



Maine Heritage



ALDERMERE'S FARM HANDS PROGRAM TURNS 20

Mimi Rebein

Brothers Michael (left) and Matthew (right) Heath participated in the first session of Big Farm Hands for adult volunteers.

Last winter, brothers Matthew and Michael Heath were looking to do some volunteer work together. The Heaths have lived in the Camden area for most of their lives and were familiar with Maine Coast Heritage Trust's Aldermere Farm Preserve. "Michael had just moved back up from Portland," says Matt, "and we had thought about doing something together.

I thought, oh, I wonder if Aldermere has something. I thought maybe we could learn some cool skills."

Their timing was perfect. When they reached out, Joelle Albury, Aldermere Farm's outreach and office manager, and general manager Heidi Baker were discussing launching a Farm

Hands program for adults. The Heath brothers ended up participating in MCHT's inaugural Big Farm Hands program. "It's good to get some interactions with the animals," says Matt. "It makes you think about where your food comes from and all the work that goes into it. Helping the cows, helping the farm, and hanging out—it's been great."

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

ON THE MISSION



Tim Glidden



Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT) conserves and stewards Maine's coastal lands and islands for their renowned scenic beauty, ecological value, outdoor recreational opportunities, and contribution to community well-being. MCHT provides statewide conservation leadership through its work with land trusts, coastal communities, and other partners.

Our board chair Tom Armstrong asks someone to read Maine Coast Heritage Trust's mission statement at every board meeting. No matter what's on the agenda, no matter how pressed we are for time, I always find it valuable to pause and hear those words spoken out loud. Every time I do, I'm reminded of how deep MCHT's roots go and how our branches continue to grow.

Since MCHT was founded in 1970, this mission statement has changed little while the context in which we do our work has changed a great deal. Threats to the environment and biodiversity have always been a concern of this organization, but in our rapidly changing climate, the problems and our response to these threats has become increasingly complex. While the loss of open, undeveloped coastal lands inspired the creation of MCHT 50 years ago, the need and desire for places to get outside and access the coast has only become greater over the decades—particularly now, in the wake of the pandemic.

While serving as MCHT's president over the past ten years, I've seen this organization adapt and stretch in remarkable and necessary ways to remain true to its mission. We've also weathered tremendous challenges, which is not in and of itself an accomplishment, but rather an indicator of the organization's strength, agility, and competence over the long haul.

Thanks to you and others who support MCHT year after year, we have capacities today that we didn't dream about 50 years ago. Decades of investment and relationship building in communities up and down the coast are yielding powerful partnership projects that show how land conservation can help solve problems ranging from the loss of traditional water access for clambers to food insecurity. MCHT has become the state leader in creating more permanent public access to the coast and has launched several initiatives designed to make the coast more resilient to climate change. This organization is as strong and impactful as it's ever been.

With every faith in a bright future for Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and after ten years of the most fulfilling work of my life, I have decided that the time has come for me to step down as president by the end of this year. It has been a rare and deep honor to get to know you over these years and to work alongside you on behalf of the Maine coast. Thank you for everything. I remain your partner in the mission to keep the coast open, healthy, working, and beautiful—now and forever.

ALDERMERE'S FARM HANDS PROGRAM TURNS 20 CONTINUED FROM COVER



A group of Farm Hands from a session in the early spring of 2017.

Farm Hands, Aldermere Farm's first program, was started by former general manager Ron Howard back in 2001. Ron had learned invaluable lessons growing up on a farm, and he thought local kids would benefit from the experience of caring for the animals. He was right. A staple of programming at Aldermere Farm, Farm Hands has had about 360 participants over the years, typically ranging from age 10 to 13.

Over the course of the program, which usually occurs in six sessions, participants learn skills like haltering a calf, brushing cows and leading them into the creep, and the basics of showing. Of course, the program cultivates more than just these farm skills.

"We don't grow and move forward until we're uncomfortable," says Heidi. "At first a lot of kids are not comfortable walking into the pens with the cows. A month later, they're handling them with no fear."

Heidi always begins the program by telling Farm Hand participants that they're there to help as volunteers—that they have an important job to do. Heidi finds that they appreciate the sense of responsibility. And it's true: as an educational center, it's critical that these cows are halter trained and comfortable around people. The program was on hold during much of the pandemic and Heidi and her team acutely felt the absence of the Farm Hands.

