



The Land We Love

*Preserving the rural heritage of the
Northern Neck since 2004*

Volume 9, Issue 1

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FARMLAND PRESERVED IN NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY

As you drive on Route 360 leaving Callao, you will pass a small farm on your right, before you get to the site for the Westmoreland Players. This pretty 23-acre property, bordered on one side by hardwood trees and a creek, belongs to two sisters who decided that they wanted to preserve their family farm. It will remain as you see it, forever, thanks to the conservation-minded sisters, Sara Winstead Wilbur and Virginia Winstead Barton.

Mrs. Wilbur's and Mrs. Barton's grandfather, Colis M. Winstead, obtained this farmland property in 1898 at age 23. He is a direct descendant of Samuel Winstead (b. 1671) whose land, as surveyed in 1690, was located directly across Richmond Road behind Bethany Church. Colis ("Les") Winstead married Anna Dawson

in 1903. The Winstead sisters, who spent childhood summers here with their grandparents in the 1930s and 1940s, have a strong attachment to this farmland which has been in their immediate family for over 100 years, and wanted to preserve this land for farming.

A two-story wood frame farmhouse with Carpenter Gothic wooden brackets along the front porch eaves sits along the highway at the front of the property. The earliest part of the house was built by the Winstead sisters' grandfather about 1900, and was a simple one-over-one tiny two room house, one room up, and one room down, with a narrow staircase against an exterior wall. There is also an early 1900's white wooden well-house, with a water bucket on a rope pulley still in use and an early 1900's

smokehouse.

The property contains open flat farmland containing 11 acres of USDA Prime soils, and .6 acres of Soils of Statewide Importance. The land is farmed in a small grain rotation and the preservation of this property ensures that productive agricultural land remains available for future use and production.

The remainder of the land slopes gently away from the crop fields through a mature hardwood and pine forest to the southern boundary of the property which is formed by Mill Creek, a tributary of the Yeocomico River. Preserving this property will enhance the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries by preventing non-point source pollution that could result from more intensive development of the property. This will support state and federal goals for land preservation in the Chesapeake Bay watershed by meeting the multi-state Bay Agreement goals, as well as contributing to the Governor's goal to protect 400,000 acres of open space in the Commonwealth. Protecting this land supports land use policies of Northumberland County as delineated in their Comprehensive Plan, which contains



Virginia & Sara Winstead
with Mother and Grandparents
Colis & Anna Winstead -1937

goals to facilitate existing and future farming operations, conserve water and other natural resources and preserve the agricultural and rural characteristics of the county.

We are grateful to the Winstead sisters for their donation of preserved land to our community. The NNLC and Northumberland County share the responsibility for upholding the landowners' wishes to protect their land, enforce their wishes, and preserve a family legacy. So next time you drive on Rte. 360 and see the Winstead Farm, think of these sisters who gave us open farmland and protected waters for years to come, and say thank you.



MARY LOUISA POLLARD STEWARDSHIP & ENFORCEMENT FUND



In the late 1990's, a group of citizens gathered to discuss their concerns about the future of the Northern Neck. The rural based economies and the desire to have the Northern Neck grow gracefully were extremely important to this visionary group. Water quality, contiguous farm and forest lands, and scenic vistas were the

focal point of their efforts. An ancient Indian proverb resonated within them, *"the land is not given to us by our parents; it is borrowed from our children"*. Their informal exchanges and get-togethers evolved into the Northern Neck Land Conservancy, which was incorporated in January 2004.

The impetus behind the group that began this small land trust was Mary Louisa Pollard. Her vision and love of the Northern Neck inspired others to join her in forming the organization. Mary Louisa became the first President of the NNLC and has served on the Board of Directors for 10 years. So much has been accomplished but her dreams are not yet satisfied.

