

SQUAM LOOKOUT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SQUAM LAKES CONSERVATION SOCIETY

VOL. XIII, No. 4

“Squam’s Land Trust”

Late Fall 2004

HIGH HAITH

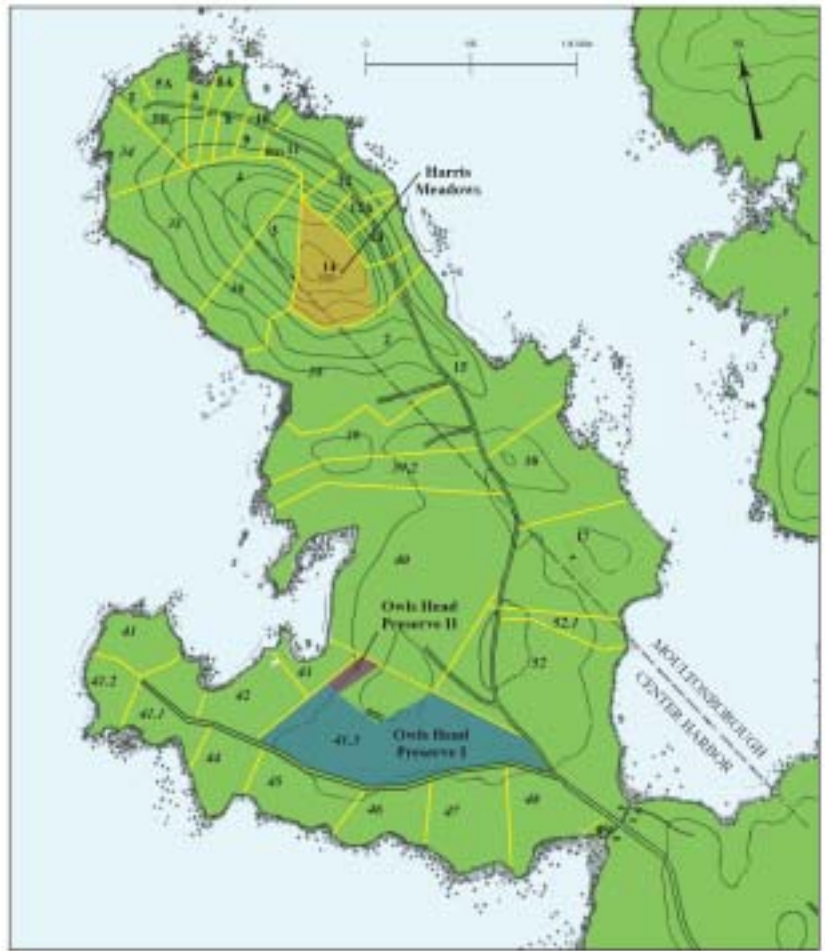
High Haith is clearly one of Squam’s most treasured jewels. It has 240 acres, three miles of shoreline, and crown sitting 140 feet up, providing breathtaking views of Squam Lake at its widest point, the Squam Range to the north, and Red Hill to the east. A pasture over a century ago, “Sturtevant Island” is home to seasonal camps, the former Camp Asquam for girls, a little-known nature trail, mature forests, and several ecological zones. In 2001, Warren Lake and the SLCS initiated an effort to conserve areas of High Haith, with particular attention to the undeveloped interior. We’re pleased to announce three successful conservation projects.

Harris Meadows

Although you wouldn’t know it today from looking at the existing forest, the crown of High Haith was a meadow when George Harris was deeded the north half of the “island” in 1909. Shortly thereafter, a causeway was built, connecting High Haith to the mainland. Edward and Alice Harris built a cabin around 1960. Edward had been going up to Squam since he was a child. Their children, Susan Williams, Edward M Harris, Jr., George R. Harris, Priscilla Morse, Eleanor Martinez, and Martha Torrey, seized the opportunity to conserve some of the “Harris” land. Working with buyers Tinsley and Sheri Galyean, an agreement was reached to conserve the majority of their last holding on High Haith, in particular the land rising to the peak. This act was a heartfelt parting shot for the benefit of the entire Squam community, sharing their family’s love of the land and Squam. This is just another example of why Squam is so special!

Owls Head Preserve I and II

The largest tract of undeveloped land under single ownership on High Haith is in the process of being permanently conserved! It started when James and Kathleen Elcock approached John Gephart and Monica Hargraves to sell a 5-acre tract that his parents (F. Thomas and Sarah Lou Gephart) acquired in 1955. What ensued was an all-out effort to conserve all their remaining land and part of the Elcock purchase. Mark Fetting and Georgia Smith stepped up huge by purchasing the remaining 15.8 acres and donating a conservation easement over all of it! The Elcocks agreed to add a 150 foot wide conservation area on the lakeside portion of their lot. We commend all the parties for working in the best interest of their neighborhood and the entire Squam Community.



