

## FUNDRAISER UPDATE

As announced in the letter sent out in March with dues renewal forms, the Executive Committee has launched a \$20,000 fundraiser to support trail work. This is the first fundraising campaign in the 106 year history of the Club.

The purpose of the campaign is to achieve three objectives:

- Open all trails damaged and blocked by the "Ice Storm of '98."
- Complete restoration work on some of WODC's popular trails, especially the Walden Trail.
- Add \$10,000 to the Edgar J. Rich Fund for future trail work. The Rich Fund's current balance is \$6,900, a respectable sum — but not nearly enough to meet longterm obligations. Since trail maintenance is an important and expensive function of the Club, and one whose expenses can vary greatly, the Rich Fund can be used to supplement the normal trail budget in years when Club revenues have fallen, a low cost crew is not available, or a major project is necessary.

Note that the target amount is in addition to grant money obtained from the National Recreational Trails Act, the Forest Service, or other government sources. It also excludes the \$3,500 we expect each year in basic (\$15 level) membership dues.

To date campaign results are encouraging. We have raised approximately \$9,600 toward the \$20,000 goal. How has this been achieved?

In February and March seventeen Club members pledged over \$6,000 to a fund designed to match general contributions on a dollar for dollar basis, as well as the portion of WODC dues payments exceeding \$25. Individual pledges to the matching fund ranged from \$100 to \$1,000, with the majority falling into the \$250-\$500 range.

(Continued on Page 2)

## TRAILS REPORT - APRIL 1998

Before heading out on your first Spring hike, take some time to inquire about the condition of your planned route. Although this week's 80 degree temperatures will have melted the last ice from the trees, the consequences of the January ice storm will be with us for years.

Over half of WODC's 52 miles of trails were moderately to severely damaged by the storm. This seems to be representative of the WMNF as a whole, where about half of the total 1,465 trail miles were damaged. Damage ranges from small broken branches to broken tree tops, snapped trunks, and completely uprooted trees. Hardwoods at 2,000-3,000' elevation, such as on Dicey's Mill Trail, fared the worst, while softwoods suffered minimal damage in most locations.

Please plan all hiking trips with these conditions in mind. Travel is slow on many trails, and route finding may be difficult. But if you plan properly you will be able to enjoy some truly unique and wondrous sights in the forest. While view clearing is not appropriate in Wilderness areas, the storm has created many wonderful new vistas within the forest.

But wait! Before you plan another season of outings in the WMNF, how about scheduling a few days to help with the trail cleanup? We estimate that 100-200 person-days will be required to clear all WODC trails, with most of the work expected to be done by volunteers like you.

In order to reopen our trails by midseason, we plan to be doing trail clearing every **Saturday** from May through July. We will need at least eight volunteers on each day to meet these goals. To reach some of the more remote areas, we have also planned two overnight work trips. Please see the accompanying **Trail Calendar** for additional details.

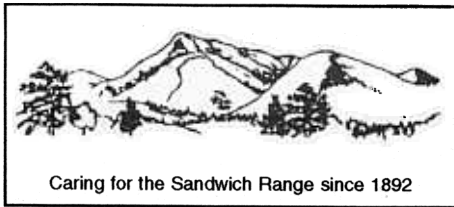
Although a good turnout will let us reopen most trails by mid-summer, additional time will be required to clear all the storm debris, and insure that waterbars and drainage areas are clear. To achieve this goal, the Trails and Executive Committees have decided to hire an

additional trail crew to help with the final cleanup.

We plan to hire a two person crew for at least four weeks in June and July. This light crew will be used for a second pass on trails that have already been reopened by volunteers. This will add 320 hours (or more) to the 1000 hours of anticipated volunteer time. Financing the crew will come from WODC dues and contributions. We also expect to receive USFS support from an ice-storm cleanup fund, as well as from the new User Fee program.

While the ice storm damage would normally be enough to occupy us for at least a year, it is not our only challenge. At the 1997 Annual Meeting it was voted to appropriate \$5,900 to accelerate our ongoing restoration of Walden Trail. Based on this show of support from members, the Trails Committee had been preparing detailed plans in the months before the storm. These plans included a request for additional support from the National Recreational Trails Fund. This fund receives monies through the federal gasoline tax, and is administered by agencies in each state. We submitted a proposal for \$9,700, which we learned in late March has been granted in full. Since this is a matching fund grant it does not replace the need for Club funding, but it does insure that this work will be within our means.

The work on Walden Trail was planned to be a two year project. Although the ice storm damage suggests a delay in schedule, our National Recreational Trails Act grant must be used within two years. We will therefore continue with the original timetable, that envisioned a 4-week crew in 1997, and an 8-week crew in 1999. We will be hiring three people for this heavy work in each of the two years. Since the Walden restoration will consist entirely of rock work, we are currently seeking applicants with suitable experience for this challenging work. The crew leader must have especially good rock skills, as well as prior experience with crew leadership.



The *Newsletter* is published twice each year by the Wonalancet Out Door Club. The mailing address is:

WODC Newsletter Editor  
HC 64 Box 5  
Wonalancet, NH 03897

The Editor encourages members and interested readers to submit material for use in future issues. Articles, poems, drawings, comments, criticisms, suggestions, are welcomed.

