



Photo by Joseph Meehan

## *Celebrating 35 Years of Conservation*

Since the Salisbury Association Land Trust was established in the mid-1970s, it has worked with local landowners who expressed the wish to permanently protect some or all of their land from future development. A variety of land-protection options were employed including conservation easements, donation of land, and land purchase to protect farmland, forests, wetlands, scenic vistas and wildlife habitat.

### *The Land Trust: Start-up*

Every endeavor has its pioneers and that was certainly the case some 35 years ago when the idea of creating a local land trust was first proposed.

Recognizing that future development would have a big impact on Salisbury's landscape, and wanting to permanently protect the town's beautiful scenic settings, Gus Pope, who lived near the Salmon Kill, explored the possibility of forming a non-profit trust.

He was joined by Bill Morrill (who later became the Land Trust chairman and Salisbury Association president) in formulating plans to set up a land trust. Mitch Finlay, then president of the Salisbury Association, arranged for the Land Trust to become a committee within the Association.

During this start-up period, the Land Trust was assisted by The Nature Conservancy in early

transactions to be sure that tax and legal issues were properly handled. Around this time Mr. Pope donated land, conveying a portion of the Barrick Matiff, a stretch of ridgeline land off Route 44. The National Park Service later purchased the Pope land as part of the Appalachian Trail protective corridor. Proceeds from the sale became a Land Trust endowment that, with investment, still provides benefits today.

### *The Early Years*

Also early on, Doris Walker, a member of the first Salisbury Conservation Commission, and still an active member of the Land Trust today, gave a conservation easement and donated several parcels of land to protect her farmland and the scenic beauty along Salmon Kill Road. Recalling that time, she recently remarked, "I loved that land and wanted the valley and mountain views to go on forever."

In the early and mid 1980s a cluster of conservation actions protected a large area of agricultural lands in the Town Hill section near the Hotchkiss School. Ben Belcher donated conservation easements on over 300 acres to the Salisbury Association and American Farmland Trust (AFT). Other easement donors followed, including Dorrance Sexton and Robert Noble. The AFT easements

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were later transferred to the Salisbury Association. In addition, the Blum family sold development rights to the State of Connecticut. These various efforts combined to protect a large swath of contiguous prime farmland.



*Among the pioneers of the Salisbury Land Trust in the 1970s: Doris Walker and Gus Pope (seated), Mitch Finlay (left) and Bill Morrill. Photo courtesy The Lakeville Journal, Sept. 8, 1994*

Conservation interest extended to lands along Moore Brook, where Dr. Mary Alice White (who became Land Trust chairwoman in 1985 and later Salisbury Association president) donated easements, as did several of her neighbors, preserving what the *Salisbury Natural Resource Inventory* (2009) describes as “one of the true ecological treasures of the region.”

In the early 1990s Dr. White led a fund-raising effort to protect the rugged and scenic Sages Ravine, now owned by the State of Connecticut, from development.

The Salisbury Land Trust, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, American Farmland Trust, and National Park Service was also instrumental in protecting large areas of farmland and forest from Hamlet Hill Farm across the ridges east to Prospect Mountain. Major donors involved included Peter Findlay, the Forsyth and Mitchell families, and John Herndon.

This article provides a general summary of the first 20 or so years of the Land Trust’s activities. In addition to the individuals mentioned, many others have played a significant role as supporters.

All of the conserved lands, past and present, are identified on the Salisbury Open Space Map, published and periodically updated by the Salisbury Land Trust. A large-size edition of the map is displayed at Town Hall and at the Academy Building, where it is available for purchase.

*With thanks to Bill Morrill for providing information used in the preparation of this article.*

***Land Trust Seeks Photos***

The Salisbury Land Trust is marking 35 years of land protection with a special photo exhibit celebrating Salisbury’s natural resources and scenic beauty.

The show will include photographs by both professional photographers and the general public. It will be on view at the Academy Building from August 15 to October 30.

We welcome your participation. If you would like to submit a photo for consideration in this juried show, please call the Salisbury Association at 860-435-0566 or stop by the Academy Building for entry rules.

## Talks on Local Heritage

The Salisbury Association Historical Society, in conjunction with Scoville Memorial Library, presents three heritage talks this winter-spring season. The talks, free and open to the public, take place at 2:00 in the library's Wardell Room.

