

the TaTTler

a newsletter of the

Thames Talbot Land Trust

Working together to leave a legacy of healthy landscapes

DEEP ECONOMY

The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future

June 13, 2008

Bessie Labatt Hall, Kings College

Bill McKibben: Author. Educator. Environmentalist



"We need new mental models of the possible. I would be content if this book helped shake our ingrained belief that growth is still an obvious goal of our economy—content if the reader wondered a little the next time he or she heard some newscaster happily declare that the economy had gotten 3% larger. And content, as well, if my work helped shake the idea that there was no alternative to growth save miserable recession. If economists can shed their inclination to serve as priests of the current cult, they will play a crucial role in helping us understand what options we have, what scales of enterprise may work to serve all our needs, which kinds of efficiency help

and which harm. For them—for all of us—this is a far more interesting intellectual adventure than merely trying to keep the present system accelerating a little longer.

It's extremely hard to imagine a world substantially different from the one we know. But our current economies are changing the physical world in horrifying ways. It's our greatest challenge—the only real question of our time—to see whether we can transform those economies enough to prevent some damage and to help us cope with what we can't prevent. To see if we can manage to mobilize the wealth of our communities to make the transition tolerable, even sweet, instead of tragic."

Deep Economy by Bill McKibben

The Thames Talbot Land Trust is delighted to have Bill McKibben join us to explore his thinking—and our own—in more depth. He will also be signing books at the end of the talk. If these ideas from his book, *Deep Economy*, entice you, challenge you, disturb or intrigue you, join us on Friday, June 13, 2008 at 7 p.m. for an evening of thought provoking inquiry. The cost is \$5 at the door. Come early to be sure to get a seat.

Land: a Living Legacy

Don Gordon

In 2002 Rick and Carol Richardson took the bold step of being the first to donate land to the recently founded Thames Talbot Land Trust. That gift has created the Meadowlily Nature Preserve on the South Branch of the Thames River; a natural area open to the public for passive recreation such as hiking and bird-watching.

"We both grew up with access to natural land to explore, but now the area where I once played, learned to skate on a pond, and saw my very first Lady's Slipper orchid is completely gone" says Carol Richardson. "By donating this land, we hope that young people could enjoy a natural setting, explore and develop their imaginations; as well as providing an activity that families could enjoy together."

Unlike bequests, most planned gifts of land are made during the donors' lifetime and they have the opportunity to witness the fruits of their gift and to see how well their gift is stewarded by the land trust.

Land is a living legacy, and the Thames Talbot Land Trust (TTLT) is an astute and active manager of the properties entrusted to it in perpetuity. At the Meadowlily property, the TTLT has invested thousands of dollars in habitat enhancement and in improving access and interpretation so that the public can better enjoy this natural jewel in an urban setting. Rick and Carol have remained active supporters of the TTLT and one of the recent projects reflects Carol's keen interest in butterflies.



An old meadow on the floodplain is home to many species of native butterflies and through selected plantings and the removal of invasive species, the TTLT is improving this important habitat. This spring, an interpretive panel will be installed to help visitors identify the many butterflies frequenting the meadow and foster an understanding of the importance of butterflies and the threats they face. Land is a dynamic gift that keeps on giving and both the

Presidents Report AGM 2008

Muriel Andreae

Newport Forest - Omnibus Research Inc. donated this 100-acre property to TTLT on June 8 2007. Kee and Pat Dewdney chose to transfer the Conservation Easement from the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) to TTLT before donating the land itself. This generous donation was celebrated with a festive Dedication Ceremony on September 27 2007. Pat and Kee Dewdney lead the Newport Forest Stewards.

Joany's Woods - This 365 acre property was acquired on September 28 2007, after a very successful campaign led by Stan Caveney. Funding was received from many sources, including over eighty private individuals. Over 150 people toured the property during 2007.

Muriel Allin and Blair Allingham lead the Stewards of Joany's Woods, who visit the site regularly, organized hikes and solved issues as needed.