Anyone interested in working on either the light or heavy crew is encouraged to contact us for additional details and a job application. Please contact Chris Conrod at 284-6686 or by mail at P.O. Box 17, South Tamworth, NH 03883. Additional details are also available on the WODC



Clearing ice storm damage

web site at [www.hydrocad.net/wodc](http://www.hydrocad.net/wodc). The web site also contains details on the progress of trail clearing and a current trail calendar. Since our busy schedule is subject to change on short notice, our web site will be the best way to stay abreast of recent events.

Peter Smart

## FUNDRAISER UPDATE

(Continued from Page 1)

As of April 7, contributions and membership renewals eligible for matching status totaled \$4,250. We received another \$1,100 in donations not qualifying for matching status. Of 171 renewals received, 35 renewed as Trail Blazers (\$50), 68 as Stewards (\$25), and 68 as Pathfinders (\$15). Contributions were received from 51 members in addition to, or in lieu of, renewing at higher levels.

We still have another \$10,400 to go. If everyone pitches in, I am confident that we can achieve our \$20,000 goal. If you haven't already done so, please send in your contribution and/or membership renewal today. Since WODC's fiscal year runs from January to December, it is important that renewals be made at the beginning of the calendar year.

Tom Rogers

be read on the WODC web site, or obtained from the Editor.

November 21st, 1938

Dear George,

As you probably read in the papers, between the big doings of the dictators, we had a tremendous blow in these parts. I was out when the wind struck, almost without warning. I had gone out on a gusty fall afternoon, there were rain clouds and some falling moisture, but nothing unusual. Suddenly, with a bellow, the hurricane arrived, wrapping the branches of a big maple around its straining trunk, shaking the house and filling the air with flying shingles. Some trees came up by the roots, being gently laid away to their last rest as a mother lays down her children at night; others snapped off at the base with splintering crashes and great violence like soldiers going down in a rain of shells. The ruination of branches occurred right and left as the stoutest oaks and butternuts bent to the ground in the fiercest gusts. All their leaves were still green, affording a terrible purchase, and the roar of the battle sounded like the deepest notes of a gigantic organ. How that old wind gathered up its full strength and hurled itself upon them, time after time, tearing away a heavy branch here and there, storming in through the openings and grappling with the trunk itself.

I gathered all the children on the front lawn and for half an hour we stood in Muir-like admiration of the elements. I can assure you that although the strength and fury of the storm was beyond anything in my experience, there was not the slightest taint of evil anywhere. I could have sworn that the sound trees enjoyed their struggle and I could swear now that they will be all the better, for Nature is ever kind at heart, though sometimes a bit boisterous.

Well, nothing would do but Al Zink and I must depart to the Sandwiches to see what the storm had done to our beloved hills. So often in summer and winter have I been up there that every bulge and dip in the range is a well-loved old friend. There are scores of trees too where I have taken mine ease, a dozen brooks where refreshment never failed, and how went it with them in the tempest? So one Friday

## 1938 HURRICANE

Note: Following are extracts of a long letter written by Rev. Frederick B. Noss of Andover, MA, Tamworth, and Sandwich, NH, to his brother George. It describes the hurricane of 1938 and damage caused to the Blueberry Ledge, Rollins, and Dicey's Mill trails, as he and his friends cleared portions of them that fall.

The letter was made available to me by his daughter, Tish (Noss) Mutter. The full letter may

morning we set sail with brother Foster (Zink) for ballast and cooking. Two light axes and food for two days went into our packs as we drove up the familiar road. Whiteface by the Blueberry Ledge Trail marked the beginning of the exploration, and an easy time we had that day. Let me confess: It feels good to sink your axe into the soft green wood of a balsam and the smell of the fresh cut wood is a delight. So we reached the hut and while Foster cooked a mammoth supper, Al and I cut new-fallen balsam boughs for a bed. Plenty of it. A foot deep we made it, spongy and fragrant. No featherbed ever approached it for softness.

In the morning we found work to do. The Rollins trail immediately beyond Shehadi lay deep beneath fallen trees. Our axes rung all morning long and into the afternoon. Three hundred yards of impassable trail lay open behind us, but the day was done and we went back to the car.

Some ten days ago Al and I cooked up another expedition. Our senior patrol leader (Bill Moore) went along. By brilliant moonlight we climbed to Heermance, ate a midnight meal and fell to rest upon our still fragrant bed. That was two-thirty of a frosty November night, and at seven-thirty in the morning the others answered my breakfast call. It began as a gorgeous day so that we set our axes to hewing at ten. We meant to sleep the night at Passaconaway Lodge, and worked mightily to that end. I used a heavy Plumb axe and it was good where the trunks lay near the ground, but for overhead work it proved wearisome. In places you understand we had to tunnel.

*"although the strength and fury of the storm was beyond anything in my experience, there was not the slightest taint of evil anywhere. I could have sworn that the sound trees enjoyed their struggle and I could swear now that they will be all the better, for Nature is ever kind at heart, though sometimes a bit boisterous."*

Sometimes with skill we could sever a trunk on the left of the path and have the stump stand up from the weight of the roots on the right. Sometimes we had to cut them twice and roll the log away. It was great labor and a sweaty one. The canteen emptied itself into us. At noon we entered a free trail which led us through standing stuff for half a mile. Then a little more clearing and another half mile of easy going. Then as the sun sloped away to evening shadows, we resolved to leave the clearing of the trail and press on by crawling, climbing and detours until we reached the hut.

