

Watershed News

THE PISCATAQUOG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Colburn Family Entrusts PWA to *Protect a New Boston Landmark*

by Margaret Watkins

Martin M. Colburn grew up in New Boston, and after World War II brought his new bride Martha home to the family farm. Long-time New Boston residents are more apt to remember the couple as Bud and Martie, and may even have had Martie as their 1st or 2nd grade teacher at New Boston Central School. Bud worked at New Hampshire Ball Bearings, and when the company opened a Laconia plant in the early 1960s, the family moved to the Lakes Region. But Bud and Martie retained a wet meadow and woodlot on Route 136, "just to have it be ours still, and we continued to use it for wood even after we'd moved," remembers Martie.

In October 2005, their son Ken Colburn contacted PWA to see whether we could help the family achieve their conservation goals for the land. The prominence and educational potential of the property were immediately attractive to us. Ken Lombard and Kim Burkhamer of New Boston volunteered considerable time researching the deed and determining boundaries, which, it turns out, are more expansive than portrayed by the town tax map. All the Colburn family members were supportive of our natural area/educational use management interests and agreed that gifting the land to the PWA met their wishes.

"Mom and Dad kept the meadow long after we left New Boston because they wanted to maintain their connection to the land and the town. What better way to honor that connection than to make the meadow available to all as a natural area," said Ken Colburn.

The property's scenic meadow is a landmark for New Boston residents and anyone who travels Route 136 between New Boston and

Francestown. Changes on the land are evident through the seasons and the years. At present, this turn in the road is dominated by cattails sporting lush brown coats in summer and glistening silver with frost as winter approaches.

The cattails support a variety of wildlife, which varies in abundance and composition depending on where the meadow is in its hydrological cycle. From the road you can easily hear and see signs of several marsh residents. Jaunty red-winged blackbirds perch on stalks to herald the arrival of spring, and muskrat lodges are visible throughout the marsh. Both species are partial to



Colburn marsh (Photo by Pat Nelson)

marshy areas, and to cattails in particular.

Streams from the hillside and abutting land converge in the meadow and flow under the road. The forest behind the marsh supports a variety of tree species, including hemlock, white pine, maple, birch, beech, and oak. In spring, visitors to the property may discover swamp saxifrage and other wildflowers blooming under the forest canopy. Old stone walls run along two sides of the property, which lends itself to a short trail system – still to be built.

A property dedication of the Martin M. & Martha A. Colburn Meadow and reception are planned for the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 25, 1:30 PM, when many of the Colburn clan can attend. Please mark your calendar now.

PWA OFFICE
603.487.3331

Executive Director
Margaret Watkins

Director of Operations
Paula Bellemore

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

John McCausland

Vice President

Jerry Shinn

Treasurer

Diane Beland

Secretary

Amy Doherty

Directors

Len Allen

John Boyle

Randy Parker

Mica Stark

Arthur Walmsley

Directors Emeriti

Gordon Russell

Robert Todd

Newsletter Editor

Pat Nelson

COMMITTEES

Outreach

Chris Conroy

Donna Mombourquette

Pat Nelson

Mica Stark

Cindy Stave

Open Space

Graham Pendlebury

Len Allen

John Boyle

Jed Callen

Kim DiPietro

David Marshall

Pat Myers

David Nieman

Jason Reimers

Jason Sachs

Susan Weiss

Barry Wicklow

Development

Jerry Shinn

Jed Callen

Carol Hess

Arthur Walmsley

Janie Young

Finance

Randy Parker

Len Allen

Diane Beland

John McCausland

Peter de Roeth

Water Quality

Amy Doherty

Brian Dresser

John Magee

Tom Noel

Invasive Species

Lyn Lombard

Hannah Proctor

Keeping Track

Barbara Thomson



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by Margaret Watkins

which is ready and waiting as we use up the old. While we hope these changes are eye-catching and appealing, there is more to them than looks alone.