**February 19:** Bill Hosley, former Director of the New Haven Historical Society Museum and an authority on Connecticut's history, presents a program called "More Than Books--Libraries, Communities and Historic Preservation." His talk focuses on the area's many municipal, history and specialty research libraries.

**March 19:** This talk focuses on the distinguished Holley family, as Lou Bucceri and Barbara Collins address the topic, "The Holleys and the Holley-Williams House of Lakeville." Their presentation features a special documentary film that opens a window to the time when iron was king in Salisbury.



*Dining room of the Holley-Williams House*

**April 16:** Salisbury was famous for its iron operations, providing weapons for the nation's wars as well as tools, artifacts and equipment for its peacetime expansion. Salisbury iron was known for its high quality, a matter of importance when producing cannons or making railroad wheels strong enough to ride over the Rockies. Dick Paddock will recall this heritage in his talk, "Salisbury Iron 1731-1923: A Rich Heritage."

## Era of Elegance II

After a successful "Era of Elegance" series last year, the Salisbury Historical Society is pleased to sponsor a second season of talks at Scoville Memorial Library. The lectures begin at 2:00, and public is invited.

**January 22:** Professional photographer and Twin Lakes resident Joseph Meehan opened the series with a talk on "The Fascinating World of Nineteenth Century Photography," a look at the trials and tribulations of the pioneer photographers who worked with rudimentary cameras and employed crude chemical processes. Using many projected images and print samples, he thoroughly engaged a standing-room-only audience.



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**February 26:** Pauline Simring's talk on antique and estate jewelry was titled "Personal Adornment." Ms. Simring has a passion for beautiful, handmade jewelry spanning many centuries dating from the Greek/Roman era through the Edwardian and Victorian periods. In her presentation she discussed the history, styles and significance of jewelry.



*Stephan Van Rensselaer*

**March 26:** Deborah Emmons-Andarawis will present a talk about Albany's "Shades of Class" during the 18th century, featuring the Van Rensselaer and Schulyer families. Ms. Emmons-Andarawis is the curator of Historic Cherry Hill, a museum in Albany.

## *Heritage of Salisbury's Public Schools*



*Lakeville High School, closed in 1938 when HVRHS was opened, was located where the Lakeville Post Office is today*

Following up on last year's Historical Society exhibit on the heritage of Salisbury's independent schools, this spring features an exhibit on the history of Salisbury's public schools. Beginning with the town's fourteen small District Schools, the exhibit extends to present-day public schools, Salisbury Central School and HVRHS.

Students at the early District Schools learned not only the "3 R's" but also the broader aspects of history, literature and the developing world. The exhibit will delve into these studies, timely even today

as society continues to seek the keys to the educational process. Most of these early schools have disappeared, but recollections of former students will add texture to the historical photos and documents.

Of special interest is the Connecticut School for Imbeciles, a name that would be impossible to use today. With students brought in from around the state, new teaching methods were explored to equip the students with skills for dealing with society.

The exhibit will be on view at the Academy Building from May 16 to August 8. *Ron Jones*



*District Town Hill School (one-room school house), structure still in existence on Route 112; photo dated 1897*

## *SVAS Celebrates 40 Years*



*1971 photo with mainstays of the newly formed Salisbury Volunteer Ambulance Service, alongside their specially equipped Ford Wagon. Left to right: Dick Barton, Kenneth Farwell, Jack Lloyd, Barbara Garrity, R.N., Ann Lloyd, R.N., Art Wilkinson, John Hickey and W. Rees Harris. Photo by Bill Binzen, Jr.*

2011 marks the 40<sup>th</sup> year of volunteer emergency medical service provided to the Salisbury community by the Salisbury Volunteer Ambulance Service (SVAS). On March 21 SVAS will open an exhibit at the Salisbury Association's Academy Building, featuring photos, rosters, and memorabilia documenting the organization's history. A reception is planned for Saturday, March 26, 4:00-6:00, at which the community can meet SVAS squad members. The exhibit will run through April 17.

## *Historic Paintings Restored*

Last year's sale of the Holley-Williams House, with de-accession of the painting collection housed there, provided the Salisbury Association with funds to do much-needed restoration of a number of paintings that it owns. Several of these restored works are among the paintings currently exhibited at the Academy Building.



