

Edward L Rose Conservancy



# Conservancy Currents

Summer 2024



Gordon Easement wetlands, New Milford, PA

Hello members. Wow, a lot has happened in the Summer of 2024, most of it revolving around the transfer of Woodbourne Forest and Wildlife Preserve to the Edward L. Rose Land Conservancy. The success of that acquisition was not a foregone conclusion. The Nature Conservancy and the local Woodbourne Committee needed to be convinced that our Conservancy was the best choice. Our history of successful land preservation and our many conservation projects contributed to our being selected.



*On May 19<sup>th</sup>, with the “help” of resident beavers, a small but dedicated team of volunteers cleared and re-routed some of the trails with clippers and saws.*

### **Can Biological Controls Save the Hemlock?**

Through the efforts of our Conservation Specialist, Kristi Sullivan, a shipment of 2,000 *Leucotaraxis* Silver Flies were received from Cornell.



See: [Leucotaraxis Silver Flies – New York State Hemlock Initiative \(cornell.edu\)](#) The flies “which are abundant predators of hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA)” were released into the Woodbourne Forest which contains perhaps the largest old growth climax forests in Pennsylvania. While these tiny predators have been approved for use by Cornell for biological control in the northeast, the effort is relatively new and still being developed for greater distribution. We can only hope that it succeeds.



*On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Joyce Stone, pictured here with Keith Oberg, returned to Woodbourne’s old growth forest to assist in releasing the flies.*

**Introducing Joyce Stone**

Joyce Stone and her husband Ben were the longtime resident naturalists at Woodbourne Forest and Wildlife Sanctuary. Between 1976 and 1979 Joyce created the Ecological Inventory of Woodbourne, including the cultural history, geology, hydrology, topography, soils, and of course, flora and fauna. It is a list of virtually every living thing in the seven different habitats she identified and mapped in the Preserve's 600 acres, including Cope's pond with its floating islands, old growth forests, wetlands, tree plantations, and meadows. There are several extant copies of this document available for review.

The first ecological survey of the preserve had been conducted in 1932 by Theodora Cope, the daughter of its founder and benefactor Francis R. Cope Jr., as part of her thesis for her master's degree at Cornell University. It has been 45 years since Joyce created her survey, roughly the same number of years between the surveys by Theodora and Joyce. One can surmise that we are due for an update from a new generation of naturalists.



*The official transfer celebration of the Preserve from The Nature Conservancy to the E. L. Rose Conservancy was held at Salt Springs*

*State Park on June 12, 2024. "A positive event with refreshments and speakers highlighting the history of Woodbourne."*

### **"And the Two Shall Become One."**

About five years ago, long before the Woodbourne acquisition was afoot, and while assisting Keith in sorting through a number of file cabinets containing E.L. Rose Conservancy documents, I came across a blueprint of a survey dated Sept. 1, 1912 by E.L. Weston, titled "The Reservation A. H. Rose Est." containing 1040 acres." It was unclear then as to how this document had come into possession of the Rose Conservancy. Nonetheless recognizing it as a one-of-a-kind document, it was returned to safe keeping. Then, after Woodbourne was acquired and, for several good reasons, the board decided to sell the naturalist's house at the Preserve. Again, a small number of volunteers put in the effort necessary to both spruce up the outside and clean out the interior. That included a five-drawer file cabinet in what had been Joyce Stone's and then Jerry Skinner's office. Jerry was the resident naturalist following Joyce. Once again, we sorted through all the paper to separate wheat from chaff. The important documents were delivered to safe-keeping at the Greenwood Sanctuary.

That effort resulted in our taking a closer look at the papers that accompanied the old survey. What was revealed in those documents but previously unrecognized, were the 1932-1946 efforts of Francis R. Cope Jr., as he tried, unsuccessfully, to save the remaining 1,040 acres, including virgin forest, from the loggers, out of the original 100,000 acres owned by the Rose Family at Silver Lake. While his efforts to convince the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to create a state park out of the Silver Lake Forest failed, it is interesting to speculate that this lost cause inspired him to turn his 602 acres of old growth forest in Dimock, out of

his own ancestor's 25,000 acres, into the Woodbourne Preserve just a few years later.

