

THE GARDEN CLUB OF EAST HAMPTON

The Nature Trail of East Hampton has a fascinating history. Today it comprises 25 acres of wetland preserve and wildlife sanctuary only a few blocks from the center of our village. Originally the 4 acre core area was the earliest documented Japanese water garden in a private estate in this country.

The first Japanese water garden seen in the United States was a display for the California Midwinter Exposition of 1894 in San Francisco. Emma Woodhouse decided to create a similar one in a boggy area adjoining her home in East Hampton. Working without a landscape designer and with the help of a single gardener and two workmen, she created an exotic and unique garden.

Beginning in 1895 and working for a period of three years, the gardener and his helpers, reconfigured the area, installing raised dikes edged with split logs that provided dry paths between 4 new canals. There were arched half-moon bridges, a thatch-roofed Japanese tea house, an octangular 'contemplation' pavilion, and a small boat called the "Swamp Angel" which plied the canals. The Japanese Iris *kaempferi* were almost unknown in this country when Mrs. Woodhouse introduced many varieties in these gardens. She also planted native American plants such as mallow and swamp maple to provide color. In 1915 garden historian Louise Shelton called the garden "the best piece of work of its kind in the country."

In 1936 the Woodhouse family persuaded the GC of EH to accept the garden and some adjacent property on a long-term loan. The Club was asked to create a nature preserve on the land. The gardens were allowed to 'go wild' to encourage bird and wildlife and to decrease maintenance. The Garden Club had simple bridges, benches and paths built throughout the area, which was renamed The Nature Trail. In 1951 the entire area was deeded to the Village.

Today children feed the ducks and geese who paddle along the waterways. Visitors walk along the paths, most never realizing that the area was once an exotic Japanese water garden and was nationally famous.

The Garden Club of East Hampton works with the Park Commission of the Village to oversee the maintenance of the Trail. Today the GC of EH has embarked on a water study of the area under the direction of the Village's Environmental Officer.

Our members feel that its 61 year guardianship of this unique preserve is its proudest achievement.

Mrs. Sandra Brown Taylor, President
Garden Club of East Hampton, New York

Nature Trail - comments by Mary Hopkinson, 1969

As you may have gathered over the years I have been reporting about the Nature Trail, it is an area very dear to my heart. I started working in it as a very young novice in the Garden Club under the direction of Mrs. Lockweed and Mrs. Woodhouse. We planted many lovely wild flowers - we tagged the bushes and trees. I learned many things - amongst them the love of this beautiful woodsey spot in the midst of a bustling village - and vibrant sea shore - and an almost reverence for the work and objectives of the Garden Club members who cared so much about making their surroundings beautiful, not only for themselves, but for everyone, and who believed in preserving natural beauty - and in creating beauty where it did not exist. I would like to recommend that no matter what other projects our Garden Club may undertake - the Nature Trail will be number one on the list of obligations. I feel that this should be so as a tribute to those devoted members who so many years ago had the foresight and ability to develop this exquisite spot. God put in the streams, the trees and the swamps - and the skunk cabbage. The ducks, the geese, and even the swans discovered it, but in 1934 the Garden Club of East Hampton penetrated this secret garden and, under the direction of Mrs. Woodhouse, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Cloud, Mrs. Siter and many others, opened its beauty to our privileged members. In 1942 it was shared with the rest of the world, and in 1951 it was deeded to the Village of East Hampton with the definite understanding that the G.C. of E.H. was to act in an advisory capacity to the Village for the preservation of the Trail and its surroundings. With every gift of trees and shrubs and wonderful donations we are further and further obligated. My hope is that every present and future member of the Garden Club will keep this in mind and always be willing to do her share in preserving our magnificent heritage. Report in 1969.

1955-

THE NATURE TRAIL

The Nature Trail in East Hampton is unique, for it is located only two blocks from the center of the Village. It consists of twenty-four acres of land much of which is bog, crossed by a beautiful brook. The trees and shrubs have been left in their natural state as nearly as was possible.

In 1935 Mrs. Lorenzo Woodhouse lent to the East Hampton Garden Club about ten acres of land on which was built the first part of the Nature Trail. This land lies between Hunting and Davids Lanes west of Egypt Lane.

Mrs. William Lockwood was the Chairman of this project, assisted by Miss Maria Knox, Mrs. Lawrence Jones and all the membership of the Club.

Paths were built and dead wood cleared out and bridges were built. All the shrubs and trees were marked with signs where ever there was an interesting variety. Unfortunately, playful boys seemed to enjoy throwing these markers in the pond and brook.

Near the Hunting Lane entrance of the Trail there is a sizeable pond, in what was called the Water Garden. Here, Mrs. Woodhouse's brother-in-law, ^(Stephen Cummings, 2nd husband of Emma Woodhouse) had a fine Japanese Iris Garden which was totally destroyed in the hurricane of 1938.

The Garden Club members worked tirelessly to create a Nature Trail that would be outstanding, planting wild flowers and such shrubs as would be in keeping with such a sanctuary.

The following shrubs and wild flowers were listed as being found in this Trail: Clethra, Wild Rose, Swamp Azalea,

Highbush Cranberry, Else. Solomon's Seal, Turk's Cap Lily, Iris (winterberry) Elderberry, Royal Fern, Boneset, Cinnamon Fern, Swamp Maple, Purple Lythrum, Yellow Loosestrife, Deadly Night Shade, Blackberry and Cattails, Jewel Weed, Joe Pye Weed, Skunk Cabbage, Water Parsnip, Yarrow, Money Wart, Fox Tail Grass, Jack in the Pulpit, Spirea, Aronia, Burnet, Iris, Woodbine Mallow, Wild Lily of Valley, Columbine and Bouncing Bet.

Donations were received from members and a good part of the Club's funds were spent on the Nature Trail.

A plant sanctuary and a shrine, which was a copy of one in the Gardens on Parade at the Worlds Fair, was placed in the Trail in 1941.

Eventually, a beautiful statue of St. Francis of Assisi was placed in this shrine in memory of Mrs. Chester Cloud, who had been a devoted worker in the Trail.

When the work on the paths was completed, the Trail was formally opened on July 7th, 1942. The Mayor and members of the Village Board, the Members of the Ladies' Village Improvement Society, the Girl and Boy Scouts were invited and refreshments were served in the Water Garden.

