

# field, forest & fen



*Connecting People with the Land*



Bruce Johnson Photography

With so few islands around, Deowongo is a special place for visitors and residence of Canadarago Lake and Fetterley Forest.

## A Community Treasure Conserved

Anchored proudly in Canadarago Lake, Deowongo Island is an iconic place shared by all who visit. Many had wondered what would happen to the beautiful island—and now, thanks to a great team effort, they don't have to wonder any more. Deowongo Island will be a place shared by all who care about its future.

The Schoenleins, a local family who owned the island for years, knew how special the island was to the people around Canadarago Lake and in the region. Rather than sell the island to the highest bidder, they offered to sell it to the Otsego Land Trust at a charitable rate.

"We knew it was the right thing to do and the island would be in good hands," Lois Schoenlein reflected. "We wanted to be sure that other families could enjoy the wonder and beauty of the lake and this island for years to come."

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### CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

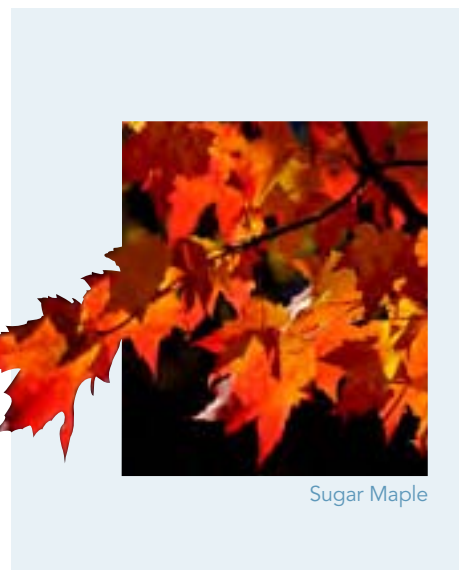
## The Sugar is Sweet at Ringwood Farm

The view from the top of the field at Ringwood Farm is beautiful. Eighty years ago, in the midst of the Great Depression, the grandfather of Jim and Steve Bartlett bought Ringwood Farm and probably enjoyed the same view. Down the hill, there's the barn that the family built and across the hills is a glimpse of Otsego Lake.

You can see the history of the land and history in the making. But what you won't see is just as important. You won't see hundreds of condos fifty years from now. Instead, you'll continue to see a farm.

Thanks to the Bartlett family's leadership and the support of New York State's farmland protection program, along with support from Land Trust

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Sugar Maple



Otsego Land Trust protects the distinctive rural character of the Otsego County area by securing lands and waters of significant scenic, historic, and ecological value, including forests and farmlands.

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Otsego Land Trust is partially funded by the New York Conservation Partnership Program administered by the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Program with support from the State of New York. A copy of Otsego Land Trust's annual financial report may be obtained upon request from our office or from the New York State Attorney General's Charities Bureau, ATTN: FOIL Officer, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.



Susan Rowland Photography

The fall colors are brilliant at Compton Bridge Conservation Area along the Susquehanna River.

## FIELD NOTES CHANGING LANDSCAPES

The fall season in the Otsego Region is magical. The hardwood forests are ablaze with color. The crisp cool air invigorates our hikes along the river as we start to get ready for the season of snow.

Thanks to your support, we are well on our way to conserving new places where you can walk, canoe, hike and explore. Your help has also been instrumental in our ability to partner with landowners throughout the region to conserve their family lands.

This fall, while we continue to work on conservation projects, we are looking for a new executive director. As you may know, after six years with us, Peter Hujik, has relocated to northern Virginia where he has taken an executive position with the Piedmont Environmental Council.

Peter, in partnership with you and our community, was a terrific conservation leader for the Land Trust. Hard-working, with a strong commitment to people and the land, Peter will be missed. We wish him and his family well.

We look forward to finding a new executive director. With this transition, our winter and spring promise to be extraordinary. We are in the final stages of a number of land protection projects and expanding our community programs to connect kids and families to the land. Our new executive director will be joining an organization fully engaged in conservation—and we anticipate introducing you to that person in the spring.

With your support, we can meet the winter snow with a smile and assist you in making your conservation dreams, and that of our community, a reality.

As always, if you want to chat about our programs or prospects, please give me a call. ■

**Harry Levine**  
Chairman







Joe Homburger

The view of Ringwood farm.

*The Sugar is Sweet at Ringwood Farm  
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members, the Bartlett family conserved Ringwood Farm—their family’s legacy and 334 acres of working fields and forests.

For three generations the Bartlett family has been farming at Ringwood Farm, just outside of Cooperstown, along the state and federally designated Route 20 Scenic Byway. Known for some of the county’s best and most threatened farmland, Ringwood Farm runs a diverse farming operation, including dairy cows, cropland and a sugar bush.

Although the technology has changed drastically since the 1930’s, the same sugar bush is tapped every spring providing many residents and visitors with fresh, local maple syrup, cream and sugar. The Bartletts have kept up with the changes in technology and continue to market and sell their delicious maple products.

