

*Helping to Preserve the Rural Landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee Region
Andover, Bradford, Danbury, Gosben, Grantham, New London, Newbury, Springfield, Sunapee, Sutton, Warner, & Wilmot*



CHATTER

Summer 2009



Haying on Stanley Farm, Burpee Hill Road, New London (circa 1943). The author of the article below, "Going Home," spent his summers at this farm, moved to the farm as an adult and now is one of 21 family members who have donated conservation easements on over 75 acres of forest, agricultural land and Little Lake Sunapee shoreline.

Going Home:

Committed to the creation of a family legacy

by Peter Stanley

Hillsdale is a small town in the northeast corner of New Jersey. In 1953 it was on the fringe of the post war New York City sprawl - we lived in a new subdivision on the west side of town. Dad worked in the city and wasn't around that much. We lived on the edge of farm country at first, but the press of civilization was gobbling up the countryside fast, along with all my favorite haunts. There were plenty of kids around and there was a big pond nearby that offered lots of opportunities

for a 7 year old boy to explore. In the spring I would catch frogs and newly hatched turtles, set up a stand in the front yard and sell them for a dime apiece to neighborhood children (the neighbors wished I'd had a lemonade stand like any normal kid). Yankees pitcher Vic Rasche owned the property that adjoined ours in the backyard, and would play catch with me when he was around - that was pretty cool. But everything was just a prelude to summer for me.

School let out for the season on Wednesday June 24, and by Friday the 26th we were on our way to Stanley Farm in New Hampshire - the red Dodge station wagon packed full for the two month trip. Ike was in the White House, Stalin had died that winter, the Rosenbergs had just been executed at Sing Sing the week before (the search for the "Commies" was in full swing) and the Yankees were dominating everyone, but where we were going, none of that mattered.

(continued on page 2)



This photo, taken circa 1943, shows author Peter Stanley's cousin Molly Huse as a child in the right foreground. She is standing in the working farm fields of what is now one of the three Stanley Family Farm Association conservation easements. Mount Sunapee is visible in the distance - before the ski area was constructed.

(continued from page 1)

The trip to Stanley Farm was arduous – the interstate system didn't exist yet, so much of the trip was relegated to old, busy routes that kept the average speed down to 35. 350 miles at 35mph – you do the math. My father had a lead foot and a short temper, and woe betide the kid in the back seat who dares to open his or her mouth – the back of a hand on a giant right arm would sweep across the back seat with the swift certainty of a headsman's ax (my sister still suffers from narcolepsy in the back seat of a car – I got the lead foot). GW Bridge, Cross Bronx, Merritt Parkway, Berlin Turnpike, Route 5 through tobacco country to Routes 10 and 11 in New Hampshire, with a couple of “shortcuts” thrown in – it sounds simple, but it wasn't. If you expected to survive the trip, you needed a tight lip and a cast iron bladder - the old man wasn't stopping for anything but gas. But we were on our way to heaven, God's country, Land O' Goshen – as far as this 7 year old boy was concerned there was no place on or off this planet to compare with the wonders of New Hampshire.

We arrived in the middle of the night (or past my bed time anyway), and when the car door opened there was a shock of cold air as I was whisked off to bed in the upstairs of Windmill Cottage. My grandmother, who now spent summers on the farm and winters in Florida, had placed a soapstone bed warmer, carefully warmed in her oven and buttoned in a linen slip, between the sheets of my bed (an act of consideration not lost on this 7 year old). After 10 hours in the backseat of a not so comfortable car, the coziness of a warm bed put me to sleep instantly.

In the coming days this same migration was occurring with various aunts, uncles and cousins, starting from wherever their lives had taken them. They were all headed for Stanley Farm, their ancestral home on Burpee Hill, and a kind of unique experience that would weave a thread of commonality into our families' lives that is difficult for most people to understand. This migration was an annual event that would repeat itself for generations – and repeats itself still.

The next morning I was up with the sun and out the door

before anyone else. The farm was quiet now – the animals had been given up several years before. The hum of machinery in my grandfather's shop was a distant memory, and the ever present bustle of carpenters and laborers pursuing their tasks had vanished. This was a harbinger of my grandfather's last summer – though I was unaware. The memories were still fresh as I strolled up the lane and through the open gate, past the giant one-lunger that used to power all the machinery, into the shop and on into the barn where it adjoined at the corner. It was like they all went out for a minute, the cows,

the carpenters, the horses, the whole bunch, but would be back soon. An era had come to an end, but at the time it was hard to comprehend. The chickens were still there though, in a space off the end of the cow shed. The huge gardens alongside the barn had been fallow since the summer guests had stopped coming. The times had changed.

I made my way around through the network of connecting barns, past the stable and the cow shed to where the ell of the farmhouse joined the barns. The smell of fresh baking drifted into the buildings, a smell that comes from hot dough melting onto a cookie sheet that has been greased with lard. My nose led me through the door from the barn into the kitchen, and there on the sideboard was a rack of cookies, freshly sprinkled with sugar, cooling from the heat of the Crawford. Aunt Emma was the only person in the farmhouse now, gently rocking in her chair on the kitchen porch. She always seemed ancient to me, a spinster school teacher who was actually the youngest of her generation. She possessed a stern countenance, punctuated by a rather large nose - she was not a favorite of the looking glass. I crossed the kitchen to the side porch, where she spent most of her days now and greeted her with a peck on the cheek. She allowed a slight smile and her eyes twinkled to belie her otherwise somber face as she pointed to the other chair. Several times a summer we would sit and chat, and although I was too young to appreciate her full intellectual depth, precious bits of history would unfold before me.