Although we had cut our way through some monstrous tangles, we soon found ourselves in the midst of the most distressing desolation I have ever seen. We could not locate the trail, and struggled on through, over and under a burden of tangled branches, upended stumps, ragged holes, smashed trunks and stiff resisting tree tops. Sometimes we found ourselves fifteen feet above the ground with no choice but to go on down into the mess. Sometimes we dragged ourselves through on hands and knees. We stayed very close together, for anywhere one of us might drop from sight and be seen no more. We could tell from the angle of the basin that we should be no more than half a mile from Passaconaway Lodge.

With fearful expenditure of energy we pressed on, packs on back and axes in right hands. In one hundred yards we were in the densest deadfall you could imagine and the sun set. It was night. We had had neither dinner nor any water, and there could not be found space in which to set an untrammelled foot. In our struggles we could not tell whether we were just below the hut or already beyond it. Can you picture us stumbling through the treetops, unable to see six feet ahead, without the slightest notion of where the trail might be or of where the next footfall would land us? A pause for breath and another thrust. The stars shining steadily through the top of yonder sole survivor of the wreck with unwinking calm. Not a leaf stirring, not even a cracking limb in the gathering chill. Not a sound but one. Running water! Water, cool, clear, entrancing water, dead ahead. The sound of water in the

#### Winter Potluck

On January 17, 1998, about 30 people attended a WODC winter social event at the Benz Center in Center Sandwich. The festivities began with a potluck supper with the usual fantastic array of entrees, salads, and desserts. This was followed by a slide show presented by Peter Smart. Peter took us on a trip to Australia, with slides of city and country, skiing and hiking. Posters, maps, and aboriginal music added to the atmosphere. Thank you Peter.

Susan Bryant Kimball

mountains: how often it deceives one. A healthy sound of tumbling rivers may be only wind in the birches far down in the valley. The splashing yonder turns out to be the rustle of dry leaves upon a rock, or comes with a subdued murmur from some underground spate. Bill and Al listened skeptically, but they could not deny the sound. How many brooks come down across this ridge?

Down we climbed into the blackness, stopping at almost every step to make sure the blessed gurgle still held out. A huge red spruce grappled with me; I could not lead the way beneath it and with huge effort mounted up again, feeling for holds in the blackness. Six feet beyond it, through the dry branches lay a white birch trunk, with an impenetrable jungle just beyond. We climbed along this into the upper limbs and felt our way through them to the top of a large rock. The side toward the water turned out to be climbable, but to wriggle down through the foliage took the last ounce of strength. At last we knelt one after the other beside the tiny pool and buried our faces in the water. No words can describe the sensation of standing hip deep in smashed trees, with darkness all about, hunger in the midriff and the cold stars winking down. We advanced slowly upstream, at each step lifting the knee up to the chin in vain efforts to tread down the opposition. More crawling, flatter than infantrymen under machine gun fire. Yet we made solid progress and ever kept the tinkle of



our water supply hard by on the left. Then the forest opened a least mite, and the ground became swampy. A blessed sign. Hope rose swiftly. There were, we remembered, swampy runs below the lodge. In a few minutes the trees became so scattering that they lay prone where they fell and we could step over them one by one. My hand trailed across a stump. Axe marks, ancient, but distinct! What ho, the source and spring of our tiny stream. The flashlight sent its beam hither and yon uncertainly.

Dry ground, surely, but give it to me. Ah over there. Have I not climbed that slope in the snow in nights as dark as this? The hut will be right there. One corner stood forth in that feeble glare, like the benediction of a home. Buried beneath two great fallen firs but intact. I yelled like a madman and in an instant forgave the mountain all its sorry tricks.

Passaconaway Lodge is like a home of our own. The dry wood inside is that which we have cut and stacked ourselves. The fireplace is as we rebuilt it. We lie down to sleep on the browse we have gathered, and now that the trees all around have been leveled off it will be ours alone all the more. We crawled through the branches blocking the entrance with the certain knowledge that nowhere on the whole mountain had anyone trodden in more than six weeks, and that we were as inaccessible to man as if we had landed in the center of Labrador.

Bill fetched water from the spring and at last a lusty young fire blazed under the now kindly stars. Thick soup bubbled in the old pot, so promptly indeed that at seven we were able to sit down to a substantial supper, while in washed and refilled pots our dinner cooked. When eight came round, this was the dinner hour. We sat down on the dot to a stew of lamb, onions, potatoes, turnips and carrots that completely filled my larger pot. We quaffed stout cups of coffee that was half condensed milk and sugar. A warm glow spread speedily all through the tired muscles of our legs. For forty minutes we absorbed stew before our appetites diminished.

In spite of the wild desolation of the storm, the piled dead of the forests, and the impenetrable fastness everywhere,

millions of five and ten foot firs and spruces were showing their fragrant tops in the moonlight for the first time. The dead would nourish them, the flowers would spring everywhere. At any rate, nature through the storm has claimed Passaconaway for her own again.