In addition, the farm has a history of providing important habitat for

birds and wildlife, with beautiful wetlands and over 1 mile of frontage along Cripple Creek, a trout stream that drains into Otsego Lake.

As with other farmland protection projects, the Bartletts continue to own the farm, the land remains on the tax rolls, and they can sell, lease or transfer the farm in the future. In addition, honoring the pattern of agricultural diversity in the region, the Bartletts can create home-based businesses that are compatible with local zoning. The conservation agreement will make

the land available for farming and forestry into the future and remains in effect with all successive new owners. ■

*“We need to make sure we invest in local farms,” remarked Peter Hujik, Executive Director of Otsego Land Trust. “This is one way our family can help the next generation by providing great soils that won’t grow houses...just great crops.”*



M. Foster

The third and fourth generation of Bartlett’s, Steve, Luke and Jim.

## Places to Explore – Climb a Mountain, Go for a Paddle



Check out the Overlook Trail where you can get a great view of Canadarago Lake and Deowongo Island.



Canoeing to Deowongo Island was part of Jarrett Hotaling's summer internship.

### Beautiful Views Await You at Fetterley Forest

*“Over the course of this past week, we have bumped into several people that we met during the tour and dedication—a sign that the Fetterley’s generous gift is also building community.”*

—PAT AND DAN BOND OF RICHFIELD SPRINGS

What do you do when your family has owned a piece of land for over 100 years? Well, in the case of the Fetterley family, you create a new public conservation and working forest that will inspire the love of the land for generations to come.

This past fall, during a celebration of the land and the family’s generosity, fond memories of the Forest were shared by siblings Judy and Dan Fetterley and cousin Marge Ford. The family came from as far as Florida and Wisconsin, as three generations of Fetterleys and four generations of Fords gathered to meet community members.

“There are so few areas like this, where we can go as a family or hike with friends, close to home”, remarked Brian and Shelia Howser of Richfield Springs. A trail created by Otsego Land Trust provides beautiful

views of Canadarago Lake. The Conservation Area will be managed for sustainable forestry and hiking. For a trail map or information visit [www.otsegoLandTrust.org](http://www.otsegoLandTrust.org). ■



Dan, Judy and Marge take turns cutting the ribbon of the new sign at Fetterley Forest.

### Upper Susquehanna Headwaters Water-trail Takes Shape

Conserving our water is becoming increasingly important, and Otsego Land Trust is hard at work to make sure that the upper Susquehanna watershed is conserved and that people of all ages have access to our county’s streams, ponds, lakes and rivers.

A growing water-trail system is developing here in Otsego County, where paddlers can connect to the Susquehanna River by way of Canadarago Lake and Oaks Creek.

Deowongo Island at the headwaters of Oaks Creek is a great place to kick off the 15-mile paddle to the Compton Bridge Conservation Area on County Highway 11C.

Stay tuned as Otsego Land Trust plans to open several public access sites along Oaks Creek and the Susquehanna River. For more information, feel free to give us a call at 607-547-2366 ■





The beach on the north end of Deowongo makes for a perfect place to land your canoe or kayak.

*A Community Treasure Conserved  
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Native Americans, traders, fishermen, botanists and tourists frequented the island and Canadago Lake that were along a popular travel route from the Mohawk Valley to the Susquehanna River.

**Did you know?**

The name of the island, "Deowongo" comes from the Oneida Iroquois Nation's language meaning, "place of hearing."

Quite possibly the most significant characteristic of Deowongo Island is not necessarily the rich cultural history or even the uniqueness of a lone island on a large body of water but the memories and stories that people share with the island.

"I've spent countless hours looking out over the Lake", noted Don Urtz of Richfield Springs, "it is no doubt a special place to others too."

When the Schoenleins expressed their interest in making the island Otsego Land Trust's newest public conservation area, community members jumped on the chance. Now, thanks to a number of very generous people in our community who contributed the funds to purchase and clean up the island, it will be conserved and open to the public.

Next spring, weather and funding

permitting, we will be working on cleaning up Deowongo Island and creating a management plan that will balance the recreational uses with the protection of its unique ecological and cultural attributes.

We look forward to working with you and local groups to help us plan for Deowongo's future protection and management. It's not every day a local island is conserved. ■



Dan has taken many photos of Deowongo over the years, including this self portrait taken in the 1980's.

Don Urtz

# Volunteers Make Brookwood Point Come to Life



Volunteers and interns made Brookwood Garden a welcome place for visitors this summer.

Susan Rowland Photography

## A Place for Discovery

This past summer and fall, many people found Brookwood Point to be a place for art, quiet hikes, gardening, wildlife, meeting new people and much more.

Volunteer photographer Susan Rowland can't stay away from Brookwood now that she has "discovered it," capturing thousands of pictures of the flowers, birds, stonewalls and wildlife.

