

GREENWAYS

Newsletter of
D&R Greenway Land Trust
Volume 28, Number 2
Winter 2019

Land Preservation Update

Since 1989, D&R Greenway has permanently preserved 309 properties, approximately 20,903 acres valued at over \$400 million dollars.
Connecting ~ People ~ Wildlife ~ Community ~ Land

A Life's Journey in Nature: Audio Tour of St. Michaels Farm Preserve

Who are you? Who were you as a child? What has stayed with you, and what is buried deep in memory? What kind of future is on your horizon?

Every person has a life story. So does every place. Some very special places call to us to reflect on the stages of our lives, to feel the resonances between the story of life on earth and our individual life journey from childhood to maturity.

St Michaels Farm Preserve is just such a special place. The preserve's fields, pools, marshes, woods and streams; its barn and wooden bridge; the orphanage remnants—all hold stories that reveal unseen, unheard insights.

D&R Greenway has created a self-guided audio walking tour that tells the preserve's stories, inspiring visitors to experience the preserve in an exciting new way. Using the TravelStories smart phone app, which debuted the Healing Trail a year ago, this new audio tour accompanies a visitor along the

preserve trails. The tour automatically plays a short podcast-style story at 20 key points. Each story is connected to the overarching theme, our life journey.

Central to the theme is the connection between the preserve and children. Hundreds of children lived at St. Michaels Orphan Asylum & Industrial School, commonly known as St. Michaels Orphanage, between 1898 and 1973. The tour recounts the history of the orphanage, which has almost completely disappeared from sight—its buildings and roads replaced by farm fields, woods and meadows. Two remnants are still visible, near the preserve's west entrance. A flagpole and a small iron fence mark the location of the "Shrine," an area of rock walls, statues and plantings where children had their first communion. The story that a visitor hears at the Shrine includes the following passage:



Inside

- Transformation: Land, People, Communities
- New Board Leadership
- Iron Mike Trail Opened
- New Labyrinth on Conservation Campus
- Expand Your World in 2020: Talks, Art, Poetry

From time to time we can give meaning to places, leave our mark, live a life that gives meaning to time. No matter what mark we leave on the land, the land will remember us.

Continued on page 2



Welcome to St. Michaels Farm Preserve, where new gates enhance the entrance—to honor the children who lived at St. Michaels Orphanage.

St. Michaels

Continued from page 1

In the scrapes of dust that we breathe in and breathe out to settle anew on the ground, the land remembers us. Every step presses a memory into the soil. The earth is eternal, and what we do while we are on it becomes part of its history forever.

In a variety of ways, the audio tour celebrates the presence of children at the preserve. While the stories are written at an adult language level, they are intended to inspire grownups to once again experience nature as children do, with a sense of wonder: free of judgment, anxiety, and the narrow perspective of “been there, done that.” Adults, who have been looking at trees over a lifetime, are invited to gaze up at a towering forest canopy as if for the first time, to experience a rush of awe. Instead of hopping through a marsh to avoid muddy shoes, the tour suggests stopping, using all five senses to fully experience the wetlands: touching velvety moss and inhaling spicebush’s pungent fragrance.

A key goal of the tour is to encourage adults to connect children with nature, to prevent the “nature-deficit disorder” that affects so many kids growing up in our technocentric age. Some tour

stories are about creating positive experiences of nature, such as the Hopewell Community Campout under the stars. Other stories suggest ways of teaching kids about the science and ecology of the preserve. Observing bluebirds and swallows nesting in side-by-side boxes is an opportunity to talk about how birds share territory. Seeing tadpoles clustered

in a springtime pool, children can learn about how vernal ponds shelter young amphibians from predators. A glimpse of a red rock outcrop is an occasion to discover that millions of years ago the preserve was a vast lake.

While many of the stories are linked to childhood, all of them relate to the stages of life. At the bridge over Beden Brook dedicated to preserve benefactor David Knights, the tour includes this passage:

The bridge represents an essential connecting piece between ideals and actions: learning how to be an independent adult. That’s part of growing up. To have the confidence to trust oneself, to know you can have a unique effect on the world. You can make a difference, once you cross the bridge and take the first step.