But this was my first day back on the farm, and the “ants in my pants” must have been evident to Aunt Emma. After a brief visit, she handed me a couple of sugar cookies carefully wrapped in a napkin, and I was off to the fields and the forest, the windmill and the Elephant Rock, and all the wonders the farm had in store for me. I usually spent the mornings exploring yet unseen corners of the hill or hunting imaginary beasts with my great-grandfather's old smoothbore (long since incapable of

(continued on page 3)

The following remarks were offered by the ASLPT Chair of the Board of Trustees, Heidi Rice Lauridsen at the reception honoring the third conservation easement donated by the Stanley Farm Association.

"The Stanley family, conservation and the ASLPT have been closely associated for years. The obvious connection is that Debbie Stanley has been the Executive Director of the ASLPT for over 20 years. But there is much more.

In November of 1989, when the ASLPT was only two years old, the Stanley family conserved approximately 26 acres on Burpee Hill in New London. This was the third easement for the ASLPT and protected open fields, high bush blueberries, Christmas trees and forest land. Thirteen family members committed to this easement. Obtaining consensus among such a large group sends a strong message about how important conservation is to the Stanley family.

In September of 2002, the Stanley family once again protected 11.6 acres, the Stanley Point Trust, covering 1/2 mile of shoreline on Little Lake Sunapee and 700 feet on both sides of Newport Road, protecting part of the entrance to New London.

And in January 2009, Pam Bright, on behalf of 21 family members, executed an additional easement on 38.5 acres on Burpee Hill, which provides for the connection of 4 separate parcels for a total of 64.5 contiguous acres!

The property consists of undeveloped land, located on Newport Road and on Burpee Hill Road in New London, which has been owned by the Stanley Family for 145 years. ...The property connects 2 areas of conserved land, one area along the south side of Little Lake Sunapee and the other along the south side of Burpee Hill Road. A portion of the land drains into Little Lake Sunapee which provides the drinking water for the town of New London.

The math suggests that the Stanley family has conserved over 75 acres of land in New London since 1989! That is an accomplishment of which your family should be most proud and for which ASLPT is most grateful.

On a personal note, we often buy our Christmas trees from Peter and Debbie (Stanley). We are usually caught up in the frenzy of the Christmas season when we go to pick out our tree, a task on a long list of things to be done in a short period of time. But, driving into Elephant Rock Farm and seeing the beautiful Christmas trees and the fields beyond calms the frenzy and I am overwhelmed by a feeling of peace and optimism. My children and my grandchildren and generations beyond will always be able to see this place as I am seeing it now.

I am reminded of a poem by John O'Donohue, an Irish poet and philosopher. Although written about a home, it applies to these special places as well. He writes, in part:

'May your heart be tranquil here, blessed by peace that the world cannot give.'

Thank you Stanley family for these special Stanley places you have protected forever."

(continued from page 2)

fring). Afternoons were spent at the lake on Stanley Point, with countless cousins, in the pursuit of crawdads, bullfrogs and all manner of waterfront entertainment. Rainy days were reserved for the barns. You can't imagine how much stuff will accumulate in a huge complex of barns when a family has nearly a century to collect it. There were wagons and sleighs in the lofts, tack by the truckload, and all manner of tools and implements; all set aside as some new invention would appear that would do the work more efficiently. The subsistence farm had been replaced by the corporate farm and the grocery store. The cheese press and molds sat idle, as there were no longer any cows or goats to produce the milk. The scythes, the flails and the winnower were stacked in the barn and went without notice. It was all history waiting to be discovered.

Stanley Farm was just about at the top of the hill, and we could look out over the fields and farms below to Kearsarge in the east, Sunapee to the southwest and Ragged to the northeast - all three towers on the hill in town were clear as a bell. Uncle Charlie Gay's farm abutted ours, and Cousin Henry's farm was just below that. The corners of County Road, Burpee Hill Road and Knights Hill Road all converged in the distance at the base of the two hills and were clearly visible from anywhere on the farm. This was the view I had come to know and love,

(continued on page 4)



Elephant Rock sits at the northern edge of the first of three conservation easements donated by the Stanley Farm Association. The Christmas Tree farm unfolds from here toward the most recent easement to the northeast toward Little Lake Sunapee. If you walk southwest through the high bush blueberry field you will come to the Stanley Farmstead - home and barns - on scenic Burpee Hill Road.

photo: Nancy Lyon



Nelson Farm:

On March 31, 2009 the original Nelson Farm easement of 88 acres, located on the east shore of Lake Massasecum in Bradford, grew by one acre. An additional acre of shoreline was added to the easement already donated by the family of Nelson Farm which includes 850 feet of shoreline, undeveloped forest and the highest point of land on the northeast side of the Lake. The property is visible to the public from Route 114 providing scenic views of the hillside and shoreline, as well as making a significant contribution to the water quality of Lake Massasecum.

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”

—John Muir

ASLPT Receives NH Charitable Fund Grant

The ASLPT is delighted to have its grant application for \$5,000 selected by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation – Upper Valley Region. The monies will be used to fund a two day Board of Trustees strategic planning retreat (including all the pre-event planning) scheduled to be held within the next six months.

The last strategic planning retreat was held in November 2005. Much has changed for the ASLPT - both internally and externally – making this an ideal time to reassess the vision of the ASLPT and to determine where the organization should direct its staff and volunteer efforts over the next five to ten years.

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation has been providing financial support toward improving the quality of life in our communities since 1962. It builds and manages a collection of charitable funds, totaling nearly \$ 490 million, created by individuals, families and corporations. The Foundation is non-partisan, frequently playing the role of convener and catalyst on a broad spectrum of issues that affect the State of New Hampshire. Based in Concord, the Foundation roots itself in communities across the state through seven regions including Lakes, Manchester, Monadnock, Nashua, North Country, Piscataqua and Upper Valley. For more information visit www.nhcf.org.

