



Stream frontage at the 213 acre Porkepyn Rylle Forest Reservation. The property was donated to the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests by the family of Gracia Snyder. Photo by Tom Howe.

Gracia Snyder Trust Donates 213 Acres in Salisbury to Forest Society

Contains largest Yellow Birch in the U.S.

Tom Howe, Society for the Preservation of NH Forests

The Forest Society recently received a gift of the 213-acre "Porkepyn Rylle Forest" in Salisbury from the Gracia Harris Snyder Trust. Gracia initiated the project more than a year ago, at the age of 88, and passed away on November 30, 2016, just before we were to close. Her two sons and successor trustees, Jonathan and Evan Snyder, followed through enthusiastically to ensure completion of their mother's plan.

The property consists of well managed forestland, plus diverse other features including ledge outcrops and escarpments, a red maple swamp, a red pine rocky ridge natural community, a brook running for nearly a mile through the property, an underlying aquifer protecting nearby water supplies, and two sets of extensive cellar holes and foundations, where cut granite stones mark the homes of former owners of the property.

Up until a month before she died, Gracia still lived mostly unassisted in her home, next to what is now our newest reservation. She took an active interest and much pride in the management of her property, and didn't hesitate to direct her forester and logger about what to do and how to do it! She took special pleasure in a photo from her most recent logging job, showing a truck loaded right to its rated maximum, filled with clear, massive diameter, white pine logs headed to the sawmill. Later on the day that Gracia died, the N.H. Big Tree Program confirmed that a majestic whopper of a yellow birch was the biggest in the county.

At various times a real estate broker, a night librarian at Proctor Academy, and a diplomat's wife living in Beirut, Lebanon, Gracia always had a twinkle in her eye, a story to tell, and a homemade brownie for anyone will-

ing to listen.

Porcupines occupied a significant role in her colorful past, hence her preference for the name of this reservation, Porkepyn Rylle Forest. Porcupines are abundant on the property, and initially outnumbered the human occupants of the former farmhouse that her parents bought and began using as a summer place during the Depression. As the first woman ever elected to the Town of Andover's Board of Selectmen, Gracia quickly capitalized on her early experiences with porcupines to gain respect within this previously all-male bastion. One day, when some people came into the town office attempting to collect the \$.50 bounty then offered for each porcupine nose handed across the counter, and cleverly disguising each animal's paws as additional "noses," she delightedly exposed their fraud in front of the other selectmen.

Gracia's gift means that a future healthy, intact habitat -- for porcupines and so many other species -- is secure at the Porkepyn Rylle Forest.

Tom Howe is senior director of land conservation at the Forest Society. Article printed with permission of the society. www.forestssociety.org

Kearsarge Chorale Presents Handel's *Messiah*

Press release

The Kearsarge Chorale, accompanied by professional soloists, including Mezzo-soprano Frances Steven-Putnam and orchestra, will perform G.F. Handel's *Messiah* on Saturday, November 18 at 7:30 P.M. and on Sunday, November 19 at 3 P.M. at Our Lady of Fatima Church, 724 Main Street, New London, New Hampshire.

Ms. Steven-Putnam, currently Director of Music at Kearsarge Community Presbyterian Church in New London, has a varied musical background, including musical theater, jazz, oratorio and grand opera.

The Kearsarge Chorale is made up of community singers from New London and many of the surrounding towns, including Andover.

Tickets are available at Morgan Hill Bookstore and Tatewell Gallery in New London or on-line at www.kearsargechorale.org for \$15 each through November

15. Tickets may be purchased at the door for \$20. Please note: seating is limited.



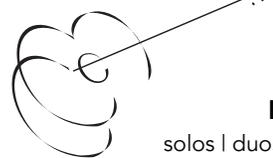
Mezzo-soprano Frances Steven-Putnam will be one of the soloists performing with the Kearsarge Chorale in Handel's *Messiah*, November 18 and 19 in New London.

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