The following are just a few of Cope's notes taken from those fascinating documents, including these handwritten calculations.



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- 1809 Dr. Robert Rose of Philadelphia purchases 100,000 acres.
- Sold a portion to Sheldon. (The east shore of Silver Lake)
- Silver Lake was clear to 20 feet.
- Edward, a son of Dr. Rose had a family of boys in Montrose.
- Andrew Rose remained at Silver Lake until his death. His widow married Colonel West.
- Montrose Independent: On 03/21/1946 Governor Martin and Secretary of Forests and Waters James A. Kell view the property.
- F.R. Cope was President of the Susq. Co. Historical Society



- Susq. Co. Post – 09/26/40 – D.A.R. “Sale Of Building Lots Bordering Silver Lake being pushed by a Binghamton realty firm.
- Letter from Harrisburg, by Lynn Emerick, State Forester, offer by A.C. Crossley (for the 700 acres of the Big Woods north of the lake on SR167) tis \$150,000 now \$155,000. Price too high for Penna.
- December 7, 1938 letter by F.R. Cope, Jr. to J.R. Bogardus Secty of Forests and Waters. Refers to blueprint of 1,040 acres, formerly held by Andrew H. Rose Estate bought in 1912 by A.C. Crossley and Sons 8 Chapin Street, Binghamton, NY for \$75/acre containing an estimated 30 million board feet of lumber.
- Letter May 22, 1933 by J.R. Crossley to F.R. Cope offered \$150,000 for 700 acres.

So now we know that that mysterious 1912 survey of the remaining 1,040 acres then owned by Andrew Rose was used by Francis Cope to convince the Commonwealth to purchase it for a state park. And how did all this documentation end up in Rose Conservancy files? In 2006 the granddaughter of Francis Cope thought the Conservancy might be interested and dropped off a packet of papers.

Bill Fischer, Editor

## **From the Committees:**

### **Membership**

This year's annual meeting was combined with a members' picnic at the Williams Pavilion in Salt Springs Park. We met on Saturday evening, July 27th, and enjoyed a BBQ chicken dinner, courtesy of the Butler family. The business meeting lasted about 30 minutes and touched on issues of general interest: the budget, stewardship of EL Rose-owned properties, conservation activities, etc. The Board hopes to make this an annual event, an opportunity to thank our members for their support.

We understand that some members did not receive the May email announcing this event or the July invitation. We will do a better job next year to make sure all members get this information. If you are an active member who did not receive an invitation, please send a message confirming your current email account, addressing it to [board@elrose.org](mailto:board@elrose.org).

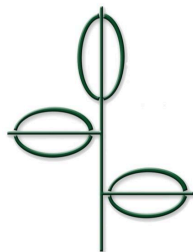
## **Stewardship**

Managing the Woodbourne Forest Preserve, the Greenwood Sanctuary and the Highpoint Preserve is a lot of work. The Stewardship Committee has that responsibility. One of the more demanding tasks is the maintenance of over 12 miles of hiking trails, but you can help. Actually you can help in two ways. First, volunteer for any of the organized trail clearing events. Invitations to participate are sent out to membership several times a year. If you can fit them in your schedule, we would love to have you join in. Secondly, when you hike the trails, feel free to pick up the sticks and limbs, and let us know if a tree is down across the trail, or of anything else that looks amiss. If you're willing and able, you also can carry a small pair of nippers with you for those blackberry canes that like to grow across the trail, or all those other bits of vegetation that grow into the paths. It is amazing how quickly a trail can become overgrown. Happy hiking and thanks for your help!





More at [ELROSE.ORG](http://ELROSE.ORG)



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