The story at the Charles Evans Overlook recounts that the “long view” of life, like the



What could be more fun than mud prints!

view from the preserve to the distant Sourland Mountain...connects memories of the past with dreams for the future. The long view crystallizes the hopes of parents for their children. From this Overlook we can see the future, because it is a future where the land in your vision now is the land that future generations will see just the same as it is today.

St. Michaels Farm Preserve is a touchstone for the community. The story of its preservation cannot be told too often—and the tour does that, recounting how friends and neighbors raised funds to save the land from development. This “founding” narrative is just one square in a quilt of connected stories. For visitors new to the preserve, and for those to whom it’s as familiar as their own backyard, the new audio tour is a revelation. Like the big red barn, repurposed from old materials, and topped with a carving of laughing children, this journey remakes the past into a brand new life-affirming celebration.

The new tour is dedicated in honor of the children who once lived at St. Michaels Orphanage with the hope that the preserve becomes a place of healing and peace. ♥



Exploring the natural world together ♥

Download the free “TravelStorys” app to your mobile device and take an audio tour. Visit www.drgreenway.org/travelstorys for more information about this self-guided audio tour and our other available tours.

A Transformative Year

As our 30th anniversary year comes to an end, D&R Greenway is celebrating transformation—of landscapes and community.

For the next two months, you can experience lands that have been transformed by D&R Greenway's preservation work with a "virtual tour"—visit us to view our current art exhibit: "Portraits of Preservation."

Nationally-renowned artist and new trustee James Fiorentino toured lands preserved through D&R Greenway's efforts to showcase our central New Jersey landscapes. Inspired by open skies, deep forests, vast fields of wildflowers and grasslands, inviting trails and native habitats, James remarks, "It is more important than ever that we show people these places and preserve more lands before they are lost, forever." We bet you will find at least one landscape you didn't know we preserved, and at least one that is among your favorites.

"It is more important than ever that we show people these places and preserve more lands before they are lost, forever."

Transformation is visibly present in our land stewardship work, too. If you've walked our trails, you've noticed new signs with improved maps and photos of the birds and flowers you may see on the trail. Our St. Michaels Farm Preserve took on a new look this year that includes educational kiosks and historical photos, a reconfigured entrance near Hopewell Borough with benches, parking, a split rail fence and a new gate (pictured on page 1). Our TravelStories tour provides the opportunity to learn why this land and the community surrounding it are so

remarkable. As one visitor said, "I've enjoyed walking here before, but now it is so much more interesting to me!"

These accomplishments that you can visit and experience for yourself are only possible with the vision and perseverance of a dedicated group of skilled professionals who work hard every day, with your support. As we carry out our new strategic plan to connect with communities throughout our region, our expanded staff and board is working with passion to make a difference on our land and in our communities. Make sure you introduce yourself, and tell them why you care about the work of D&R Greenway.

Transformation is powerful and rewarding. Our 30th anniversary year has been one of leaping forward into the future.

Yours in conservation, ♥



Linda J. Mead
President & CEO

Meet D&R Greenway's New Leadership

In 2019, D&R Greenway welcomed Vanessa Sandom and Michael Kunst to its Board of Trustees. These two new trustees bring important preservation and financial skills and community connections.

After a management career with GE, Johnson & Johnson and Travelers Insurance, Vanessa Sandom became involved in local politics and joined the

Hopewell Township Committee in 2001. In her seven years as mayor of Hopewell Township her leadership was instrumental in securing preservation of D&R Greenway's St. Michaels Farm Preserve, among other properties.

"As an elected official, preserving land for future generations was one of the greatest privileges of the office," she says. "Hopewell Township has

preserved more than 33 percent of its land, in large part due to its partnership with land conservation trusts like D&R Greenway. Together, we preserved St. Michaels, Cedar Ridge, Mount Rose and the Martin Tract. Now that I'm a retired elected official and a new D&R Greenway trustee, I'm excited to continue the work of preserving open space and agricultural properties across Mercer County and beyond."



Trustees Michael Kunst and Vanessa Sandom

Born in Trenton, Michael Kunst has lived most of his life in central New Jersey and has seen what can happen to land that is not protected. In his many years with Siemens Financial Services, where he is Vice President & Risk Head for the commercial real estate and construction loan businesses, he brings more than two decades of commercial lending experience. An outdoor enthusiast, he enjoys the sights and sounds of nature while hiking, biking and kayaking.