I believe that we shall shortly repair to these regions armed with a tent and create a winter camp. We shall in future plunge more often straight into the woods, and disregard the trails. It takes but little longer to proceed thus and there is vast interest to be drawn from finding the way. Every aspect of the terrain etches itself firmly on the mind, and one notes a hundred beautiful corners of hill, stream and wood for every mile covered. Believe me, sir, there is no virtue in a trail except you have an immediate destination found only on that trail. And what care we for such spots really? Why is not one tree, or level place or brook the equal of any other? Does all the charm of wilderness reveal itself only where a thousand have walked? Did those who made the trails have a monopoly on choice rendezvous or know all the pleasant places? Nay, nay. The beauties of the hills all vary among themselves and are spaced impartially in every fold of the mountains.

Frederick B. Noss

## LILLIAN W. BOWLES

On January 5, 1998, Lillian Bowles, a good neighbor of the community and life member of WODC, passed away having lived a long and useful life.

Lillian was born in Wonalancet and spent her entire life here. As a young child she could often be found with her father, Walter Walker, as he tended his farm chores, did errands for neighbors, and delivered milk to the local inns and households. He carried US mail to and from Tamworth and related the latest news picked up in Tamworth. As Lillian grew, her time working with her father became more substantial and a pattern of service formed.

Early in the century the post office was in the Antlers Tea Room. When the number of tourists increased, Lillian

helped Kate Sleeper sorting and distributing mail. Though not of legal age, Lillian eventually was acting postmaster. In 1932, at age 21, she became the official postmaster of the Wonalancet Post Office, a position she held until 1992. Since Wonalancet was isolated from neighboring towns, the post office was a center of community activity. It was here friends gathered, visited with neighbors, bought stamps, and waited for mail.

As the post office moved from one location to another, the WODC library followed. She volunteered to keep the library in her post office, and it was secure under her supervision. She sold WODC maps to those who wanted them. Notices concerning the Club could be posted there, missing items advertised, and meetings announced. Her post office/library was a place to get information, to escape a rain shower, or to say hello.

Her third area of commitment was to the Wonalancet Chapel. To Lillian one would go to schedule a wedding, social function, or meeting. WODC has held most of its meetings there for 75 years. For many years, it was Lillian who requested that people leave the Chapel as they found it. Are the hymnals placed properly in the pews? Are all leaves that were tracked into the building removed? Has the table been replaced to its proper location? In other words, please, "Leave no Trace."

After Lillian retired she remained active. As long as she was able, Lillian walked the Chinook Trail daily. She knew the importance of her relationship with people, and tried to maintain that contact.

Family members include: a daughter Barbara Simoneau of Hooksett, sons David and Bruce of Wonalancet and Tamworth, four grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

David, a past president of WODC, is the trail adopter of the Bickford Trail. In his retirement he keeps active by clearing trails for WODC and the Tamworth Outing Club. He continues his service to the community as the Tamworth Fire Chief.

Sally Zink

## NETC NEWS/CHANGES

"Do we need the New England Trail Conference (NETC)?" This question posed by the moderator opened this year's Conference held on Saturday, March 28 at the Greenfield Community College in Massachusetts. About 40 people attended, representing 15 or 20 of the 51 member organizations. This represents a major decline in attendance that has been occurring over the past several years. Those present who responded to the question felt that the Conference represents an opportunity to exchange information and ideas with other trail groups, and to discuss topics of interest.

Most groups who attend are from Massachusetts and Connecticut, although Trailwrights, SPNH, AMC, WODC and other groups are from New Hampshire. A notable attendee this year was Donna Hepp, the Forest Supervisor for the entire WMNF, who held a question-and-answer session on downsizing in the Forest Service. She indicated that the WMNF staff has been cut from 126 to 104, and is targeted to decrease to 93 in the next two years. Because of this, staff has been short of time to design important programs, such as working with those interested in volunteer trailwork, and how volunteers would earn the WMNF parking Passport. Work on the Forest Plan revision has been halted indefinitely due to lack of staff and funding. Emergency funds anticipated for icestorm cleanup will be used in part for staff salaries. Some of the emergency funds will be distributed to trail clubs; no specifics are presently available. A Partnership Coordinator is being appointed to work with those who can provide services or funding for the Forest.

Program topics at the Conference were: Obtaining Grants, Multi-Use Trails, Working With Volunteers, followed by a beautiful slide show of hiking in New England.

The NETC is looking for a Secretary-Treasurer, or two persons for these positions. More members are also wanted for the NETC Executive Committee. Anyone interested should call Bob Spoerl at (603)271-3254.

Judith Reardon

## WHAT IS FERNCROFT?

To hikers who use WODC trails the name "Ferncroft" recalls a gravel road leading to a parking lot in Wonalancet. Many must wonder at the significance of the name. Ferncroft was the most popular and largest of six inns located in the Wonalancet area during early years of the 20th century. In the words of the owners, it was not an inn. "It is neither a hotel nor camp, but a combination of both, whose atmosphere is one of a party of congenial friends, who will take strangers in or leave them alone, as the stranger may elect."



