

photo gerard monteux



Jeremy's Gift: Taft Point by Tom Sidar

Jeremy Strater leans across the worn and weathered kitchen table at his Taft Point cottage. With the wistful look of an emotional reminiscence, he states, "My father once said to me, 'Jeremy, this land is your fortune. Whack it up into one acre lots.'"

At this point, Jeremy's donation of sixty-five acres at Taft Point to Frenchman Bay Conservancy has been complete for about a week. I've probably been out to Taft Point twenty-five times. I know Jeremy

pretty well by now. I wait for what comes next in this classic "fathers and sons" conversation.

Jeremy seems to like the pesky red squirrels as much he likes the chickadees. Once I saw a spider move

Views from the rock-covered shoreline of Flanders Bay look south to Stave Island and the Acadia Mountains, west to Calf Island and Sorrento, northwest to Schieffelin Point and, in the distance, Schoodic Mountain.

He continues, "I can't remember if I said anything at all. Sometimes, when you hear something that preposterous, it's just better not to dignify it with a response."

As we talk, chipmunks, squirrels, chickadees and hairy woodpeckers chatter and chase each other around the feeders outside the window.

across his table. I knew better than to swat it. I trapped it in a glass jar and moved it outside. Jeremy is a kind man. His gift is an act of kindness to the land and to the people of Downeast Maine.

On October 24, Jeremy and I signed the papers. The new Taft Point Preserve has over a half a mile of

"Like" us on Facebook.



Stay in touch with the latest FBC news, or post photos of your friends and family enjoying one of the FBC Preserves or events.

facebook.com/frenchmanbay

continued on page 2

frontage on Flanders Bay and Jones Cove. FBC plans to build two hiking trails, about a half mile each, one to Flanders Bay and one to Jones Cove. Views from the rock-covered shoreline of Flanders Bay look south to Stave Island and the Acadia Mountains,



Portrait of Jeremy by his father Henry Strater

west to Calf Island and Sorrento, northwest to Schieffelin Point and, in the distance, Schoodic Mountain.

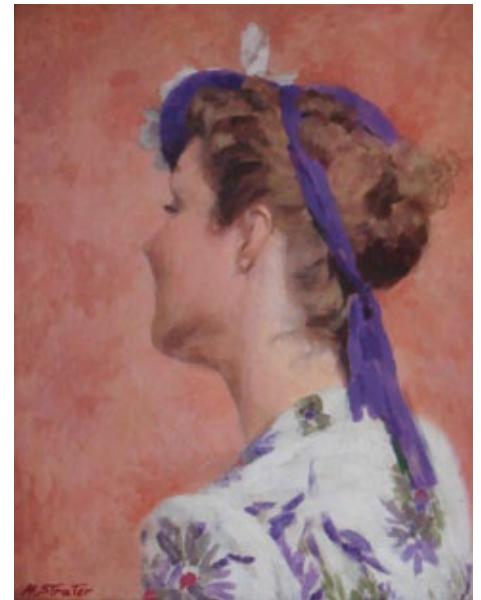
Jeremy's father, Henry Strater, was an American realist painter; a friend of F. Scott Fitzgerald at Princeton,

an American Ambulance Corps volunteer in WWI, and a member of that group of American expats living in Paris that Gertrude Stein famously described as the "Lost Generation."

Jeremy's parents divorced when he was very young. In 1948, when he was four years old, his mother, Janet Strater, purchased the Taft Point land and cottages and moved to Maine. As Jeremy says, and the family portraits prove, Janet was "absolutely precious, a real looker." She married again to a water color painter and a lobsterman who also ran a fishing weir off of Calf Island.

"When I was ten years old, he took me with him on his twenty-six foot lobster boat, with a canvas dodger, driven by a powerful Chevy six engine. I was young, and I was out working the waters of Flanders Bay. I thought that was just the coolest thing. Those were my formative years. There was also a lot of art and music. I grew up with all these talented people—artists, musicians but also welders, fisherman, carpenters."

Once, Jeremy gave me a tour of the Taft Point cottage where he grew up and later returned to live. The rooms of the cottage ramble on, full



Portrait of Janet Strater, Jeremy's mother, by his father Henry Strater

of diverse items including chainsaws, guitars, harmonicas, books, papers in files, and painted portraits. In one of the guest rooms, there is a faded old felt pennant on the wall, PRINCETON TIGERS. I laugh and say that half the rooms in my old school had one like that hanging on the wall. Later in the day, out by the old collapsed boathouse I'm about to leave when Jeremy gets a look on his face like he remembers something. "Where did you go to school?"