"The work of D&R Greenway to help sustain the health of our environment has not gone unnoticed," he observes. "D&R Greenway is a role model for land preservation in this region, and together with state and local partners collectively preserves our fragile landscape. It is a wonderful sight to see a D&R Greenway Land Trust sign on a preserved property and know that the natural benefits of that land will forever be part of our community. As a new member to the board, I look forward to continuing those efforts and further protecting our natural landscape for generations to come." 🌿

New Iron Mike Trail is a Legacy to a Remarkable Man

If there is a heaven, Michael Snyder is looking down from it, smiling on his family and the gift they created for the community: the 'Iron Mike Trail.'

Across from the entrance to the Johnson Education Center on Rosedale Road in Princeton, an arbor and kiosk welcomes walkers to a one-mile loop trail that connects to Johnson Park School, the elementary school attended by the four Snyder children.

Dedicated by the family on Thanksgiving weekend, Mike's wife Barbara Snyder was touched by the outpouring of love from many, many friends and the beauty of the trail. "This is exactly what Mike would have loved," she enthused. "The natural areas along the wooded trail where animals live, the purposely placed stumps of trees that create seats in the forest, a place to walk while quietly appreciating nature."

"Iron Mike" earned his nickname because of the strength he embodied both physically and mentally. A high school wrestler and, subsequently, a wrestling coach, Iron Mike ran two New York Marathons and, last November, the Princeton Half Marathon. Then, unexpectedly, the investment banker's life was cut short at age 56. To keep his legacy alive in the community he loved, his family chose to



Close to 100 family members and friends of Mike Snyder joined D&R Greenway on November 30 at the Iron Mike Trail dedication.

partner with D&R Greenway to create a public walking trail in his memory.

Ever since its founding 30 years ago, D&R Greenway has been connecting trails and preserving linked greenways of land. The Iron Mike Trail expands D&R Greenway's Conservation Campus that includes its Johnson Education Center and brand-new labyrinth. Connecting the Stony Brook Trail, Greenway Meadows park, and the network of trails around Johnson Park School, the Iron Mike Trail is on the J. Seward Johnson Sr. Nature Preserve, made up of 14 acres permanently

preserved by D&R Greenway in 2002. The year before, in 2001, D&R Greenway preserved the former General Robert Wood Johnson estate to create Greenway Meadows park.

"Michael Snyder's children contacted us just days after his passing and came in to talk with me about creating a lasting memorial for their father," says D&R Greenway President & CEO Linda Mead.

"I learned that Mike loved daily walks with his two Australian shepherds at Greenway Meadows park." Speaking of the value of land preservation that grows year after year, Mead says, "It is so rewarding to hear how meaningful the lands we protect are to the people who enjoy them."

The family dedicated memorial gifts and actively raised close to \$100,000 to name a lasting trail. Two-hundred donors—many of whom were new to D&R Greenway—made contributions.

"We ran through the options of how to honor him," says Mike's son Ian. "Rather than giving to heart disease foundations, where our donation would be a drop in the bucket, we wanted something that would be lasting and meaningful to the community, and where his presence would be felt in a place where people gather joyfully." All four siblings—Erik, Ian, Cole and Julia—and Iron Mike's wife, Barbara, wanted a space where "we could go to draw on his strength—that's something we need a lot these days."

The new trail is actually an expansion of a prior trail that was destroyed in Princeton storms and that had become overgrown. Because of its location nearby a place Snyder often walked, and its connection to the elementary school attended by his children, Linda Mead says, "This place, selected by the Snyder children, was perfect. Their gift allowed us to refresh the old trail and make significant



Erik, Barbara, Cole, Julia and Ian Snyder ❤️

improvements, overseen by our brand new Director of Land Stewardship who was only two weeks on the job when we met with the Snyder family.”