Ferncroft Main House, ca 1930

The owners, founders, and operators were Sarah Elizabeth and Elliot Fisher, a couple in their late 20's who began taking guests in the summer of 1908, the year following their marriage. They began their venture by purchasing several houses. Three still exist in 1998: the attractive "Currier Cottage" located in the open field just west of the turn-off to the Ferncroft parking lot, the early 19th century (1802) "Jewell House" located where the Blueberry Ledge and Dicey's Mills trails diverge near Squirrel Bridge, and "Green Shutters" located on the south side of Wonalancet Brook. In addition the Fishers built an almost completely new Main House that included a kitchen, large dining room, several comfortably furnished living rooms, and twelve large guest bedrooms. A small but old house, formerly the home

of Benjamin Currier, was appended as a laundry. At the height of its popularity there were the Main House, five cottages, and 22 cabins. The inn could take 115 guests, many more than any of the other five local inns. Ferncroft was the only guest house in Wonalancet constructed exclusively for accommodating visitors. In 1909, rates were \$1.50 to \$2.00/night and \$9.00 to \$12.00/week. The lower rate may have been for tent accommodations, and the higher for the Main House and Cottages.

The cabins were a unique feature in Wonalancet. When the inn first opened,

the Fishers provided a few tents for guests who preferred to "rough it" and camp in the woods behind the main house. Tenting became so popular that within five years the Fishers tried another experiment, thinking there might be people who would prefer a bit more comfort than provided by tents. They built small rustic camps in the woodlands north and west of the Main House; several of these cabins still exist. "They are scattered among the trees so as to give the impression of a few rather than many. Those who once try them never want to sleep in the house again during the summer. The cabins are roomy, the larger ones containing two beds, two closets, and are very well ventilated. In addition to three windows and the door, the sides of the camps are hinged and may be swung out, affording as much air as

one could wish. They are completely screened. They contain stoves for heating during the early and late season and cool nights and they are provided with running cold water. Hot water is brought to the cabins each morning. A bath house, centrally located, equipped with tubs and showers, with hot and cold water, is provided for the convenience of the guests in the cabins."

Before the 1950's the inn was open during summer months only, but as winter outdoor activities became popular it stayed open all year. In early years most activities were provided nearby. There was a 70 X 30 foot swimming pool with "warm" water flowing directly from Wonalancet Brook through a 1/4 mile long iron pipe exposed to the sun. There were two tennis courts, a croquet lawn, a recreation barn with a polished dance floor and a small well-equipped stage, ping pong tables, and small tables for quiet games such as bridge and checkers.

Throughout its years of operation the most common activities were hiking and backpacking. Ferncroft became a mecca for AMC members who wanted comfortable beds, good food, pleasant company, and nearby peaks with well-maintained trails. Two attractive advertising brochures, one entitled "A Mountain Inn where Nature and Hospitality are Richly Bountiful," describe hiking as a major activity. Both brochures list the nearby Sandwich Range peaks and give elevations and distances in miles

from the inn. "All trails are clearly marked and the Wonalancet Outdoor Club and other outdoor groups keep them in constant repair."

Several well-known hikers used Ferncroft. Among these were the family of Rev. Edgar Heermance who stayed at the inn regularly for many years. While a guest at Ferncroft in 1912 Edgar Heermance and friends constructed Camp Heermance, now more commonly called a shelter. Another guest, Edmund K. Alden, vacationed there five months each summer. He was an indefatigable hiker who climbed Mt. Whiteface and Mt. Chocorua over 50 times. He was a diligent worker at trail maintenance, and in 1930 labored mightily to get all trails in exemplary shape before May 30, in time for the AMC annual encampment.

The Inn played a significant role in encouraging guest participation in WODC. Guests automatically became Club members, and were encouraged to participate in all activities. Notices of events were posted at the Inn. The Fishers worked for the Club in many ways. Elliot was Chairman of Paths, Trails, and Camps from 1912 to 1922. An effective means of raising funds during the 1920's was through social events such as musicals and lectures, several held in the Ferncroft recreation barn with Sarah Elizabeth hostess. Annual Meetings were also at times held in the Barn. Sarah was a member of the Constitution Revision Committee in 1929.