The ASLPT is grateful to the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation for its continued financial support of our organization.

(“Going Home” continued from page 3) and like the farm, there was predictability and grounding in the features of the beautiful landscape that comprised Burpee Hill.

But as I walked down the driveway with the sugar cookies still warm in my hand I paused to survey my now familiar world, and something new caught my eye, something very foreign. With disbelief, I realized that there was a new house at the corner of County Road and Burpee Hill. It stood there alone with nothing but fields all around it and looked just like the ranch houses in the subdivisions in Hillsdale. It was out of place, it just didn’t fit. My heart sank, as I realized that this was just the beginning. Later that morning I lamented to my mother about what I had seen and what I was sure was coming. She patted my head and tried to comfort me as she placed a plate of scrambled eggs on the table. “Don’t worry” she said, “That will never happen here in the middle of nowhere.”

56 years later, as we all know, it did happen and is happening yet. Now familiar subdivisions bear the names of the farms or people that were once there. The walls remain, but the only crop for most is houses. As the farms died and the animals disappeared, Mother Nature began to reclaim what she could. Wonderful scenic vistas began to disappear. People, mostly older people worried about how they will survive in their waning years, made practical decisions – land is money. Speculators with little or no interest in the history or culture of a place would do what they do with speed and efficiency – time is also money.

But dotted throughout our changing landscape are the properties of the people and families who understand that the land can yield more than just the money we spend. Land can also be food for our bodies and currency for our souls. We can harvest timber for the things we build and wood to heat our homes. Land provides habitat for the creatures we share this place with and cleanses the water we drink. Land nurtures the imagination of 7 year-old children and is a living history for them to discover. To paraphrase a famous line from a political pundit “It’s the land, stupid.”

This year, I am proud to say, my family agreed to conserve the remainder of Stanley Farm. This concludes a 20 year effort (there are 21 owners in all), and a life-long dream of mine, to protect this invaluable family resource. The region is indeed fortunate to have the combination of a professional land conservation organization like ASLPT, so many land owners willing to conserve their property, and the financial support of members and contributors who understand the importance of what is being done.

Peter Stanley lives with his wife Debbie on Burpee Hill and has been actively involved in conservation since he was a child. He has been instrumental in many conservation projects, including the Low Plain and more recently, the Clark Pond Natural Area. His work experience has been widely varied, but his passion has always been land conservation.

Calendar:

July:

ASLPT Progressive Dinners

Thursday, July 9, 5:30 pm

Thursday, July 23, 5:30 pm

August:

Stanley Farm Property Tour (New London)

Join Peter Stanley for a guided tour of 64.5 acres on scenic Burpee Hill Road.

Friday, August 28, 10 - 12 noon

September:

Courser Phase 3 Property Tour (Warner)

ASLPT Land Protection Specialist Beth McGuinn will lead a hiking tour of the Poverty Plains portion of the 440 acre Courser Phase 3 property in Warner.

Thursday, September 10, 4:30 - 6:30 pm

"Our Rural Landscape Then and Now"

Lecture/slide show of some the ASLPT properties that exemplify the rural heritage of this region. (New London Historical Society)

Wednesday, September 16, 7:00 pm

Thad & Virginia Johnson Property Tour

(Sutton Mills) Join ASLPT Land Protection Specialist Beth McGuinn hiking the numerous trails cleared beginning in 1970 by easement donors Thad and Virginia Johnson.

Thursday, September 24, 11:30 am - 2 pm

Landscapes for Landsake: The Banks Gallery will be holding an exhibit of original oil paintings of selected Ausbon Sargent protected properties painted by regional artists.

Exhibit dates: September 26-October 31

Special exhibit opening by invitation for ASLPT members only:

Friday September 25, 5 - 8 pm

Opening party for the general public:

Saturday September 26, 5 - 8 pm

October:

ASLPT Annual Meeting

(New London Historical Society)

Sunday, October 25, 4 - 6 pm

Courser Farm 11th Annual Pumpkin Festival

Sunday, October 25, Carving starts at noon

October 29th, 30 & 31 Lighting of all the carved pumpkins occurs at dusk on each night.

December:

Holiday Cocktail Party (Foxstand)

Thursday, December 3, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Complete details regarding time, driving directions and cost are on our web site

www.ausbonsargent.org

in the NEWS/Calendar menu.

From the Executive Director:

The most common question asked of me is: "How are things going given the uncertain financial times?" So far, the ASLPT is weathering the economy. We are fortunate that our engaged board, staff and network of volunteers are being creative in communicating the message that "our" land trust enriches their lives. We stick to our mission and never lose focus on what we do best - land conservation. After all, we are the only regional land trust in the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee area.

Our monthly board meetings now include a critical issue topic with time allowed for meaningful discussion focused on programs, budgets, stewardship and the future. Cash flow is carefully scrutinized insuring that our resources are used wisely. And as in the past, the key to the ASLPT's operating budget is the donations we receive from you, our supporters, in the form of membership, Annual Preservation Fund and other monetary gifts. Of course some of you have had to cut back in your giving, but others have been able to increase their donation, which has made all the difference. We are so grateful to all our members; your support truly makes this a unique organization, able to protect this special place!

Another question often asked is: "Now that the ASLPT has two land protection specialists, do you still have a backlog of projects?" The simple answer is "no" - a landowner no longer has to wait a year or more before we can start working on their project. We can respond in a timely fashion. On average each month, at least one and sometimes two land projects are presented to the board for approval to begin the land protection process (which could take 6 -18 months to complete.) Our goal for this year is to conserve 13 properties. While there is no shortage of projects, we are finding that because of this economy a number of our landowners cannot pay for transaction costs including survey work and the stewardship contribution. In some cases the approved projects must be put on hold and, with other projects we find financial assistance from neighbors or a town's conservation commission.