In 1938 a hurricane struck East Hampton felling trees and flooding acres of the Trail and washing out paths and bridges. This was a severe blow to those who had worked so hard to establish it.

Then in 1950, Mrs. Woodhouse deeded to the Village of East Hampton the land on which the Trail lay. The Garden Club was asked to act as consultants to the Village Board for the Nature Trail. The Garden Club continued its interest in this project and contributed money to its maintenance.

Since the Nature Trail became Village property, the Ladies' Village Improvement Society has taken a keen interest in the Trail and has contributed to its support.

In 1951, Mrs. Woodhouse added twelve more acres of land lying between Hunting and Fithian Lanes to her original gift to the Village, so that the tract known as the Nature Trail embraces twenty-four acres of almost virgin bog and woodland.

It is hoped, eventually, to cut a path along the brooks straight through the property. However, the hurricanes of 1954 caused so much damage and expense that it will be some years before sufficient funds are available.

Xerox
1969 Report

NATURE TRAIL COMMITTEE REPORT

First I will give you a brief account of what has been done in the Nature Trail this past winter and summer. Mr. Field and his men have done the usual pruning-repairing of paths and bridges-some clearing of streams which are constantly choked by falling leaves and branches-plus beer cans, etc., and in general continued his careful maintenance so that the trail has again provided a haven of beauty and tranquility far removed from our traffic-jammed roads.

No new paths were opened as Mr. Field was unable to give his time to this project. However, the place is not abandoned and we are hopeful that perhaps this work may be done during the coming winter. It will add enormously to the enjoyment of the Nature Trail as the area on the other side of Huntting Lane is as beautiful, if not more so, as our present layout.

The extermination of the rats was successfully accomplished by Mr. Nardy who has promised to watch for further infestation. I rather imagine we shall have to have a repeat performance this fall as we have already received a few complaints from nearby residents. Am not sure they are all our rats. A few may come from the Huntting Inn - but we promise to take care of those belonging to us.

Unfortunately, we again have had some vandalism - the worst being the partial destruction of the duck feeding station. Most of the flagstones were torn up and thrown into the stream - some

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being placed by the entrance to the drain under the road - thus blocking the ducks from swimming up the stream. Most of the flagstones were so badly broken that they could not be reset. I called the police - who after some clever research discovered the culprits. Due to the fact that they were minors, no action was taken. I asked if their parents could be made responsible, and at that point the police said no. However, two days later a bill was passed in Albany where from now on parents will be held responsible for destruction of property by their children. I spoke to Chief Dordelman the following day and he said that the bill was not retroactive, but that in the future parents would be held responsible for any destruction of property done by their children. If the parents are financially unable to make restitution, the police will endeavor to make the culprits repair the damage - or earn money to make partial payment. If enforced, this law may put a stop to some of these senseless vicious acts of destruction.

The Shrine enclosing the statue of St. Francis is falling to pieces. It is over thirty years old and its dejected appearance is not surprising. Mrs. James has suggested to the school that its carpentering class make a new one as a winter project, thereby perhaps enlisting their interest in the care of the Nature Trail.

There are other bits of this and that which I probably should report but there is not the time and I want to let you know about the really exciting things that have happened in the last six weeks.

First - a beautiful piece of property, a little over a quarter of an acre, has been given to the Nature Trail by Miss May Rogers. The property extends along Fythian Lane across from Miss Rogers' home back to the property given to us by Mrs. Roger Donohue, thus enlarging the extent of the sanctuary so that we have a continuous stretch from Huntting Lane through to Fythian Lane. It is a lovely piece of land with a stream and some exquisite trees and bushes plus some quite lovely planting which Miss Rogers put in a few years ago. We are very happy about this as it means that there will be no encroachment upon the Nature Trail from that very vulnerable spot near Main Street. Our deep gratitude to Miss Rogers has been expressed by our committee-by our President Mrs. Chase - and by Mayor Skidmore.

The next thrill is that I think the project for which we have been hoarding our money will be achieved - namely the installation of a well and pump to increase the flow of water in the lily ponds and nearby streams - so that the algae and slime which now exist will be eliminated. The project is costly as far as our funds are concerned, but with the unanimous consent of our committee I have gone to the Village Board and offered to pay

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half the cost if they will provide the remaining half. I was not certain I had the half but was hopeful and God was good to us. As a result of the publicity of this request, Miss Rogers, our wonderful benefactor, called and said she would like to give \$500 towards the cost of the pump. On top of this Mr. Kenneth Davis called and said that the Hook Pond Association would give \$250. Our offer was sound. These generous donations have brought great happiness to our committee as we realize how truly interested so many people are in the Nature Trail. It also gives us courage towards future planning.

Undoubtedly there will be complications before all this can be accomplished. The Village Board has not yet approved our offer but Mayor Skidmore feels that it has been very favorably received. Mr. Schellinger has given a tentative figure on costs. Permission for digging the well must be obtained from the Natural Resources Committee and I'm sure we'll run into a few unforeseen snags, but the project is under way and we are receiving tremendous encouragement for the committee and the many others who have wished this unhappy spot in the trail could be rectified. This is a great moment. We feel that it will not only enhance the beauty of the trail but it will improve the physical condition of that area in the sanctuary - namely clearing up a stagnant condition that eventually could be harmful.

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As you may have gathered over the years I have been reporting about the Nature Trail, it is an area very dear to my heart. I started working in it as a very young novice in the Garden Club under the direction of Mrs. Lockwood and Mrs. Woodhouse. We planted many lovely wild flowers - we tagged the bushes and trees. I learned many things - amongst them the love of this beautiful woodsey spot in the midst of a bustling village - and vibrant sea shore - and an almost reverence for the work and objectives of the Garden Club members who cared so much about making their surroundings beautiful, not only for themselves, but for everyone, and who believed in preserving natural beauty - and in creating beauty where it did not exist. I would like to recommend that no matter what other projects our Garden Club may undertake - the Nature Trail will be number one on the list of obligations. I feel that this should be so as a tribute to those devoted members who so many years ago had the foresight and ability to develop this exquisite spot. God put in the streams, the trees and the swamps - and the skunk cabbage. The ducks, the geese, and even the swans discovered it, but in 1934 the Garden Club of East Hampton penetrated this secret garden and, under the direction of Mrs. Woodhouse, Mrs. Lockwood, Mrs. Cloud, Mrs. Siter and many others, opened its beauty to our privileged members. In 1942 it was shared with the rest of the world, and in 1951 it was deeded to the Village of East Hampton with the definite understanding that the G.C. of E.H. was to act in an

advisory capacity to the Village for the preservation of the Trail and its surroundings. With every gift of trees and shrubs and wonderful donations we are further and further obligated. My hope is that every present and future member of the Garden Club will keep this in mind and always be willing to do her share in preserving our magnificent heritage.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary L. Hopkinson, Chairman
Nature Trail Committee