A fundamental change is the PWA logo. For a long time, we believed *Piscataquog* meant "Place of Deer," hence the former logo. A volunteer who has Abenaki roots challenged this and various other interpretations of the word. With the help of the award-winning Abenaki poet, Cheryl Savageau, she determined that *Piscataquog* means "the place that is dark in the shade of trees," a reference to the forests that dominated the area before European settlement and which once again are prominent across roughly 78% of the watershed. She attributes this confusion in meaning to the importance of how one speaks an Abenaki word. The new logo, with its uplands, river, trees, and birds, seeks to capture the PWA's breadth of commitment to conserving not only riverfront land, but also land throughout the watershed communities. The logo also represents PWA's commitment to protecting

a wide array of native plants and animals – the Piscataquog region's biodiversity – through our various programs of land conservation, wildlife tracking, water quality monitoring, and invasive species control.

You will note the newsletter no longer includes a renewal form. Instead, you will find a renewal envelope with each mailing. This change frees more space in the newsletter for articles, and the envelope provides a convenient way for members to renew memberships, which we hope will result in fewer resources devoted to renewal follow up. To conform to the restrictions of our bulk mail permit, every newsletter will include an envelope, whether or not your membership is up for renewal.

As you drive around the watershed, you may notice new PWA property signs (see photo). Signs are planned for properties PWA owns outright. At our larger, drier properties we are creating trails with help from PWA volunteers, including Emily Hague, Ben Haubrich, Ray James, Graham Pendlebury, and Gordon Russell. Visit a PWA property on your own, or watch for a PWA-sponsored hike.

Dynamic times are often characterized by change, and PWA is enjoying dynamic times! As landowners, volunteers, and members, you play a vital role in PWA's work and mission. *Thank you!*



With support of a \$500 grant from the Robin Colson Memorial Fund, PWA is installing new property signs like these at 10 PWA-owned properties. Graham Pendlebury has been assembling and installing the signs with help from other volunteers. (Photo: Pat Nelson)



See you at
PWA's 36th Annual Meeting
on October 21 at Crotched Mountain!

Jerry King of Weare

by Paul Susca

Jerry King's passion is fishing for Atlantic salmon. It's what first got him involved with the PWA's Adopt-a-Salmon program. The program included watershed protection education in New Boston's grade school, and that led to Jerry's membership – and more – with the PWA. Today, he is active in PWA's Weare membership drive, and you may have met him at various PWA meetings and events. While Jerry occasionally casts dry flies in the Middle Branch of the Piscataquog along River Road in New Boston, his motivation for volunteering with Adopt-a-Salmon was not to hook a prize salmon in the Piscataquog some day.

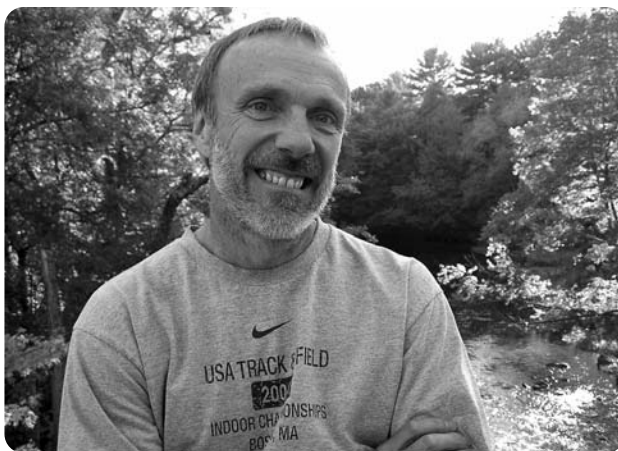
Jerry puts it simply: "It just makes sense to keep water resources clean and healthy." Raising his voice above the clamor of the water rushing over the dam near his home in Weare's Riverdale section, he contrasts some of the historical uses of the River with today's sensibility.

During the River's industrial era, he relates, "They just used the River, they used it – to drive the mills and to carry away the waste." Now, he notes, there's a much greater appreciation for the River's importance as a clean, natural resource. "Let's have the River as clean as we can make it," he urges.

When Jerry and his wife Christine moved to Riverdale from Manchester in 1982, they were struck with how quiet the area was. He could hear the water running over the dam when he woke up in the morning. Jerry points out that in some ways, parts of the watershed are more of a refuge today than they were decades ago. "I met a fellow in his 90s at a yard sale here a few years ago, and he had lived here as a boy. When I complained to him about the noise of the traffic in the village these days, he said, 'Oh, it was a lot worse when I lived

here; between the sound of the mill and the railroad depot, you couldn't even hear the river.'"