When you face the difficult decisions forced on all of us by the current economy, we ask you to consider the concrete and lasting difference that the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust has made in the quality of your life here. Isn't prudent use of our resources about making a good long-term investment? The ASLPT conserved properties provide you with locally grown agricultural products, majestic views, functioning wetlands, clean water and air, productive forests, natural areas to enjoy hiking and wildlife viewing and increased designated lands for public use.

As always, I would like to thank everyone for the many ways you support the land trust as either a member, volunteer or easement donor. Isn't it wonderful to live in an area where people are working together to protect and to pass on to the next generation that which makes this place so special?

Thank you



ASLPT Exec. Director
Debbie Stanley

Wish List: Can you help us purchase any of these items?

Call Debbie Stanley at 526-6555

Digital Camera - \$250

Portable Display - \$495

The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust

Membership, Gifts & Thank You's

Membership, APF and Gifts are from July 1, 2008 – June 1, 2009. Some names are followed by these symbols:

** denotes donors who have given to both Membership and the Annual Preservation Fund. + denotes donors who have provided us with their company's matching gift information. ^ denotes deceased. If you have any questions concerning your membership status, please call Operations Manager, Sue Andrews at 526-6555 or email Sue at aslptsea@tds.net.*

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"Walker Brook - Birnbaum Easement" an original oil painting by Sally Ladd Cole of the well known local swimming hole in Danbury. This part of Walker Brook sits on the west edge of the 106 acre easement donated in 2003 by Roger Birnbaum. Check the Calendar listing here in Chatter and on the ASLPT web site for the September '09 "Landscapes for Land's Sake" exhibit at The Banks Gallery in New London. More details at the www.thebanksgallery.com.

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This brook and granite boulders are visible from the newly built trail on the west side of Clark Pond - parking and trailhead are on Bog Rd., New London.

photo: Nancy Lyon

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The Annual Preservation Fund:

What is it? What does it do?

By Maggie Ford

We chose the word "preservation" because it embodies what we do at ASLPT. We preserve our rural landscape by holding conservation easements and overseeing them into the future. Today, ASLPT is the steward of over 100 properties and more than 6,200 acres – that's about 10 square miles. We meet with property owners, arrange for land surveys, research deeds, work with town conservation commissions, and in some cases find special funding in order to conserve these special places.

This year, we have set ourselves the goal of conserving at least 13 new properties, from one acre to nearly 500, from Warner and Webster to Springfield and Grantham. Your gifts to the Annual Preservation Fund of more than \$60,000 this year will make that goal a reality.

Your contributions not only enable ASLPT to conserve new easements across the 12 towns that we serve, they also make it possible for us to meet our enduring commitment to protect land for today and into the future – adding value, in Roosevelt's words. The responsibility to steward these properties includes an annual visit to each property by one of our dedicated cadre of volunteers. It means providing our volunteers with appropriate training. It means working with new property owners to assure that the terms of an easement are being observed. And, in the case of a potential problem, it means resolving any issues.

Not a small task this "preserving" business, even in good economic times. ASLPT, like other non-profits, continually watches the bottom line. Our investments are sound and we continue to take steps to control our expenses. In good years and when we have been particularly frugal, we direct any net income at year's end to our Stewardship Fund to assure that in the lean years we have sufficient funds to carry out our perpetual responsibilities to the land.

Contributions to the Annual Preservation Fund are critical to all that we do at ASLPT – from the initial conversation with a land owner to stewarding those conserved lands into the future. Your contributions help achieve Roosevelt's vision of turning over to the next generation natural assets that have and will continue to increase in value. The land you help protect today will be here for your children, grandchildren and their grandchildren to enjoy.

Maggie Ford is a member of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the ASLPT Development Committee.

**"The nation behaves well if
it treats the natural resources as
assets which it must turn over to
the next generation increased, and
not impaired, in value."**

-Theodore Roosevelt

Marilyn Kidder & Pam Perkins:

An interview with two of our volunteers

by Janet Miller Haines



Pam Perkins is a very active member (since 2005) of the ASLPT's Progressive Dinner Committee and Holiday Party – both events are important fund and friend raisers. Pam is great at identifying local residents to host the Progressive Dinner meals. And for the past three years she has gracefully and persuasively solicited food donations from local restaurants for our annual fundraising Holiday Party.

-photos by Nancy Lyon

A different model...

For all the years I lived in New Jersey, the picture I had of a realtor was of someone who was interested in one thing – selling a house. Imagine my delight when I learned that at least two of the leading realtors in our area – the area where we had chosen to retire – broke that model...big time. Yes, they had an interest in selling houses, but they factored in the lives that would be led by the new owners. They were, and are, interested in preserving the rural character of the Mt Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee Region (from the mission of the ASLPT).

Marilyn Kidder and Pam Perkins are two of the leading realtors in our region, and they both have made a commitment to the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust. Thankfully that is the same goal of many who come here to live. Marilyn asked somewhat wistfully, "Why would you kill the goose who'd been laying golden eggs?"

Marilyn and Pam come to their profession quite naturally. Pam is a member of a family who'd been in the business for three generations and Marilyn, who was itching for something to do as her kids were getting older, linked up with her friend, Wade Weathers of another local firm.

Call it serendipity. Call it fate. Call it good fortune for the rest of us. These two women have helped to maintain the world as we have come to know it, and to love it – thankfully.