Meadowlily Nature Preserve - With support from grants, the stewardship fund and the efforts of many volunteers the Trust started naturalizing the upper meadow using native seeds and nuts, and without using any herbicide on the competing weeds.

Eberhardt Conservation Easement - The Trust holds a Conservation Easement with Eric and Marsha Eberhardt for their 100-acre property. Annual monitoring and property management discussions continued during site visits in July, November and December

Skunk's Misery - The Skunk's Misery Natural Area Conservation Plan was developed by NCC and TTLT to protect the biodiversity and promote stewardship of Skunk's Misery. Both Boards endorsed the plan in 2007. TTLT is the lead and will be working with Middlesex County, the

local municipalities, private landowners and agencies to achieve the conservation goals of the plan.

Fall Speaker - Lorraine Johnson spoke at the Wolf Performance Hall on November 2 2007 on gardening as a social and political act.

Recognition of Donors, Volunteers and Staff - The Supporters Circle and Colonel Talbot's Circle grew in 2007. The Supporters Circle, recognizing annual donations, included 64 individuals and companies. The Colonel Talbot's Circle, which recognizes the cumulative value of a donor's gift of cash or real property, now includes four Legacy Sponsors (over \$100,000), seven Keystone Sponsors (over \$25,000), six Patrons (over \$10,000) and 38 Stewards (over \$1000).

The London Community Foundation honoured Bernie VanDenBelt, past president and Founding Member of the Trust, with the 2007 Ivey Environmental Leadership Award. The Land Trust hosted a barbecue for volunteers and recognized the long-term contributions of Bill DeYoung, Terry Grawey, Mary Kerr and Bernie VanDenBelt.

Don Gordon had been our Executive Director since 2006, working as a private consultant two days a week. He has done an exemplary job as both a fundraiser and providing support and services to the Board and all the committees. In 2008, Don became our first employee.

On behalf of the Land Trust community, I would like to thank the Directors, committee members, staff, Stewards and volunteers, for their time and effort. We have seen significant possessions entrusted to our care. It is an act of faith by the donors, to trust us with their legacy. I am honoured to have been your president in 2007.

TTLT Board of Directors 2007 / 2008

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Executive Director

Don Gordon

Committees seek Volunteers
You could be part of the solution
Contact "thamestalbot@ttl.ca" or
Call 519 858-3442

Contributors to this issue

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Joany's Woods

Jane Bowles

Vegetation Management Plan

In January an important milestone in the management of Joany's Woods was passed with the completion of the Recreation and Vegetation Management Plan. This 20-year planning document was prepared for TTLT by Silvecon and is the backbone of the Draft Joany's Woods Management Plan. A management plan for all properties owned by TTLT is a requirement under the Ontario Land Trust Alliance. This plan makes recommendations and lays out actions for management activities that range from forming a Stewards Group (already done) to identifying and removing hazard trees on an annual basis, closing and maintaining trails and erecting signage and barriers. Maps show the 11.7 km of trails, identify features of the site such as boardwalks, gates and culverts and highlight where special management activities are required or recommended. Logging the woods for a commercial timber harvest is not part of the plan, but some of the pine and spruce plantations may be logged to thin them and provide timber that can be used to build structures such as boardwalks and provide fence posts on site.



André and Andrea find treasure

TTLT will encourage passive recreational activities at Joany's Woods including hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, birding and botanizing, photography, tree-hugging, picnics and meditation. Activities that the TTLT considers incompatible with the natural environment objectives of the property will be prohibited. Such activities include use of motorized vehicles (except for management and maintenance purposes), mountain biking and recreational cycling, horse-back riding, off-leash dog walking, camping and fires.

Trespass by ATV users is probably the biggest single management headache for TTLT at Joany's Woods. ATV traffic in the past has caused heavy damage in some places on the trails. The arsenal to be used to try and control the problem will include word of mouth, public relations exercises, signage at entrances, fences and barriers and enforcement by police. The good news is that regular patrols over the winter by the Stewards of Joany's Woods already seem to have made a difference. There was very little traffic over the winter although visits increase once the snow thawed.