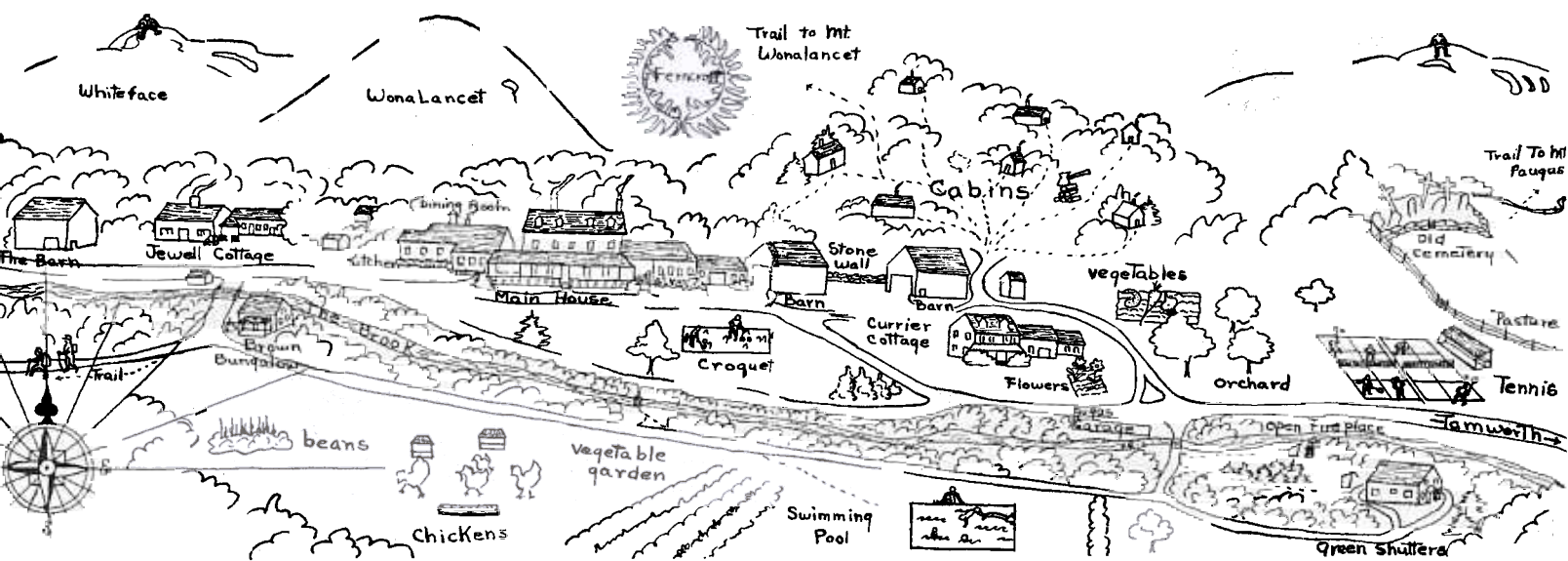
Ferncroft never formally closed: it simply faded away. The great depression of the 1930's, and the almost simultaneous double whammy of the 1938 hurricane followed closely by the outbreak of World War II, were all significant factors in reducing guest visits. Sarah Elizabeth struggled to keep the inn open. She found it necessary to sell some of her land. By the mid 1950's she could not afford to maintain the inn. In addition she was elderly and not well. She died in March of 1958 and is buried in the Jewell Cemetery near her beloved inn.

Her nephews and nieces attempted to continue, but without success. The Inn closed, and the property was put to sale. Charlotte and Stearns Smalley purchased the Jewell Homestead with 47 acres of land in 1961. A fire of unknown origin destroyed the Main House on July 21, 1966. In 1968 the Smalleys and Cookes purchased the remaining 105 acres of Ferncroft land and buildings. They in turn sold the Currier house with 13 acres of land to Ed and Phyllis French, present owners.

#### Other Early Inns:

All of the following inns were in operation before the construction and opening of Ferncroft. Since Wonalancet has no official boundaries and occupies parts of four towns, the selections are somewhat arbitrary. For comparison purposes, all accommodation rates are for 1909.

Wonalancet Farm was a reconstructed





old farmhouse, built in 1814, and renovated by Katherine Sleeper in 1891. It was the first inn to open in the Wonalancet area, and continued taking guests until the mid 1960's. It was open all year. Although it remained in operation these many years, it ceased being a popular inn by the outbreak of World War II. In 1909 it could accommodate 40 guests, and the rates were \$2.00/night and \$10-\$12/week. It is presently owned by the Semmes family, relatives of Katherine Sleeper and Arthur Walden.

**Locke Falls Cottage** was located on Route 113A about 100 yards east of the Wonalancet Fire House. Hannah (Currier) and Tom Wiggin operated and owned the inn, the same Tom who marked and cut the trail bearing his name on Mt. Whiteface. At that time a trail extended from the Cottage to Locke Falls, presently known as Wonalancet Falls. Locke Falls Cottage opened in the late 1890's. There were accommodations for 30 guests, and the rates in 1909 were \$1.00/night and \$7.00-9.00/week. The present house is owned by the Cargill family.

**Tilton Farm** was located on Route 113A across from the Wonalancet Chapel on the west side of the road. It was owned and operated by Ira and Alice (Meador) Tilton, opening in the late 1890's. As the area became popular, the Tilttons built an annex soon named "Windomere" due to its numerous windows. Together these houses accommodated 40 guests. In 1909 the rates were \$2.00/night and \$8.00-\$12.00/week. The main house burned in April 1911; neither remains today. The property was subsequently divided. "Windomere" was on a site currently (1998) owned by the Chandlers, the main house on property owned by David French.

**Passaconaway Cottage**, the smallest of the inns, was located at the corner of Pease Hill Road and Great Hill Road, owned and operated by Albert S. Pollard from the mid to late 1890's to 1908. It could accommodate 10 guests. Rates were \$1.00/day and \$5.00-\$7.00/week. The only remaining structure is the large barn. The Cave family owns the barn and property.

**Mt. Mexico Farm**, located on the Mt. Mexico Road that leaves Route 113A at the Wonalancet Fire Station, was owned

and operated by Fred and Charlene (Walker) Bickford. It was Fred Bickford who marked and opened the trail currently bearing his name, and the first trail to the top of Mt. Paugus that extended from Big Rock Cave to the peak on the site of the present Paugus Trail. The cottage could take 12 guests. In 1909 rates were \$1.00/night and \$6.00-\$9.00/week. The Breasted family owns the house today (1998).

**The Pines**, owned and operated by Mrs. Andrew W. Fisher, is located on Route 113A at the present (1998) "Whispering Pines" bed and breakfast, 200 yards east of the AMC Cabin. It could take 30 guests, with rates in 1909 of \$2.00/night and \$8.00-\$12.00/week. Present owner of the house and property is the Erickson family.