*Conservator Val Michalski restoring the Coffing portrait.  
Photo by Patrick L.Sullivan/The Lakeville Journal*

### *Hadn't Been Cleaned for 150 Years*

Painting conservator Valentine Michalski was asked to restore five paintings for the Association. The first painting he worked on was the portrait of John Churchill Coffing, painted by Edwin White, N.A. in 1844.

In his report, Val noted that "the condition was surprisingly good, given its age, except that the canvas sagged on its stretcher, endangering the paint film. The grime on the surface was what you would expect of something that hadn't been cleaned in 150 years. The good news was that no previous restorations had been attempted.

"I followed standard procedure for doing a wax adhesive lining to support the sagging canvas. It involved attaching the old, weakened canvas to a new one using conservation wax and the heat and pressure of a vacuum hot table. This was accomplished without complication. The result was a warm portrait, visually much closer to the way it looked when originally painted."

### *Creating Four from One*

Decorative Arts Conservator Regina Wenzek agreed to restore the frames of the John Churchill Coffing portrait and the Edwin White landscape.



*"Housatonic River View, Cornwall," by Edwin White, 1847,  
cleaned and restored by Val Michalski, the frame restored by  
Regina Wenzek*

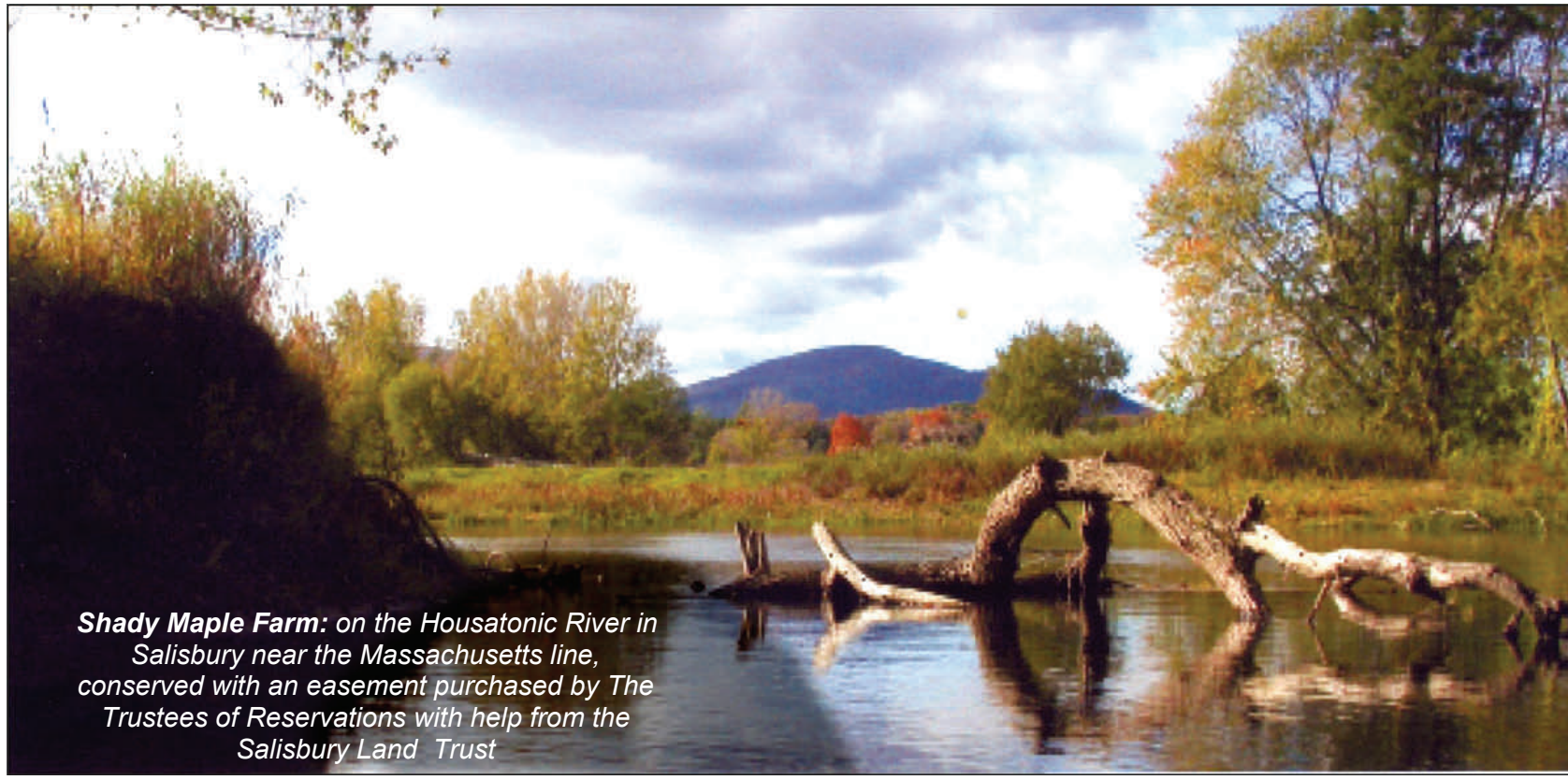
In restoring the large, ornate frame of the White landscape, Ms. Wenzek encountered a big problem: the absence of even one fully ornamented corner. She reported that "there were enough pieces remaining from the four corner ornaments to almost make one whole corner. As for the parts that were missing, it was obvious what they were supposed to be."