Stewards Report

Over the past eight months the Stewards Committee consisting of local residents and enthusiasts from surrounding communities has worked together to monitor and clean up Joany's Woods. The biggest challenge has been preventing vehicle entry onto the property through various egresses; most of these have been forged through trees and shrubs with little regard for nature. Damage that has been procured by ATVs is in some spots extensive, with large ruts rendering many trails impassable. The stewards have been diligent in reporting vehicle trespassers to the OPP and as a result trespassing has diminished but has not stopped.

A workday, held on April 13 brought out enthusiastic volunteers despite the cold snowy start to the day. There was no shortage of work and everyone enjoyed the bright sunshine that the wet snow gave way to, pitching in to help remove garbage, repair benches, and install new signage. A hunting blind that had been constructed and well hidden in the woods was removed, the beer bottles inside collected and carted out. Hazard trees were skillfully cut down and one that had fallen across the parking area through the winter was removed. Thanks to the job scope planning and organizational efforts of Blair Allin, the required jobs were identified and most of those completed. Days end saw a mound of garbage piled at the entrance awaiting removal, which was contracted out the next day. Thanks to everyone who came out to help, it was a very enjoyable and successful day.

Signage continues to be installed at various locations around the perimeter of Joany's Woods and later this spring concrete barricades will be placed at the main entrances as well as the identified trouble spots to further reduce accessibility by vehicles. All of the stewards and volunteers have been instrumental in making Joany's Woods a spectacular success.



Widow Maker



Chain Saw Cleanup

Thanks to all our great volunteers

spring weekend work parties

Eberhardt Easement April 6

The lingering snow did not stop volunteers from tackling the removal of several invasive alien species. European Buckthorn and Multiflora Rose, were removed with the aid of a Weed Wrench and muscle. Second year Garlic Mustard was pulled by hand and the first year cotyledons were burned with a Weed Devil propane torch.



Joany's Woods April 13

Tasks included garbage cleanout and installation of property boundary signage. Hazard tree management along trails was carried out according to the recent "Recreation and Vegetation Management Plan".



Newport Forest April 20

Volunteers worked at trail improvements and others hung out.



Eberhardt Easement

Jane Bowles

The Eberhardt property work day on April 6, 2008 workday went off smoothly in perfect weather. The only hitch was that there was still quite a lot of snow in patches. This not only made the work more difficult, but hampered the wheelbarrow to some extent. The TTLT holds a Conservation Easement on this property, near Sebringville in Perth County, owned by Eric and Marsha Eberhardt.

We had a great turnout. Fifteen volunteers showed up for all or part of the day. In the morning most of us focused on removing Garlic Mustard. This species, introduced from Eurasia, is a serious invader of natural areas. It has overwintering rosettes that starts flowering in early spring. In order to stop the plants flowering and setting seed you have to remove them, roots and all. Plants that are not completely removed will sprout again from the root, and uprooted plants that are not killed will continue to grow and set seed using reserves in the roots. Seeds can start germinating as early as February, as soon as the temperature rises above freezing for part of the day. The late start to spring this year meant that the seedlings were only just beginning to germinate. Some of them were still under the snow.

We concentrated in removing plants from areas nearest to (and in) the mature woodland at the back of the property. It was a triage approach, with the objective of holding back the invasion from the forest, rather than fighting in the old orchard and hedgerows where the plants are already well established. We used both the time-honoured method of pulling the rosettes out by the roots, and a more novel approach of scorching the seedlings with a flame-thrower.



Don Gordon, Muriel Andreae, Bill DeYoung and Daria Koscinski heading for work.

More aggressive tactics, such as herbicides, are off-limits on the Eberhardt property, which is a certified organic farm. Every plant we removed means there will be fewer seeds set this year and next, but because many Garlic Mustard seeds do not germinate straight away, there may be as many as ten years worth of seeds lying dormant in the soil. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities for years to come!