Annual Report of Nature Trail Committee
Mrs. Russell Hopkinson, Chairman

In October 1958, at the instigation of the Garden Club of East Hampton, a joint meeting was held of the Nature Trail Committees of the Garden Club of East Hampton, the Eastern Gate Garden Club, the Ladies Village Improvement Society and the Village Park Commission, for the purpose of forming a single committee consisting of members from each of these respective organizations which would serve as a clearing house for any project contemplated towards the maintenance and preservation of the Nature Trail. Such a committee has been formed and is now known as the Nature Trail and Bird Sanctuary Committee of East Hampton. It's members are:

Mrs. Russell Hopkinson - Chairman
Mrs. John DiGate - Secretary
(replacing Mrs. Hollingsworth Siter)
Mrs. Percy Schenck - Treasurer

Mrs. Ferris Talmage	Miss Eleanor Tingley
Mrs. Bruce Bromley	Mrs. Wallace Chauncey
Mrs. Frank Shepard	Mrs. Edward Cook
Mrs. Hollingsworth Siter	Mrs. Joseph Zenger
Mrs. Ellery James	Mrs. Harry Escallette

Mrs. LeRoy King - Honorary Warden

Seven very constructive meetings have been held by this committee. Due to the ambiguous wording of the deeds of this property to the Village - a plea was made to the Village Board to declare this area a sanctuary in perpetuity. So far this request has not been granted, due to certain legal difficulties. The Board, however, assured us that it "would do all in its power to continue to assist with the Nature Trail activities." We are hopeful that at some later date we may be able to obtain a stronger statement from the Board. Mr. William Lockwood has written a letter to this effect to the Village Board, stating that he has definite knowledge that the donors of this property wished to have this area remain in its natural condition as a refuge for birds and a nursery for plants and trees to grow.

In the meantime, the present Board has been most cooperative. Upon the report of vandalism in the spring, policemen patrolled the Trail over weekends. We hope to follow up this patrolling by appointing volunteer wardens from the Boy Scouts and various interested groups. The trails were cleared by the Village - the bridges repaired - garbage pails emptied daily - and the outlying boundaries mowed and pruned.

The real work in the Trail must wait until the ground becomes hard. However, we expect to have a bad case of erosion repaired in the very near future. The banks where the ducks are fed are slowly collapsing. The Ladies Village Improvement Society is donating \$250.00 towards this project with the promise of Mayor Marley that the Village would assist in the ultimate cost. Upon the completion of this project the new signs will go up - explaining to everyone that this area is a Nature Trail and Bird Sanctuary and asking their help towards its protection. The signs have been made by Mr. Cullum under the direction of Mrs. Wallace Chauncey and are being donated by the Garden Club of East Hampton. The drinking fountain donated by the Eastern Gate Garden Club is having its face lifted and will be planted into the background.

A resident on Egypt Lane - Mr. Elmer Silver - has asked if he may brighten up our Shrine - repair the doors - paint the interior and clean the St. Francis figure. His reason - gratitude for the enjoyment he derives from wandering through the Trail.

We hope that by next spring the Nature Trail will be almost as it was when Mrs. Lockwood and all her ardent workers were responsible for the beauty of the Trail. We shall be prepared for vandalism - the stealing of the ducks and the destruction of the shrubs and ferns. There are many ideas brewing in the minds of this active and able committee - and while there is little to see of any change at this point - we feel we have come a long way in obtaining the recognition and support of the Village and in establishing a fine group of women who are working harmoniously with one thought in mind - the maintenance and preservation of the Nature Trail.

The Nature Trail and Bird Sanctuary is officially recorded in the Village Minutes - and although it is not described as a "sanctuary in perpetuity" our efforts and interest will keep it as such. I believe that it would be very difficult for any future Village Board to make changes in this area provided public opinion wishes it to remain as it is. The Garden Club of East Hampton created this lovely spot. Let us never waver in our determination to preserve for the future.

Respectfully submitted

(signed) Mary L. Hopkinson

Sept. 9/1959 -

Bench At Nature Trail Honors Couple Who Watched Over It

The late Mr. and Mrs. S. Leroy King of East Hampton, who lived on Egypt Lane next door to the Nature Trail, which extends from Davids Lane to Hunting and Fithian Lanes, are now memorialized by a circular bench built around a large tree by the lily pond.

Mr. and Mrs. King loved birds and flowers, and became unofficial guardians of the ducks that live in the "dreen" at the foot of their own garden. Mr. King died May 30, 1957, and Mrs. King died on Jan. 28, 1961, while feeding her beloved bird visitors.

Funds for the bench were given by the Garden Club of East Hampton, the Ladies' Village Improve-

ment Society, which furnished the grain the Kings fed the ducks, the Eastern Gate Garden Club, and friends of the Kings. Mrs. Russell Hopkinson, chairman of the Nature Trail committee, arranged for the building of the bench by Frank Dayton.

The memorial may be reached from Hunting Lane by going past the row of memorial dogwood trees by the Basil Maguire fence to the path and big trees.

Mr. King, a carpenter, was an amateur naturalist who was said to know more about Long Island wildflowers and their propagation than anyone living. He grew them in his garden, and from there could

watch the ducklings in the dreen and protect them against wanton children and dogs.

Land for the sanctuary was given by the late Mrs. Lorenzo Woodhouse and the late Mrs. Ruger Donoho, and was deeded to the Village. The Trail was begun by members of the Garden Club of East Hampton, led by the late Mrs. William A. Lockwood.

Last week, the memorial bench was visited by five of Mr. and Mrs. King's six children. Edwin King, who lives in Richmond, Va., was unable to come. The children were all brought up next door to the Nature Trail, and share in their parents' love of nature.



