



# Tidings of the Turtle



Francis Small Heritage Trust Newsletter – December 2000

## Sawyer Mt. Reveals Its Natural Wonders...

A colony of **beavers** has staked its claim on Trust land and has created an extensive habitat shared by many animals. Mink, duck, and deer have all been sighted at the new beaver pond as well as the tracks of raccoon, bear, moose, and of course ... beaver. Located next to the old Sawyer Mt. Road in Limington, the busy animals have created a network of dams on both sides of the Hale Road. In fact, earlier this year the beaver pond had risen so high that this road was actually under water! The pond is fed by several streams that come down from the mountain and exit on both sides of the old road.

A few years back, the beaver had created a six-foot high dam downstream from this new habitat. That land is now a grassy field that will eventually revert back to forested land. When the poplar trees return, the beaver will undoubtedly be back. The old dam is located on the latest 45 acre parcel acquired on the mountain. The new dam is located on one of the first parcels acquired by the Trust. As is the typical natural cycle with the beaver, eventually the animals will



*These are no two-bit beavers!  
(That's a quarter on this gnawed stump.)*

remove all of the poplar trees at the new habitat and then they will move on to a new location. In the meantime, they have transformed this forested area into pond and created a home not only for themselves, but for many other animals as well.

All is not easy for the life of a beaver, however. Earlier this year we had lots of rainfall that allowed the pond to fill to capacity. The beaver had built a large lodge on the east side of the Hale road where they were well protected, since the only entrance to the lodge was under the water. However, the lack of rain in late summer caused the water level to drop and expose their entrance, making the beavers vulnerable to predators. Indeed, a few of the beavers may have been killed since there is now a second hole high on the side of the lodge. But the resourceful beavers quickly (seemingly overnight!) built a second smaller lodge on the west side of the road.



*A lack of rain makes this beaver lodge vulnerable*

Viewing the handiwork of the beavers makes a nice afternoon hike for the whole family. Once such hike starts at the old Sawyer Mt. Road off Rt. 117 in Limington. That unmarked road is the rightmost path between the two highway arrow signs at the sharp curve between the Norton Road and Christian Hill Road.

Hike up the Sawyer Mt. Road for about a half mile until you come to the Hale Road on the right. The first beaver dam and lodge is located on the right before you get to the Hale Road. The new lodge is just after the junction. Be sure to look for tracks in the mud as all sorts of animals frequent the area. Bring a flashlight and peer into the abandoned lodge. Please, however, do not disturb the nocturnal beavers, their dams, or their lodges as all are protected by state law and they have a hard enough time surviving without human interference.

## ... and Provides a Summer Serendipity

It was one of those late summer dog days on Sawyer Mt. Don Cameron of the Maine Natural Areas Program had joined Trust Directors Lorraine and Sherwood Libby for a kind of quest. Weeks earlier Lorraine had found a Trumpet Honeysuckle (*Lonicera Sempervirens*) on one of her rambles and was hoping it might be identified as a wild, not cultivated specimen – a rare find. Cameron, as it turned out, could not give that assurance. The Trumpet Honeysuckle in question was likely a vestige of a vanished homestead.

Disappointed, the trio continued its explorations and, near the top of a ridge, made two serendipitous discoveries. Sedge is a tufted marsh plant, related to grasses but with a solid stem and a small dry fruit. It is an uncommon entity in these parts and having it turn up on Sawyer Mt. is special indeed. The other surprise was a patch of old growth forest – Red Oak and Hop Hornbeam –which had escaped logging operations because of its limited commercial value.

## Trust Begins Natural Resource Inventory Project

Since the Francis Small Heritage Trust was formed in 1990, one of its primary goals has been to complete the “Sawyer Mt. Project”. The mission of that project is to establish a balance between the needs of the local communities and the protection of the natural character and wildlife habitats of the Sawyer Mt. region. As of the spring of 2000 the Trust has acquired approximately 600 acres within that designated region, mostly in the area of the summit. With that substantial amount of land acquired and protected the Trust was faced with two challenging questions. First, how do we begin inventorying the natural resources found on the newly acquired properties? And second, how do we prioritize future acquisitions in a way that will help us preserve the most ecologically important habitats within the region?

Over the past year and a half, with guidance and support from the Sweet Water Trust, a plan was established for taking the first step toward answering these important questions. FSHT began by discussing its needs with Woodlot

Alternatives Inc., a professional natural resource consulting organization located in Topsham. In the fall of 1999, FSHT hired Woodlot Alternatives to locate and map the basic habitat types found on the 600 acres of Trust property and the lands surrounding those properties. In June of this year, Woodlot Alternatives provided FSHT with a report and map showing the location of the lots currently owned by the Trust. The map and report also locate and describe the basic habitat types and water features found on the Trust properties and on the approximately 2,500 surrounding acres that make up the Sawyer Mt. region. This information was obtained through a process called “remote sensing”, and involves analysis of aerial photos of the area taken after the ice storm of 1998.