After a picnic lunch (at which Garlic Mustard pastries were served as snacks) everyone set about removing shrubs of Common Buckthorn and Multiflora Rose. For this we used loppers, weed wrenches, shovels and brute force, but as the ground was soft and we had quite good success and managed to extract about a dozen buckthorns and about half-dozen rose bushes. Like Garlic Mustard, both these species are introduced aliens that reproduce fast and can disrupt the integrity of natural areas.

Altogether it was a successful day, our only regret was that Marsha and Eric could not join us because of Eric's illness.



Garlic Mustard Pesto

Jane Bowles

Before you pull Garlic Mustard out by the roots, harvest and wash 2-4 cups of tender young leaves.

Grind the leaves with 1 cup of pine nuts or walnuts, add 1/2 cup of olive oil and blend until smooth. Mix in 1/2 cup of finely grated Parmesan cheese. Toss fresh cooked pasta in the resulting sauce and throw in some chopped tomatoes (optional).

Tire Cleanup in Middlesex County

Muriel Allingham

The Ontario government has initiated a 1.5 million dollar clean up of tires dumped in Middlesex County plus \$200,000 to provide an up to date inventory of tire stockpiles. More than 300,000 tires have been dumped illegally in rural areas of Middlesex County. Skunks Misery and Gentleman's Creek are not the only place in Ontario that suffers from the problem of illegal tire stockpiling.

Although tires do not pose an immediate health or environmental problem, two major hazards of stock piled tires are the collection of stagnant water and tire fires. Stagnant water in the tires provides habitat for mosquitoes, increasing the possibility of the spread of West Nile virus. Tire fires pose a large health, safety and environmental hazard to the community. The Hagersville fire near Hamilton saw 14 million tires burning for 17 days, necessitating the evacuation of 1 200 people from their homes. The cost to fight this fire and clean up the ensuing mess was a staggering ten million dollars loss.

While the tire clean up in Middlesex County will be a welcome improvement for area residents, it is not a solution for the growing used tire problem. The philosophy of reduce, reuse, and recycle necessitates the participation of manufacturers, retailers, consumers, processors and municipalities to extend tire life and to ensure end of tire-life reclamation. Research by manufacturers focusing on technology that will increase tire life, as well as providing consumer education programs on tire maintenance is a focus of due diligence for improved industry standards.

Ontario winter driving conditions result in scrap tires that still have remaining life spans, although they may no longer be safe to use in colder climates, culling re-usable tires to be sold to countries with more temperate climates can reduce 12% of Ontario's scrap tires. The clean up is a start; however, unless the market value for used rubber is improved, the landscape will again be peppered with that all too familiar site of the used tire, as in the case of Gentleman's Creek.



Beryl Ivey

1931-2007

Beryl Ivey was a founding member of the Thames Talbot Land Trust and among our staunchest supporters. When she passed away at Christmas 2007 it was a great loss to the cause of conservation across Canada. The TTLT is honoured to have received an estate gift from Beryl of \$500,000 on 15 April 2008 which increases the Ivey Natural Lands Legacy contribution to \$1.5 million.

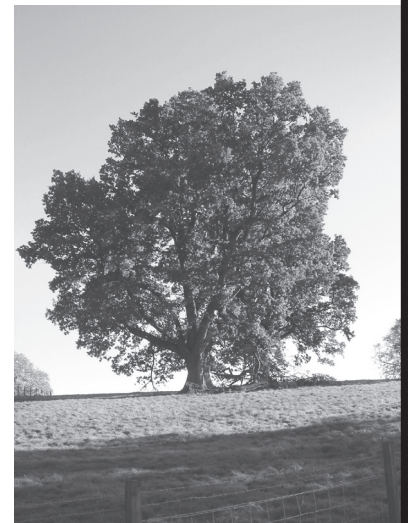
Her bequest gift to TTLT is directed towards our efforts at Skunk's Misery.

If you love the future, Trust in the land.

The Opportunities Fund of the Thames Talbot Land Trust was established through a founding gift of \$1 million from Beryl and Richard Ivey. Your planned gift of cash or securities to the Opportunities Fund will support the acquisition of natural lands to be protected in perpetuity.

