

Island Opinion

• EDITORIAL •

An island jewel preserved forever

Ask Jamestowners what they like best about Conanicut Island and you'll likely get a variety of answers. But the island's "rural" setting is usually near the top of everyone's list.

The Conanicut Island Land Trust just made a major contribution toward preserving the island's treasured rural character with a huge open space acquisition. This week, the group announced that it has purchased the Godena Farm, a 23-acre pastoral spread on the island's north end. In addition to the meadows and spectacular distant views, the property includes a house, a barn and a garage.

Most people recognize the land trust as the folks who host Hey Day every other year and serve up the bratwurst at the annual island shoreline clean-up effort each spring. But the land trust is credited with saving some 70 land parcels from relentless progress by purchasing the development rights associated with those properties.

The Godena Farm is the first property that is actually owned by the Conanicut Island Land Trust.

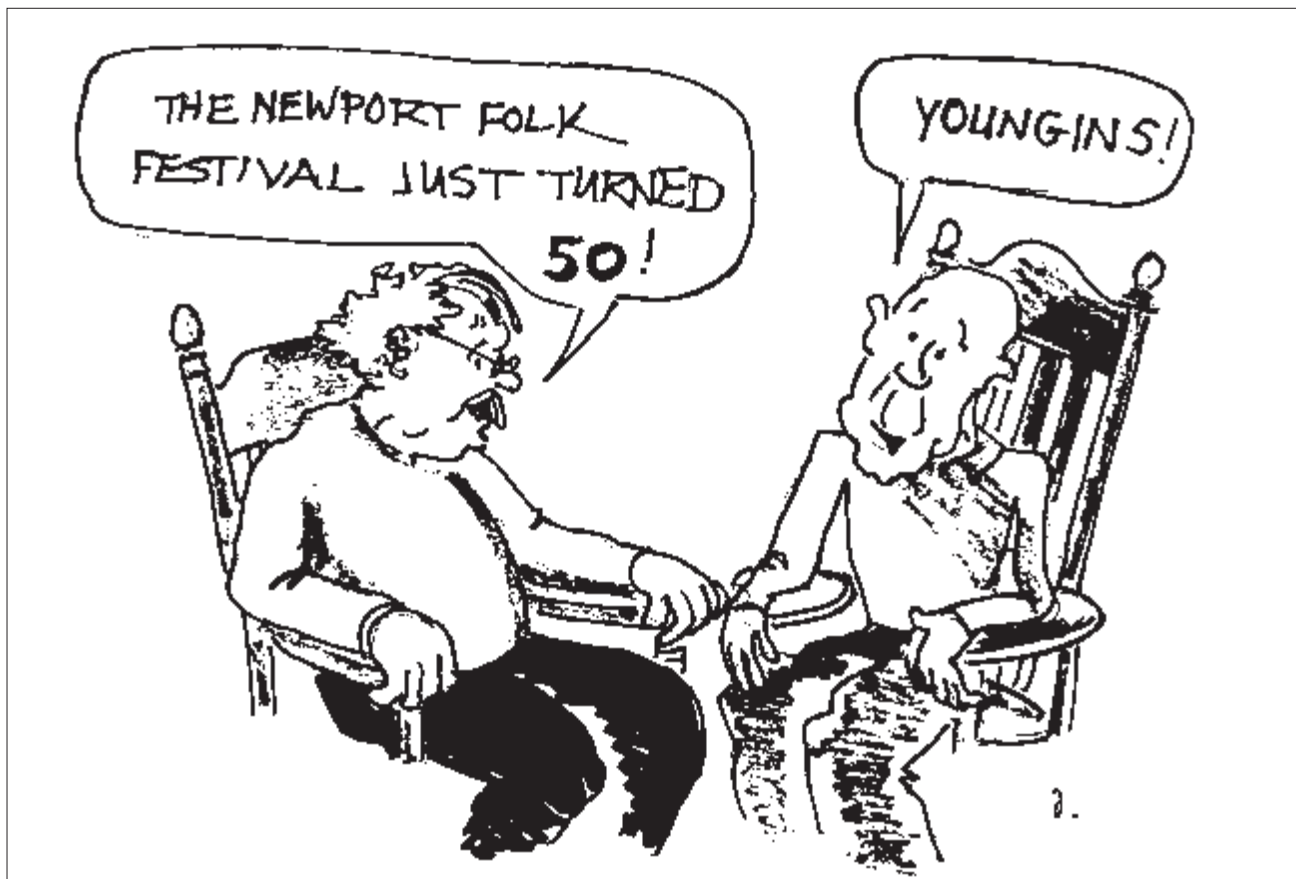
This is a huge undertaking, says Quentin Anthony, who is the president of the land trust. Anthony is a native Jamestown and has close ties to the land, having explored just about every inch of the island as a youngster. He believes the Godena Farm represents a unique opportunity to make the island's natural resources available to the public.

There is not much open space left to preserve, so the farm is extremely important, Anthony says. Most of the properties for which the land trust owns the development rights are not open to the public. But because the land trust owns the Godena Farm, public access is possible.

Anthony says the next task for the land trust will be to determine what to do with the farm. Walking trails are a possibility. Anthony said there has been talk of creating an interpretative nature center. Some of the land could be farmed. The land trust is looking for input from islanders.

The Conanicut Island Land Trust plans to unveil the Godena Farm to all Jamestowners at this year's Hey Day celebration in September.

— Jeff McDonough



No 'Fiddler' in Jamestown

Put your fiddles away – the Jamestown Community Theatre recently learned that the rights for *Fiddler on the Roof* have become unavailable.

