

# Hedgerows

Summer 2017 Published by the Washington Township Land Trust

## Washington Township Land Trust Mission Statement

The Washington Township Land Trust was organized to protect and preserve ecological, cultural, and historical integrity of the areas that contribute to and enhance the rural character of Washington Township and its environs. The Trust also promotes public interest in conserving land for open space uses in harmony with the natural environment and acquires interests in land by purchase or donation. It also manages land and property easements for the benefit of the public and educates the public to be stewards of the land.

Washington Township Land Trust

### 2017 BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Jim Fitterer (President)** is a Transportation professional with the Washington Township Board of Education and has expertise in project management and commercial insurance. He has served as Vice Chair of the Washington Township Historical Preservation Commission.



**Kim Kaiser (Vice President)** is an attorney involved in regional planning and land use. She is a former Washington Township Committee Member, Washington Township Planning Board Chair and was instrumental in the creation of the Washington Township Teen Center.



**John R. Holt (Secretary)** is a retired educator with a PhD from the University of Chicago who has taught English at the University of Kansas, the College of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia, and the University of Illinois, chairing departments at the Chicago Latin School and Centenary College in Hackettstown. His interest in environmental stewardship comes from a long love of hiking, camping, and boating and a deep engagement with nature/culture theory.



**Dick Kellner (Treasurer)** has a BA in Economics and an MBA from the Wharton School. He is a retired marketing executive, having worked for Fortune 100 companies. Dick served 8 years on the Washington Township Board of Education and is a past-President of the Long Valley Jaycees.



**Nancy Gable (Trustee)** is a clinical social worker and educator with an MSW degree (George Williams College) and MAT degree (University of Chicago). She has a private psychotherapy practice in Somerset and has been a part-time lecturer at the Rutgers School of Social Work. She brings a lifelong interest in the preservation of our natural resources.



**Barbara Kellner (Trustee)** is a professional psychotherapist with a BSN degree and MA in Counseling Psychology with a private clinical practice in Chester. A 46-year resident of the township, she is a long-time community leader and activist focused on historic and open space preservation.



**Tina Contros (Trustee)** is a professional Architect and general contractor with 32 years experience in the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. A former New Jersey resident, she now resides in Austin, Texas and remains active with the Land Trust, bringing her valuable expertise to the Obadiah LaTourette Mill preservation initiative.



**Sue Penney (Trustee)** is a real estate professional, SRES, and banker with Peapack-Gladstone Bank. Sue also serves the community as a member of the Washington Township Historic Preservation Commission.

## Mill Committee Report

Last year (2016) marked two important milestones in the life of our 266-year-old Obadiah LaTourette Mill, once the cornerstone of economic development in German Valley, now known as Long Valley. First, it was the 25th anniversary of Land Trust ownership and our efforts to restore the once condemned building to a safe and useful condition. Second, it was time to update the Mill's technical restoration plan. This 18-month process is nearing completion thanks to a \$52,000 Grant from the Morris County Freeholders, authorized in 2015. Major engineering and architectural studies undertaken to assess the site have identified critical next steps. Our goal is to complete exterior repairs (foundation, North wall siding and windows) to finally enclose the building and make it weather-tight for the first time in decades.

The engineering study revealed serious undermining of the riverside foundation caused by the flow of water around and through the Mill's "raceway," home to the turbine wheel that powered the Mill. The water has flowed unchecked for years following collapse of the protective dam decades earlier. What could be seen was a widening crack between stones in the arch above the raceway entrance as the foundation shifted and settled underwater. Most of the damage, however, was below surface level and difficult to see until our engineers got into and under the water. It was clear that neither windows nor siding could be installed until the foundation, now in jeopardy, was made solid and able to support the Mill itself.

Emergency repair of the northeast corner foundation and intake arch was completed in September, 2016 by our dedicated professional and volunteer force under the leadership of Trustee Tina Contros at a cost of \$30,000. This effort was chronicled in a 12/22/16 Observer-Tribune article and a feature story in the *Black River Journal* for Winter, 2017. Community fundraising of \$26,125, including a grant from Morris County Heritage Commission and major donations locally from Frazier Industries and The Borgenicht Foundation, made this work possible.

So what's next? Engineers found that the northwest foundation needs underwater repair where the river's flow exits the "raceway." The column between the exit arches (seen in photo above at far end of the "raceway") has been undermined and needs mortar underwater to replace what's eroded. Also needed is a stone protective barrier to divert water flow around the repaired northeast foundation corner to prevent future erosion. Then, exterior fill (pointing) to reinforce the stone foundation above water will complete the foundation work. Engineers estimate this work will cost \$112,000, with savings possible using volunteer labor.



