

American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.
Post Office Box 204
Port Republic, MD 20676



NEWSLETTER

Volume 6 - Number 4

Editors: Ellen and David Farr

Fall 1992

Annual Meeting: Saturday, October 24

Notices and reservation forms for the ACLT Sixth Annual Meeting to be held Saturday, October 24, at Christ Church on Broomes Island Road in Port Republic, were mailed out in a special mailing to all members we believed lived within driving distance of our meeting place. If, by any chance, you wish to attend this meeting and did not receive this mailing, please call the Office, 410-586-1570, with your reservation immediately. (We were unable to publish the Newsletter in time for the October 17 registration deadline.)

We are pleased that Wayne Klockner, Executive Director of the Maryland Regional Office of The Nature Conservancy, will be our keynote speaker. As part of the meeting, ACLT Vice President Peter Vogt will share with you the ACLT vision for the future and our hopes for the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas in the Parkers Creek and Governors Run watersheds while there is still the chance. The photo entries in the ACLT-sponsored Calvert County Landscapes Photo Contest will be on display and prizes awarded to the winners in each category: The Natural Landscape, the Historical Landscape and Pictures by Young People.

The Schedule

9:30 a.m.	Registration & Coffee
10-12:00	Meeting and Program
12-12:15 p.m.	Cider Break
12:15	Picnic Lunch
1:00	Guided Tours

Extra hands will be more than welcome if you can come early and help with the set up, or stay a little later and help with the clean-up. Eleanor Prince is this year's coordinator.

There is no charge for the lunch for members, but we ask for a contribution of \$6.60 for each of their guests. If any members wish to

make a contribution to help defray the cost of the lunch, a basket for contributions will be available at the door. Be sure you have brought your dues up to date before the meeting in order to be qualified to vote. See you there!

Board of Directors

Aileen R. Hughes, President
Peter Vogt, Vice President
Sue Hamilton, Secretary
Ralph H. Dwan, Jr., Treasurer
Paul Berry
Stephen M. Bunker
Donald C. Dahmann
Carl Fleischhauer
Oliver S. Flint, Jr.
Daniel Priest
Charlene Sturbitts
John Mark Switzer
Robert Ulanowicz
Caroline E. Van Mason
Margaret Young

Report of the Nominating Committee

Under its current configuration the ACLT Board of Directors consists of 15 members elected to three year terms. Every year the terms of five directors expire. The class of 1992 consists of Don Dahmann, Ralph Dwan, Oliver Flint, Sue Hamilton and Dan Priest. With regret the committee reports that Dahmann, Flint and Priest have decided not to stand for election for another term. They have been members of the Board since the beginning in 1986 and have contributed unstintingly of their time and talent. They will be missed. Don helped us reach out to the Washington Post and the National Geographic, Ollie was the naturalist concerned about how trails and other improvements interfaced with the plants and animals. Dan was the "big picture" member. How do we raise the money to accomplish our goals?

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present a slate of six nominees to the Board to be elected at the October membership meeting. The number is six rather than five because the Board appointed Paul Berry to be John Hollowell's replacement on the Board during the past year, and he has agreed to stand for election to that slot which is in the class of '93. Paul was introduced in the last newsletter. Ralph Dwan and Sue Hamilton who have served this last year as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, agreed to stand for another 3-year term. The other nominees for 3-year terms are:

1.) **June Whitson:** June tells us that she and her late husband, Bill, "found" Calvert County

in the late 60's when they were looking for a weekend retreat that had both woods and water. After her retirement from the World Bank, Calvert County became home, but the "woods and water" have become increasingly threatened as the bulldozers push their relentless way into the county. June spent her childhood in South Africa and, since University in Tennessee and Maryland, has lived, worked and traveled in many parts of the world. She says that if one is not born to a permanent home-place, it is important to find one and do one's best to protect it. Her hobbies include gardening, reading, traveling and trying to learn more about the delicate balances of the place we call "home."

2.) **Florence W. Ford:** "Flo" has been a county resident for four years along with her husband, Edwin "Skip" Ford, a retired Air Force officer. She is a registered nurse with a background in both hospital and industrial work, having set up Infection Control programs dealing with disposal and sanitation. Fittingly enough, she has an interest in cleaning up "my" Bay. A mother of four grown children, she does volunteer work with Hospice and Meals-on-Wheels. She has already served as the ACLT Recording Secretary.

3.) **David Farr:** David is a mycologist with the US Department of Agriculture with 18 years of service. He is a "hands on" type of person as evidenced by the fact that he and his wife, Ellen, did much of the construction work on their residence at Scientists Cliffs. They are Charter Members of ACLT and David has assisted Ellen in editing the newsletter. He can frequently be seen on ACLT property working on "their" section of the trail.

