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At a recent party on the grounds of the Quissett Harbor House, trustees of the Quissett Harbor Preservation Trust Michelle Lord (left), Chip Morse, president, and Carroll Pierce celebrate the Knob's restoration. The two women served as the party co-chairmen.

A Two-Year Project

Celebration Marks Two-Year Knob Restoration Project

By ANDREW CUNNINGHAM

Falmouth residents and visitors for generations have walked the trails leading to Quissett Knob—some in summer carrying picnic gear on their way to the beach, and others just enjoying the silence and beauty that the trails provide. The view from the Knob itself is breathtaking.

Surrounded on two sides by Buzzards Bay and on the third by the entrance to Quissett Harbor, the Knob has been a source of inspiration to artists, a favorite spot for weddings, and a place just to sit and meditate. Looking out at the sailboats dotting the bay, or at a majestic sunset, provides a sense of peace and an experience unique to the Knob. For those who enjoy a little more excitement, when the seas are running high and the wind is fierce, the Knob can be an exhilarating and literally breathtaking spot.

On the evening of June 30, a celebration for contributors to the Quissett Harbor Preservation Trust was held on the grounds of the Quissett Harbor House in honor of the completion of the two-year restoration of the Knob. The preservation trust was formed in late 1999 through the vision and initiative of Henry Wheeler, a longtime Quissett resident, to preserve and protect

Quissett Harbor and the Knob.

The \$1,550,000 Knob restoration project, funded entirely through private donations, is being hailed as one of great significance for the residents of Falmouth. "Every person who appreciates nature and who lives in the Town of Falmouth has taken a stroll out there," says Quissett resident Dick DeWolfe. "And for sailors, it's almost iconic. Every sailor who comes down Buzzards Bay looks for the Knob as a landmark."

The Knob has worldwide renown. "I was in Paris some years back," explained Chip Morse, "and was asked by a local French person where I live. When I told him that I lived in Woods Hole, he responded: 'Oh, do you know a place called the Knob?'"

Besides its obvious beauty, the Knob also serves a practical purpose as the northern barrier to the harbor. It affords protection to Gansett Point and to the mouth of Quissett Harbor. That practicality was also important in the 1700s and 1800s for local trade and commerce. Since that time, according to a survey done in the 1970s by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, the Knob has lost about 82 feet through erosion. The rock armor has been repaired twice

in the past, first in 1912 and again in 1973.

"The current restoration project was part of a larger plan to achieve the goals of the preservation trust," attorney Dana Rodin, who spearheaded the project said. Those goals include the preservation and protection of the harbor area and surrounding habitats, and restoration to combat the years of wind and severe weather that have damaged the rock armor, as well as the effect of people creating new paths and ravines. "The Knob was no longer functioning as intended to protect the land mass, but has now been fully restored and fortified," says Rodin.

Permitting for the project began in 2002, and the actual work got underway in November 2004. AGM Marine of Mashpee was hired to take on the comprehensive project, using a large tract excavator to repair the rock armor. Landscaper Bill Armstrong of Falmouth installed the stone terraces and beach grasses have since been planted that, thanks to a rainy spring, are beginning to take hold. Mike McGrath, of Holmes and McGrath, oversaw the work.

The Knob is important to the culture of Falmouth and area residents recognize that fact.

In addition to a contribution by the Salt Pond Areas Bird Sanctuaries, which actually owns the land, over 250 checks were written, said Mr. Morse. "From young kids who gave hard-earned cash, to several very generous donors who contributed \$100,000 or more, it was a major outpouring of private support."

Visitors to the Knob are surrounded by beauty from the moment they begin the walk from picturesque Quissett Harbor. The trails that lead through the peaceful woods hold memories for untold numbers of people who played on the ancient oak trees as children. The woods empty out onto the narrow spit of land that affords access to the beach below and a trail leads to the Knob—the crown jewel itself.

That jewel has now been fully restored, and will hopefully provide inspiration, romance, and beauty for many years to come.