Ms. Wenzek explained the process she used. "I fitted what pieces I could to make a whole (corner). The missing ornament parts I filled in with putty, then molded, sanded, and carved them into place. Once I had a complete corner, I took a mold and cast three more. Because the corner ornaments were so large and concave I took the mold in four parts." Her other work involved the restoration of the gold leaf.



*Painting of William Holley Williams ("Little Willy"),  
c. 1850, artist unknown,  
shown here partially  
cleaned*

## *Land Trust Partners for Conservation*



*Shady Maple Farm: on the Housatonic River in Salisbury near the Massachusetts line, conserved with an easement purchased by The Trustees of Reservations with help from the Salisbury Land Trust*

The Salisbury Land Trust's mission is to protect Salisbury's open space to conserve our rich ecological bounty, best agricultural soils and prime scenic vistas--all elements of our rural character. The Land Trust pursues this mission with the help of many partners.

Paramount are the families that donate conservation restrictions on portions of their property to assure that future development of their land is permanently limited.

When critical parcels come up for sale, the Land Trust cooperates with other conservation and governmental groups and an ever-generous community of individual contributors to make it happen. Some examples are shown in the accompanying photos.

The Land Trust also collaborates with others in crafting its easement documents to be sure that the easements accomplish the Land Trust's goals while allowing for appropriate use of the conserved land by the property owner. Easements are prepared under the guidance of our lawyer, Geoff Drury.

Tim Abbott, director of HVA's Litchfield Hills Greenprint, has provided important services by identifying natural resources and creating a baseline record of existing

conditions to be used to monitor any changes.

In our work around Lake Wononscopomuc the Land Trust has been guided by Sean Hayden, of the Northwest Conservation District, in developing management plans to minimize erosion and nutrient flow and to protect the lake's aesthetics.

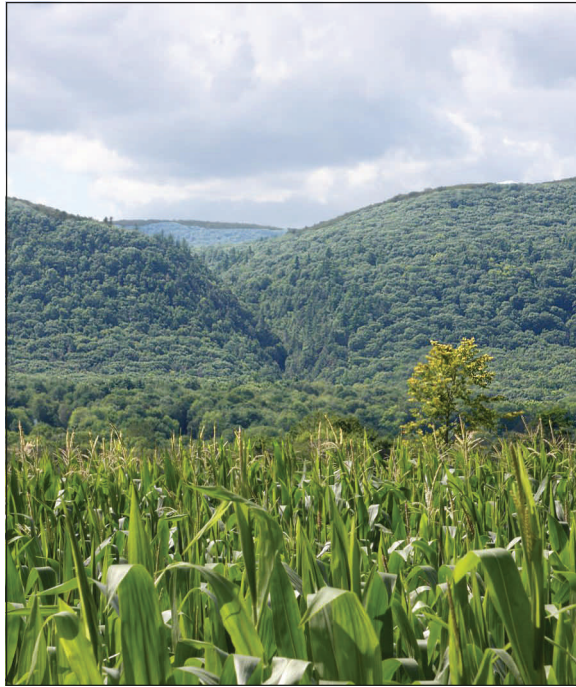
And, of course, thanks are due to all who appreciate this wonderful place and strive to sustain it. *George Massey*

### *Farmland Conserved along Housatonic*

The Salisbury Association Land Trust received a conservation easement on riverfront property in Salisbury, at Route 44 and Housatonic River Road, donated by Scott and Roxanne Bok, owners of Twin Lakes Farm.