The Nominating Committee considers individuals who 1.) are willing to serve on projects in addition to regular Board meetings; 2.) appreciate conservation of natural resources, and have 3.) skills in performing Board oversight responsibilities, and 4.) an understanding of ACLT's impact on our neighbors and other constituencies at large.

As is customary, the Nominating Committee has presented a single slate for the consideration of the membership. Other nominations may be made from the floor provided the nominees have given approval in advance and meet the same criteria as has the slate.

ACLT Receives World Wildlife Fund Grant

We received word this week that ACLT was awarded an \$8,400 World Wildlife Fund 1992 Innovation Grant to enable us to expand our preservation efforts in the Parkers Creek watershed by developing an ecological database and promoting donations from key landowners of conservation easements, encouraging clustering of development away from sensitive natural areas and stimulating participation in the County's transferable development rights

(TDR) program. Peg Niland, our Administrator, will serve as Project Director, a task for which she is eminently qualified.

We have been advised that the selection process was highly competitive. In all, the WWF received 264 applications from 47 states and Puerto Rico, representing a wide variety of local, regional and statewide nonprofit conservation and civic organizations. We were among the 32 projects chosen for funding this year.

You will learn more about this project at the Annual Meeting.

On Membership

Under the ACLT By-laws **Regular Memberships** are renewable annually. These range from Basic at \$25 to Benefactor at \$1000 and more. Charter Members (prior to October 1987) and Sustaining Members whose contributions are in increments of \$2500 or more are considered life-time members and do not have to renew annually. At the first of the month in which a member's anniversary date falls, a renewal reminder is mailed out followed by subsequent mailings if it is necessary. If you are a **Regular Member**, you will find your anniversary date in the upper right hand corner of your newsletter mailing label. If the date is prior to October 1, 1991, your renewal is overdue. The process of sending out second and third renewal reminders is costly (\$.29 postage, plus paper and envelopes for each mailing but most important the valuable time of Peg Niland, our professional Administrator.) If you could make it your policy to send in your renewal in advance of your anniversary date or as soon as possible after receipt of your first notice it would be deeply appreciated.

Power Plant Tour

Baltimore Gas & Electric Company has offered to give ACLT members a special tour of its Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant on Monday, November 9th at 9:30 a.m.

Space will be limited to the first 20 people to sign up as this tour will take us into the secure areas of the power plant. We will be escorted by two representatives who will give us a presentation which includes slides, an explanation of fuel types, what happens to spent fuel, the role of the Chesapeake Bay and a question and answer period. Also accompanying us will be John Smith, Public Affairs Representative for BG&E and a member of ACLT.

As the walking tour is extensive, comfortable dress is urged. All visitors must be at least *18 years of age* and must sign up by October 28th, providing social security and drivers license numbers for security purposes.

Please register by calling Peg Niland at the ACLT office at 410-586-1570.

New ACLT Office Shaping Up!

One look at the former "Gate A House" at the main entrance into Scientists Cliffs and you can readily see that volunteerism is alive and well among ACLT members. Our new office, opening in November, has newly painted ceilings and walls, closets changed to alcoves for office equipment, old carpeting coming out and new going in, extra electric outlets, blinds on the windows, pruned trees and shrubs and there are big plans in store for the kitchen and bathroom!

Special thanks to Skip Ford for not only overseeing all that is being done, but for all his painting, carpentry and electrical work.

We also want to thank those who offered items on our "Wish List" published in the summer newsletter. The following are items still needed:

pencil sharpener	kitchen supplies
Paper cutter	copier table
three-hole punch	calculator

and volunteers!!

Anyone wanting to donate time or equipment, please call the ACLT office: 410-586-1570

Sprucing up for Fall

Fifteen ACLT trail maintenance volunteers were out in force to begin to prune back the vines and branches that encroached into the walkways over the summer. We need more people to help with this task on an on-going basis. Call Mark Switzer, 410-586-0386, or the Office, 586-1570, to join up with a partner.