MEMORIAL FOR THEIR PARENTS: Left to right, Donald P. King, Alfred "Speed" King, Mrs. Florence K. Miller, Remington King, and Melville King at the Nature Trail bench placed recently in the memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. S. Leroy King.

Star Photo

The Nature Trail
East Hampton, N.Y.

The Garden of Peace
By R.V.C. Bodley

With East Hampton I will always associate peace of mind. When I first came there in 1942 after two violent years of war in Europe, my whole being was in a turmoil. The philosophic contentment which I had learnt from the Arabs in the Sahara had been shaken. I did not know where I was going. I seemed to be surrounded by a fog which never lifted.

Then, one evening, I wandered almost accidentally into a wild garden near the bottom of Hunting Lane. The place was a tangle of briar roses and honeysuckle and other wild flowers. Grass paths made their way through sweet smelling shrubs and followed little brooks. Here and there, miniature bridges spanned the clear water of the streams. Although evidently cared for, no one seemed to frequent this place, and the only sounds were the chirping of the birds and the rustling of the breeze in the trees.

As I walked unbelievably in this domain of the Sleeping Beauty, I began to feel its enchantment. The mist which had hung so heavily about me dissolved. I felt the care and confusion in me fading. By the time I got back to dinner, I had quite a different outlook.

After that, I spent part of each day in the fragrant garden. I rested before a kind of rustic shrine surrounded by tall grasses, and let my thoughts uncoil themselves. All the tenseness bred by those days of trial in Europe loosened. By the time I left East Hampton, I was looking forward. The road was still misty, but I could see my way.

The following year was not too constructive. I was on the road, but I was not sure where it led. So, when the summer came around again, I went to East Hampton and made at once for my tangled garden.

The moment I set foot on those turf paths, every vestige of doubt was ripped out of my mind. It was as if each shrub, each flower, each reed was telling me that the goal was in sight. I do not think that I have ever felt such exhilaration, such penetrating peace as on that second contact with the garden.

I went back to New York. Within a month a publisher had commissioned me to write a book. Within four months, the book had been written. Within ten months, the book had been published. Before the book had been out a week, a second edition was in the press, then a third, then a fourth, a sixth, an eighth. A magazine condensation was followed by a sale to the movies. All kinds of pleasant repercussions succeeded one another.

The book was called Wind in the Sahara and, in Wind in the Sahara, that peace and contentment which I had found with the Arabs, which I had lost with the war and discovered again in the tangled garden of Hunting Lane sang a kind of theme song. Neither did the spell disappear with the coming of the book. Whenever I visit East Hampton, I spend a little time of every day walking along those grassy paths or sitting beside the brook, and find there the same comfort. So, if any of you have troubled minds, go to the garden, go to the shrine of flowers and shrubs and reeds and, if peace of mind is not given to you there, you must be one of those for whom peace of mind is not intended.

Annual Zone Report -
for 1958

GARDEN CLUB OF EAST HAMPTON

Mrs. Frank P. Shepard, President.

Number of Active Members - 62.

Number of Meetings - 7.

The Nature Trail in East Hampton, which many of you visited during the Zone Meeting last year, is -- has been -- and probably always will be -- one of our most challenging projects. It involves many phases of Garden Club activities -- Conservation - Horticulture - Publicity - and now Civic.

In 1934 Mrs. Lorenzo Woodhouse, a former president of the Garden Club of East Hampton, loaned ten acres of her property to our Club. It was an untouched, natural tract of land, interlaced with running brooks, swamps, dense thickets and towering trees inhabited only by wild fowl of all descriptions. Under the leadership of Mrs. William Lockwood, a former president of our Club and of the Garden Club of America, the Nature Trail was laid out. For eight years our members worked to open this wilderness. The dense thickets were attacked, paths were made, bridges built, and trees, shrubs and wild flowers were identified and tagged by handmade signs. It became an unbelievable place of beauty -- and since 1942 thousands of people have come to visit and linger in this little wild area of East Hampton.

Now we are confronted with the problem of perpetuating the existence of this sanctuary. In 1951, Mrs. Woodhouse deeded the Nature

Trail to the Village of East Hampton. An adjoining tract of land had been previously given to the Village - making a total of twenty-three acres. We are very much disturbed to find that these gifts were made with no restrictions other than that the "premises were to be used as a public park and recreational center." Today many schools are crying for more playgrounds -- ours in particular -- and it is our fear that this area might be invaded.

Heretofore, because of our Club's efforts in the Nature Trail - the Village has played very little part in the care of this property other than mild policing for vandalism - and ruthless pruning along its edges. Now, due to the ever-increasing demands for more commercial and school areas, it is a possibility that the Village might be tempted to use a part, or all, of this land for an open park or playground.

Our first step toward the prevention of such a catastrophe has been to put articles in the local paper, emphasizing the fact that East Hampton, through no expenditure of the Village nor burden on the taxpayers, is the fortunate possessor of a "little gem" (to quote one of our visitors) - a sanctuary in its midst - which many towns and villages -- too late -- would like to duplicate. We also have formed a coordinating committee consisting of two members from, respectively, the Village Park Commission, the Ladies Village Improvement Society, the local Eastern Gate Garden Club, and our own Club.

At the first meeting of this committee the terms under which the land was given were discovered. Our hope is to discourage any attempt

to make it an open playground or park by exploring the legal means by which the Village could declare it a sanctuary in perpetuity. If this can be accomplished, we can proceed with our plans -- open trails into some of the unexplored parts - build a bird-watching tower - continue the identification of plants and trees - and make it not only an exquisite sanctuary, but a thrilling workshop for all nature lovers.

It is a long range plan. Our hope for success is that when the Village took over this property, the Garden Club of East Hampton was asked to act as advisors toward its maintenance. If they will continue to accept our advice, the Nature Trail will become a permanent sanctuary for all the generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary L. Hopkinson
(Mrs. Russell Hopkinson)

September 25, 1958

East Hampton, New York
January 23, 1959

Village Board
East Hampton
New York

E. Woodhouse

Dear Sirs

On December 31, 1934 the Village Board of East Hampton accepted a tract of land from Mrs. Roger Donoho as a memorial to her husband for the purposes of a public park and recreational centre. This area comprised 8.004 acres. On April 28, 1951 Mrs. Lorenzo Woodhouse deeded two parcels of land to the Village, one of 8.124 acres and the other of 6.968 acres -- also for the purposes of a public park. The area of both these gifts extends roughly from David's Lane to Hunting Lane and from Hunting Lane to Fithian Lane -- bounded on one side by Egypt Lane and on the other side by adjoining properties, the boundaries of which are undoubtedly shown on the map of the deeds.