To resuscitate a neglected trail and turn it into the Iron Mike Trail, Director of Land Stewardship Tina Notas and Assistant Director Cindy Taylor worked throughout the spring and summer with volunteer corporate groups and the “Wednesday morning volunteer crew,” as well as a group of 40 of Ian’s friends, to clear the trail of invasive species—Photiniavillosa, barberry, burning bush. Hundreds of native trees, shrubs and perennials were planted, from tulip poplar to spicebush, serviceberry, woodland poppy and several varieties of fern. Michael was a gardener who loved native dogwood trees. In his honor two flowering dogwoods now frame the arbor, and are planted near an educational gathering

space used by Johnson Park School students. New understory trees include *Ostrya virginiana*, commonly called the ironwood tree. One of the hardest and strongest woods in the forest, it is harder than oak, hickory, locust, and more, surpassed only by flowering dogwood—hence its name “ironwood.” Two wooden boardwalks had to be replaced, and the new plantings were protected with deer fencing.

“The Snyder family and friends provided initial funding to create the trail and an endowment to maintain the trail in perpetuity,” says Tina, adding that children from the school will benefit by learning to identify native plants as well as invasives.

“The Iron Mike Trail will extend our pupils’ use of the natural setting around our school, as the trail connects to pathways we’ve developed on our own,” says Johnson Park School Principal Robert Ginsberg—who was

principal back in the day when Ian and his siblings attended the school. “The Iron Mike Trail is a welcome addition to our award-winning environmental-education program, and is another cooperative project between our school’s young environmental stewards and D&R Greenway.”

In addition to the arbor built by David Robinson of Natural Edge Design, informational kiosks, benches, trail markers and maps, the trail includes a quote from Iron Mike:

“Adversity doesn’t build character, it reveals it.”

D&R Greenway is confident the Iron Mike trail will continue to reveal character in those who use it and recall its namesake. 🍂

You are welcome to walk the trail. Parking is available at the Johnson Education Center or along Johnson Park Drive.

Land for Life Stories: Watch Our New Video Series!

Supporters of D&R Greenway will be familiar with our motto, “Land for Life,” which is based on the deep connection that is forged between people and the land. It’s an idea that has energized our efforts to preserve, so far, 309 properties and 20,903 acres across central New Jersey.

Behind every one of those projects is a touching human story we are telling with a new video series, Land for Life Stories. Please visit our website, www.drgreenway.org, or our YouTube channel, to watch one of these brand-new videos launched November through January:

- **“Matthews Farm: Preserved Land Maintains the Bonds of Family”** tells the story of four generations of a Montgomery Township family who live within four miles of a highly visible farm along Route 206. “If you take me away from this place, I might as well die,” says Pat Matthews of the farm where she’s lived and raised a family over 67 years of marriage. ❤️

- **“Preserved Land Uncovers a Hidden History”** describes how the acquisition of a small property in Montgomery will enable two



Four generations of the Matthews family on the preserved land.

non-profits to establish the Stoutsburg Sourlands African American Museum (SSAAM) and tell the long-absent stories of African Americans in the Hopewell Valley and Somerset County. ❤️

- **“Preserved Land Connects Generations of Americans”** shares the remarkable story of a 100-year-old veteran, his neighbors, and a young schoolgirl who worked with D&R Greenway to preserve a 37-acre

Bridgewater property that played a crucial role in the American Revolution. ❤️

Please take a few minutes to watch these three new short videos, share them on social media, and send us your feedback. We will be creating more in the coming year in support of our mission to “inspire a conservation ethic, now and forever.” Stay tuned. 🍂

Visit D&R Greenway's Labyrinth on our Conservation Campus

A labyrinth is an ancient and mysterious pattern that is representative of one's journey in life. Unlike a maze where you encounter a wrong turn or a dead end, the labyrinth has one way in, leading to the center, and one way out. You can never get lost in a labyrinth; the idea is to "find" something! That something is found through your own meditation.

The circular pattern is known to be thousands of years old, dating back to Greek mythology. The traditional 11-circuit labyrinth, found on the floor of the medieval Chartres Cathedral in France, is probably the most famous.

"The idea to create a labyrinth came about in a conversation I had with donor and poet Jody Kendall about the value of being outdoors and the healing quality of nature," says Linda Mead, D&R Greenway President and CEO. "Jody found regeneration and joy in walking the trails at Greenway Meadows, the park that surrounds our Johnson Education Center, and wanted to share that with others."