Dave Chessler Retained as Forest Management Consultant

All of our properties are now established as Agricultural Land Preservation Districts in the County's Ag Preservation Program, and all tracts are classified as "Agricultural." This designation brings with it significant tax advantages but also responsibilities for timber stand improvement and fiber production as well. ACLT's Forestry Management Plans are on record in the tax assessor's office and are subject to periodic review by tax officials to determine whether ACLT is following through on the recommendations. With 600 acres for which we must provide stewardship, the task is beyond the capability of amateurs and volunteers. When ACLT was first organized, Dave was the County's Project Forester, and he drew up the original management plans. It is safe to say that ACLT would not exist as we know it today if it had not been for Dave's strong support in having the ACLT forests recognized as viable farm lands and qualified for acceptance into the County's Ag Land Preservation Program. It is through this program ACLT receives its transferable development rights. Dave's plans, as early as 1987, recognized the multiple-use concept of forestry management that included uses for recreation, research,

wildlife habitat improvement as well as timber stand improvement and production. Almost 70% of the land along our streams and trails was retained in its natural state. Dave is sensitive to the environmental interests of our membership and will do his best to have those concerns reflected in the plans. Dave has been a member of ACLT since 1989.

For the past several years, County Project Forester Ken Jolly has served us well as a professional forestry management advisor. The job is now simply too extensive and demanding for us to rely on him or his limited County staff for their services on an on-going basis. However, we do want them to know their assistance has been greatly appreciated. Thank you, Ken, for your help.

ACLT Bird Surveys

It is far too soon to report results from the point count surveys begun last January. These surveys involve counting birds seen and heard for five minutes at each of 15 different places in the area. Each of these spots is at least 250 yards from every other count location. (Each of our splendid benches has been designated as a count site.) The benches adjacent to a small stand of Loblolly pine are especially appreciated. Here Pine Warblers can be heard trilling in season.) Counts begin at dawn and take just over two hours. This is an excellent way to improve your bird song/call recognition skills. NO expertise required—recording help needed. The next few tentative dates are Sunday October 11, Sunday, November 15 and Sunday December 6th.

Hopefully, this project can be continued for years, when data comparison will become meaningful.

On one occasion I had the pleasure of counting a Barred Owl (calling *who cooks for you*) and, more recently, a Great Horned Owl. Most exciting glimpses occur outside the designated five minutes, however!

—Sue Hamilton

Naturalists' Notes:

This has been a wonderful summer for foragers—wild strawberries ripened in late May, followed by black raspberries, wineberries, blackberries, blueberries and huckleberries! All were within 1/8 of a mile of the parking lot. Wild food foraging is an excellent grandparent-grandchild hobby, by the way. If you don't feel like cooking all your plunder, the child is sure to be willing to take most of it home to Mom. (My poor daughter-in-law was saddled with at least ten pounds of fully ripe Pawpaws last October.)

Right now those Pawpaws are ripening fast. These are "tropical" fruits, the only temperate region representative of the Custard-apple family. These small trees grow down in lowland damp areas. Pawpaw fruit has to be peeled and seeded, of course. (Do *not* leave them around your kitchen—the fruit

flies will immediately demonstrate Spontaneous Generation.) The rest of the fruit can be mashed and used or frozen. Most people find the flesh almost too cloying to enjoy in quantity, but I find that it is an excellent addition to muffins.

Pawpaw Muffins:

1 box Washington brand oat bran muffin mix

1 egg or 1/4 cup egg substitute

1/3 cup mashed pawpaw instead of water

Mix and bake in muffin tins for 15 minutes at 400 degrees. The flavor is good and not overpowering.

While you are out competing with me and Jesse for the pawpaws and black walnuts, take a close look at the little birds flitting in and out of the bushes and small trees near the clearings. Many members of these "mixed species" flocks are quite colorful—Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets are just arriving from farther north. These tiny olive-colored birds are often astonishingly tame, and may come within two or three feet of a motionless observer.

Bittersweet is also ready to be gathered—for flower arrangements, etc. This vine grows in profusion on the bushes beside the track leading away from the parking lot. Please help yourself!

—Sue Hamilton

Maryland's First Naturalist

Did you ever wonder what kinds of plants grew in the ACLT area in Colonial times? Thanks to the efforts of an early Anglican minister of nearby Christ Episcopal Church, just a mile or so southwest of the land trust, not only do we know what plants grew here, but hundreds of specimens, dried and neatly pressed, survive in the British Museum. The man we can thank for this is the Rev. Hugh Jones (1671-1702) who rightly deserves the title of "Maryland's First Naturalist."

Young Reverend Jones arrived in Calvert County on 22 July 1696, when the ship "John" dropped anchor in the Patuxent River. As part of his duties Jones began already that fall collecting acorns and fossils no doubt along the nearby Cliffs just south of Parkers Creek. Most of his plant collecting was done during the 1698 growing season, but continued the next few years until his death from tuberculosis in January of 1702. Besides pressed plants and fossils, Jones also shipped back seeds which were later planted in English gardens, as well as small dead mammals, fish, insects, and birds. The recipients were assorted English naturalists, professional and amateur, fascinated with the creatures of the New World.