In 1934 Mrs. Lorenzo Woodhouse had loaned ten acres of this property to the Garden Club of East Hampton - seventeen years before it was given to the Village. At that time it was an untouched natural tract of marshy land, interlaced with running brooks, swamps, dense thickets, and towering trees. Under the leadership of Mrs. William Lockwood the present Nature Trail was laid out, in order to reveal the beauty of this area without disturbing its natural surroundings. Paths were made and bridges built in order to penetrate

Village Board
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its wildness. Trees, shrubs and wild flowers were identified and tagged by handmade signs. The streams, clogged with fallen debris, were cleared. Judicious pruning was done, chiefly for safety measures.

Plants and trees, natural to the surroundings, have been donated - many in memoriam; a St. Francis shrine was donated - also in memoriam - as a bird-feeding station. As you well know, the wild ducks have been fed and guarded by Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy King for years. Thousands of birds come in there, thus giving us not only a Nature Trail, but a bird sanctuary as well.

Two years ago, at the Zone Meeting of the Garden Club of America, given here by the Garden Club of East Hampton, many ladies, well versed in the fields of conservation and horticulture, gave great praise to the Nature Trail and have recommended to many other communities a similar project.

In 1942 it was opened to the public, and since then thousands of people have come to visit and enjoy the Nature Trail. From that time on, the Garden Club of East Hampton has been aided by members of the Ladies Village Improvement Society, the Eastern Gate Garden Club, and the Village in the maintenance and preservation of the Trail as you now see it.

In 1951, when Mrs. Woodhouse deeded these tracts to the Village, our understanding was that the Garden Club of East Hampton was to act in an ad-

January 23, 1959

visory capacity to the Village for the preservation of the Trail and its surrounding areas. I do not know whether there was a letter from Mrs. Woodhouse to this effect, but this has been the assumption upon which we have continued our efforts -- and I believe the Village has aided us under the same assumption.

The reason I am presenting these facts to the Board is a result of having discovered the terms upon which this tract of land was given to the Village. The words "public park and recreational centre" could mean an open park or cleared area. The work of over twenty years could be destroyed, and one of East Hampton's most beautiful natural areas could vanish completely. Our Village is most fortunate in the gift it has received, not only for the pleasure it gives to thousands of people, but also for the valuable contribution it gives toward the prevention of floods due to the marshy land and running streams; the protection by the trees and shrubs to our top soil, which we see blowing away by the thousands of tons from our opened areas; and the sanctuary it provides for our wild life. Natural areas are being sought - too late - by hundreds of villages and towns, in the realization that the rich forest floor of shrubs and deep vegetation is vitally necessary in order to prevent floods and soil erosion. We have our "natural area" and we would like to preserve it for all future generations.

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With this in mind, it is our hope that the Board of the Village of East Hampton may find it possible to declare these two gifts of land a sanctuary for wild life in perpetuity, for which the Village and the three mentioned organizations will be responsible.

A temporary committee has been formed, consisting of two members from each of the following organizations: Village Park Commission, Ladies Village Improvement Society, Eastern Gate Garden Club, and the Garden Club of East Hampton. This committee has been formed for the purpose of coordinating the work and future plans for the maintenance and preservation of the Nature Trail as such, -- upon the declaration by the Village that the Nature Trail is a Wild Life Sanctuary in perpetuity.

Yours very truly,



Mary L. Hopkinson
(Mrs. Russell Hopkinson)
Chairman, Nature Trail Committee,
Garden Club of East Hampton

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ANNUAL REPORT

Nature Trail Committee

The Nature Trail and Bird Sanctuary of East Hampton continues to be a never-ending source of pleasure and interest to the Village and its visitors. Every day of the year the area in which the ducks are fed is crowded with children, sometimes just adults, who never seem to weary of feeding and watching the ducks. People wander through the trails continuously. It is a spot which is truly enjoyed by hundreds and hundreds of people throughout the year.

Our committee, which as you know is made up of members from this Club, the L. V. I. S., the Eastern Garden Gate, and the Village Park Commission, tries to the best of its ability to act as guardians and supervisors of the maintenance and preservation of the Trail. Each year our job becomes a bit more difficult as the trees grow older, the thickets get thicker, the banks of the streams erode further, and more damage is done by careless visitors. I might add here that one night some of our careless visitors broke into a house adjoining the Trail and did considerable damage. We now have signs at the four entrances of the Trail saying: "Nature Trail closed after 8:00 P. M. - By order of the Police Department." This we were sorry to do but felt was necessary and it has proved effective.

The surveillance job is one of our guardianship responsibilities; the maintenance job is one of supervision. Mr. Field, our Village Road Commissioner, does as fine a job as he can with his six men who have to take care of all the

village roads, leaving not too much time for the Nature Trail outside of rough pruning on the exterior of the fifteen acres, the care of the bridges and paths, and a small amount of mowing. During the summer many of our members go in and trim overgrown bushes and remove fallen branches in order to keep the trails open. I would like to say here that the day our Garden Club went in and did some excellent pruning was a day we would like to repeat many times.

We have accomplished a few things this year, thanks to the funds given by the previously mentioned organizations and a few private individuals. Masses of bittersweet were removed from the David's Lane end of the Trail and the roots will be destroyed this fall. The dogwood memorial trees were carefully pruned and treated, as also were several other fine specimen trees on Hunting Lane. The killing of the bamboo, which is spreading like wildfire in the center of the Trail, has been negotiated for and will be done next summer, as warm weather is necessary for this operation. The ducks have not seemed to be quite the menace that they were, which is not due to our efforts I'm afraid, as the Game Commissioner would give us no formula by which we could reduce their number. It was either all or nothing and he wasn't even sure about nothing.