George Zink

## A WINNING LETTER

Editor's Note: This delightful letter accompanied several designs submitted in the T-Shirt Competition. I suggest an award letter to anyone who recognizes the author!

Square Ledge

Albany, NH

December 25, 1997

Dear Secret T-Shirt Committee:

I heard through the hobblebush that you folks are thinking of changing the WODC T-Shirt design. May I be so shameless and bold as to suggest that I be featured in your new design?

I believe that I possess the qualities that are essential in representing the mission and spirit of WODC. Like many of your members, I came to this area and immediately fell in love with the mountains and vowed that they would become a permanent, intrinsic part of my life. My very presence is a testament to the commitment of stewardship that has flourished in your organization for (so I am told) over a century. Plus, I am one fine looking bird.

Let's face it, what other choice is better than me? A chickadee? They are nothing more than a small snack. A raven?, — just an overfed crow with laryngitis. And a mourning dove is just a pigeon without any street smarts, although they are

mighty tasty. And don't get me started on four legged creatures. You humans are so big on the moose. I'm sorry, but I just can't respect an animal that displays more scat than common sense. And bears! You may find me in Manchester dining on pigeons but you'll never catch me eating out of a trash can.

But I digress. I honestly believe that upon careful consideration you will agree that I would be an excellent candidate for the position of WODC ambassador. The enclosed sketch is based on a photo my Uncle Mort took of me doing a barrel-roll in celebration of this year's successful hatching. I admit it isn't Rembrandt (the Mrs. says my spruce trees look like they are undergoing electroshock treatment) but what do you expect from wings and feathers?

The back design I did on a lark, if you'll excuse the pun. I figure you folks must really love blue rectangles, the way you plaster them on trees throughout the forest. What is it, anyway; some kind of mystic symbol? I say if you like them so much, display them on your own trunks.

Now, as to the prize. I would be quite comfortable with groveling adulation but I doubt that you will be making any T-Shirts that would fit me. So as soon as you come to your senses and realize that my design is far better than any other you could hope for, just set a bucket of the Colonel's extra crispy on top of Square Ledge and we'll call it even.

Yours in anticipation,

P. Falcon

P.S. Tell the Square Ledge Trail Adopter that if I ever catch him and his geeky sidekick skulking around my kids again I'll use their thinning scalps for target practice.



## ANNUAL MEETING

WODC will hold its annual meeting and potluck supper on Sunday, August 23. The supper will take place in the grove behind the Wonalancet Chapel at 5:30 P.M. Because the unplanned approach to the supper is usually successful, there is no need to contact anyone in advance. However, Sally Zink at 323-8693 will answer any questions one might have. A few lawn chairs would be helpful; the grove quickly becomes a Standing Room Only scene.

The Annual Meeting will begin at 7 P.M. in the Chapel. From past experience, we expect the meeting to last about two hours. We hope to see you that evening. We need your presence for friendship and input into Club activities.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Several interesting and significant letters have come to the attention of the Editor. These pieces may not warrant separate articles, so are assembled in this piece.

**Marty Basch**, avid hiker and author from North Conway reminds us "Mud and spring run-off make trails prime targets for erosion. The bottom of a hiker's boot can damage a trail. Keeping this in mind, Vermont's **Green Mountain Club** has issued three simple guidelines for spring hiking. (1) If the trail is so muddy that you need to walk on the vegetation beside it, turn back and seek another area to hike. (2) Plan hikes in the hardwood forest at lower elevations. (3) Avoid the spruce-fir forest at higher elevations. By using trails that are dry and firm, hikers can minimize spring impact."

WODC's Trails Committee has written a letter to WMNF Forest Supervisor **Donna Hepp** requesting that she not permit the use of chain saws in Wilderness, specifically in the clean up of ice storm damage along the hiking trail of the White Mountain National Forest. "Reopening Wilderness trails will be slow, and some hikers may feel inconvenienced that they can't maintain their usual pace on all trails. But if one of the objectives of Wilderness is to let 'natural forces prevail,' how can we justify the major intrusion of motorized equipment just to restore recreational opportunities, an activity that is not a primary objective of Wilderness?"

We find it sadly ironic that many people who support Wilderness in principle draw the line when the principle becomes inconvenient to their personal goals. How can we possibly expect others to respect the 'restrictions' of Wilderness if we do not accept them when they affect us? To be more blunt, Wilderness is not just a way to stop logging so we can use the area as our private playground. Although many hikers probably support Wilderness for that specific reason, they must understand that it brings certain restrictions and responsibilities for them as well. Finally, we reject the argument that 'this isn't true wilderness anyway, so the restrictions are ridiculous.' While very little land in the lower-48 is untouched wilderness, that does nothing to lessen the benefits afforded by Wilderness designation. Even if these lands are only a little wilder, that is still an invaluable result. And while recreational pressures in the northeast may be a challenge for Wilderness managers, it is these very pressures that heighten the value of Wilderness, and make it even more deserving of protection.

Wilderness is not cheap. It requires a great dedication and cost to have and protect. As the trail season progresses we will certainly find our convictions tested by the magnitude of the task. On the other hand, there is also great splendor and a renewed natural presence in the woods. We need to help others to appreciate that splendor, and to work in harmony with it, rather than sacrifice the very objectives for which Wilderness was established." So be it.