Nothing outlasts land.

The Thames Talbot Land Trust is a certified recipient of Ecological Gifts under the Income Tax Act and can accept gifts of natural, agricultural and cultural significance. To learn more about us, please call: **(519) 858-3442** or visit: **www.ttlc.ca**



Thames Talbot Land Trust

Working together to leave a legacy of healthy landscapes

Bonnie's Botanizing Blog

Bonnie Bergsma

Newport Forest Virginia Bluebell Walk, May 4 2008

Don G. and I arrived as first timers to walk in Newport Forest on the Virginia Bluebell walk. We were greeted with smiling faces and a warm welcome from Pat and Kee. While we waited until the group assembled I heard and saw a Red-bellied Woodpecker on a very large and old tree. I also ventured down the streamside trail to the creek below. It is like walking on a deer path with very unobtrusive and carefully placed steps. I heard Western Chorus Frog—the one that sounds like a fingernail running across a comb.



Virginia Bluebell
Mertensia virginica
Allen Woodliffe

Kee guided us to a patch of Virginia Bluebell, a rare to uncommon species in Ontario (S3), which were just starting to bloom. There were lots of spring ephemerals taking advantage of the sunlight before the trees fully leaf out. I noted Cut-leaved Toothwort, Spring Beauty, White Trillium, both Yellow and White Trout Lily, Dutchman's Breeches, Mayapple, Wild Geranium, Wild Leek, Early Meadow Rue, Bloodroot, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Wild Strawberry, Wild Ginger.

At one rest stop with a scenic view and a bench, the others waited while Kee took Don and I on a little side trip to view the large Chinquapin Oak. We walked through what Kee described as a "climax thorn forest" as it was 100% hawthorn. In the floodplain were several Sycamore of small to very large—my favourite Carolinian tree species. Kee pointed out Blue Ash with its square twigs. Two other birds we heard and saw were the Rose-breasted Grosbeak whose call Kee described as "a robin on LSD", and the Rufous-sided Towhee, a colourful bird that flits through the underbrush.

We made another side excursion to the river edge where the Thames River is building a new sand bar. The spring flood carried a lot of flotsam into the bottomland forests and only weeks before, the patch of Virginia Bluebell was almost 2 metres underwater.



Rattlesnake Fern
Botrychium virginianum
W DeYoung

Joany's Woods Mother's Day Walk, May 11 2008

There were two groups consisting of 6 land trust members and four guests for this walk in the gentle rain on Mother's Day. The group I was in had Stan, Bill, Bonnie, Muriel-2, with special guests Florence and Don Pullen. It's my fault we were slower because, like pooh bear, I like to stop and examine every different flower. We took the Vernon Road entrance that begins in the flood plain of the Ausable River. Our search for Green Dragon found a young specimen of what we believe to be *Arisaema dracontium* and we will return in June. Florence is an avid botanist and she and I had a nice time botanizing. As the rain came down a little harder, Stan encouraged us, saying "it's only another 500 metres ahead". Finally, we found a beautiful specimen of Tulip Tree with a straight bole of at least 20 metre. Don P. knows trees; he was admiring the size and stature of these trees, knowing their worth to a logger. He also described the artistic worth of a diseased tree with big burls for a friend of his.

In the flood plain we found Round-leaved Hawthorn *Crataegus chrysocarpa* in full bloom, American Bladdernut, Yellow Swamp Buttercup and Wild Blue Phlox. At the top of the very steep hill we found four different species of currants and gooseberries: Wild Black Currant, Smooth Gooseberry, Bristly Black Currant, Prickly Gooseberry. Both Pin Cherry and Chokecherry were in full flower. Scattered along the trail were two species of Rattlesnake Root: White lettuce and Tall Rattlesnake Root, as well as Wild Ginger, Wood Anemone, Baneberry and Wild Geranium.

This trail is particularly nice because it takes you along the crest of the river valley with wonderful views from the top of the steep forested slopes to the forested bottomlands with many vernal pools filled with water. Depending on the aspect of the slope we would view large areas dominated by colonies of Blue Cohosh, Mayapple, Trout Lily, and Starry False Solomon's Seal, and White Trillium.