I hope you will all see the lovely circular bench which Mr. Frank Dayton built and installed around a tree near the lily pond. The bronze plaque dedicates the bench to Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy King who voluntarily guarded the Nature Trail and fed the ducks for many, many years. In this week's Star there will be a picture of Mr. and Mrs. King's family around the bench, with an article written by Mrs. Rattray. The money for this bench came from the funds given to the

Nature Trail Committee by this club, the Eastern Gate Garden Club and Old East Hampton.

Here I would like to explain that the policy of the Nature Trail Committee is to use the contributions to the Trail for the improvement and embellishment of the Trail and not for every day maintenance. That we believe is the responsibility of the Village.

The Village, however, makes no budget for the Nature Trail. Its care and maintenance come out of the budget of Mr. Field, and, as I explained, he has many vital obligations, namely, the roads of East Hampton. So - between Mr. Field, who is a great lover of the Nature Trail, and myself we have come up with a plan which I have proposed to the Village Board and have every reason to believe will be accepted.

Here is the plan: To employ a man with experience - who is retired from full time work - for four months in the summer. He will take care of all necessary work in the Nature Trail during the growing season and after storms when very often much damage is done. He will also act as a guardian during the day. I asked and received permission from this club that we would pay one-third of his salary. The Village will pay the remainder. This has not been officially sanctioned by the Village, but I believe it will be. I do not know what the cost will be to us but imagine it will be around three hundred dollars. I have in mind that perhaps we can share this expense with our other interested organizations.

There are many things which should be done for the Trail which are under consideration, one of which is the improvement of the so-called "duck feeding area" which includes the parking area, the banks of the stream, the place

where people sit, the surrounding trees and bushes, and various other needs in that region. Part of this so-called "improvement" would be undertaken by Mr. Field's men, but we would like to have professional guidance before anything is done in order that the natural beauty of that spot is retained. This improvement we feel is truly necessary in the immediate future.

In closing I would like to say that the committee with which I am working is great. Each member is vitally interested in the welfare of the Nature Trail. In particular I would like to mention our Miss Eleanor Tingley who is forever picking up sticks in the Trail, guides us with so many suggestions, and is now trying to restore the St. Francis statue. May I also say that the efforts of all of us are more than rewarded when we see the happiness in people's faces as they wander through the trail.

Respectfully submitted,

September 15, 1963

Mary L. Hopkinson
(Mrs. Russell Hopkinson)
Chairman
Nature Trail Committee

1)
Mrs. Russell Hopkinson

P. O. Box 974, East Hampton, New York 11937

Nature Trail Report:

Thanks again to Mr. Field - the Village Road Commissioner - the Trail is in excellent condition - Due to last winter's difficult weather conditions - many of the paths need resurfacing - all of which Mr. Field took care of - As again channel out streams - cut back overgrowth - and reached the duck feeding area -

I wish there were some way of counting the number of visitors to ~~the~~ who ^{came} ~~came~~ to the Nature Trail during the summer - Every time I drive by - the little parking space has been full - ^{and} ~~with~~ more cars parked along the sides

2) of the road - Of course there is a certain amount of litter around with ~~that~~^{so} many people going through the trail - but - as things go - it could be worse - and Mr. Field with his men do the very best they can -

We shall again consider putting more paths in area on North side of Hunting Lane - Mr. Field ^{says} that if the winter does not require too much from his men - he will certainly do this - We have not abandoned the idea of dredging in the area where ~~the~~^a pond used to be - Mrs. Lister - one of the great friends of the Nature Trail for many-many years would love to see this done - and so would we - This winter we shall try to obtain some expert advice for

3)

Mrs. Russell Hopkinson

P. O. Box 974, East Hampton, New York 11937

this project —

We have a few problems. The lily pond continues to produce a luxuriant growth of revolting green slime. The water lilies we planted last year survived but are almost obliterated from sight by the amount of algae in the pond. As many of you know who have visited this otherwise lovely spot, there is practically no flow of water during a dry summer such as we have had. A pump might be possible to install. but is not thought of favorably by Mr. Field. Many of

Mrs. Russell Hopkinson

P. O. Box 974, East Hampton, New York 11937

The members have a hydraulic engineer for a husband or friend we should be delighted to hear his opinion.

Our second problem is one that we have every year - towards the end of the summer. So much bread-corn - etc - etc is fed to the ducks by the ~~many visitors to the trail~~ - that they can't possibly consume it all - and therefore - the rats come along for their share - Usually - as the feeding diminishes the rats disappear. This year - however - we have felt that it is necessary to do an extermination program - ~~because~~ due to the tremendous number of

5)

Mrs. Russell Hopkinson

P. O. Box 974, East Hampton, New York 11937

visitors who have been feeding the ducks -
 Many times I have gone by the stream - and
 seen children dumping bags of bread + rolls
 into the water - and the ducks just sailed
 by with their beaks in the air. So the
 rats come ^{TP} - We are now in consultation with Mr. Field
 and Mr. Nardi - who - as many of you know - is an
 experienced exterminator. He has recommended
 a method where only rats are affected - absolutely
 no injury to the ducks. We are hoping this will
 be put in effect within a few days -

Vandalism was slight - except for one
 instance which could have been serious. A visitor

8) has sent this as a gift to the Nature Trail - at the request of Mr. Chappell - who has suggested that it might be played at the Nature Trail as a possible Nature Program Material. It is a fascinating idea - and we shall pursue the possibilities. We are very grateful for his interest.

This winter the committee will meet again - to outline winter work with Mr. Field. We have our little nest egg in the bank - and it may be that this winter we shall use it -