FSHT will use this report and map to help prioritize future acquisitions and as a source of information for potential donors. While additional, more detailed studies will be needed in the future, FSHT is pleased to have taken the first step toward creating a “natural resource inventory” of the Sawyer Mt. region.



## A Tale of Three Signs

Thanks to the handiwork of Board member Dan Kidd, three carved wooden signs will be erected in the Limington area honoring very different gifts to the public through the Trust. One of these is to be in memory of Donald S. Lloyd, placed at what is being called Lloyd Corner on Rt. 117. As was requested by Mr. Lloyd's family, the Trust has received many generous monetary gifts in his name.

Mrs. Evelyn Webster of Cornish has had the personal strength of conviction to sell the Trust 287 acres at below market value, thereby thwarting a new development on a beautiful piece of land, again off Rt. 117. (It is interesting to note that the town had already assigned names to roads that were to be built on this land before Mrs. Webster and the Trust intervened.) We will be pleased to set a sign here to acknowledge Mrs. Webster's concern for future generations.

Dr. Philip Jagolinzer's donation of a 20 acre easement on the Saco River was celebrated with a small ceremony (see article and photo on this page) in addition to the placing of a sign. Dr. Jagolinzer's vision will guarantee forever our descendants' access to the river and the beautiful brook that feeds it.

In recognizing these three benefactors, the Trust is confident that the true value and significance of their actions today will become ever more apparent with the passing of time.



*The Jagolinzer clan gathers around the new sign.*

## Dr. Philip Jagolinzer Honored in Special Ceremony

Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup> brought gray skies, numerous Trust directors, and several generations of the Jagolinzer clan to a small sign reading “Jagolinzer Preserve” located by the side of Rt. 25 near the Cornish/Limington line.

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President Bob Savage was master of ceremonies as the Trust honored Dr. Philip Jagolinzer for his donation of a 20 acre easement on the Saco River. Savage noted that Dr. Jagolinzer's gift served as an important local model of land stewardship which others might choose to emulate.

Dr. Jagolinzer shared his dream of a conservation legacy for preserving the natural character of the area for plants, animals and non-intrusive human activities.

## No Recount Demanded at Trust Elections

Participatory democracy at its most elemental was on display at the Annual Meeting of the Francis Small Heritage Trust. Members gathered at Sacopee Valley High School on Tuesday, October 24 to nominate and elect directors and officers for the new year. Peter Zack (Porter), Scott Hoar (Sanford), Dick Jarrett (Limington) and John MacDonald (Cornish) were re-elected to three year terms as directors, joining Marlene Livonia (Hiram), Bob Savage (Limington), Sherwood Libby (Limington), Lorraine Libby (Limington) and Dan Kidd (Limington) on the Trust's Board.

The following slate of officers was presented by the Nominating Committee and confirmed unanimously:

President: Marlene Livonia  
 1st Vice-President: Bob Savage  
 2nd Vice President: Dan Kidd  
 Treasurer: Dick Jarrett  
 Secretary: Peter Zack

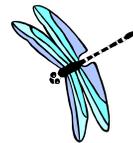
## MAINE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CHALLENGE GRANT

Early this year the Maine Community Foundation generously awarded a \$15,000 challenge grant for land acquisition in the Sawyer Mt. Project. The grant will be received in its entirety only if the Trust is able to secure an additional \$15,000 from members and supportive others.

To date \$8,000 has been raised in the effort to preserve a remarkable natural area. We need your help to realize the \$7,000 balance and achieve the grand total of \$30,000. Isn't this a marvelous opportunity to create an enduring legacy for tomorrow's children?

## Anisoptera Anecdotes

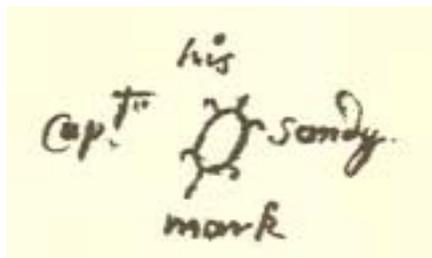
Fall and winter curtail that annoying buzz of mosquitoes, but rest assured they'll be back next spring. And creeping our way is the threat of the West Nile virus (carried by mosquitoes that have contracted it by feasting on infected birds). To make war on mosquitoes, use Mother Nature's arsenal –**DRAGONFLIES** (suborder Anisoptera).