"A small school in eastern Pennsylvania, Hill School."

"Hill School! I went to Lawrenceville! You were our arch rivals! Beat Hill!" We laugh and compare memories of our "almost common" experience. Over the months to come, we never stop joking about the "Larries" and "Hillies."

After Lawrenceville and Goddard College, Jeremy lived in Philadelphia. "When I worked in Philadelphia, I didn't even think about Taft Point. I rented the cottage for a hundred dollars a month just to pay the taxes. In 1984, I came back to work on the caretaker's cottage. It was close to sliding down the bank into the bay and I wanted to save it. I lived in that cottage and worked on the concrete foundation with breaker bars, hammer drills and wedges all summer long. I lifted and hauled and sweat



photo tom sidar

until I got down to my high school weight. I didn't have running water. I bathed in Jones Pond." He laughs. "Fifteen years later I had saved up enough to have Patrick Jordan move it back. It took an excavator just twenty minutes to break up the old foundation, and then I had a new a new foundation built on that same spot."

"Why did you decide to stay here and not go back to Philadelphia?" I ask.

"The kindness and civility of the people. The integrity. And I enjoyed working the land with saws and tractors and chains doing timber stand improvement."

After a pause, he continues, "I was around all these talented people—musicians and artists. I was hanging around with welders and loggers, so I developed a sense of how to relate to many different people. That was the strength of my life. I know a bit about what a forest ranger does, and a welder, and a blues musician. That's why I call myself a 'dubber'. I had no art talent, but I had a good talent in music. I picked up a guitar when I was sixteen and I took to it. Then came the bass, mandolin, harmonica and autoharp, singing and playing ballads and blues."

Jeremy and I share an interest in certain singers and songs. Once, when we were riding in my Jeep I pushed Guy Clark's "Desperados Waiting for a Train" into the CD player. Jeremy got a huge smile and joined in from the beginning, "I played the Red River Valley..." He sang it word for word.

At the kitchen table a few hours have past. We are talking easily about our lives, as if we've known each other for many years. I'm taking some notes. Then his honest and natural modesty kicks in. He blurts out, "It ain't about me. It's about the land, the land that was given to me and nurtured, the timber stands, the deer on the pasture edges, the woods with pileated woodpeckers that sound like African drummers...the way, some-



photo tom sidar

"It's about the land, the land that was given to me and nurtured, the timber stands, the deer on the pasture edges, the woods with pileated woodpeckers that sound like African drummers..."

—Jeremy Strater

times, the bay lies flat-ass calm like a bathtub and sometimes freezes up so chunks of ice wash up on the shore and tilt like upturned tables. The water always reflects the weather in the sky above. It's wonderful to behold."

"Don't worry Jeremy, I'll get it right. This story is about the gift and the giver and the land. Parents and grandparents will bring their children and grandchildren to this wonderful

place and they will remember it all their lives. People will read this story in ten minutes. Let's allow that." We shake hands and hug, and I say I'll be back soon. On the drive back to the office, I reflect warmly that, though the trails will be named after bodies of water, this has been a Friendship Trail for Jeremy and me. ❖

A Fond Farewell to Tom Sidar, and

By Randy Ewins *President, FBC*

When you reflect on the twenty-year history of Frenchman Bay Conservancy, it becomes apparent that this once little land trust business has matured and grown dramatically in the past six and a half years under Tom Sidar's leadership. Tom orchestrated a path for FBC that has resulted in financial, organizational and land protection successes that one would have never thought possible in such a relatively short period of time.

From a financial standpoint, Tom worked with the Finance Committee and Board to develop and implement a Balanced Budget every year under his leadership. When he arrived at FBC, there was



no endowment, or operating reserve, and funding for stewardship was just beginning. Today, FBC can proudly state that our Operating Endowment account is well over a half a million dollars, and we have a healthy operating reserve and a fully funded stewardship account. This is quite an accomplishment in just six and a half years. Keep in mind, these funds did not fall from the sky; they are a result of your generous and sustained gifts.