The easement conserves 100 acres of farm fields on Prime or Statewide Important soils and dozens of additional acres of state-designated critical floodplain forest habitat. The easement protects several large oxbows and more than 4000 feet of riverfront on the Housatonic River.

In 2007 the Bok family protected 184 acres of farmland on the north side of Route 44.

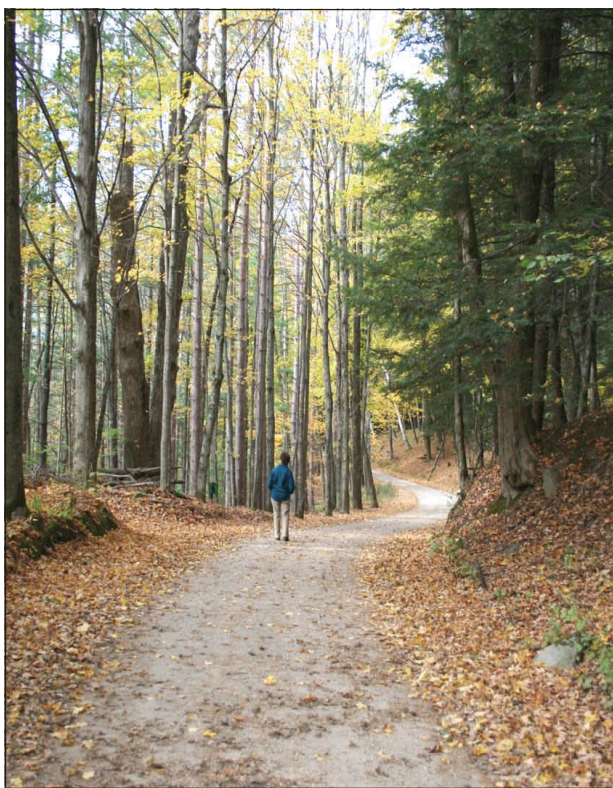


**Sages Ravine:** conserved by a cooperative effort of The Nature Conservancy and State of Connecticut, with fund-raising help from the Salisbury Land Trust

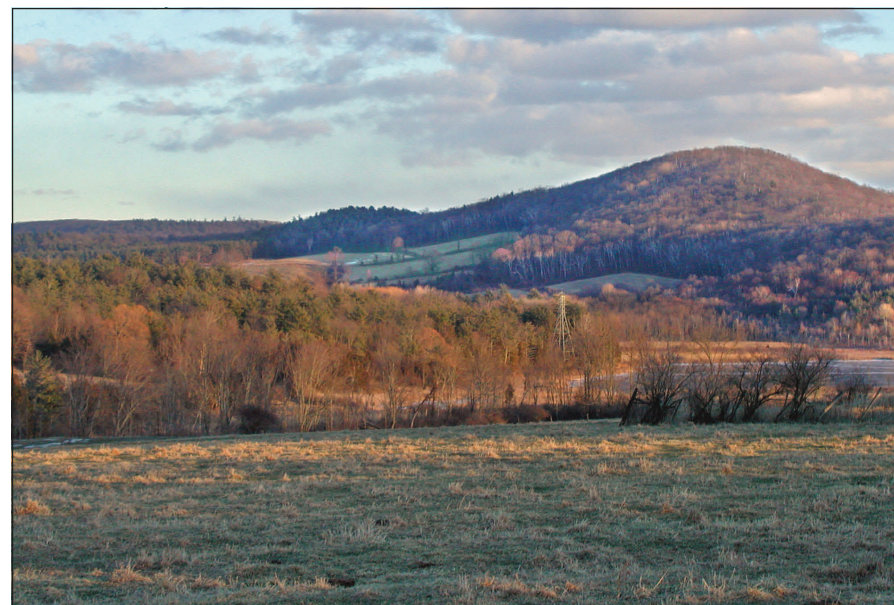


**Twin Oaks:** purchased by the Sharon Land Trust with help from the Salisbury Land Trust

**Tory Hill:** (foreground) purchased by the Salisbury Land Trust with support from the Sharon Land Trust and the State of Connecticut, and facilitated by donation of an easement on adjacent land by the Keiter family