The Farm Hands program geared to middle schoolers will continue to be an important part of programming at MCHT, but Heidi is excited to provide volunteer opportunities for adults like the Heath brothers as well. "I would definitely recommend this program to people," says Matt. "Same here," says Michael. In fact, they liked it so much they continue to pitch in and help at the farm together once or twice a week!

Meanwhile, the next crop of young Farm Hands are back at it. Twenty years in, the program is going strong. 🌱



IN MY WORDS: ANN AND DAVID INGRAM MCHT DONORS

We first got to know Maine Coast Heritage Trust through Aldermere Farm, and our

relationship with the organization grew from there. Over the years we've supported the annual fund and special projects in the Midcoast and elsewhere throughout the state. It's important to us to get to know the people and programs of the organizations we're supporting—

to really wrap our arms around them. We've had that opportunity with MCHT.

We're both directly involved with nonprofits, so we know what good governance looks like. MCHT isn't just giving lip service to its mission—they're actively pursuing it. And their success in raising money for the recent Campaign is further proof that there are supporters like us who find land conservation to be important.

When we set out to make our estate plans, we talked to David Warren at MCHT, and we've set up a special fund to help preserve accessibility and provide for ongoing stewardship of MCHT's lands and programs. Over the decades we've come to love Maine's natural beauty, and the people here have been good to us. We wanted to give back to this place that has become so important to us. 🌱

INVASIVE PLANTS & WHY THEY MATTER TO MCHT

Amanda Devine

Multiflora rose is an invasive plant that provides some nutrition for birds and mammals, but not as much as native plant species it displaces.

Almost anywhere on the planet, collections of plants, animals, fungi, and other microorganisms have co-evolved in balanced systems that ensure the survival of all and the domination of none. So what happens when a species from another part of the world is abruptly added to the mix? Because local species don't always have systems for keeping newcomers in check, they may potentially spread, overtake native species, and throw a whole ecosystem out of whack.

One set of invasive species—plants—are especially noticeable in Maine during the summer months. “MCHT’s stewardship staff could spend all day, every day combating invasive plants,” says MCHT land steward Amanda Devine. “Obviously, that’s not possible.” So, the organization’s general approach is one of prioritization: know what invasive plants are present on a property, remove small to moderate infestations, respond immediately to new infestations, and monitor regularly.

In some instances, invasive plants have gotten so out of hand, and the quality of habitat in a given place has become so poor, that it becomes necessary for MCHT to invest a lot of time and money into restoration.

That might mean bringing in heavy equipment to remove all vegetation, applying limited amounts of herbicide to invasive re-growth, and either replanting or relying on soil seed banks to allow native plants to return. When it comes to the use of herbicides, Amanda says, “The risk of inadequate action against invasives outweighs the risk to the environment and to human health caused by herbicide use in this very limited, highly targeted way. Its careful use is critical to maintaining biodiversity on the Maine coast.”

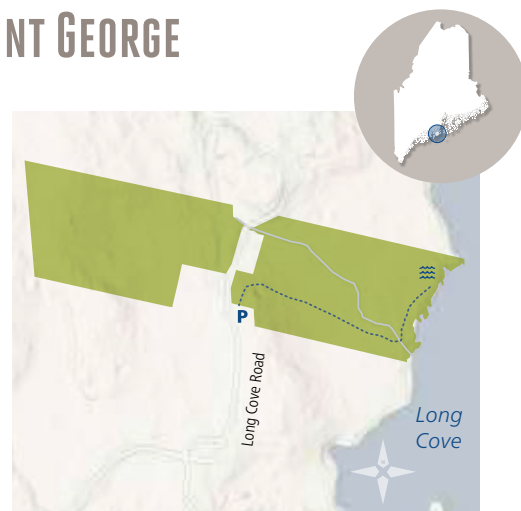
Anyone who owns or cares for land in Maine can do their part to beat back invasive plants and help our native plants and animals survive. To learn more about Maine’s invasive species head to maine.gov/invasives. For tips on managing them check out the *Winning the War on Weeds* pamphlet, which Amanda helped create and is available at mcht.org/publication/winning-the-war-on-weeds. “If we lose our native plants, we lose the insects, we lose the birds,” says Amanda. “Imagine a symphony orchestra that keeps losing instruments. Eventually all you’re left with is a single violin and a high hat. We do not want that for the Maine coast.” 🌱

FEATURED PRESERVE BAMFORD PRESERVE, SAINT GEORGE

Maine Coast Heritage Trust conserved this sweet 37-acre property on Long Cove in 2014 and, since that time, Midcoast land steward Amanda Devine has been making improvements to what she calls “a simple neighborhood place.”