Christ Church itself had been in existence at least by 1672, since the Parish Register records a birth for that year. The exact location and appearance of the early building remains uncertain. Jones

was about the eighth rector of the church, whose associated Parish extended from Huntingtown to Solomons and from the Patuxent to the Bay. Of course at that time the church was a part of the Church of England, with close ties to the Crown remaining until the American Revolution. Although the Calverts who founded Maryland were Catholic, Lord Baltimore lost his governmental control of Maryland in 1689 during the colony's "Protestant Revolution." This made possible the 1692 Establishment Act (celebrated this year at Christ Church) which empowered the vestry to collect 40 pounds of tobacco from everyone of the ca. 550 "taxables" living in the Parish area, regardless of faith. While this "tithe" angered other denominations, some of the tobacco grown on what is now the ACLT must have helped pay the Rev. Jones to collect plants, some of which no doubt also grew on or near ACLT lands!

After a few decades of interest by early 18th century botanists, the surviving Jones material languished forgotten in the British Museum for some 250 years until its rediscovery, starting in 1972, by Prof. James Reveal, a botanist at the University of Maryland. Reveal led a research effort to reexamine vascular plants in the collections. The team's findings plus surviving letters by Jones were published in the journal *Huntia* (Vol. 7, 1987). In March 1983 many of these pressed representatives of the Colonial flora, including some from Jones' contemporaries William Vernon and Dr. David Krieg, were briefly displayed at the Old State House in Annapolis, the University of Maryland, and of course Christ Church, where some people who later became ACLT members had a chance to view plants which grew in Calvert County almost 300 years earlier.

Sadly, a number of the species Jones collected, particularly herbaceous woodland wildflowers, can no longer be found in our area. In fact, five of Calvert's Colonial species are now extremely rare anywhere, and one (Chaff-seed, or *Schwalbea americana*) is now close to extinction. Tree species have fared better; except for the white cedar, all of the trees sampled by Rev. Jones still grow in Calvert County, albeit not the majestic specimens he would have seen in what remained of the ancient forests in his day. The curious omission of loblolly pine and red maple among Jones' specimens seems to imply that these American species—now common on ACLT land—spread into the County as a result of land clearing and later abandonment. Already in Jones' day, the Chesapeake seen by John Smith in 1608 had been much changed. Southern Maryland's Indian population had dropped from about 1300 to 90, and the remaining ancient forest was being rapidly cleared. Eurasian species already comprised almost 10% of the collected flora. (In the ACLT area this figure had risen to 25% at the time of Dr. Steven Hill's 1985 inventory during the start-up phase of the land trust.)

In a letter dated 23 January 1698, Jones described the local land as low and

“very woody like one continued Forrest, no part clear but what is cleared by the English Indeed in a few years we may expect it otherwise, for the tobacco trade destroyes abundance of timber, both for makeing of hogsheds & building of tobacco houses, besides cleareing ground yearly for planting ...”

This passage may be the earliest recognition that the vast New World forests are finite. Were Jones to step out of his grave, perhaps on the grounds of his church, he would see his prophecy come true: The ancient forest where he collected wildflowers are long gone. That the ensuing second-growth forests and farms would themselves be fragmented by subdivision and paved with asphalt and concrete Jones could not have envisioned in his worst nightmares. But neither could he have foreseen the special preservation of land just for the flora and fauna. Had it been in his power, Rev. Jones would surely have saved us a square mile or two of the ancient forest, but then land trusts were still 150 year in the future.

Jones' distant successor, the Rev. John E. Howanstone, Rector of present Christ Church and ACLT member, has established a special Parish arboretum containing some of the tree and bush species sampled by Jones. (The previous minister, Rev. William Plummer actually started this with a cherry tree planted in 1983.) Hugh Jones would be honored by these plantings and by the rediscovery and study of his collections.

And he would no doubt be enthusiastic that some of his old collecting grounds have been set aside The American Chestnut Land Trust to become once more “very woody like one continued Forrest.”

—Peter Vogt

Christ Church Dedicates Hugh Jones Grove

On Sunday October 25, Christ Church will dedicate the Hugh Jones Grove at the 4:00 p.m. evensong service. Guest speaker will be Dr. James L. Reveal, botanist from the University of Maryland and author of the paper on early Maryland botanists mentioned in the previous article.

[Ed. Note: If you are interested in the history of botany in Maryland, Volume 7 of the journal *Huntia* is still in print and can be ordered for \$50.00 plus postage and handling from the Hunt Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. The 282 page volume, edited by Dr. James Reveal, includes papers dealing with the history of plant collecting in Maryland (about 90 pages) and Maryland's flora in Colonial times (35 pages). The rest deals with more technical aspects of botany.]