**Dark Hollow:** purchased by the Salisbury Land Trust with a grant from the State of Connecticut and a generous gift from the Belcher family



**Red Mountain:** a joint project of the Salisbury and Sharon Land Trusts, facilitated by donation of an easement on adjacent land by the Briscoe family

## *Notes from the Annual Meeting*

Opening the Salisbury Association's annual meeting in January, president Dave Heck sited 2010 as a banner year. Among noteworthy events was the sale of the Holley-Williams House, relieving the Association of a long-held financial burden of owning and operating the property. Prior to the sale, the Association had contracted with Historic New England, a non-profit preservation organization, to protect the historic features of the house under a Preservation Restriction Agreement. Proceeds from the house sale have already been directed towards new, productive history projects by the Salisbury Historical Society.

In other business, John Arnold was recognized for his many years of excellent and dedicated service as the Association's Treasurer. He will remain on the board as a trustee.

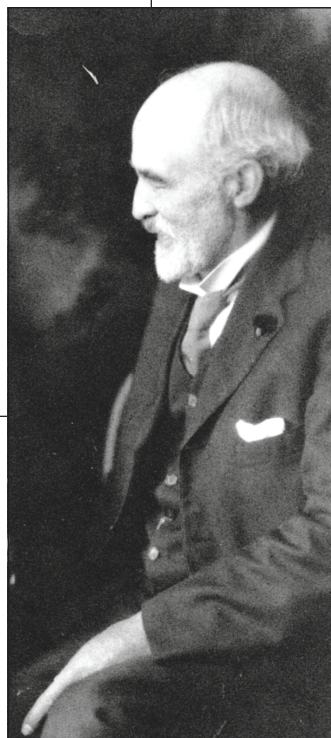
After the Nominating Committee's report, the following officers were approved: Joel Cohen (Treasurer), Nancy Humphreys (Assistant Treasurer), and Kathy Mera (Secretary). The newly elected trustees are John Arnold, Joan Baldwin, David Bayersdorfer and John Landon.

The chairmen of the Association's three primary committees reported on 2010 accomplishments: for the Land Trust (Lou Hecht, George Massey), Historical Society (Ron Jones) and Civic Activities (Lou Bucceri). Written summaries of their reports were distributed.

In closing the meeting, Dave Heck presented a special Salisbury Association "Lifetime Honorary Membership" medal to George Kiefer for his contributions to the well-being of our community over many years.

### *Warner Memoir Coming Soon*

In 1926 Judge Donald T. Warner (1850-1929) wrote about his memories of growing up in Salisbury. His writing is a marvelous mix of facts, characters, and anecdotes that reveal life in our town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The memoir will be available for sale at the 2011 Fall Heritage Talk on Judge Warner and his times.



### *Keeping History Alive*

The Oral History Project, co-sponsored by the Salisbury Association and the Scoville Memorial Library, is seeking volunteers to transcribe audio tapes of interviews of local residents that were recorded in the 1980s and 1990s. The goal is to create a written record of personal memories of what life was like in Salisbury, Lakeville, Taconic and Lime Rock.

Of the 117 taped interviews, about 45 remain to be transcribed. If you would like to learn more about the transcription process, and perhaps participate in it, please contact Jean McMillen at 860-435-2112.



## Hot Shots



### *20 Years of Holiday Music*

In December the Salisbury Association marked its 20<sup>th</sup> year of sponsoring the Victorian Christmas Concert. The Academy Building, adorned in candlelight and poinsettias, served as a warm refuge for the melodic works of Handel and Telemann, as well as traditional seasonal songs. The superb trio performed on oboe and recorder (Judith Dansker, left), lute (Christopher Morrongiello), and historical harp (Marcia Young, who also added a lovely soprano voice).



*Photo by Patrick Sullivan*

### *Sprucing Up Dark Hollow*

The Salisbury Land Trust maintains the Dark Hollow preserve in as “natural” a state as possible, but from time to time intervention is needed to clear brush from the hiking trails, reduce invasive plants, or remove fallen trees that impede access along the road. Photo, left to right: John Arnold on his tractor, Lou Hecht, Dave Heck, Tom Key and (somewhere in the woods) George Massey.