The NNLC serves all five counties in the Northern

Neck. As the holder or co-holder of an easement we have an obligation to watch over the protected properties of this peninsula. Inspecting every property once a year, generating corresponding reports and defending an easement in court if necessary are all protocol, and our responsibility to the landowner's wishes as outlined in the deed of easement is permanent. We also have an objective of facilitating the protection of several additional properties annually as landowners contact us for assistance. These procedures and best practices require capital. Mary Louisa has seen this responsibility as being great, and the need to maintain a viable organization to continue this monitoring is critical.

To ensure that we can

achieve our objective, we have created a fund that is restricted to inspecting and defending our landowners' easements forever. In honor of our founder, Mary Louisa, we have named this important fund the **Mary Louisa Pollard Stewardship and Enforcement Fund**. Our goal is to achieve a \$78,000 minimum balance in this reserve. We have received donations from landowners who have placed easements, as well as many others who wish to honor Mary Louisa and support the protection of our rural heritage forever.

If you would like to contribute to the MLP Stewardship & Enforcement Fund, we are happy to accept your donation!

Simply send a check to NNLC and write MLP on the memo line. Your gift will help us protect land for years to come.

LAWRENCE W. LATANE JOINS THE NNLC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The newest member of the Northern Neck Land Conservancy Board of Directors is Lawrence Latane, of Westmoreland County.

He and his wife, Becky, own and operate Blenheim Organic Gardens, which produces and sells certified organic vegetables at markets in Williamsburg and Fredericksburg. Vegetables are also available through CSA share plans at Blenheim, in Fredericksburg, and in Falls Church.

Latane is a member of the NNLC's land preservation committee. He has previously served on the board of the Virginia Association for Biological Farm-

ing which advocates sustainable agriculture and promotes ways to keep small farms economically and environmentally sound.

He has been involved in Northern Neck issues for more than 30 years, first as a reporter, and then, editor of the Westmoreland News, followed by a 22-year career as a reporter for the Richmond Times-Dispatch where he covered the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula, the commercial fishing industry and the Chesapeake Bay. After his retirement from journalism, The Chesapeake Bay Foundation named him its Conservationist of the Year in

2009 for his work on environmental and political issues affecting the bay.

A graduate of Elon College, Latane lives in a historic house called Blenheim and owns portions of Blenheim and Haywood farms near Washington's Birthplace National Monument which are protected with conservation easements.



Lawrence W. Latane



Mark Your Calendars !!!

Boots and Barbecue returns Sunday September 14th at Gascony Estate in Northumberland County.

Join us on the shores of Mill Creek and Ingram Bay at the home of our hosts Paul and Rosemary Tribble.

A MESSAGE FROM THE NNLC PRESIDENT

2014 marks the tenth anniversary of the Northern Neck Land Conservancy.

Our paperwork to the State Corporation Commission was sent on January 6, 2004. Our date of incorporation was January 22, 2004. It was signed & sealed by the SCC clerk on February 4, 2004.

So we will consider February 4 as NNLC's official anniversary.

The founding Board members were George Freeman Jr., Jane Towner, Kathryn Gregory, Donald McCann III and the indomitable Mary Louisa Pollard. (Webster's definition of *indomitable* is *not easily discouraged, unyielding or unconquerable*. She remains a director ten years later!)

Soon after, the initial board members were joined

by Robert Fox, Bill Boldon, Elizabeth Crowther, Page Henley Jr., & Matson Terry II.

Tayloe Murphy Jr. and Alan Voorhees were named Honorary Directors— titles now held by Tayloe and George Freeman.

Dozens of other ladies and gentlemen have served as board members and members of our Development, Land Preservation, & Educational Outreach committees.

To each and every one, we say "Thank you very, very much!"

According to the NNLC's original filing, the corporation was formed for "*the benefit of the general public of the counties of Lancaster, Northumberland, King George, Richmond, Westmoreland in Virginia,*

known as "Northern Neck", to preserve and enhance open space, including farm land, forested land, scenic vistas, parks and recreation areas, and the like."