The show is presently touring the country, and its producers have decided to extend the dates of the tour through November, and perhaps longer. Therefore, JCT, as well as other community and professional theatres, are seen as competition and cannot perform the show. The JCT theatre board will take a short time to regroup and will announce their fall plans in the Walrus in the next few weeks.

Mary Wright
Jamestown
Community Theatre

• LETTERS •

Thanks for a successful regatta

The Conanicut and Jamestown Yacht Clubs hosted the 2009 Club 420 National Championship on July 27-29. The Club 420 is a two-person sailing dinghy approximately 14 feet long and is a popular boat for youths up to 22 years old in high school and college.

Over 300 sailors, coaches and parents arrived at Ft. Getty Park starting Saturday before the regatta. Ft. Getty offers an attractive venue for a large regatta such as this, with ample lawn area for the Club 420

boats, space for a large tent, ramps to launch the coach and spectator boats, a large beach to launch the 420 boats out of the large waters around the park and ample room for sponsoring vendors.

After three days of challenging racing through light and heavy wind conditions, strong tidal flows and a pesky fog that kept creeping in, taking the podium in first place were Nick Johnstone and Katie DaSilva from Conanicut Yacht Club; second place went to Markus Edegran and Teddy Mark from Larchmont Yacht Club; and third place was awarded to

Declan Whitmyer and Ian Storck from Noroton Yacht Club.

Thanks to the local summer residents who graciously welcomed the sailors to their park and saw their usual tranquil days become a flurry of activities and noises of the starting guns going off in the harbor. Special thanks, too, to all the numerous volunteers from the local yacht clubs and the race officials. To pull this off took well over 100 people and they worked tirelessly for four days. The volunteers were flawlessly organized, always upbeat and helpful, and simply made all the attendees leave with a smile.

On behalf of the Club

See "Letters" on page 21

100 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 2, 1909

Sunday afternoon Rev. H. N. Jeter had about 80 members of the Shiloh Baptist Church of Newport came across on the 3:30 ferry trip to attend a service in the town hall, in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Shiloh Baptist Central Mission in this town by Rev. Dr. Jeter.

From the Newport Daily News, August 7, 1909

Town Clerk Severance has received from the Boston Post a handsome cane to be presented to the oldest citizen of the town, the only provision attached to the gift being, that upon the death of the holder, the cane goes to the next oldest citizen living.

From the Newport Daily News, August 9, 1909

The ferries Saturday and Sunday did a large business. Besides the regular travel, the polo at Narragansett Pier and the New York Yacht Club fleet in Newport harbor have attracted a large number.

75 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 6, 1934

A large number of guests were in town over the weekend, many coming for the purpose of visiting the battleships and the ferries were crowded all day Saturday.

Owing to the large attendance, it was necessary to hold three masses at St. Mark's Church Sunday.

Owing to the heavy traffic over the ferries Sunday, it was necessary to put on two boats and give half hour service.

From the Newport Daily News, August 7, 1934

The annual admirals' tea, which is becoming an institution, was held this afternoon by Rear Admiral and Mrs. Spencer Wood at their Jamestown residence, with a gathering of more than 40 in attendance, the majority being prominent active and retired naval officers of high rank.



This week in Island history

Compiled by Sue Maden

Week of August 6

The news of 10 and 15 years ago is from the Jamestown Press. The news of 100 years ago came from the collection of the Newport Historical Society.

It was the sixth consecutive year that Admiral and Mrs. Wood have held this event.

50 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 6, 1959

Toll reductions ordered April 1 and June 23 of this year on the ... Jamestown Bridge are estimated to have reduced revenues by a total of \$9,000 annually. The average bridge toll has dropped from 65 cents a passage in 1951 to 46 cents this year. This remains, however, more than double the 22 cents on the Mount Hope Bridge.

From the Newport Daily News, August 11, 1959

The Jamestown (Town) Council last night voted against a proposal by the U.S. Army Engineers to enlarge the torpedo testing range around Gould Island, principally by extending it 500 feet to the south.

25 years ago

From the Newport Daily News, August 3, 1984

The School Committee, assured that the roof construction project is on schedule, authorized payment Thursday of \$130,000 to the contractor for work completed to date.

From the Newport Daily News, August 9, 1984

The Jamestown Design Study Committee Wednesday

asked Wilbur Smith and Associates, designers of the proposed cross-island connector road, to submit a letter of design features to be considered for the road sometime within the next two weeks.

15 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, August 4, 1994

The Jamestown Seniors Association recently presented a \$10,000 check to Friends of the Jamestown Seniors to assist in renovating the Grange Hall on West Street for use as a senior center.

Sixteen islanders last Saturday participated in Save the Bay's largest "Swim the Bay" in 18 years. ... These Jamestown participants joined over 400 people, including swimmers, rowers, spotters, and Save the Bay staffers, who were also involved in the 1.7 mile swim that started in Newport.

10 years ago

From the Jamestown Press, August 5, 1999

Fourteen Jamestown residents, along with nearly 270 other swimmers risked fatigue, sore muscles and jelly fish stings last Saturday to swim nearly two miles across the East Passage of Narragansett Bay in support of Save the Bay's effort to keep the bay a clean and healthy place for swimming and other recreational activities.

Jamestown business owners and residents refused to put on rose-colored glasses last Thursday when presented with a series of Munchkin-style sketches of Narragansett Avenue during a workshop with the Planning Commission and the Town Council. The sketches were prepared by design consultants ... hired last month to develop a plan for sprucing up Narragansett Avenue from East Ferry to the Fire Station. ... The message from the 50 islanders attending was keep it simple, nothing "cute," and don't waste limited funds on improvements that will have to be dug up later when and if utility lines go underground.