### *At the SWSA Exhibit*

At the Salisbury Winter Sports Association exhibit in the Academy Building, aspiring junior jumper Carl Williams (left) converses with SWSA vice president Mat Kiefer on his chances for entering the Junior Olympic Ski Jumping Championships. The competition takes place at the town’s magnificent new jumping facility.

# Our New Website: Bookmark It!

*salisburyassn.org*

The Salisbury Association

Home > Land Trust > Historical Society > Civic Activities > Events > Get Involved > Our Community >

The Salisbury Association, located in the Academy Building in Salisbury CT, was organized in 1902, its purpose being to "further the best interests of the whole town and to protect its natural attractions."

**Upcoming Events**

February 19, 2011  
[More Than Books](#) at 4:00 pm

February 26, 2011  
[Era of Elegance Series](#) at 2:00 pm

March 19, 2011  
[The Holley Williams House](#) at 4:00 pm

March 26, 2011  
[Lecture Era of Elegance Series](#) at 2:00 pm

April 16, 2011  
[Salisbury from 1731 thru 1923](#) at 4:00 pm

**Land Trust**

The Salisbury Association Land Trust is a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the rural character and important natural areas of our community including farmland, public vistas, and special habitats. Formed in 1976, the Land Trust is a volunteer committee within the Salisbury Association, a nonprofit civic organization founded in 1902. [read more...](#)

**Historical Society**

We invite you to delve into our history site to learn about the exciting history of Salisbury. From pre-history to the present day, we think you will enjoy learning about key figures, places and events that shaped Salisbury's past. [read more...](#)

**Civic Activities**

The Civic Activities Committee of the Salisbury Association is involved with a number of activities, projects, and presentations. It organizes lectures, sometimes in cooperation with the Historical Society. It has for a number of years provided a venue for, and sponsored musical presentations and funded music workshops for the students at Salisbury Central School. Also with the Historical Society it plans and organizes bus or walking tours to places of particular interest in town. Civic Activities provides financial assistance to town beautification projects and maintains Academy Park between the Academy Building and the Post Office. Through the Toulmin and Powel funds it finances projects at the Town Grove as well as tree planting and maintenance throughout the town. This committee of the Salisbury Association sponsors the Salisbury Band for the July Fourth picnic and confirms that hot dogs are sold and children are entertained at this annual Town Grove event. Although diversified, the Civic Activities committee is a major part of the Salisbury Association. [read more...](#)

Salisbury Association is proudly powered by [WordPress](#)  
[Entries \(RSS\)](#) and [Comments \(RSS\)](#).

Upcoming events of the Association

Land Trust information

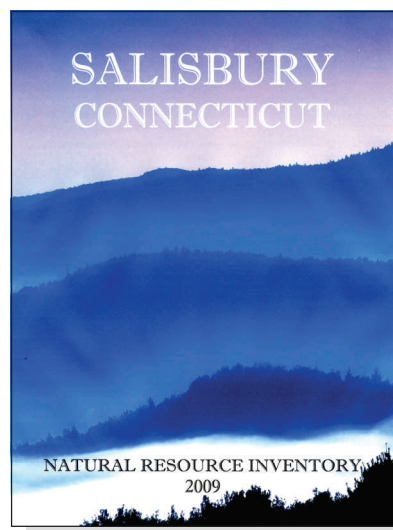
The story of the Historical Society

Civic Activities

The Salisbury Association has a new website. We invite you to explore it. The website describes the work of the Land Trust, Historical Society and Civic Activities committees. It also includes reminders of coming events. We welcome your suggestions.

