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EMAIL REMINDER

Please provide us with your most current contact information including email address. Send to: info@openlandtrust.com



Save the Date

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2016
 "A LOWCOUNTRY LUNCHEON"

Beaufort County Open Land Trust and Nemours Wildlife Foundation are hosting this Fundraiser/Booksigning event featuring author Mary Alice Monroe on the majestic grounds of Nemours Plantation. Tickets include lunch and a signed copy of her upcoming novel, *A Lowcountry Wedding*, to be released in early May. A *New York Times* best-selling author, Monroe excels in creating an absorbing story and atmosphere in conjunction with important ecological concerns.
 Price: \$85/person

A YEAR OF SUPPORT

The Open Land Trust will be selling the 2016 Preservation Calendar for \$15 available by late November. Contact us today to reserve your calendar for a year of support!

Winding Marsh Creek, by Scott Quarforth



Fall 2015 Newsletter

The Retreat:

Conservation Easement Donation Preserves a Piece of Port Royal Island History

In November of 1930, writing for the *Charleston News and Courier*, Chlotilde Martin (1895-1991) wrote "Seven miles from the town of Beaufort, in the direction of the Parris island causeway, across a plowed field and through a thick wood, is to be found the oldest house on Port Royal Island – the Retreat. This house is so old that nobody seems to know just how old it really is. It was there when the woods of this section were still full of Red Men..." With records dating back to the 1730s and the site of one of Beaufort County's oldest homes, Retreat Plantation is located on the Battery Creek side of Port Royal Island near Mink Point. In 1965, B.G. and Anne Pinckney purchased 150 acres of the Retreat, including the old house, from a retired Cuban sugar plantation owner named Antonio Ponvert. At the time of purchase, most of the property had become overgrown and unattractive. With just a few minor additions to bring the old house up-to-date a couple centuries and some elbow grease to help clear the land to pasture horses and Santa Gertrudis cattle, the Pinckney family firmly planted their roots at the Retreat.

For the Pinckneys, the early days at the Retreat were typical of the rural lifestyle the residents of the Lowcountry enjoyed during those times. Mrs. Anne Pinckney recalled when she and her late husband moved to

the Retreat they had no neighbors and could count on one hand how many docks they could see when gazing across Battery Creek toward Wright's Point and Port Royal. As time marched on, things began to change. The Pinckney's cattle and horses and the fields they roamed were replaced with planted pine trees for timber production. They went from having no neighbors to many and the hands of

all know, a lot has evolved around town since the mid-1960s. As more and more people have discovered our little piece of paradise, naturally more and more development has followed. Port Royal Island is no exception, with much of the Island's landscape most certainly unrecognizable to any Native American Indian that once roamed the region. However, many tracts of wide open spaces and natural areas

continue to exist on the Island today. Some of these properties are permanently protected, including a significant portion of Clarendon Plantation and strategic lands surrounding the Marine Corps Air Station, but many are not. We are excited to report that earlier this year, the Pinckney family, who still owns a large percentage of their original tract, graciously donated to the Land Trust a conservation easement protecting forever the remaining undeveloped portion of the Retreat, which consists of nearly fifty sprawling acres. Today,

five men would not be enough to count the number of docks visible from their bluff. The two lane main road turned to four. After living in the old house for the better part of forty years, B.G. and Anne built a new, slightly more modern home (not to worry, the old house is of course still standing proud in all of her glory and meticulously maintained as a clubhouse for the residential community next door). As we

with four generations of Pinckneys living on the property, the family has ensured that the core area and heart of the Retreat will be left much like it was found way back when. We at the Land Trust would like to sincerely thank Mrs. Anne Pinckney and her family for helping contribute to the growing mosaic of conserved lands in our area.