If you stop by today, you’ll find a 0.3-mile trail winding gently through

forested wetlands and past a lovely orchard to the shores of Long Cove. A picnic bench is at the end of the trail (or beginning if you’re coming from the water) where you can take a rest, have a nibble, and enjoy the ocean views. Bring your binoculars—it’s a good place to spot songbirds on land, waterfowl offshore, and raptors soaring above. 🌱



REMEMBRANCES

BY MCHT PRESIDENT TIM GLIDDEN

This year, we've said a final goodbye with regret to two old friends who played leadership roles in Maine Coast Heritage Trust's story for many decades. When we pause to acknowledge their contributions, I am reminded of all those who have written that story over the past half century. In my faith tradition we honor the "mighty cloud of witnesses" — those who have gone before and by whose example we are now inspired in the same cause. Dianna Emory and Charlie Dodge are two of our shining witnesses.

Dianna Kilby Emory



Dianna served on the MCHT board from 1998 to 2007 and actively ever since then on our advisory council. She was passionately committed to the well-being of Maine's natural world: woods and waters, coast and islands. The nonprofit boards she served on are literally too numerous to name but included Friends of Acadia, The Forest Society of Maine, and Frenchman Bay Conservancy in addition to MCHT. Dianna was a doer and a leader; with her energy and enthusiasm she inspired us to bring the impossible within reach. Dianna also drew on her deep experience in clinical counseling to make connections between mental health and direct experience in the natural world. I am personally indebted to her for the unreserved generosity and kindness she showed me when I joined MCHT—a seemingly infinite source of introductions, unstinting hospitality for my many, many visits to MDI, and a boundless reservoir of well-informed advice. We will miss her sparkle and elegance and be forever grateful for her commitment to MCHT. 🌿

Charles W. H. Dodge



Charlie served on MCHT's board from 1989 through 1996 and as a member of our advisory council in the years since. Charlie was an innovator in his professional life, including more than thirty years with S.D. Warren Co. here in Maine. He was a passionate outdoorsman and while that term is out of fashion, it perfectly captures his enjoyment of the natural world through fly-fishing, skiing, sailing, and hunting. That passion extended to the conservation of the lands and waters of Maine and a deep commitment to environmental protection, causes he pursued with his wife Marylee through their generous support for a myriad of related organizations, including board service with many. It was my privilege to spend time with Charlie getting his advice and perspective on the strategic challenges facing MCHT. He was always glad to see you and his stories, told with a dry, keen humor, were always worth the trip! Charlie was a strong connection back to MCHT's earliest years, and we feel the loss of his presence. 🌿

There are way more stories to share than we can fit in the print newsletter! Check out the digital version of Maine Heritage to learn more about the work that MCHT donors are making possible up and down the coast.

[MCHT.ORG/MAINEHERITAGE](https://mcht.org/MaineHeritage)

IF YOU HAVEN'T MADE YOUR 2021
GIFT TO MCHT YET, HEAD TO:
[GIVE.MCHT.ORG](https://give.mcht.org)



KEEP THE COAST *MAINE*

Everything you read about in this newsletter is possible thanks to the generous support of Maine Coast Heritage Trust donors.

Donors are creating more public access to the coast, strengthening coastal communities, making Maine more resilient to climate change, and so much more. Thank you to all who are a part of MCHT and the ongoing effort to keep the coast Maine.

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WHAT'S INSIDE:

20 Years of the Farm
Hands Program

Managing
Invasive Plants

& More!

NAME THAT PLACE

Some hints...

It's on the St. George peninsula.

It's a great place to pick blackberries in the fall.

SEE INSIDE FOR
THIS FEATURED PRESERVE