Rally!

The 2004 Land Trust Alliance Rally, Providence, Rhode Island

While kids trick-or-treated, and Red Sox Nation celebrated its remarkable World Series victory, Jane and I were participating in a memorable event of another nature, the 17th Land Trust Alliance Rally in Providence, RI. It was a tremendous opportunity to learn skills, share ideas, rekindle relationships, and make new friends in the conservation world. We heard about new trends, techniques, laws, and strategies. Rally also presented an opportunity to share our successes and challenges at Squam.

Interacting with but a fraction of the 2,100 participants from across the country and world at Rally, we both heard several times “Oh, you’re from Squam, what a special place.” It’s heartwarming to hear that those who venture to Squam are still touched by its beauty, people, and serenity. It’s ironic that so many know about Squam, yet remember it for being so quiet. I’m reminded of one of my favorite expressions, from catcher Yogi Berra, who when asked if he goes back to Yankee Stadium, responded: “Na, nobody goes there anymore, it’s too crowded.” Fortunately, Squam’s not that way, and we’re committed to helping maintain the balance of what is developed, and isn’t.

No doubt the biggest topic at Rally this year was the public’s scrutiny of the land conservation community. With the prospect of Congress passing new tax incentives and reform legislation, the world of conservation is about to change in a big way. In response to this, the Land

Trust Alliance recently updated the *Land Trust Standards and Practices* (see sidebar). In the next several months, we’ll be working to make sure that our policies and procedures remain up to the highest standard, implementing several changes to improve our policies and procedures. It’s important for the Squam Lakes Conservation Society to not only keep up with the changes, but to take a lead. Squam deserves that, and more.

As we sprint toward the finish of an unprecedented year for conservation at Squam, I’m in awe of the way Squam stands out as an exception in this rapidly changing and developed world. Thanks to all of you who make the Squam Lakes Conservation Society possible, and to all of you who uphold the conservation-minded ethic that makes and keeps Squam so special. Happy Holidays!



Photo: copyright Rebecca Orris
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Rand Wentworth at the opening Plenary
Session of the LTA Rally

LAND TRUST ALLIANCE REVISES STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

LTA President Rand Wentworth, in his keynote address, spoke of the gains land trusts have made in land conservation across the nation, but noted the growing threats to protecting land, including media attacks and the potential for government regulation of land trusts. Wentworth noted that the revised *Land Trust Standards and Practices* are one tool to help address the ethical and technical challenges facing land trusts.

The new *Land Trust Standards and Practices* reflect recent changes in nonprofit law, and the lessons learned in conservation over the past 15 years. They emphasize that sustainable land conservation requires systems and processes to help ensure that organizations will stand the test of time, in perpetuity.

Jay Espy, president of Maine Coast Heritage Trust and co-chair of the committee, commented on the importance of the work ahead, “the land trust community is an important force in land conservation and we need to figure out how best to keep the public’s trust in, and support for, our work in an environment of increased public scrutiny, increased competition for resources and increased potential for abuse of tax benefits.”

A copy of the 2004 revisions can be downloaded and printed from the LTA website – www.lta.org.

The Society’s mission is to preserve the unique quality and character of the Squam watershed by protecting lands for present and future generations.

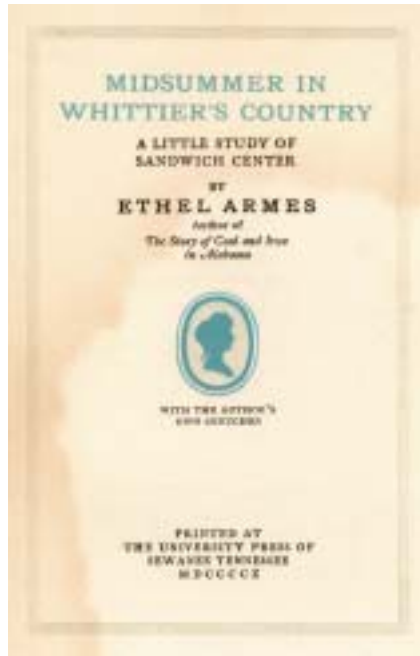
THE WAY IT WAS

“Asquam”
by Ethel Armes

Excerpted from “Midsummer in Whittier’s Country” by Ethel Armes, copyright, 1910 by The University Press of Sewanee Tennessee. “Asquam” tells the legend of the fateful love of Suneta and Anonis.