As mothers, they helped instill in their kids the value of the land by getting them involved early on in their lives. Pam's daughters raised money for the ASLPT in a bike-a-thon – and to this day – they believe they saved the Vernlund (now Cross's)



Marilyn Kidder joined the ASLPT Board of Trustees in 1989, serving 9 years, and was Chair from 1992-1994. Marilyn returned as an ASLPT Trustee in 1999-2004 and currently serves on the Lands Committee. Marilyn Kidder's business firm, Coldwell Banker Milestone Real Estate, has contributed a portion of every commission earned to the ASLPT since 1989.

field known as "Main Street Meadow" on lower Main Street in New London. Back in 1990, one of Marilyn's sons participated in New London Hospital Days dressed up as Seymour Woodsnfields, the squirrel mascot of the ASLPT.

During our three-way conversation, each one of them spoke of what I'll call their 'caring' instinct. And yes, they're interested in running a good business but rolled up into that is keeping our area balanced between open spaces and developed spaces. Their banter contained the names of farms and homesteads; riding horses and hiking; building roads as the area dealt with increasing population. Clearly they and their families have enjoyed those open spaces, but their chosen profession meant dealing with the developed spaces as well. In other words, they had to work hard to maintain a balance. And that in turn meant preserving the rural character of the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee Region. To put it bluntly, that's what attracts potential homeowners. That's what attracts buyers. That's what keeps the region looking like it does.

So what does all this mean for the future? They both agreed that as a society and a culture, we've got to find ways to keep the character of our region intact. That in turn means being creative about developing easements. Maybe it means creative matchmaking between development clusters and conservation easement open spaces. Certainly it means staying in front of the public with the mission of the ASLPT. And, we always must find methods to encourage additional volunteerism. Once folks have tasted what we do, they'll help out more, and get more out of helping.

Marilyn summed up her feelings suggesting that "It's all a ripple effect. Whatever we do winds up impacting everything and everyone around us. It's a concept that's at work each and every day in each and every way." And Pam added, "I keep thinking about all the ripples Ausbon Sargent has created from his original, incredibly selfless act. His great sacrifice for future generations has served to protect the land and gather people together in ways I'm sure he never imagined in his wildest dreams."

I think Ausbon Sargent would be pleased with what he started.

Thanks Pam. Thanks Marilyn.

Janet Miller Haines minored in Journalism in college and likes to keep her hand in the writing game, as well as serving on the ASLPT's Development Committee.

Clark Pond Natural Area:

The history of its acquisition by the Town of New London

by Terence Dancy

Historically, the Town of New London has been interested in the natural area adjacent to Clark Pond since 1975. Esther Currier (Founder/Chair of the Conservation Commission), in a handwritten letter to the Selectmen dated April 10, 1975 identified the land between Bog Road and Clark Pond for protection. In part, her letter said, "... we recommend that the isolated part of this land be considered of ecological value in keeping natural the shore of the only pond in the town with undeveloped shoreline."

My retirement to this region nearly 3 decades ago closely parallels this 34 year-old story of conserving Clark Pond. When we lived in Montréal, my wife and I bought a vacation home on Pleasant Lake. Soon we became aware of the long history of land protection in New London and the region. This was an enormous change for us both after my career in the steel industry and my wife's in electrical and manufacturing research.

Then in the mid-1980s we both retired - becoming full-time residents of New London in 1990. I was introduced to land-use activities when invited to work on drafting a lake waterfront ordinance. This led me to the Conservation Commission and its cooperative relationship with the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust (ASLPT). In 1991, I was appointed to the Conservation Commission and was elected its Chair in 1994.

Because the townspeople of New London have long favored land protection, in 1994 the Conservation Commission initiated the establishment of a Capital Reserve specifically to



This photo was taken from a vantage point above Bog Road.- looking southwest toward Mt. Kearsarge. Clark Pond has been on the Town of New London's Master Plan and has twice been voted funding for its purchase by the citizens of New London. 91.41 acres at the north end of Clark Pond and the land on the right and left of the bog seen in the foreground are now owned by New London and protected by an ASLPT conservation easement.

photo: Peter Stanley

offered to the Commission, as a gift, a 19.5 acre parcel adjacent to I-89. This land abutted the parcels described by Esther Currier twenty-one years earlier. Because acquisition of this property was consistent with the long term objective of conserving the area on Clark Pond (if and when other parcels could be acquired by the Town) the Commission recommended, and the Selectmen approved, the acceptance of this gift.

Then it was learned, in 1999, that a 23.6 acre parcel on Bog Road was on the market. Because this property could provide road access to the 19.5 acre Town land and, more important (if it became available), would give road access to the Shultz parcel on Clark Pond, the Commission recommended its purchase. The purchase of this property from the Palazzi Corporation for \$29,700 was approved at the 1999 Town Meeting - supported by the Budget Committee and the Selectmen. Early in 2007, Mr. Schultz contacted the Commission to say that he was ready to discuss the sale of the Clark Pond shore land parcel. After an independent appraisal of \$245,000, the Commission made an offer, contingent on Town Meeting approval, and this was accepted. The foresight of the Commission and support of the Town in establishing a Capital Reserve for exactly this type of conservation land made it possible to obtain overwhelming support for the purchase at the 2008 Town Meeting. After further negotiation, the final price paid was \$220,000 - based on a detailed survey showing that the parcel was smaller than originally estimated. We should all be proud to realize Esther Currier's vision first expressed 30 years ago. Because the Town owns the Clark Pond property, for the land to be protected "in perpetuity," a conservation easement to be held by ASLPT will be the final step in preserving this unique 91 acre property for the enjoyment of future generations.

