriate for us, but we could make no promises at that time.

The property is isolated and relatively small but it does lie in the area that the Commonwealth has designated as priority habitat for the Eastern Box Turtle. While we believed that the environmental argument for accepting the parcel was strong, we were reluctant to accept the parcel without a clear agreement with the Bay Club that access by the public would be permitted. Without public access we were afraid that our exemption from property taxes might...
be questioned. The issue was complicated because public access to the Town's Tinkham Forest was still an unresolved issue.

Fortunately, the Town and the Bay Club in late 2012 were able to come to agreement on access to Tinkham Forest along Bay Club Drive and, luckily, the Sparrow lot abutted Bay Club Drive. Early this year MLT Director Don Short arranged a meeting with officials of the Bay Club at which we described the parcel, our interest in it and why we didn't believe that MLT ownership would be detrimental to the interests of the Bay Club members. With reassurances that the Sparrow Preserve would not become a "high profile" MLT property with trails or other improvements, the directors of the Bay Club gave their approval to our proceeding with the acquisition which we accepted from the family in May of this year.

The Sparrow Preserve acquisition is instructive of the many issues the MLT must consider before accepting a gift of or purchasing land that will be held in fee. Firstly, we have to be convinced that there will be a public benefit in our holding the land and that the public will be able to enjoy that benefit. Secondly, we have to be convinced that the costs of stewardship do not outweigh any benefits created. (In this case the stewardship costs should be minimal.) Lastly, it demonstrates that, while a cliche, patience is a virtue in doing land deals. Taking the time to get all of the interested parties in agreement will save us from having unresolved disputes for years to come.

We will be marking the boundaries this winter with our small boundary signs and we plan to install a “Sparrow Preserve” sign at some point, but otherwise the old woodlot will remain undisturbed. If you are a member of the Bay Club or visiting the Tinkham Forest, you might wish to try to find the Sparrow Preserve- but please don’t disturb the turtles.

A Genealogical Note

The Sparrow Preserve was a gift to the MLT from the heirs of Sarah Crosby Sparrow, the wife of Frank Miller Sparrow. The U.S. Census of 1910 indicates that the couple lived on North Street and had three boys: William, aged 10, Alfred, aged 7 and Labaron, aged 5. The Census also indicates that Frank Miller Sparrow was an attorney with his own practice. The 1880 Census lists William Edward Sparrow as a physician in town with real estate valued at $5000, perhaps this included the woodlot. The Sparrows may have subsequently migrated from Mattapoisett, but the woodlot that provided the heat for these prominent citizens will now be preserved as a memorial.

Friends Alternative Gift Fair- Nov. 9

The MLT will participate this year on November 9, 10 AM - 1 PM in an Alternative Gift Fair organized by the Mattapoisett Friends Meeting. We will offer gift memberships, MLT merchandise and some unique items made from materials collected from MLT land. In addition we will have a silent auction for 2 objects d’art that were donated to the MLT by the artists, Hugh and Donna Kelly of Weston, MA, and Aucoot Road. Mr. Kelly has carved in alabaster an 11” high profile of the Wampanoag chief, Metacomet. Mrs. Kelly has painted a lovely fall scene of ducks on the salt marsh. You don’t have to be present to have the winning bid. If you are interested in viewing the items or placing a bid before November 9, please contact MLT President Gary Johnson at 774-263-6657 or send an email to info@mattlandtrust.org.
Be careful out there

Deer hunting season opens October 21, and runs through December 31: for archery (Oct. 21 - Nov. 30), shotgun (Dec. 2 - Dec. 14) and primitive muzzle load firearms (Dec. 16 - Dec. 31). You can find more information regarding all hunting seasons and regulations at http://www.eregulations.com/massachusetts/huntingandfishing/quick-reference-guide/ (Mattapoisett is in Zone 11) When using your Land Trust properties, remember that hunting is allowed, and that no one form of recreation is exclusive of the other. Please be aware of and respect hunters who are legally using the land. Dress for safety, using hats and/or vests of “Blaze Orange” to improve your visibility.

Honor Your Loved Ones

The following individuals or groups have chosen in the last six months to honor their loved ones through donations to the Mattapoisett Land Trust.