Through Tom's insight, in 2013, FBC became one of only 238 Accredited Land Trusts by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC) in the United

States. The LTAC was created eight years ago as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance to recognize land trust organizations for meeting stringent national standards for excellence, upholding the public trust and ensuring that conservation efforts are permanent. FBC is one of only a handful of Accredited Land Trust organizations in Maine. In addition to national recognition, Accreditation establishes policy and practices that FBC follows pertaining to documentation validity, thoroughness and retention.

Today, FBC protects 6,383 acres through easement and fee lands. Over half of those total acres have been put under conservation protection during Tom's tenure at FBC. Considering that Tom has led FBC for less than one third of FBC's existence, that is a

Tom has provided a level of mentorship to board members, young people and land owners, and to me that is immeasurable. This is an accomplishment that cannot be quantified by numbers, acreage, or certifications.

significant accomplishment. In addition to doubling FBC's conserved lands, Tom also expanded FBC into four new towns in the Frenchman Bay and Union River corridors. And in doing so, he established FBC with lasting relationships that will be handed down through generations to come.

In closing on a more personal note, Tom has provided a level of mentorship to board members, young people and land owners, and to me that is immeasurable. This is an accomplishment that cannot be quantified by numbers, acreage or certifications. His passion for these pristine lands that we share with nature is nothing short of exemplary. Thank you Tom, for your dedication, enthusiasm, work ethic and most of all, being such a wonderful friend and leader to Frenchman Bay Conservancy. Enjoy your retirement!

a Warm Welcome to Aaron Dority

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I announce the selection of Aaron Dority as FBC's new Executive Director. Aaron comes to FBC from Penobscot East Resource Center, a fishing community nonprofit organization located in Stonington, Maine, where he was the Federal Policy Director and prior to that, the Director of the Downeast Groundfish Initiative for the past seven years. Aaron was instrumental in the development of draft policies to protect critical marine habitat and support small scale, sustainable fishing. He co-developed a cooperative research survey with local fishermen to assess fish stocks.

Aaron earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Connecticut in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Oregon, with a focus on nonprofit and natural resource management. He brings a wealth of nonprofit experience to FBC, with a keen focus on fundraising, grant writing, stewardship, budgeting, and strategic planning. Aaron lives in Blue Hill, Maine, with his wife Jessie Ray and their three children.

As he looks forward to starting on December 1, Aaron offered the following words:

Frenchman Bay Conservancy has a great track record preserving this unique region—for ecological value, for public access and recreation, and to protect the sense of place that defines this incredible piece of coastal Maine. I think that Tom Sidar and the members of the board of directors have done an excellent job protecting land within the mission area of FBC, including bringing an additional roughly 3,000 acres under protection within the past few years.

As the incoming Executive Director, I'm looking forward to further growth and successes, focusing on land stewardship, community engagement and sound organizational development. I look forward to meeting the people who sustain this organization—those with their generosity and with their enthusiasm, and I plan to build upon FBC's existing relationships with people from throughout the region. I want to hear the stories that landowners have to share about their land, why it is important to them, and I want to carry out a conservation strategy that complements the livelihoods of Hancock County residents.

I'll be starting in December, and I invite all those who are interested to reach out and say hello. After December 1, you will be able to reach me at 207-422-2328, or aaron@frenchmanbay.org. ❖



“I look forward to meeting the people who sustain this organization—those with their generosity and with their enthusiasm, and I plan to build upon FBC’s existing relationships with people from throughout the region.”

— Aaron Dority

2nd Annual Downeast Double Trouble Trail Race



photos hans krichels

Frenchman Bay Conservancy and Great Pond Mountain Land Trust partnered again for a two-day trail race event. The Wildlands Trail Run at Great Pond Mountain on October 26 drew seventy-eight runners this year. The FBC Autumn Trail Race was scheduled for November 2, but had to be postponed due to the heavy snow and winds that pounded Downeast Maine that day. The race date moved to November 9, and fifty runners showed up and finished the race in good form and good spirits on a much more pleasant day. The overall winners were Patrick Powers and Jennifer Van Dongen. Twenty-six volunteers worked the start, road crossings, mid-trail cheering stations, finish line scoring, chili and refreshment tables and much more. Special thanks to our major sponsors: Evergreen Home & Hearth, Peacock Construction, and EBS. ❖



FBC President Randy Ewins chats with winner Patrick Powers



Women's winner, Jennifer Van Dongen

FBC Mourns the Loss of a Dear Friend and Patriarch of FBC



Oliver Crosby, one of the original signers of FBC's Articles of Incorporation and twenty plus year Board member died on October 25, 2014. He was 94 years old. Oliver was the cornerstone of FBC for many years, enlightening and educating all who would listen on the benefits of protecting and conserving land.