The conservation easement ensures that the area remains undeveloped and will include provisions that the

The Facts About Clark Pond Conservation Easement

Owner: Town of New London
Easement held by: The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust
Location: Bog Road, New London
Acreage: 91.41 acres
Frontage on two public roads (Bog Road and I-89)
Shoreline frontage of 1,188' on Clark Pond
Scenic views of Mt. Kearsarge & Clark Pond
Property is part of a large wetland providing water quality protection and significant wildlife habitat.
Public access is available on a newly constructed trail leaving Bog Road along the west side of the pond.

purchase properties for conservation easement protection. At the same time, the Commission became actively involved in the effort to update the Town's Master Plan. Eric Schultz's property on Clark Pond was listed in a table of "Lands with Attractive Features Worthy of Protection" in the 1998 Master Plan. At that time, the Commission approached Mr. Schultz regarding our longer term interest in acquiring and protecting his property because of its natural features and shoreline.

In 1996, Anita Lockhead (formerly Anita DesBarres)

NH Wildlife Action Plan in Conservation Planning:

Being used by 4 towns in the ASLPT region

By Amanda Stone

The UNH Cooperative Extension staff, working in partnership with the ASLPT staff, has been helping the conservation commissions in Grantham, Springfield, Newbury and Bradford incorporate information from the NH Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) into their natural resources inventories (NRI), conservation planning, and community outreach. Towns in the ASLPT's region were invited to apply for assistance in fall, 2008, and these four towns were selected for assistance.

Extension and Ausbon Sargent staff have held 4 meetings with each community since January. The actions that these communities have taken to use NH Wildlife Action Plan data will be documented so other towns in the Ausbon Sargent region can benefit and learn from these community projects.

Here's what these communities have been doing:

Springfield has incorporated NH Wildlife Action Plan data on habitats and associated species into their 2008 NRI - identifying priority areas for conservation of wildlife habitats and important water resources. They've started working on outreach to landowners interested in conserving their land and protecting wildlife habitat and water resources. And, Springfield plans to work with Grantham on common priorities along their town border.

Grantham developed a conservation display for the 2009 town meeting and is planning articles for the town newsletter and website. They are developing landowner information packets using the ASLPT land conservation materials.

Newbury's goals are to educate the community about land conservation and conservation easements and incorporate WAP information into Newbury's Natural Resources Inventory.

Bradford reviewed the Wildlife Action Plan maps and identified priority areas for conservation of wildlife habitats. They plan to incorporate the Wildlife Action Plan maps and data into their upcoming natural resources inventory, and develop an outreach program that includes getting information onto the town web site, the town newsletter and the local newspaper, and creating displays for the July 4th event, the weekly Bradford Farmer's Market, the public library, and other venues.



The rookeries of the Great Blue Heron (above) are listed as critical habitat under the Wildlife Action Plan. Towns participating in the WAP process are identifying those land resources that are vital to wildlife habitat in their communities.

New Hampshire's Wildlife Action Plan (WAP):

"In 1983, the reforestation that followed farming and logging of the 19th and 20th centuries reached its peak, with 87 percent of the state's lands forested. By 1997, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) estimated that the state's forest cover dropped three percent, to 84 percent. Unlike the 18th and 19th century conversion of forests to fields, today's land conversion to roads, housing, and businesses permanently alters natural habitats and degrades their value to native wildlife. The WAP points to where the most vulnerable species and habitats are in relation to these rapid changes to the natural landscape."

NH Department of Fish & Game
www.wildlife.state.nh.us

Both UNH Cooperative Extension and the ASLPT also plan to sponsor education events on wildlife habitat and species conservation later this year, which will be open to all towns.

Calendar of regional WAP events (contact Beth at the ASLPT offices for questions/details 526-6555 or aslptbeth@tds.net):

Springfield: Land Conservation Options Workshop,
Tuesday, September 22, 2009, 7-9pm

Newbury: Land Conservation Options Workshop,
Saturday, September 12, 2009, 9am-12:30pm, Newbury Town Offices.

Bradford: Natural Resources Inventory and Wildlife workshop,
Thursday, Oct 15, 7-9pm

Amanda Stone and Frank Mitchell work with UNH Cooperative Extension's Land & Water Conservation Program, and conduct the Wildlife Action Plan Community Assistance Program as part of the technical assistance program funded by the NH Fish & Game Department. The NH Wildlife Action Plan was completed by NH Fish & Game and partners in 2005.

(continued from page 12) public has walking access in perpetuity. The Town will retain the right to manage timber resources on the property and will have responsibility to maintain a trail network, including bridges and boardwalks and other trail related structures. Roadside parking will be included. Extensive work on the trails is already done.

The Conservation Commission acknowledges with thanks the excellent cooperation of Eric Schultz in completing this project. But it is the support of the citizens of the Town

of New London over many years that saved this special place forever.

Terry Dancy had a career in the international steel industry in England, Pittsburgh and Québec from 1947 to 1985. He and his wife, Edna, have had a vacation home on Pleasant Lake since 1978 that they still enjoy with their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They have lived in New London since 1990 and Terry has served on the Conservation Commission since 1992.

"Questing" on the Cook Easement Trails

Enjoy a treasure hunt with your family on ASLPT protected land

by Dave Brazier

The first time I heard about a nature "Quest" was on a trail near Pleasant Lake. I was descending the trail when I passed three women hiking with a group of children whose ages ranged from 4 to 10 years old. While this was not a difficult trail for an adult, it could be a challenge for a 4 year-old, yet all these kids looked like they were having a great time. I stopped and chatted and found out they were on a Quest. What is a Quest? It is a treasure hunt that makes use of rhymes, pictures, photographs, hand drawn maps or riddle like clues to lead you to a treasure box. The treasure box usually contains a log book and/or a memento or stamp to record your visit. There are two Quest books describing Quests in the Connecticut River valley available at Morgan Hill Book Store (Main Street, New London). I was impressed with the excitement radiating from this group and felt this would be a fun venture for my 4 and 5 year-old granddaughters. I am a firm believer that the sooner you can expose children to a fun outdoor activity the more likely they are to respect and enjoy nature over their lifetime. I had taken them on hikes before, but often after 10 to 15 minutes they became bored and wondered when we would return to the car. So, on their next summer visit we set off on a "Quest." And to my delight they enjoyed it immensely. They ran up and down the trail looking for the next clue and could not wait to find the treasure box. As soon as we returned home they were ready to go on a second Quest the same day! It has become an annual activity when they return to New Hampshire each summer.