**Brendan O'Reilly** of the Appalachian Mountain Club recently completed a report on WMNF hiking trails that pass through private lands, a topic of special interest to WODC members since many of our trails begin or enter private property. His data leads to considering the importance of landowner-hiker relationships, and what should be done to enhance them.

Of the nearly 400 hiking trails in the WMNF, 89 originate in or pass through private land. That is, 22% of all trails have a trailhead or section of trail on private land. Sixty-one trail-heads are located on private land. The total mileage

of all trails that are partially on private land amounts to 308 miles. Eighty-nine miles of trails are wholly on private lands. That is, 27 percent of those 308 trail miles are in private ownership.

Of utmost importance to the public are deeds and easements that establish permanent understandings among private landowners, hiking organizations, and the Forest Service. There is no crisis situation in the Wonalancet area. However, we think it important to remind members of the cooperative relationships among individual land owners and the hiking public. The Club should always be vigilant in efforts to protect landowner property and welfare, and ever working toward acquiring easements when and where possible.

**Have you thanked a landowner lately?**

## T-SHIRT DESIGN

Since early winter the T-shirt committee has struggled with the challenge of selecting the next WODC T-shirt design. Three excellent designs were submitted: Chris Conrod's design of a peregrin falcon, Chele Miller's design of the Wonalancet Chapel and peaks, and Gale Christiansen's design of the Chapel and peaks in the snow. Finally, we chose Gale's design, but keep your eyes open for the others in various WODC projects.

The T-shirts will be available by early summer. Ordering information will be available at the Ferncroft kiosk and elsewhere.

Judith Reardon

## SUMMER EVENTS

Three summer activities are planned; only one is scheduled.

On Sunday, July 19 at 4:00 P.M. in the Wonalancet Chapel, Scott Bailey of the Hubbard Brook Research Station will make a slide presentation on research in the Bowl Research Natural Area. Scott is a soil scientist whom some will remember from the hike he led into the Bowl during the summer of 1997.



## 1998 Trail Calendar

Unless otherwise noted, all trips meet at the Ferncroft kiosk at 8:15 A.M. on Saturday. Any mid-season changes will be posted on our web site at [www.hydrocad.net/wodc](http://www.hydrocad.net/wodc). Please bring good gloves, lunch, and plenty of water. All necessary tools will be provided, but bring a pair of sturdy pruning shears if you have them. For further information phone Peter Smart at 603-323-8666 or 603-323-8827.

May 2nd	<b>Blueberry Ledge Trail</b> - Although preliminary ice storm cleanup began in January, there is still much to do to fully clear this important trail.
May 9th	<b>Chocorua Mtn Club Trails Day</b> - As our annual WODC/CMC work trip we'll give CMC a hand clearing ice storm damage. Meet at Margaret Wheeler's house by Lake Chocorua.
May 15-17	<b>WMNF Ice Storm cleanup weekend</b> - WODC volunteers will spend 1-2 nights near Camp Rich to clear the upper trails on Mt Passaconaway. Call for details, or join us for the day on Saturday.
May 23	<b>Bennett Street Trail</b> - The ice damage in this area is severe, so a good turnout is especially important. Meet at Bennett Street trailhead.
May 30	<b>Kelley Trail</b> - Clear ice storm damage, and perhaps a little of Lawrence Trail, if we get that far!
June 6	<b>Old Mast Road</b> - Finish clearing ice damage. Blowdowns have already been cut, so perhaps we'll have time do a little work on the connecting trails.
June 13	<b>Big Rock Cave and Cabin Trails</b> - We'll need a good turnout to clear both trails in a single day. Meet at Big Rock Cave Trail - Cabin Trail. intersection.
June 15-July 10	WODC will be hiring a small crew to help with ice storm cleanup. During this period the crew will do final cleanup on the trails already partially cleared.
June 20	<b>Wonalancet Range Trail</b> - This wonderful trail suffered moderate damage below the ledges and along the Short Cut.
June 27	<b>Red Path, Pasture Path, &amp; Tilton Spring Trail</b> - Not much damage here, so with a good turnout we'll clear all three in a day.
July 4	No specific trail - A day to rest or to catch up, depending on how the cleanup is going.
July 11	<b>Square Ledge Trail</b> - In February the start of Square Ledge Trail was unrecognizable. Come help us reopen this wonderful trail.
July 18	<b>Walden Trail</b> - For our New Hampshire Trails Day project we'll clear Walden Trail in preparation for treadway restoration due to start the following week.
July 20-Aug 14	<b>Walden Trail</b> - We plan to hire a "heavy crew" to continue our 3-year treadway restoration project.
July 25	<b>Lawrence Trail</b> - This should be an interesting trip, with the ice damage having made the trail even wilder than usual.
August	No scheduled projects this month, although we will be working closely with the crew on Walden Trail.
Sept 11-13	<b>Kate Sleeper Trail</b> - Annual overnight work trip, concentrating on storm cleanup and drainage work. The late date should ensure a bug-free trip.
October 3	<b>Kelley Trail</b> - Trailwrights will join us for side-hill work in the "plunge pool" to correct an eroded section of trail and move the treadway out of the brook.



Wonalancet Out Door Club

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