Blueberry bush in memory of Copper, Julie & Jonathan Craig’s beloved horse:
Brad & Priscilla Hathaway
Mattapoisett, MA

Blueberry bush in memory of Muriel Larson:
Brad & Priscilla Hathaway
Mattapoisett, MA

In memory of Ruth P. Hall:
Ann Coggins
Mattapoisett, MA
M. Lorraine Crook
Groveland, MA
Thomas & Nancy Duell
Hope Valley, RI
Mr. & Mrs. Victor Pierce
Felon, DE

In memory of Patricia A. (Patsy) Tapper:
Alpha Surveying & Engineering, Inc.
Middleboro, MA
Be Well Holistic, Inc.
North Dartmouth, MA
Paul D. Belling
Groton, MA
Gerald & Ruth Bouden
Fairhaven, MA
Alan & Toby Bultsky
South Easton, MA
Janet & Eugene Connors
New Bedford, MA
William W. & Joyce L. Cooper
North Kingstown, RI
John & Joyce Dexter
Sarasota, FL
Alwyn Dexter
Yarmouth Port, MA
Erik Jan Dubovik & Shirley W. Chung
Chestnut Hill, MA
Jeannine Duchaine
Mattapoisett, MA
Linda Ann Duchaine
Mattapoisett, MA
Kevin & Melinda Eaton
Mattapoisett, MA
Miss Marilyn Feldman
Longmeadow, MA
Ellen P. Flynn & Coby T. Flynn
Mattapoisett, MA
William Hall
Mattapoisett, MA
Brad & Priscilla Hathaway
Mattapoisett, MA
Lenore & Scott Henderson
Mattapoisett, MA
Erin & Edward Hennessey
Littleton, NH
Michael Immler & Gregory Galvan
Mattapoisett, MA
Gloria & Thaddeus Irzyk
Fairhaven, MA
Thomas H. & Patricia E. Kennedy
North Dartmouth, MA
Sylvia & Wayne Knight
Mattapoisett, MA
Lucky & Irene Lucas
New Bedford, MA
William & Pamela Mackenzie
Middleboro, MA
Florence Martocci, Judith Lippa & Ruth Martocci
Mattapoisett, MA
Patricia F. Marrojo
Fairhaven, MA
New Bedford Office Machine
New Bedford, MA
Joe Molloy
Torbay, NL Canada
Sister Frances Molloy
St. Johns, NL Canada
Siew Mun & Paula Mui
Mattapoisett, MA
Charles & Caroline Murphy
Fairhaven, MA
Rachel & Craig Parks
Carlsbad, CA
John Parsons
Torbay, NL Canada
Henry & Hope Pietrzykoulski
Fairhaven, MA
Claire & Bruce Pratt
Mattapoisett, MA
Madeline J. Reid
Mattapoisett, MA
Strategic Sourcing Team at ReSources USA
Brookline, MA
Claudia Richards
Mattapoisett, MA
Angela Roche
Torbay, NL Canada
Southeastern Adoption Services, Inc.
Marion, MA
Michael L. & Kathy A. Smith
New Bedford, MA
Tony & Janice Spark
Mattapoisett, MA
Daniel A. & Maryann Sullivan
Rochester, MA
The Tappers- Christopher, Diane, Julia, Jen, Drew,
Isaac, Max & Kim
New Bedford, MA
Shirley Thorne
Torbay, NL Canada
Jean C. West
Mattapoisett, MA
Carol Whalen
Mattapoisett, MA
Margot & David Wizansky
Brookline, MA
Sharon L. Young & Sylvester Mayers
Marion, MA
Florence Vusahlk & the Merlo Family
Mattapoisett, MA
Blueberry bush in honor of the birthday of Gary P. Johnson:
Luana Josvold
Mattapoisett, MA

Thank you for your generous contributions which will be used to further our mission of protecting the land and environment of Mattapoisett for generations to come.
Kids’ Corner

Technology and the outdoors.

If you have a smart phone or a tablet, you don’t have to use it only for school work, talking with friends or playing video games. You can also use it to discover the world around you. With a GPS program or device, you can try “Geocaching”.