Emergency repair of the northeast corner foundation and intake arch that was completed September, 2016.

The architect's completed Renovation Plan is expected before year's end and will outline the repairs mentioned above plus carpentry needed to complete interior and exterior repairs and finally enclose the structure. This document will guide the Land Trust through the sequence of steps needed to continue the Mill's restoration.

— Dick Kellner

## Land Stewardship Committee Report

Nancy Gable, WTLT board member and co-chair of the Land Stewardship Committee, is participating in Rutgers University's Environmental Stewards Program at Duke Farms in Hillsborough Township. Each Thursday evening, from January through June, participants attend a three-hour lecture covering several aspects of the environment from the basic science of earth, air, and water to the public policies that either support or endanger our natural surroundings. In addition to the classwork, an intensive internship is required to become a certified environmental steward. Nancy plans to use her internship to benefit the WTLT by applying knowledge learned in the program to managing the properties for which our land trust is responsible.

We have cleared the trails at Mill Pond Park and made note of the invasive species there. Thanks to Chris Steffen and Caryl Brackenridge for volunteering to help maintain the park during the summer months!

— Nancy Gable

## Membership Committee Report

As a member-based, non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, the WTLT is truly an all-volunteer organization. We volunteers are local citizens dedicated to preserving our parklands as well as the Obadiah LaTourette Mill, in the middle of historic Long Valley, NJ. This year we've made several pleas to our friends, relatives, patrons, business leaders, foundations, and charitable trusts. Our purpose was mainly to get funding to address an emergency repair on the historic Mill. We are grateful that many of you rose to the challenge and helped us get that repair completed.

Of course our funding needs continue. Restoring a mill that dates back to 1750 and was saved from condemnation in 1989 requires a huge commitment of money and volunteer labor! Some of you may have noticed last fall and winter our "Burma Shave"-style signs along the roads to and from Long Valley. They read: "Here's a name—you can't forget: Obadiah LaTourette." Those signs, plus a banner reading "Save the Mill!" draped across the façade, helped to raise awareness of our cause. This issue of *Hedgerows* represents another attempt to communicate and to solicit your help.

Donations of money are always most welcome, of course. But we also would love to have more volunteers! We need help with fundraising, promotion, membership, parks cleanup and maintenance, construction, publications, and website management. Large, open-ended commitments of time are not necessary! Also, for those so inclined, we need to expand our Board of Trustees, perhaps even doubling our number. If you are interested, please contact us at 908-876-5986, or at [wtlanttrust@gmail.com](mailto:wtlanttrust@gmail.com).

— Barbara Kellner

## Fundraising Committee Report

In early January, WTLT was awarded a \$5,600 operating funds re-grant (80% of the original \$7,000 grant) from the Morris County Historic Heritage Commission (MCHHC). It was a timely award in that the funds, normally used for operating costs, went towards funding the emergency foundation repairs on the Obadiah LaTourette Mill in October. We are very grateful to the MCHHC for continuing to support our efforts!

The publicity campaign of fall 2016 and winter 2017 yielded over \$10,000 in donations and memberships in the last quarter of 2016. We now have 24 Patrons (who contribute at least \$100).

Now the Fundraising Committee is gearing up to apply for 2018 grants. Most grants, whether for land conservation or historic preservation, require a percentage—often half—of matching funds. In addition, then, to reaching out to businesses and other nonprofits, WTLT needs local support most of all. Thus, our appeal to YOU. All donations are gratefully received! Also, members can help us by reaching out to friends and family encouraging them to join us.

— Kim Kaiser

### Washington Township Land Trust Annual Membership

- Individual \$25    Family \$35    Business \$100



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (For WTLT use only) \_\_\_\_\_

Donation (optional)

I wish to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for:

- Land preservation  
 Mill restoration work  
 Mill Park plantings/maintenance

Make check payable to: WTLT

PO Box 4

Long Valley, NJ 07853

*Volunteers and Professional Services Needed.  
Contact any WTLT officer for details.*



**Washington Township Land Trust**

PO Box 4  
Long Valley, NJ 07853-0004

## 2017 UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday, September 23**

### Field Trip With Emile Devito, PhD

Dr DeVito, the charismatic head of Science and Stewardship at the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, will lead a field trip at Mill Pond Park. He will identify species (including invasive species), note ecological relationships, and explain how the natural environment changes over time, with and without the impact of human activity. Following this outing, we will gather at the Obadiah LaTourette Mill for lunch.

**Saturday, October 14**

### Mill Tour

In cooperation with the "Pathways Tour" sponsored by the Washington Township Historical Society, we will hold an Open House and Tour at the Obadiah LaTourette Mill.

**Saturday, October 14 – Annual Meeting** (Stay Tuned, location and time to be determined)