Limited Bow and Arrow Hunting Allowed

Last year the ACLT Board agreed to let one party hunt on a section of ACLT land during the bow and arrow season. This year seven bow and arrow hunters have requested permission to use three tracts of the ACLT (no hunting is being allowed on the Kenwood tract). The Board agreed that up to a total of 12 deer could be taken. Mark Switzer drafted rules for hunting on ACLT land and devised a system of reporting that will help us assess the extent of ACLT's deer population and determine the correct deer harvest in future years.

Signs will be posed at Land Trust entrances when hunters are on the property. Hunting is not permitted Friday through Sunday and on holidays. The bow and arrow season is September 15 through January 30.

Beware of poachers during the shotgun season (November 28 through December 12). Shotgun hunting is not permitted on ACLT land. If you think you hear shooting in the Land Trust, notify Mark Switzer (410-586-0386).

GRDC Designated “Registered Natural Area”

At its annual shareholders meeting on 26 July 1992, the Governors Run Development Corporation (GRDC), which owns the 80-acre forested tract between the “original” ACLT and the Kenwood tract, was presented with a handsome plaque by The Nature Conservancy. Informed about the presence of two endangered *Cicindela* species (the Northeastern Beach tiger beetle and the Puritan tiger beetle) along the GRDC cliff, the shareholders agreed to enroll their property in TNC's Natural Areas Registry. The GRDC tract extends westwards along the south side of the stream called Governors Run (which parallels the Steve Easter Trail) and provides an undisturbed forest buffer next to Maryland's only known colony of sweet pinesap (*Monotropis odorata*) located on the adjacent ACLT. The TNC registry is non-binding and volunteer in nature, but served to “recognize property owners for volunteer action to safeguard the best that remains of our natural world.”

Other owners of undeveloped land should contact The Nature Conservancy to find out if they might also be eligible for this honor.

The GRDC was created in 1981 when 15 families got together under the leadership of Greg and Alicia Yowell to purchase the Governors Run property including the cabins, abandoned hotel, pier, and store from the Cloverdale Corporation owned by the three Cammack brothers, who had acquired it from a DC contractor at auction in the 1950's.

Many ACLT members remember buying ice cream or postcards at the Governors Run store next

to the beach, but few remember patronizing the Cliffs Hotel, apparently a swinging place during the second quarter of our century. The "Run" was especially popular among DC fishermen, who could count on Capt. Weldon Parks to take them to the best fishing ground across the bay, the "Gooses." During those years Governors Run was still owned by George Dorsey, whose forbears had acquired it about the year 1840 from a Mr. Frazier. Governors Run is called "Frazier's Landing" on an 1822 map, which is as far back as I can trace the ownership of this interesting piece of Calvert County.

The abandoned Cliffs Hotel had fallen into seemingly irreparable decay by the time the property was conveyed in 1981, but the new owner, Paul Jones DDS, had almost succeeded in restoring this old treasure when it was tragically destroyed by arson in 1983.

At the time of its 1981 purchase, the developed part of the original tract became the "Governors Run Condominium Association" and the back 80 acres of forest became the GRDC. New owners proceeded to restore and remodel their cabins, some of which were in a sorry state. During the 80's some Condo members (like us) sold their cabins and today retain only shares in the land corporation. In 1984, prior to the creation of ACLT, GRDC enrolled its acreage in a Forest Resource Management Plan, and in 1987

the shareholders created an Agricultural Preservation District, similar to the ACLT. However, TDRs have not been sold, so the ultimate destiny of the property remains undecided. Some shareholders consider the land a reserve for possible future development, while others would like to see the land protected in perpetuity. My wife and I (1/15 shareholders of the GRDC) are in the latter camp; in fact we have promised to donate back our share of the proceeds from any sale of the GRDC to a conservation organization (such as the ACLT) which will guarantee its protection in perpetuity. After all, the GRDC includes the second highest point (112 feet) on the Calvert Cliffs, and the only place in almost three miles of unbroken waterfront development (from Gate E in Scientists Cliffs to the south end of Western Shores) where undisturbed forest land still extends to the Chesapeake Bay. The GRDC is part of the Governors Run watershed, more than half of which has now been protected as ACLT (200 acres) and Scientists Cliffs Green Space (50 acres).

The GRDC was an early corporate donor to the ACLT and the Condominium Association became a Sustaining Member when the ACLT acquired the Kenwood Tract. In addition, about a third of the Governors Run cabin owners/shareholders have joined ACLT as individual members.

—Peter Vogt

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