In the nymph stages, dragonflies eat mosquito larvae and in the adult stage they will eat their weight in adult mosquitoes. They are **FEROCIOUS** consumers of mosquitoes. The indomitable mosquito will travel up to three miles in search of dinner (you, me, and other warm blooded creatures), so making your neighbors aware of dragonfly usage increases the benefit to us all.

Often you can start your own dragonfly colony, but it may take a few years to ensure a good survival rate. Also, keep in mind there are several varieties that have a one to four year life span, spending up to three years in nymph stages before emerging as the beautiful adult. It takes time to make sure you'll have adults every year. But remember, even as adults they're still working hard, eating mosquitoes.

The Trust has sold dragonflies for four years and will continue to offer this service. So when you **THINK SPRING**, think of ordering dragonflies in April for delivery in early May.



Captain Sandy's mark from the collections of the Maine Historical Society

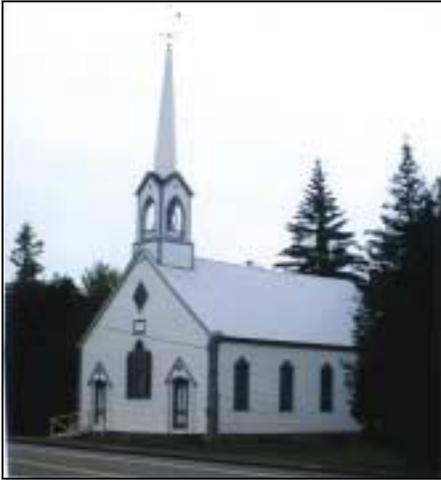
*Captain Sandy, a Sagamore Indian Chief, conveyed in 1668 to Francis Small, a trader at Kittery, all of the lands between the Great and Little Ossipee Rivers lying between the Saco River on the east and the New Hampshire line on the west, a area known as the "five Ossipee Towns".*

## Highlights in the History of the Francis Small Heritage Trust

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| 1990 | The Trust is formed.   | 1999 | Acquired 287 acres at the base of the mountain which protects an important wildlife area as well as the scenic beauty of Rt. 117. A bridge loan was taken out while we obtain the rest of the funding for this purchase.<br>Purchased outright another 45 acres on the mountain. Received as a gift a conservation easement on the 20 acre Jagolinzer Preserve on the Saco River. Presented "Bats and Buzzers", a free workshop for children to build bat houses and learn about dragonflies. |
| 1994 | "Tree Growth and Taxes," a free seminar is presented.  |      |   |
| 1996 | 126 acres on the summit of Sawyers Mt. is acquired (with mortgage obligations). These parcels contain an important deer yard.            |      |   |
| 1997 | 134 acres of adjoining mountain land is purchased outright.<br>First annual Dragonfly sale.<br>First annual "Longfellow Afternoon".      |      |   |
| 1998 | Purchased outright another adjoining 40 acres with a waterfall and a gorge.<br>Presented a free forestry workshop on "Ice Storm Damage". | 2000 | Fourth annual Dragonfly sale.<br>Fourth annual "Longfellow Afternoon".  |

*The Trust now protects 651 acres in Limington and Limerick.*

**FLASH! The Trust just obtained an agreement on an additional 72 acre parcel on the mountain!**



## A Church, a Poet, a Happening

During each of the last four summers the Unitarian Universalist Church in Hiram has provided a perfect aesthetic and historical setting for "A Longfellow Afternoon". The newly renovated building on the banks of the Saco River was erected in the latter half of the 19th century, and since then has sheltered the worshipping descendants of Hiram's General Peleg Wadsworth, grandfather of celebrated Maine born poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

On August 6, the little church once again welcomed the costumed readings of Fred

Blader as Henry and Harriet Dawkins as Henry's sister, Anne Longfellow. This accomplished pair engaged the audience with a program that nicely integrated dynamic Hiram author Jack Barnes as a third presenter.

Doubtlessly Longfellow, a spiritual fellow who loved the outdoors, would have approved of such a dramatic staging of his literary talents as a vehicle for preserving the Creation.

## FRANCIS SMALL HERITAGE TRUST

*Caring for land and a way of life in Southern Maine*

### Who We Are:

The Francis Small Heritage Trust, Inc. is a private, not for profit conservation land trust founded in 1990. We are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and have no paid staff. Our operations are supported by memberships and contributions

### What We Do:

#### Our Mission...

*To protect the present character of the land centered around the five Ossipee towns of Limerick, Cornish, Limington, Newfield and Parsonsfield by ensuring the continuation of natural areas while supporting compatible commercial uses, such as agriculture and forestry.*

#### ...and How We Carry It Out

- *By accepting donations of land and conservation easements.*
- *By providing information and support to towns, developers and landowners.*
- *By acquiring land through purchase.*
- *By presenting educational programs to help foster an appreciation of land and nature.*



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