While the wording of our mission has been expanded to include *economies* and *culture*, our work continues to follow the initial intent.

As we celebrate this 10th anniversary, note our 2014 events:

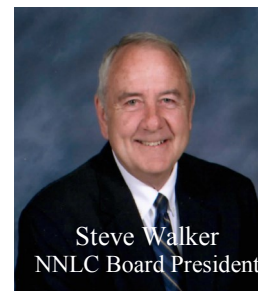
Board meetings will be on May 14, Aug. 13, and Nov. 12. Please feel free to let us know of any concerns by contacting our Executive Director in advance of the meeting.

Feb. 28, NNLC instructed Richmond County Intermediate School students about the Cat Point Creek Watershed. In June we will host a creek kayak nature

paddle to explore the beautiful habitat of the watershed.

NNLC education and outreach will continue throughout the year with exhibits at the NN Master Gardeners Seminar, Lancaster County Court Day, The Water Event at Belle Isle, RRVNWR "Go Wild", King George & Irvington Farmers Markets, the Reedville Independence Day Parade, Kinsale Day, and our own very special event Boots & BBQ.

We look forward to seeing you at these events!



Steve Walker
NNLC Board President

NNLC ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN FULL SWING!

The NNLC registered with the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in May 2013 to apply for accreditation by the Land Trust Alliance. We received confirmation that the NNLC met eligibility requirements sufficient to proceed with our application. The NNLC will submit the complete application to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission in April 2014.

The Land Trust Alliance is a national organization that pioneered the use of conservation easements and set the standards for ethical performance by land trusts. This application for accreditation includes extensive documen-

tation demonstrating the NNLC's ability to operate in an ethical, legal and technically sound manner that will ensure the long-term protection of land in the public interest.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, evaluates and verifies that the applicant is in compliance with the 12 National Land Trust Standards. These standards, *Land Trust Standards and Practices*, were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Responsible governance
- Ethical operations
- Accountability to donors and the public; and,

- Compliance with all laws, such as IRC 170 (h) and 501(c) (3).

The accreditation seal is a mark of distinction among the more than 1,700 land trusts across America. Accreditation provides assurance of quality and permanence of land conservation and publicly recognizes a land trust's ability to protect important natural places and working lands forever.

The accreditation process has allowed the NNLC the opportunity to review and implement policies and procedures that help streamline operations and lead to more effective land conservation.

We are pleased that this rigorous process will align us with national standards of excellence. ***"If our special places are important enough for us to protect, then they are important enough for us to do it right."***

Final determination on accreditation from the Commission is expected in early 2015.

To learn more about the accreditation program follow us on our webpage www.nnconserve.org. Please see the back page for information about commenting on our pending application.

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NORTHERN NECK
LAND CONSERVANCY

Land Trust Alliance Stakeholder Notification

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Northern Neck Land Conservancy is pleased to announce it is applying for accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs. As the only land trust in the Northern Neck, the NNLC is proud to serve this five-county area and we want to be recognized for our ethical practices, thorough processes, and supportive service that we provide to landowners interested in placing conservation easements. That is why it is important to us that you tell the commission about our organization.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the Northern Neck Land Conservancy complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/tips-and-tools/indicator-practices>. To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org. Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on the Northern Neck Land Conservancy's application will be most useful by July 2, 2014.

We'll be out and about all year long... here are a few notable dates to jot down—please come out, support our associates and stop by the NNLC exhibit and say hi. We look forward to seeing you!

March 29th—NN Master Gardeners Gardening in the NN Seminar in White Stone; April 12th—Lancaster Court Day Festival at Mary Ball Washington Museum; May 18th—RRVNR Go Wild; June 28th—NNLC Cat Point Creek Kayak Paddle (details will be online shortly); July 5th—NNLC float in the Reedville Independence Day Parade; Sept. 14th —NNLC Boots 'n Barbecue; September 20th— Kinsale Day; Farmers Markets



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