Respectfully submitted

Mary J. Hopkinson
Ch. Nature Trail Committee

Nature Trail History - Garden Club of East Hampton

- 8/13/1935** Nature Trail first mentioned. Praised "generosity of Mrs. Woodhouse in giving the land. The ultimate idea is to grow all species of wild flowers in eastern Long Island and also to establish houses and food stations for the birds."
- 9/26/35** Motion made to appropriate \$50 for the Nature Trail. Nature Trail Comm. became a subdivision of the Hort. Comm. Mrs. William Lockwood named chairman.
- 9/22/36** Mrs. Lockwood said that Mrs. Woodhouse was anxious to know whether the Club had come to a decision as to whether it would like her gift of the Nature Trail. It would be tax-free. Mrs. Woodhouse felt that if it became a burden at any time she would take it back or it would revert to the estate.... After much discussion as to the advisability of accepting the gift of the land, and also as to the financial responsibility that it would entail each year, it was moved and seconded that the GC accept with pleasure, and with much appreciation, Mrs. Woodhouse's offer of the Nature Trail. Motion carried.
- 11/9/36** \$100 voted for work on the trail.
- 1/7/37** \$50 voted for more work on the trail.
- 6/14/37** \$100 voted for work on paths in Nature Trail.
- 1/20/38** Mrs. Jones (new chairman of Nature Trail) has written to the President asking what was the amount of money allotted to the trail. It was found that there was no definite budget. No action was taken on a definite amount.
- 7/11/38** The Trail now has a credit in the Treasurer's book of \$141.22. A motion was made that an additional \$100 be voted for the Trail.
- 9/13/38** Mrs. Lockwood reported a conversation which she had with Mrs. Woodhouse. It is definitely understood that Mrs. Woodhouse will make provision in her will that the present Nature Trail property will be left to the GC of EH, and it was understood, that she would either leave a fund to pay the taxes (and small upkeep) or arrange that the property be tax free to the Club.
- 5/3/39** Mrs. Lockwood reported that with the \$100 the GC of EH had sent to Mr. King a good job had been done in clearing away rubbish, cutting trees, etc. Mrs. Lockwood has raised \$75 and has spent \$60 on having trees pulled up. She would like to raise \$50 more.
- 7/18/39** \$50 voted for the trail and another \$50 be voted as the necessity arose.
- 9/18/39** It was suggested by the Trail Comm. that a lump sum be given to the Comm. each year and that they would spend it as was needed.... it was decided that the Nature Trail moneys remain in the Club funds and the bills be paid by the Treasurer.
- 9/19/39** Mrs. Lockwood raised \$110 to help with the extra expenses for the Trail due to the storm. 4 GC members contributed. There is a \$56.10 balance in the account.
- 1940** \$100 allocated for Nature Trail.
- 6/16/41** \$100 allocated for Nature Trail
- 1942** \$100 allocated for Nature Trail. \$319.45 spent.
- 7/7/42** Nature Trail formally opened to public. In attendance were Mayor, Village Board, School Board, L.V.I.S. board, etc.
- 1943** \$86.50 spent on Nature Trail
- 1944** Did not spend any money on Nature Trail.
- 1945** \$200 allocated for Nature Trail. Sum not spent as chairman could not find laborers due to WWII.

2. Nature Trail (continued)

- 1946** \$244.32 spent on the Nature Trail.
- 1/9/47** Expression of opinion by the Executive Comm. as to their wishes in regard to the acceptance of the Water Garden and Nature Trail properties should Mrs. Woodhouse conclude to give them to the GC this spring. Mrs. Woodhouse has discussed this matter with Mrs. Lockwood often and again this past fall with Mrs. Ramee (Nature Trail Chairman.). It was explained to her at that time that the Club could not undertake the care of these properties unless a fund were allocated by her at the same time for their upkeep..... The details of the transfer of title of these properties is still being worked out by Mrs. Woodhouse's lawyer.
- 3/24/47** \$250 allocated for Nature Trail.
- 9/9/47** An extra \$150 appropriated for the nature Trail.
- 9/13/47** The question of a budget for the Nature Trail comes up. "About \$300 each year will take care of only the regular work and there should be more money expended than this." No decision
- 1948** \$150.11 spent on trail, leaving balance of \$1.89. No other financial record.
- 1949** \$300 appropriated for work on trail. \$404.39 spent.
- 1950** \$300 appropriated for work on trail.
- April 1951** Mrs. Woodhouse deeded Nature Trail to the village.
- 6/21/51** "Nature Trail Comm. (of GC of EH) to collaborate with Mayor. Write letter to Mayor to appoint person and committee for maintenance. Eastern Gate and East Hampton Garden Clubs not to give financial support, but advisory responsibility." Exec. Board Meeting.
- 6/26/51** Mrs. Kingsley reported on the Nature Trail, to be handled by the Village Board after July 7th." Minutes of regular meeting.
- 7/10/51** Mrs. Kingsley reported on the Nature Trail, saying that a substantial amount had been allocated by the Town Board (Village?) for maintenance but did not wish the sum of money to be on the record yet." Minutes of regular meeting.
- 9/11/51** \$25 spent on trail this year. "No cooperation from the Park Committee. No meeting held." Annual meeting minutes.
- 1952** No financial record. "Thanks to Mayor and Mr. Baker all ponds cleared, unsightly clumps removed, streams run clear." Nature Trail report - Annual Meeting.
- 1953** No financial record
- 1954** No financial record
- 1955** \$200 allocated for work on Nature Trail.
- 1956** \$94 spent on Nature Trail. No other financial record.
- 1/14/57** "Mrs. Hopkinson reported on a conversation that she had had with the Mayor. Mr. Marley re the problems of the Nature Trail in which he was most cooperative. He said that the Village has no budget for the Nature Trail but that some of the Highway men could be diverted to work with Mr. Mott in order to lower the expenses. Mr. Marley also said that he would try and get an appropriation in next year's budget." Exec. Comm. minutes.
- 1/26/57** "The Village has been most cooperative and the Eastern Gate Garden Club has some money to spend.. They have put in some new benches, some wild azaleas and evergreens. Mrs. Kleck suggested asking high school students to be members when there is a meeting between the L.V.I.S., the GC of EH, the Eastern Gate GC and the Village."
- 7/10/57** "Mrs. Hopkinson spoke of the joint committee for the Nature Trail, and said that Mr. Marley had advised her that it would come under the Park Commission of which Mrs. Percy Schenck is chairman. It was suggested that a note be written to Mrs. Schenck and to Mrs. Siter and try to arrange a joint meeting at an early date."
- 9/11/57** Members donations to Nature Trail =\$461 + lecture proceeds \$184.83 = \$645.83. Money spent on Nature Trail \$377.20

3. Nature Trail (continued)

11/20/57 "After discussing suggestions made by Dr. Collins (naturalist and speaker at meeting attended by representatives of civic groups and members of the GC of EH and Eastern Gate GC.) in his letter to Mrs. Hopkinson (Pres.), it was decided to endeavor to obtain an aerial photograph of the Nature Trail to be used in future discussion and planning. Mrs. Hop. is to contact the gentleman suggested by Dr. Collins for guidance in future plans. If his services are available, a meeting will be called in the near future with representatives from the Garden Club of EH, Eastern Gate GC, L.V.I.S. and the Village Park Commission to form a committee for future planning and work on the Nature Trail."