Written by Josh B. Bell, Stewardship Director



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P.O. Box 75
 Beaufort, SC 29901
 Office (843) 521-2175
 info@openlandtrust.com
 www.openlandtrust.org



Science Excursion Day

We were very excited to have our first Science Excursion Day at Widgeon Point Preserve this summer. Children from a local non-profit, Thumbs Up, came out to explore and learn with Jamie about the ecology of our salt marsh. The barn was converted to an outdoor classroom and served as a great spot for story time and fun activities. While walking the trail,

the children were able to learn about fiddler crabs, oyster middens, marsh birds, and much more. We are excited to have the opportunity to plant the seed of land stewardship and environmental appreciation in our local youth. We look forward to working with schools and other organizations around Beaufort County to take advantage of the endless learning

opportunities that properties like this one hold. If you know a group or class that would benefit from a learning experience like this, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at our office. We would like to send a special thank you to Mrs. Rosalyn Browne, Executive Director of Thumbs Up, for coordinating this trip and coming out to learn with us.



BIRD WALK

Thank you to everyone who attended our bird watching nature walks at Widgeon Point Preserve in September. Mr. Jack Greensheids led us around the pristine property while we searched for birds and discussed some of the important ecological features of the property. It was a pleasure to have individuals from all walks of life join us to appreciate the beauty of the Lowcountry. If you are interested in coming out to join us for a bird watching nature walk we will be having another on October @ and november @. (I want to make that part stand out)

While there is no charge or need to sign up? we ask you contact Jamie at Jamie@openlandtrust.com to give us a heads up that you'll be there.

NEW R AND C WEBSITE

Check out the Rural and Critical Lands Program website at www.ruralandcritical.org. The website has been completely overhauled and will feature a blog about properties purchased through the program, passive parks, and other conservation topics. This is now the place to go for any information about the Program. A link to the new website can also be found on the OLT website.

PASSIVE PARKS FOR THE PUBLIC

Beaufort County Open Land Trust has been successfully managing the Rural and Critical Lands Program since 2009, and now OLT will be taking on an expanded role to further the County's efforts to provide public access to many of the properties purchased through the Program. OLT will be using its expertise to inventory and evaluate County owned lands

and provide recommendations for natural resource management and use which will include implementing park plans and opening properties to the public. We look forward to engaging the public and Land Trust members in this process, and in particular, getting Widgeon Point Preserve jointly owned by the County and OLT, open for bird watching and other nature-based activities.

St. Helena Market Renovation in Progress



Progress as of October 21, 2015

The much anticipated renovation of the old St. Helena Market is underway! Located at the entrance to St. Helena and the Sea Islands, the old market is an iconic piece of Beaufort County history and it is our vision to carry on the tradition. In keeping with the historic country store theme, we have partnered with the Carolina Cider Company to lease the market once complete, which is expected to be in early 2016. Stay tuned for our Spring 2016 newsletter for the full details.

THE NATIONAL LAND TRUST RALLY

In early October, Lisa Lord, Rural and Critical Lands Program Administrator, and Josh Bell, Stewardship Director, attended the National Land Trust Alliance Conservation Conference in Sacramento, CA. Known as "Rally", this was an excellent opportunity to learn from others in the conservation community and bring resource information back to Beaufort County. Lisa spoke at one of the workshops about

BCOLT's work leading the public education campaign for the successful 2014 Rural and Critical Land Program's bond referendum. This case study was cited as a model for local conservation funding campaigns and for effective advocacy by land trusts. To learn more about the successful public education campaign, read the Fall 2015 edition of Saving Land, LTA's magazine, which highlights BCOLT's work.

DUNCAN FARMS

Preservation of rural farms are vitally important for continuing the rural and historic character of Beaufort County, and to further this effort OLT accepted an easement last spring on Duncan Farms. This 129-acre property, located in Lobeco, and within the boundaries of the historic ACE Basin, was purchased through the Rural and Critical Lands Program. Duncan Farms has been an important part of the local community for many years with farming activities that represent the traditional Sea Island culture in rural Beaufort County.