I made special note of common species and unusual to rare found on the Canadian Shield: Canada Mayflower, Red Trillium, Fly Honeysuckle, Wild Sarsaparilla, Bearded Short-husk *Brachyletrum erectum*, Foam Flower, Shining Club-moss *Lycopodium lucidulum*, Rattlesnake Fern, Christmas Fern, and Leatherwood.

We returned from the walk tired and a wee bit wet, but with smiles on our faces, happy to have had such a lovely walk in the woods on Mother's Day.

It is so rewarding and special to be part of a group of people who see so much value in nature, who are dedicated to discovering, sharing and preserving the beautiful things that gaia offers.

Membership in TTLT

Charitable receipts are issued for all contributions
(#86745 7475 RR0001)

Membership Donations

Youth/Student (under 18):	\$25
Individual Member (18 and older):	\$50
Affiliate/Group/Corporate:	\$100

Supporters' Circle

Advocate	\$240 (\$20/month)
Protector	\$480 (\$40/month)

Donations

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I (We) authorize the Thames Talbot Land Trust to process a debit, in paper, electronic or other form in the amount of \$ _____ on my (our) account on the first day of each month beginning 1, _____, 200____.

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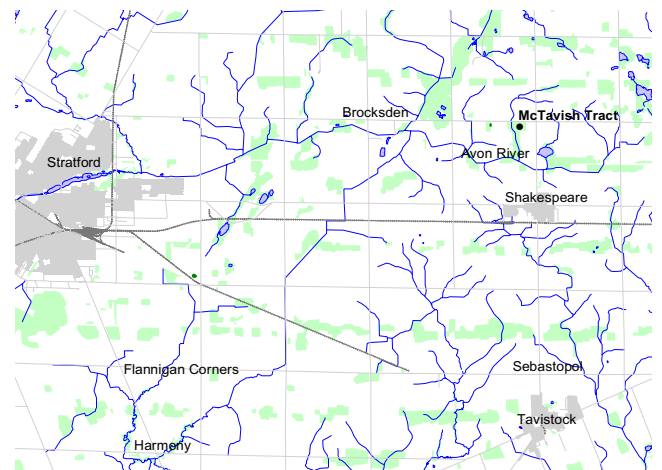
McTavish Tract

an ecological gem

The Thames Talbot Land Trust invites you to the dedication of the McTavish Tract, one of Perth County's ecological gems. Originally purchased and cared for by the late Donald McTavish and his wife Lillian, this 46 acre woodland has been donated to TTLT by the McTavish family. The property features a variety of habitats and its spring-fed, headwater stream is a tributary of the Avon River and of the Thames, a Canadian Heritage River. The McTavish Tract will be managed by TTLT as a nature reserve to protect and enhance its diverse habitats and associated wildlife.

Dedication Ceremony: Wed, June 18th at 7:00 PM.

Directions: From Stratford, travel approximately 8 km east on Highway 7/8 to Shakespeare. Turn north at the traffic lights onto Perth Road 107. Proceed 1.5 km to the first sideroad, Line 37. Turn left (west) and look for the signs. Park at the side of the road.



Richardson Story

continued from page one

public and the donors continue to benefit from it. Long after bricks and mortar have crumbled, these natural legacies will endure.

Since Rick and Carol took a leap of faith and placed their cherished land in the care of the TTLT, the Trust has built on its success and leveraged its financial support. It now protects more than 500 acres, and has received a \$1 million gift from Richard and Beryl Ivey. In 2008 the TTLT will acquire at least two new nature preserves and has an active corps of volunteers managing and monitoring the lands to ensure that the natural values are well-protected.

Carol sums it up, "In the years since we made the gift it has occurred to me that all of our descendants - grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, - will be able to access this wonderful property." You can create a natural legacy of your own, or contribute to a larger project through the Thames Talbot Land Trust. Visit www.ttl.t.ca or call (519) 858-3442 to learn more.