The Global Positioning System (GPS) is a satellite-based navigation system that has used 24 satellites since 1994 to locate any point on earth. In May, 2000, the government allowed “selective availability” which greatly improved the accuracy that was available to civilians. Geocaching is a treasure hunting game that takes advantage of this accuracy. To play, you input the location coordinates of a “treasure” into your GPS software and then go out to look for it. If you find the cache, you’ll find a log book to sign and perhaps some prizes. The rules of the game require that if you take one of the prizes, you must leave a prize of equal or greater value.

The MLT has three Geocache sites that we know of on Land Trust properties: one each on Dunseith Gardens (Salty’s home), Munro Waterfront and Tub Mill Brook. There are different coordinate systems used and different formats (see insert) so you should be careful when you enter the coordinates of the cache you’re seeking.

To learn more about Geocaching, visit the website www.geocaching.com where you can create an account for free and start discovering caches and logging your discoveries. If you would like to add a cache to one of our properties, please let us know so we can encourage more visitors to discover it. Happy hunting.

Coordinates for the Tub Mill Brook Geocache

N 41° 39.693 W 070° 49.372

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Reducing our Carbon Footprint

By Martin Hudis

The impact of the MLT on the local Carbon Footprint was discussed in the spring 2013 Heron. The fall 2008 Heron discussed what an individual can do to reduce the local Carbon Footprint. This article will update the information presented by Paul Milde in 2008.

The basics of the article by Paul Milde have not changed, but technology progress continues to increase the impact of the ideas presented by Paul.

In summary there are three things which can be done to reduce the local Carbon Footprint:

Conservation, use less energy
Efficiency, more efficient use of energy
Renewable energy sources for electricity

Conservation is straightforward: turn back thermostats, drive and fly fewer miles, etc. There is no basic change here.

Improved efficiency has had some technology improvements. The first is lighting. Replace incandescent lamps with LED’s (light emitting diodes). LED’s are now commercially available at pricing which, while costly, should be considered. They reduce electric consumption by another factor of 2 to 3 over compact fluorescent which reduced electric consumption by a factor of 2 to 3 over incandescent.

The second is self-learning thermostats. Programmable thermostats have been around for years, but they are still not user friendly. Self-learning thermostats are now available which do not require setting up a calendar with time and temperatures, instead the thermostat is adjusted manually and the thermostat undergoes self-learning. After a few days, the thermostat continues to adjust temperatures on its own based on the actual settings for the first few days. These devices contain a calendar and a clock and communicate through the Internet (Wi-Fi). The Wi-Fi provides for external communication and control through handheld smart devices.

1 “Climate Change, the MLT and You” by Paul Milde
2 “A Smart, Sexy – Thermostat?”, David Zax, MIT Technology Magazine, December 6, 2011

Dip your oar in the water!

by Mike Huguenin

Are you looking for ways to keep Mattapoisett special? The Mattapoisett Land Trust is an all-volunteer organization, and we always are looking for people to join us. What you do and how much time you provide are completely up to you. Your interests and skills determine what tasks you tackle.

Do you enjoy working with students? Our Education Committee works with local schools and teachers, awards a college scholarship each year, and administers the bequest of Edith Glick Shoolman to support local environmental education.

Do you enjoy interviewing people and learning about local history? We are working to compile the history of each of our preserves using interviews with donors, their families and friends, and knowledgeable elders with experience in Mattapoisett history.

Do you enjoy digital media? Come help us maintain and improve our website and Facebook page, or create new digital maps and Preserve information that can be downloaded easily to smart phones and tablets. Or shoot, edit and upload MLT-oriented video – we have access to great equipment for your use, and mentors to advise if needed.

Are you a graphics and design person? We are thinking about improved signage for MLT properties. We also welcome more help on this newsletter, other communications, and on our shirts, hats, towels and other MLT merchandise.

Can you write persuasively? Could you help prepare grant applications and letters of interest as we look for
funding for property purchases and land stewardship?

Do you love spending time on the web? Internet research is increasingly important to MLT as a means to research deeds, easements and boundaries for our properties, seek funding from government programs and foundation grants, and learn about the role of the land we now preserve in the history of Mattapoisett and our region.