12/4/57 The Executive Comm. was told that Mrs. Siter and Mrs. Ferris Talmage had made an investigation of the Nature Trail and have engaged the Mott Brothers to do a clean-up job. Their estimate is \$350... the work to proceed when the weather permits. Mrs. Hopkinson was asked to go see the Mayor and ask him to cooperate with labor... motion made and carried that "we only do the clean up work and not get involved in planting."

12/17/57 "No winter work on the Trail is to be planned until we have been able to formulate an over-all plan for future work to be done. Mrs. Hopkinson (Pres.) is to write Dr. Collins asking his advice as to procedure."

9/10/58 \$268.63 given by members for Nature Trail. No disbursements noted.

Oct. 1958 Nature Trail Comm. formed to consist of 2 members each from Village Park Commission, L.V.I.S., Eastern Gate GC and GC of EH.

1959 Nature Trail now has a special account on books of GC of EH. Account is with Valley National Bank.

9/11/63 GC of EH voted to donate surplus of landscaping fund to NT \$158.15

9/15/64 Nature Trail account balance **\$568.97**

"The L.V.I.S. is giving two very lovely sweet gum Trees. They are also donating a dogwood tree. "

9/8/65 Balance in Nature Trail Account **\$613.22**

1966 Balance in Nature Trail Account **\$400.86**

9/5/67 Nature Trail Balance **\$933.02**

Village of EH spent \$2,000 to resurface paths, clearing streams and ponds, banks reinforced and 3 trails to north of Hunting Lane restored. GC of EH sent thanks to Eastern Gate, LVIS, Mayor Skidmore and Village Trustees for work done.

11/18/68 Nature Trail Balance **\$1,100.88**

9/9/69 Nature Trail Balance **\$2,075.88**

See attached report by Mary Hopkinson re proposed water study for Nature Trail.

1970 Nature Trail Balance **\$2,194.63**

1971 Schellinger Co. well drilling to 152' \$1,040.59

(1/2 to be shared by EH Village subject to approval by Trustees)

other expenses 23.04

Donations (not specified) \$1,390.00

Nature Trail Balance **\$2,521.59**

page 4. Nature Trail

9/6/72	Nature Trail Balance		\$2,619.46
1973	Nature Trail Balance		\$2,781.85
1974	Nature Trail Balance		\$3,141.32
1975	Expense of \$540.00 for cleaning streams. N.T. Balance		\$2,902.01
9/7/76	Nature Trail Balance		\$2,919.48
1977	Nature Trail Balance		\$3,095.01
1978	Nature Trail Balance		\$3,566.39
1979	Nature Trail Balance		\$4,029.29
1980	Nature Trail Balance		\$4,339.56
1981	Nature Trail Balance		\$4,690.76
1982	Expense of \$1,558.50 for three teak benches		
11/13/83	Opened account at Bank of New York - balance		\$3,928.55

I am going to list the years 1984-1992 as they were shown in the Treasurer's reports made at the Annual Meeting. It will give you some idea of how the interest was piling up and no disbursements were made.

9/4/84	Nature Trail balance		\$4,197.52
9/3/85	donation of L.V.I.S.	50.00	
	interest	334.17	
	Nature Trail balance		\$4,581.69
8/30/86	donation of L.V.I.S.	50.00	
	interest	<u>273.15</u>	
	Nature trail balance		\$4,904.84
8/31/87	donation of L.V.I.S.	50.00	
	interest	<u>257.04</u>	
			\$5,211.88
8/31/88	donation of L.V.I.S.	50.00	
	interest	<u>303.60</u>	
			\$5,565.48
9/29/89	donation of L.V.I.S.	50.00	
	interest	<u>391.14</u>	
			\$6,006.62
9/28/90	donation of L.V.I.S.	50.00	
	interest	<u>422.31</u>	
			\$6,478.93
6/30/91	no record of L.V.I.S. donation		
	interest	<u>443.89</u>	
			\$6,922.82
6/30/92	no record of L.V.I.S. donation		
	interest	<u>290.18</u>	
			\$7,213.00

page 5. Nature Trail

1993 record in Treasurer's file

1994 record in Treasurer's file

This is the year that the GC of EH and the L.V.I.S. made a public appeal for funds to feed the ducks during the extremely cold winter. Records in Treasurer's file. Funds put in Nature Trail Account.

11/29/96 Nature Trail account **\$8,640.48**

1/23/97 Sandy Taylor, President, GC of EH sent a check for \$415 (the funds collected to feed the ducks by public subscription) to Mrs. Therese Furst, the L.V.I.S. chairman for the Nature Trail. The money was put in the Nature Trail account at Agway and used for feed.

Money spent by GC of EH on Nature Trail 1935 - 1959

\$50	1935
\$100	1936
\$150	1937
\$100	1938
\$260	1939
\$100	1940
\$100	1941
\$100	1942
\$200	1945
\$400	1947
\$300	1949
\$300	1950
\$200	1955
\$645	1957
<u>\$268</u>	<u>1958</u>
\$3,273	

Donations to Nature Trail Account

1959-1978	Garden Club of East Hampton donated	\$2,614
1959-1981	Old East Hampton donated	\$650
1959-1974	Eastern Gate Garden Club donated	225
1972-1990	L.V.I.S. donated	1,000
1964	Hook Pond Association donated	250
1969	Miss May Rogers (not GC of EH member)	500
1971	donations given to offset well-drilling	1,390

I believe most came from GC of EH members

page 6. Nature Trail

Disbursements: The disbursements below were either listed in the bank account as withdrawals with no mention of what they were used for or listed in the Treasurer's annual report on the Nature Trail account. There have undoubtedly been more expenses than the ones listed below.

1959-1960	\$157.60	
1966	237.36	St. Francis statue
1967	42.84	waterlilies
1970	131.25	
1971	520.00	well drilling (one half the cost - other half paid by Village)
1972	189.45	
	74.20	bench repair
1975	540.00	cleaning streams
1976	192.00	
1977	75.00	
1982	<u>\$1,558.50</u>	three teak benches
	\$3,718.20	