

# News

## from the Isle La Motte Preservation Trust



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### The Goodsell Ridge Fossil Preserve

For the Isle La Motte Preservation Trust (ILMPT), 2005 began with exciting news in the very last days of 2004. In a late afternoon phone call, Peter Espenshade, Executive Director of the Lake Champlain Land Trust (LCLT), our conservation partners, announced: "We've completed our fundraising goal!"

Since 2002 ILMPT has been working with LCLT on a capital campaign. The objective? To raise funds to purchase and preserve 71 acres of the Goodsell Ridge on Isle La Motte. The Goodsell Ridge is the most famous site of the Chazy Reef, the world's oldest reef in which corals first appear. The old pastures and cedar woodlands of the Goodsell Ridge contain outcroppings filled with a dazzling array of fossilized marine creatures - long extinct.

This land has been owned by Tom and Shirley LaBombard and visited by many scientists and university students over the years. The plan to preserve this national treasure for the benefit of education and science was in line with the LaBombards' own dreams for the property. During three years of hard work on the part of LCLT and ILMPT, foundations, individuals and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board all pitched in to make this capital campaign a success.

The acquisition generated press and television coverage all over the country including front page coverage in most of the major Vermont newspapers, and headline articles in CNN.com and USA Today.

The actual closing occurred on Sept 21, 2005 in the office of attorney Larry Bruce, when the property was officially transferred to ILMPT with conservation easements co-held by the Lake Champlain Land Trust and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. Documents were signed and bottles of champagne were opened - no matter that it was only noon - in celebration of the momentous occasion.



Former owners of the Goodsell Ridge:  
Tom and Shirley Shirley LaBombard at the closing.

### The Two Preserves



The Fisk Quarry Preserve - Acquired in 1998

In 1998 a citizens' group on Isle La Motte, formed the Isle La Motte Reef Preservation Trust. With the extraordinary help of Paul Bruhn and The Preservation Trust of Vermont, funds were raised to preserve the Fisk Quarry, a reef site well known to and studied by scientists. This Vermont Historic Site, first quarried by the French in 1666 for mortar to build Fort St. Anne, contains fossils called stromatoporoids - builders of the middle section of the reef on Isle La Motte. The 20 acre site is now called the Fisk Quarry Preserve and is a research and educational site, open to the public, owned by ILMPT and protected by conservation easements.



The Goodsell Ridge Preserve - Acquired in 2005

About a mile to the northeast of the Fisk Quarry Preserve is the Goodsell Ridge, now an 81 acre preserve owned by ILMPT and protected by conservation easements. Here are the youngest layers of the Chazy Reef containing the fossil remains of a biologically diverse ecosystem unlike the older reef layers - such as are found in the Fisk Quarry. A walk from the oldest to the youngest reef layers on Isle La Motte is a walk through time in which the rocks tell the story of earth's oldest reef as it developed over a period of several million years.