Asquam, meaning the beautiful-surrounded-by-the-water-place, is very fair. Like most inland waters it is crystal clear, reflecting minutely every change and tinge of color of the clouds and trees and sky. It is only two miles beyond Sandwich on the road under the red oaks and maples of Red Hill to Centre Harbor. It is not big, like Winnepesaukee, but is even more charming. The graceful curves of its shore lines, the miniature islands rocking on its waters, and the mists arising at dawn and evening take possession of every sense.

The Indian myth that lies sleeping on the waters’ breast wakes



only in a fierce thunder storm at night, when the curse of old Wamego flashes in the lightning; the moaning of Suneta haunts the valley for miles around, and the love song of Anonis yearns far in the lonely hills. Long ago, the legends say, an old Indian chief, the ugly Wamego, whose squaw had died, lived on the shores of ‘Squam. Suneta, the daughter of a neighboring chief, was sold to him by her father, although she was pledged to Anonis, a brave of her own tribe. The marriage feast with the ugly chief was celebrated. Before many moons had passed, however, when one night the old Wamego lay sleeping heavily, Suneta heard her lover’s voice:

A GREAT GIFT IDEA

In celebration of their marriage this fall, Elise VanWinkle and Zach Gaumier (pictured at right) made a donation to the Squam Lakes Conservation Society and presented each of their guests with a card that said *“In honor of our love for our friends and family, and our dedication to Squam Lake, a donation has been made in the name of all those here today, to the Squam Lakes Conservation Society. We thank you for joining us today.”*



If you are looking to make a meaningful and lasting gift to someone, consider giving them a membership, or a gift in their honor, to the Squam Lakes Conservation Society. We will notify them of your gift with a card that says “A gift (or a membership gift) in your honor was given to the Squam Lakes Conservation Society by YOUR NAME.” If you have questions about this or would like to make special arrangements, please contact our office.

*“Come! The night is dark and stormy,
My canoe is on the lake.
My beloved! I cannot live without you.
You are mine!
Death awaits me tonight if I bear you not
Away in mine arms!”*

Suneta sprang to him and they fled through the shadows. Wamego awoke, followed them and caught them. With his tomahawk he killed Anonis, and lifting up his voice over the fainting Suneta, cried, “May fire blast her! Let the Manitou make of her an example to coming time!” A flash of lightning and a savage growl of thunder replied to his words. The body of Suneta was turned to stone, — circle of the sighing wind, miserer, — the every living Francesca and Paoli! Today all the people who come to Asquam may look upon the rock so strangely carven in a woman’s form, sad, disconsolate on the far side of the lake: *“Mat wonck kunna-monee!”* it is said.

(If any of our readers know where this rock is, or have a picture of it, please let us know so that we can include it in an upcoming issue of *Squam Lookout*.)



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Squam Lakes Conservation Society "Squam's Land Trust"

The Squam Lakes Conservation Society (SLCS) is one of the oldest land trusts in New Hampshire. As an independent non-profit, our mission is to preserve the unique quality and character of the Squam watershed by protecting lands for present and future generations. Since 1961, the SLCS has helped protect 52 prime Squam Lakes watershed properties, covering over 1,800 acres.

We achieve our goal of long-term protection of land by seeking, holding, and monitoring conservation easements, which is brought about through the generous donation of land or by the SLCS assisting in or spearheading the purchase of important conservation lands. In addition, we work in cooperation with state and local conservation commissions, other conservation organizations, businesses, residents, and especially landowners and families.

The Squam Lakes Conservation Society envisions Squam as a unique oasis of pristine water, air, islands, shorefront, back lands, and mountains; worthy of great effort to maintain forever the fragile harmony between the natural environment and mankind.

While the SLCS continues to seek, receive, and help purchase conservation restrictions and land ownership, successful land conservation requires lots of resources and creative solutions. Please offer your support by volunteering as a Land Steward, by sending a tax-deductible donation of cash or stock, and by including the Squam Lakes Conservation Society in your estate planning. The benefactors will be the countless generations who will continue to enjoy the tranquil shores and hills of Squam as you and those before you have. For additional information, please call or e-mail us.

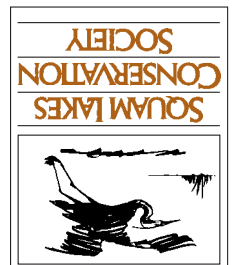


*Photo courtesy of Andrew Thompson
www.wildlightimages.com*

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