Mary Nolan continues to bring her art classes for painting lessons. "There are so many wonderful things to paint there and it's so peaceful," she explained.

"What a special place," reflected a member of the Lake and Valley Garden Club who volunteered her time and expertise in the garden. "We feel very fortunate that Brookwood Point is place for people to see the historic flower gar-

dens, quiet woodlands and the Lake."

As Otsego Land Trust continues to clarify the management plan for Brookwood Point and works to secure funding to make that plan a reality, we appreciate those who have embraced this special place.

"Thanks to volunteers, Brookwood is a place that more and more people are discovering," reflected Harry Levine, Board Chair of the Land Trust. "It's a really diverse group of people ranging from the Clark Sports Center adventure camp who spent a couple of mornings at Brookwood participating in activities with Land Trust staff, to folks who just want to come down to relax."

Thanks to all the volunteers and interns, Brookwood is looking the best it has in years! ■



Frank Farmer

Pat among her flowers.

## Hats off, with a special thanks

It is not every day that a not-for-profit organization has a nationally recognized gardener to manage such a historical garden, let alone volunteer to do it.

For this, Otsego Land Trust would like to recognize Pat Thorpe of Middlefield as the 2012 Otsego Land Trust Volunteer of the Year.

Pat has not only spent countless hours caring for the gardens over the years, but she has also acted as educator and Brookwood Maître'd to the many visitors, volunteers and Land Trust staff. Pat, thank you for your knowledge and dedication to the Garden.



Pat Thorpe

Summer intern Ryan Huggins hard at work.

If you are interested in helping out at the garden, join us at the fall cleanup day on Saturday, November 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch is included for all volunteers. Sign up with Marcie by calling (607) 547-2366. ■





Summer Interns Ryan Huggins and Jarrett Hotaling at Deowongo Island.

## The Next Generation of Land Stewards

Jarrett Hotaling and Ryan Huggins both have a passion for conservation and protecting the Otsego landscape, where their families reside. Thanks to their efforts and leadership, we are all able to enjoy new trails.

"I want the public to get the opportunity to walk on these trails so that they can see what these beautiful protected properties look like," Ryan remarked as he was building a new trail along the ridge of the newly established Fetterley Forest.

Most of their summer internship was spent tending to the gardens at Brookwood Point and building Otsego Land Trust's first trail system at Fetterley Forest.

Jarrett has just entered his freshman year of college at Finger Lakes Community College where he is pursuing a degree in Natural Resources Conservation. A native of Hartwick, Jarrett conveyed his

community connections stating, "this internship allowed me to learn new skills and give back to an area I have lived in my entire life."

Ryan is a recent graduate from Wells College where he earned a degree in Environmental Studies with a concentration in Policies and Values.

This was Ryan's second internship with Otsego Land Trust; his first in 2009 inspired him to pursue a degree in the environmental field. Ryan is currently working for the Department of Environmental Conservation teaching environmental education at area schools.

Both Ryan and Jarrett were recipients of the Cooperstown Central School Rufus R. Thayer Scholarship, given to students pursuing a degree in an environmental field.

Thanks for your hard work and dedication Ryan and Jarrett! We couldn't have completed those trails without you. ■



Show us some of your water photographs!

## Have a Good Water Shot?

Enter your photo in the Water, Water Everywhere photography contest before December 31, 2012!

There are only a couple months left to submit your photograph that celebrates the importance of water in the Otsego Region. Youth, amateur and professional photographers are encouraged to enter up to three photos for a chance to win great prizes sponsored by the Otsego Lake Association. Download the submission forms at [www.otsego-land-trust.org](http://www.otsego-land-trust.org). ■



Field Station interns and staff collect valuable information about the health of Oaks Creek.

## Supporter Helps Fund Research on Oaks Creek

With the help of an environmentally minded supporter, Otsego Land Trust was able to fund SUNY Oneonta's Biological Field Station in conducting research along Oaks Creek this summer. Inventories were taken on fish, invertebrates and plant life along the Creek. ■



Post Office Box 173  
Cooperstown, New York 13326

#### UPCOMING EVENTS



November 3: Brookwood Garden Clean up Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch provided!



December 21: Winter Solstice and Star Gazing Hike at Brookwood Point from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.



Two Cedar Waxwings perched along Otsego Lake.

Susan Rowland Photography

#### THE NATURE OF CONSERVATION Cedar Waxwing

Among our favorite birds to spot is the cedar waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*), a frequent inhabitant of many protected properties throughout the region.

Cedar waxwings are identifiable by the yellow or orange color on the tip of their tail, pale yellow

belly and a black mask around their eyes. A small cluster of bright red feathers on the wings is also a good way to identify these beautiful birds.

Keep an eye out for the cedar waxwing this winter because they are not shy, often feeding on the left over berries or drinking from birdbaths. ■