Are you an outdoors person? Our stewardship committee completes a wide variety of chores (some with heavy lifting, many just a walk in the woods) including property inspections, trail clearing and maintenance, pruning, mowing, locating and marking property boundaries, trash outs, invasive species removal, sign installation, and flower and ornamental gardening.

Come join an interesting, fun and diverse group of people of all ages who enjoy each other while working together to preserve land in Mattapoisett. What would you like to do? Please contact any Director or email us at info@mattlandtrust.org.

New Director Profiles

Mike Huguenin

Mike Huguenin joined the Board in 2013 after being a member of MLT for many years. Mike grew up outside Philadelphia and spent summers in and on the salt waters of the South Jersey shore. After college in St. Louis and a year working in Los Angeles, Mike moved to Massachusetts to attend business school at MIT. He holds degrees in Physics and Management. Mike discovered the warm, windy waters of Buzzards Bay while sailing during vacations in the mid 1970’s. It was pretty much love at first sight.

Mike and wife Sharon Chown have two grown sons. The family spent weekends and summers on Mattapoisett Neck after they purchased a cottage in 1984. The cottage was rebuilt into a year-round home in 2010 and they retired to Mattapoisett from Cambridge. Mike and Sharon’s working years were spent managing the environmental consulting firm they founded together in 1981. (Fun Fact: In 1985 Mike managed the first federal/state assessment of the economic costs of PCB contamination in New Bedford Harbor.)

Mike sees the MLT as a critical player in keeping Mattapoisett special. “The Land Trust holds beautiful properties that provide important wildlife habitat, and scenic vistas that reinforce the quiet, rural character of the town.” He continues “And many of our properties provide hiking and riding trails, hunting and fishing opportunities, birdwatching, beautiful views, and an outdoor park experience for people to enjoy.” Mike is active in stewardship activities, including property inspections, boundary-marking, and the restoration of the Bownell Blueberry Patch. In his free time you can find Mike in his garage workshop, in the garden, or outdoors boating, fishing, hunting or walking for exercise.

Skip Bedser

I was born, raised, and schooled in Philadelphia, so please forgive me if I can’t seem to lose my R’s. I spent a career selling electrical power equipment in the Mid Atlantic and New England Region as a sales engineer, a sales manager, a regional manager and finally as an independent manufacturer’s representative.

Now that I am retired, I love to travel, photograph wildlife (especially colorful birds), follow sports, take courses in history and politics, and follow the development of our three teenage grandchildren.

We bought our house in Antassawamock in 1999 because we thought that it would be a beautiful place to retire and a place where our three young grandchildren would look forward to visiting us. We didn’t realize that we would be getting so much more. We soon learned that it was impossible to not be involved in the small community’s affairs. First we learned that it was our obligation as new owners to run the community Fourth of July picnic for three hundred guests. That soon led to becoming a director, then president of the Club. We also have found greater Mattapoisett to be a warm and welcoming community. Participating in the lively “Great Decisions” discussions at the library has become a fun winter activity.

There is a strong feeling of community in Mattapoisett that is the result of so many people willing to donate their time to make Mattapoisett special. When I was asked to work with the stewardship committee for the MLT, I immediately agreed. The MLT has been very successful acquiring large tracts of open space to preserve for future generations. The MLT is now obligated to manage these many land tracts to insure that they are maintained as intended and not abused. It’s a large task for a volunteer organization, but more volunteers will make it possible. I have found that working with the MLT is a great place to meet interesting people and build relationships working together to achieve common goals. I’m sure you would too.
All Mattapoisett Land Trust events are free and open to the public

Check www.mattlandtrust.org for up-to-date information

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<td>October 18</td>
<td>5:30-8:00 PM</td>
<td>Salty's Silvery Moon Soiree</td>
<td>A fire to make S'mores, storytelling by Simon Brooks at 6:30</td>
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<td>Dunseith Gardens, Route 6 and North Street. No parking on site. Please bring flashlight to find your way home!</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>10:00 AM - 1:00 PM</td>
<td>Friends Alternative Gift Fair</td>
<td>See notice on page 3, this issue</td>
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