



GREENWICH LAND TRUST

Bridge Preserve

The Samuel and Ethel Bridge Nature Preserve was created in 1979 when Alfred H. Bridge divided his Doubling Road property into four one-acre building lots and generously donated one of them to the Land Trust. He stated that the 1.25-acre parcel was to "be preserved in perpetuity in its wild and natural state as a sanctuary for animals and birds, and wildflowers and plants indigenous to the State of Connecticut..."

It was also the spot where Samuel F. Bridge Jr.'s love of gardening began. According to Mary Joe Bridge Palmer, her father Sam Jr. planted some evergreen cuttings in his father's cow pasture in 1930. Later that year, he built his first greenhouse to grow and store geranium cuttings for his mother and her friends.

The Bridge and Palmer families have a long history of Greenwich land conservation. Sam Bridge Nursery & Greenhouses, which will celebrate its 90th anniversary next year, is part of a 125-acre site, originally a grant from King George. "We are proud to say that this land has been used only for agriculture and has been in our family since 1686," said Mary Jo.

The Bridge Preserve does not directly connect to other open space, but it is across the street from the Land Trust's Berkeley easement totaling 11.5 acres, as well as four other Land Trust properties within a two-mile radius. In addition, there are three Nature

Conservancy properties that connect to the Berkeley Easement, plus a park and two Country Clubs creating a sizeable greenway running through mid-country Greenwich, increasing the conservation value of the area.

The Bridge preserve consists mostly of dry meadow and a small wetland. It provides an ideal habitat for shrubs as well as a variety of grasses, ferns, and sedges like hop sedge. It also contains a variety of asters and goldenrods and some hardwoods like maple, dogwood, and hickory. This property is also known to contain a variety of songbirds, small mammals, deer, and amphibians like bull frogs.



When Alfred Bridge donated his parcel, he wanted to continue to mow it, however, the GLT's stewardship staff politely told him they would take over the care of the land. They now mow the meadow twice a year and remove invasives like Oriental bittersweet, to ensure the health of native flora.