Walking a labyrinth is a personal experience. Dedicated on a beautiful fall day in October, in a ceremony led by Chaplain Terri Anderson, the event included music orchestrated

by Ken Guilmartin of Music Together and a song written by his wife Lyn Ransom who founded Voices Chorale. The song's refrain is noteworthy:

Homeward bound, the land can bring me home again

Homeward bound, it brings me back to me. ♥

Found in the Edward T. Cone Grove, the labyrinth is open to the public every day of the year. It is part of D&R Greenway's Conservation Campus that features Healing Trails, which includes Jody's poetry and Lyn's song in an audio tour that can be accessed on the free-to-download TravelStorys app. YWCA Princeton's Breast Cancer Resource Center is directly adjacent to the labyrinth.

The grove surrounding the labyrinth is newly enhanced with wild bergamot, wrinkleleaf goldenrod, New England aster, lanceleaf coreopsis, marginal woodfern, fox sedge, Eastern redbud trees, arrowwood viburnum and sweet pepperbush. A new garden was planted this fall by the Stony Brook Garden Club in memory of their members including Leslie Kuenne, whose daughter Olivia has a children's art gallery named in her honor inside the Johnson Education Center.

Two Adirondack chairs have been added to the Grove for the comfort and relaxation of visitors to the labyrinth. Come....walk, sit, reflect and learn about yourself. 🌿



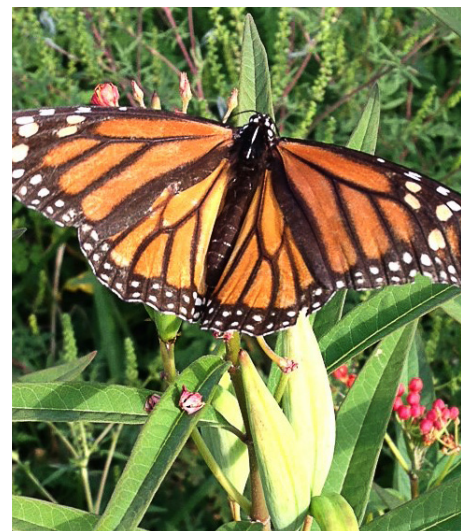
The dedication included placement of stones celebrating land, people, community. (photo: David Anderson)

We are always heartened to hear stories of how people find meaning and value as they experience D&R Greenway preserved lands in ways that speak directly to their lives. Catherine Mauger-Williams shares this account of a summertime experience she had while walking the Scott and Hella McVay Poetry Trail in Greenway Meadows. Approaching the location of her late husband C.K. Williams' poem, *Garden*, she came upon a solo musician:

"The musician had noticed the small heart-shaped plaque with our initials engraved, on the back of the heavy wooden bench. He had taken time to read your Garden poem close by. When my dog arrived near the big oak tree in full leaf, she stared at the saxophone player, intrigued by the unusual presence and sounds."

When I said: You are playing music next to my husband's poem, the musician got up. He was so young. Pointing a finger at the copper plaque, he said: 'So...Williams...that's you! I have been looking all morning for the right place to practice and this is it!' We both smiled. He sat down and started to play again, sending the notes to the valley, to the oak tree, to the grasses. The birds never stopped singing."

— Catherine Mauger-Williams ♥



A Monarch Butterfly at Greenway Meadows

Expand Your World in 2020

Art, Decoys, Poetry, Birds and Native Plants

Events are free to attend unless otherwise indicated.
For gallery hours and to RSVP: rsvp@drgreenway.org or call (609) 924-4646.

Art Exhibits

Portraits of Preservation

Through February 28

Take a visual tour of D&R Greenway's preserved lands through the eyes of renowned artist, James Fiorentino. Watercolor paintings highlight the forever landscapes and wildlife found on 20,903 acres and 309 properties permanently preserved by D&R Greenway since its founding 30 years ago.

Take home a "forever landscape" on a pillow, blanket or other special item from our Gift Shop—open daily 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Olivia Rainbow Gallery

Through February 6

All in the Family: Multi-media Art of Olivia Kuenne—in whose memory the gallery is named—and photography by her late mother, Leslie Kuenne.