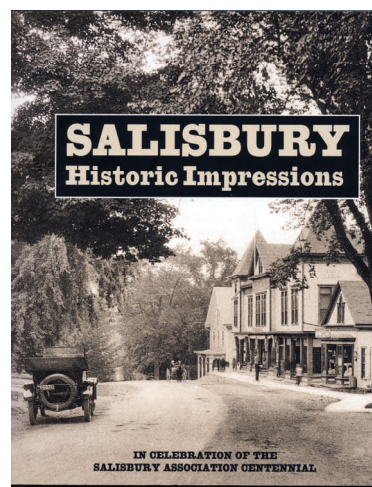
## Publications of Local Interest

Available at the Academy Building, Salisbury



Salisbury's first **Natural Resource Inventory** of the town's lakes and streams, farmland, forests, critical habitats, historic sites and other natural features, with fold-out resource maps and wildlife data

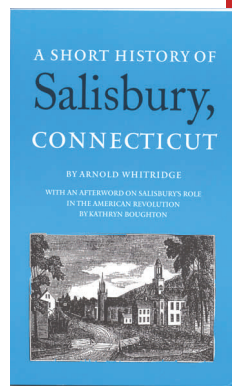
\$25



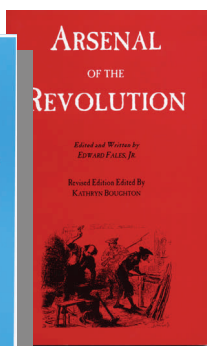
**Salisbury—Historic Impressions**

A photo reminiscence of the history of the town, shown through archival photos, captions and brief historic accounts

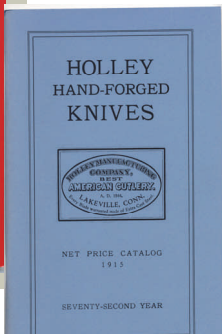
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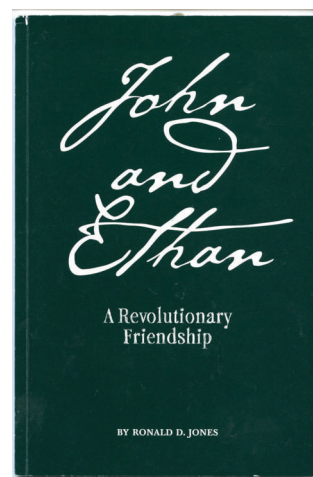
**A Short History of Salisbury**  
\$9



**Arsenal of the Revolution**  
\$15



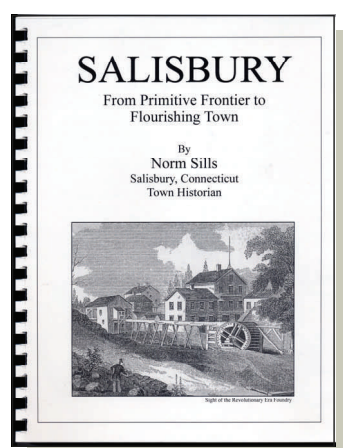
**Holly Knives**  
1915 catalog  
\$9



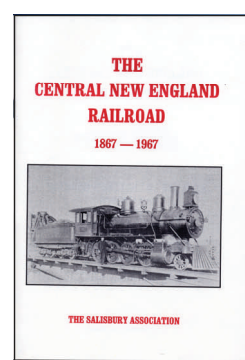
**John and Ethan**

The story of the key figures who built and operated the Salisbury blast furnace that became known as the "Arsenal of the Revolution."

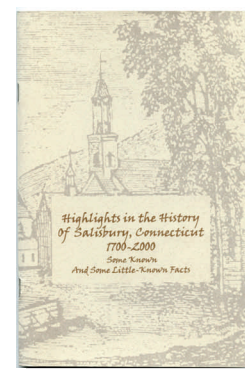
\$10



**Salisbury: From Primitive Frontier to Flourishing Town**  
\$20



**The Central New England Railroad**  
1867-1967  
\$8



**Highlights in the History of Salisbury, Connecticut**  
1700-2000  
\$5

## *What's Inside?*



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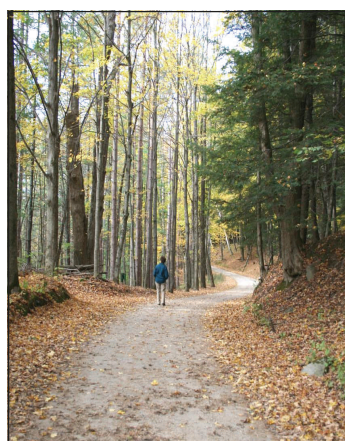
*Era of Elegance*  
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*Land Trust Celebrates*  
35th Anniversary  
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*Restoring Historic*  
Paintings  
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*Partnering for Conservation*  
Pages 6 and 7



*20 years of Victorian Christmas Concerts*  
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**The Salisbury Association**  
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