Just this past September at Tom Sidar's retirement recognition event, Oliver, though in poor health, arrived with his wife Beryl. At one point, Oliver unfolded his six foot, five inch

frame out of a small folding chair to stand and address the audience on the accomplishments of our retiring Director. Oliver was a man of integrity, wisdom and unselfish recognition of others.

A special tribute to Oliver Crosby will be published in the our 2015 Spring Newsletter. You are invited to share your thoughts, or memories about Oliver, and submit them for publication in the spring newsletter.

Please send your submissions to rle2run@yahoo.com, or Randy Ewins, 26 Carters Beach Road, Hancock, ME 04640. Volume of content will be a consideration, so please write accordingly.

A reflection of Oliver's life can be found at: <http://www.ellsworthamerican.com/?s=oliver+crosby>.

Everybody loved Oliver Crosby. He will be missed dearly.

—Randy Ewins
President, FBC

Honorary Gifts

IN MEMORIAM

Rick Beckjord
David Brewster
Constance Cameron
Oliver Crosby
Ed Curtis
David Watson Daniel
Wally Holt
Barbara Lindsay
Henry L Milo
Helen Smith
Susan Weber

IN NOMINE

Bruce & Sheila Denny-Brown
Annette Nash
Nancy & Jim Patterson
Josef & Nina Sommer
Dana R Younger



Join us TODAY!

Your membership and donations help us protect and preserve the character of this very special region—and we welcome donations at all levels. Members receive a free decal, our bi-annual newsletter, and opportunities to volunteer.

BLUE HERON SOCIETY

If possible, we urge you to consider joining the Blue Heron Society by making a commitment to give \$1000 or more each year for general operating support. You can also support the Conservancy through a bequest. Remember us in your will or explore other estate planning options with your lawyer.

YES! I want to join Frenchman Bay Conservancy.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Summer address from _____ to _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Please enroll me in the category checked below.

☐ \$5 STUDENT

☐ \$250

☐ \$25

☐ \$500

☐ \$50

☐ \$750

☐ \$100

☐ \$ _____

BLUE HERON SOCIETY

☐ \$1000

☐ \$2500

☐ \$5000

☐ My check, payable to FBC, is enclosed.

☐ I prefer to remain anonymous in public membership lists.

Please remit form and check to: Frenchman Bay Conservancy
PO Box 150, Hancock, Maine 04640

To pay by credit card, visit our website www.frenchmanbay.org

*Frenchman Bay Conservancy is recognized as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization.
All gifts are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*

Thank you!

Graphic Design: Marshall Wilkes, Ellsworth. Printed on recycled paper.



Frenchman Bay Conservancy

Frenchman Bay Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust founded in 1987. Our mission is to build lasting relationships and commitments that conserve the distinctive landscapes and natural resources of the Frenchman Bay and Union River watersheds.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Randy Ewins, *President*

Lisa Heyward, *Vice President*

David Sanderson, *Secretary*

Jack Frost, *Treasurer*

Richard Barton

Michelle Beal

Polly Ceckler

Ken Cline

Frank Dorsey

Lee Fairbanks

Paul Haertel

Misha Mytar

Tobin Peacock

Iris Simon

Dyer Wadsworth

Stephen Weber



STAFF

Aaron Dority, *Executive Director*

Joyce B. Cornwell, *Office Manager*

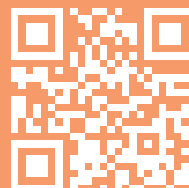
For more information on the Conservancy, please visit our office at Tidal Falls, or contact us by mail, phone, or e-mail:

Frenchman Bay Conservancy
PO Box 150 Hancock, Maine 04640

(207) 422-2328

aaron@frenchmanbay.org

www.frenchmanbay.org



SCAN THIS CODE

and join Frenchman Bay Conservancy from your smart phone with a credit card.



PO Box 150 Hancock, Maine 04640

Non-profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Hancock, ME
04640
Permit #1

Sunset at Taft Point

photo gerard monteux