February 10 – March 13

Prize-winning Nature Photography by Stony Brook Garden Club

Fine Art Decoys

New Exhibit: Carvers by the Pair

D&R Greenway's state-of-the-art decoys showcase six species interpreted differently among seven world-class carvers. Newly loaned 'old squaws' by Jim Schmiedlin join prize-winners by Pat Godin, Ben Heinemann, Victor Peroyan, Jim Sprankle, Lem Ward and Bob White.



(photo: Brenda Jones)



Black Bear in Tree. Artist: James Fiorentino

Lectures

Stories of St. Michaels Farm Preserve

Wednesday, January 22.

*Doors open 6:30 p.m.;
Talk, 7–8:00 p.m. RSVP*

*Speakers: Linda Mead, Josephine Allen,
Story Clark*

Hear selected stories from D&R Greenway's new audio tour of the preserve. Meet the founder of the TravelStorys app as you discover our natural world and hear the history of this land. A former resident of St. Michaels Orphanage will speak about how the transformation of the former orphanage land can encourage healing and peace.

State of the Birds on D&R Greenway Preserves

Tuesday, February 4.

*Doors open 6:30 p.m.;
Talk, 7–8:00 p.m. RSVP*

*Speakers: Sharyn Magee and
Hannah Suthers, Washington Crossing
Audubon Society*

Learn how expansive, contiguous acres of protected land support bird populations and species. Hear from expert ornithologists about trends from a 40-year banding project in the Sourlands and about the shocking 2.9 billion birds that have vanished in North America over the past 50 years.

Poetry

The Natural Art of Poetry

Tuesday, March 31.

Doors open 6:30 p.m.;

Workshop, 7–8:00 p.m. RSVP

In this writing workshop, led by poet Maxine Susman, we will celebrate Spring with original poems inspired by the artwork on D&R Greenway's gallery walls. All levels welcome. Maxine Susman teaches poetry at the Osher Lifelong Learning Center at Rutgers. Her most recent book is *My Mother's Medicine*.

"When Weeds, In Wheels, Shoot Long and Lovely and Lush": A Spring Poetry Workshop

Wednesday, April 22.

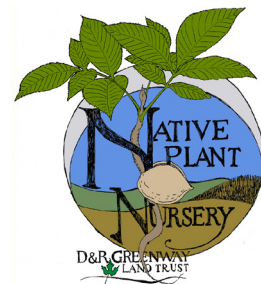
Doors open 11:30 a.m.;

Workshop, 12–2:00 p.m. RSVP

Join poet/teacher Lois Marie Harrod to read and write poems celebrating Earth Day—inside and outside the Johnson Education Center. Everyone welcome. No experience necessary. Brown bag lunch.

Lois Marie Harrod's 17th poetry collection *Woman* is forthcoming in February. For more information and poems, visit www.loismarieharrod.org.

Spring 2020



Native Plant Sales
at the Johnson Education Center

*Friday, May 15
Saturday, May 16*

Shop an expanded selection of
pollinator-friendly natives.

D&R Greenway Land Trust, Inc.

D&R Greenway Land Trust, Inc., is a regional, 501(c)(3) nonprofit land conservancy dedicated to preserving and caring for land, and inspiring a conservation ethic.

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Wishing You Every Gift of Nature This Holiday Season

Our 30th Anniversary D&R Greenway Team sends special thanks to all our landowners, volunteers, partners and supporters for helping us achieve our mission of preserving and caring for land. With your help, we have made great strides in 2019 with newly enhanced preserves and trails, and we are poised to reach another milestone in 2020 with close to 21,000 acres permanently preserved! Your contributions and partnership make all the difference.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead ♥



(bottom: l-r) Laurie Emde, Linda Mead, Cindy Taylor, Carolyn Edelmann;
(center: l-r) Valarie Bay, Tina Notas, Deb Kilmer, Amy Martin,
Karen Freundlich, Nancy Faherty; (top: l-r) Jeff Emde, Brad Fay, Bill Flemer,
Danielle Dobisch, Nadeem Demian; missing: Susan Charkes, Ilene Dube,
Sharon Fink, Diana Moore. (photo: David Anderson)