I have been a strong supporter of the philosophy of Ausbon Sargent since retiring here in 2000 and have hiked many of their properties as a land monitor and for recreational purposes. I feel it is important to set aside a percentage of land to preserve the rural nature of our State for future generations. The number of quality parcels they have added to their preservation trust since I have been in NH is quite impressive. So, the thought crossed my mind that creating several Quests on the Ausbon

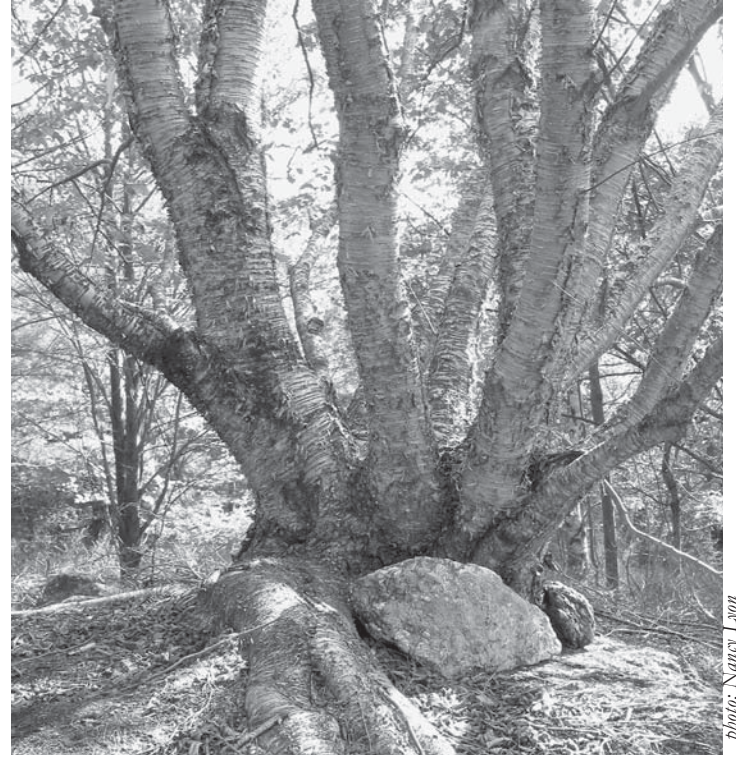


photo: Nancy Lyon

Dave and Celeste Cook donated an easement on 69 acres in Elkins. Dave has created and maintained a complex trail system and it is well marked and documented. In addition to a beautiful view of Ragged Mt., Kearsarge Mt and the Mink Hills seen near the height of land, the woods are filled with smaller pleasures - brooks, boulders and old hardwoods and pines like this birch tree above.

"I had a grand time last summer taking two granddaughters around the Pink trail on the Quest ... The girls loved it, quickly figured out how to read the trail markings, and led the way briskly thenceforth. What came a little harder for them was keeping the eye peeled for clues. That came in due course, and is, I think, the chief educational benefit of the quest: teaching not just to cover ground, but to observe what is out there."

-Dave Cook, donor with his wife Celeste of the Cook Conservation Easement

Sargent parcels would offer additional exposure of the ASLPT properties and provide opportunities for children to enjoy nature. It sounded like it might be a workable concept.

After making a written proposal to the ASLPT's Executive Director, Debbie Stanley, she gave her approval and I have documented my first

Quest and set up a treasure box on the Cooks' property trail. It is a great trail with spectacular mountain views from the top. I plan on doing several more. It's a fun venture for kids and grown-ups alike. Try it and if you enjoy it maybe you would like to pick out your favorite Ausbon Sargent property, create your own Quest and maintain the treasure box throughout the year. It is a rewarding project and can be an effective way to encourage children to respect and enjoy nature. If you are interested, contact Sue Andrews by email at aslptsea@tds.net or call 603-526-6555.

On one of our Quest hikes the treasure box was soaked and our grandchildren could not use the log book and stamp. They improvised and used the ink to paint their faces as you can see in photo. You can tell they were having a great time and yes, we quickly cleaned up their faces so they had no toxic effects from the ink.

Dave Brazier retired in 2000 after 36 years with General Electric and Synthes. He and his wife Nancy reside in North Sutton. He enjoys New England for it's variety of available outdoor activities, including backyard sugaring, beekeeping and mushroom hunting.



photo: Dave Brazier

Author Dave Brazier's two granddaughters Cameron Mackey (l) and Paige Perchinsky (r) who got creative with the Quest log book stamp ink and painted their faces too!

Signs of Spring on Hersey Farm

The Hersey Family Farm easement reawakens to the cycle of farming

By Heather Rogers

As in any other season of the year, Jerry Hersey is working seven days a week to care for his herd of Hereford cattle on Hersey Farm in East Andover. Jerry's is a way of life that few of us live today, where each day's work is connected to the land, and dictated by the season. Just as we see the piles of snow receding, buds forming, and birds nesting every year, there are the welcome rhythms of spring on this iconic New Hampshire farm, assuring us once again it is that magical time of year.

Frogs are croaking in the stream next to the barn, and swallows are migrating from their winter in South America back to the farm to build muddy nests in the rafters of the barn. During the next big rain, salamanders will migrate from the forest floor to the vernal pool, too.

Cows are calving in the barn and in the field behind it. The

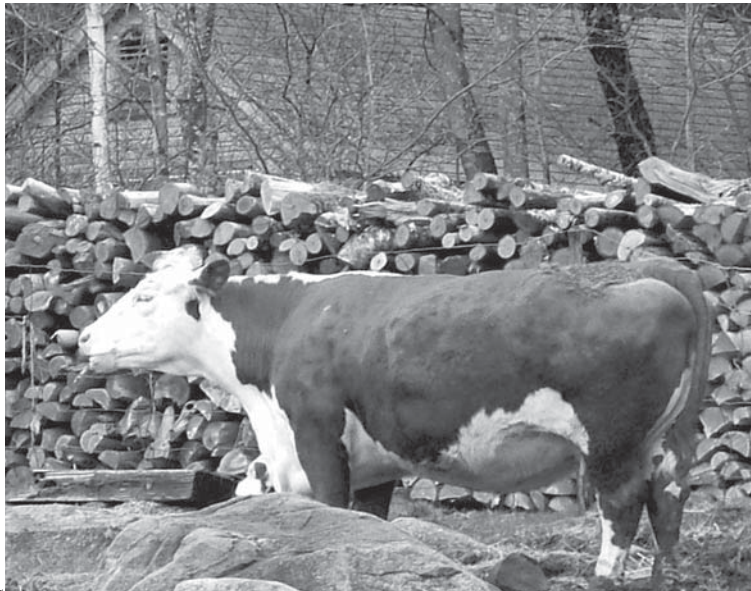


photo: Beth McGuinn

Jerry Hersey raises beef cattle as well as cutting and selling wood on this working farm

herd quickly grows in spring; four calves have already been born, and twenty-two more are on the way. Typically the herd swells from thirty-eight (how many fit in the barn for winter) to near sixty in the warmer months, and in the fall just the right number will be sold, mostly to other beef farms in New Hampshire.

The supply of hay in the barn has dwindled, though there is enough to feed the cattle until they can graze in the pasture. Most years, the pasture is productive enough to feed the herd around the first of May. Jerry moves the cattle from field to field to graze over the spring, summer and fall, making sure to keep aside enough hay to harvest for the herd for the winter. He usually has

The Hersey Family Farm includes 267.7 acres of protected wetland, agricultural fields and forest on scenic Route 11 in East Andover. This special place was protected through public and private funding in 2007. Future fundraising efforts are being planned to enlarge the easement.

enough excess hay to sell about twenty-five hundred bales to local families, too, who need the hay to feed horses, sheep, or goats of their own. Just like every other element of the farm, this has a predictable rhythm. Jerry uses the fields on his farm purchased by his parents, and also that of the original family farmstead next door purchased by his grandparents, now owned by his cousin Roger. The two are managed as one farm, a perfectly balanced system providing pasture and producing hay for the cattle as they have for so many years.

Spring is the time for mending fences. Jerry needs to keep the cattle from slipping through a break in the fence, and out of fields set aside for hay to be harvested for stashing in the barn.

After a winter of work in the woodlot, thirty-five cords of wood are lined up next to the barn, ready for local families to heat their homes with in the coming winter. Jerry and his brother Jim can be seen chopping and stacking the last logs to finish up the winter's work. There is also a load of eight-foot hemlock and pine near the road, ready to be sold for saw timber. That pile may seem smaller than in years past; since housing starts are down, the demand for saw timber is, too. Jerry instead focused some of this winter's harvest on pulpwood, which he sold to Green Crow, right down the street.

Soon, when Jerry finds time away from the other chores, we may see him tending his small vegetable garden next to the barn: planting parsnips, carrots, tomatoes, lettuce and other vegetables to enjoy for himself.

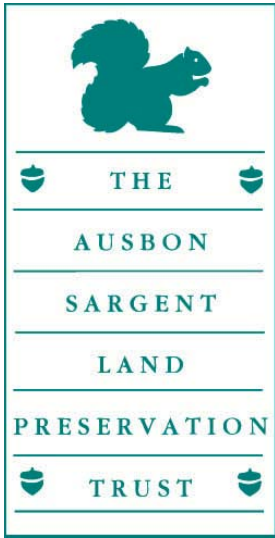
Since most of the Hersey Farm has been conserved with a conservation easement, ensuring that the land will always be available for farming and forestry, these happy signs of a new season will remain part of the fabric of our community. Next winter, with shortened days and cold nights, we can look forward to seeing Jerry's Herefords out in the pasture, a fresh stack of cordwood by the barn, and a gentle farmer mending fences.

This article appeared in the May 2009 Andover Beacon by author Heather Rogers. It is reprinted here with her permission and Andover Beacon editor Charlie Darling - an ardent supporter of the Hersey Family Farm project.

Trail Maps NEW on our web site:
www. ausbonsargent.org

Go to our web site to **Protected Properties**, we've added a new menu item: **Trails**.
Now you can quickly find out which of the ASLPT easement properties offer trail hiking opportunities.
Trail descriptions, drive directions and maps can be printed directly from the web site.

And, of course, we are always delighted to have you visit us at: 71 Pleasant St.. New London
Or call 603-526-6555 email to: info@aslpt.org



71 Pleasant Street
P.O. Box 2040
New London
New Hampshire
03257
(603) 526-6555
aslpt@tds.net
www.ausbonsargent.org

Kittie Wilson sent this photo to our web site of a bald eagle that was sighted this winter on Pleasant Lake in New London. You can also see it feeding on a deer carcass on the lake ice.

Encounter more "Wildlife Sightings" at our web site.
www.ausbonsargent.org



photo: Kittie Wilson

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You can find out more about us on our web site at www.ausbonsargent.org

Please make checks payable to: The ASLPT and mail to: P.O. Box 2040, New London, NH 03257
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7/09

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