In addition to his involvement in Adopt-a-Salmon and the membership drive, Jerry is a volunteer water quality monitor for PWA. And he isn't the only member of his family contributing to the PWA's work. Jerry and Christine's son Sam, a junior at



Jerry King enjoys a daily view of the Piscataquog from the bridge next to his house in Weare. (Photo by Pat Nelson)

John Stark Regional High School, is planning to build an observation platform at a vernal pool on PWA's Tuthill property in New Boston as his Eagle Scout project. Sam's passion is working with wood, and he hopes to finish the platform this fall. PWA member Graham Pendlebury will be guiding Sam's work on the project.

Besides Sam, Jerry and Christine's other "projects" include their daughters, Jane and Lizzie, and their business, The Framers Market, in Bedford. PWA members might recognize their matting and fram-

ing work on some beautiful fundraising pieces they prepared for the Headwaters Project-I. Christine is originally from New Jersey and Jerry from Buffalo, New York. After a busy day at the store in Bedford, their home in the watershed is still a refuge. When the evening traffic in Riverdale dies down and the kitchen windows are open, you can once again hear the water flowing over the dam.

Paul Susca lives with his wife, Peg Lopata, and their teenagers Hillary and Gabe in Frankestown. A former PWA Board member, Paul coordinates the state's drinking water source protection programs at the NH Department of Environmental Services in Concord and occasionally teaches an environmental studies course at Antioch University New England in Keene.

Help PWA Get the Word Out!

Are you a "people person"? Do you like to meet new people or plan events?

PWA's Outreach Committee has room for new volunteers, and we'd love to have you join us! The Outreach Committee oversees all communication channels including the newsletter, website, and monthly newspaper columns. It also develops and implements educational programs, such as the Walk in the Woods! series and the David Hardy Memorial Lecture, and works with the Development Committee on membership development. The Committee will likely meet monthly in 2007.

If you're enthusiastic about the PWA's work or have a marketing, education, or public relations background and are looking for a meaningful way to give back to your community, the Outreach Committee may be a perfect match!

We also need volunteers to assist with leading hikes, manning booths at fairs and farmers markets, and helping to staff events.

Please contact Paula at 487-3331 for more information.

New Tax Laws Make **NOW** a Good Time to Conserve Land

Conservation easement provisions with far-reaching implications for land conservation throughout the country were tucked into pension reform legislation passed by Congress and signed into law by the President in August.

The law significantly improves the tax incentives for donating a conservation easement. Of particular interest to landowners, the law extends the carryover period for easement deductions from 5 to 15 years. It also raises the permissible deduction from no more than 30% of adjusted gross income to as much as 50% of adjusted gross income. Farmers who meet specified criteria (for example, if their gross income

from farming exceeds 50% of their gross income for the taxable year of the easement donation), can take a charitable contribution of up to 100% of adjusted gross income.

In addition to landowner incentives, the law tightens the rules for appraisals of all donated property and includes stiff penalties for inflated appraised values. To further ensure compliance, the IRS is creating a task force to focus on preventing abuses while supporting legitimate conservation practices.

These tax incentives present a significant opportunity. Notably, however, they apply only to easements donated in 2006 and 2007 and will expire December 31, 2007 unless



Congress acts to extend them. Making the change permanent is a high conservation priority but is not guaranteed.

If you have been thinking about putting your land into conservation, now is a great time to initiate a conversation about it. Call the PWA office today!

PWA thanks the following members for their support!

Welcome to Our New Members! (as of September 1st)

Bob & Cathy Arredondo	Weare
Elizabeth Berkeley & Staci Leonard*	Goffstown
Barbara Blake	Francestown
Hope Collins	Weare
Maureen Heckman & Family	Weare
Shirley J. James	Weare
Charles & Joanne Knox	Contoocook
Verne Kaminski	Weare
David & Maria Merry**	Hooksett
Leo & Noreen Poisson	Weare
Chris Pratt	Weare

Member Renewals (as of September 1st)

Mary Berube	Francestown	Kevin McLarnon & Barbara Sholl	New Boston
Kanta Connie Bousquet*	Goffstown	Donna Mombourquette & James Denesevich***	New Boston
Lisa Brooks	Deering	Bessie & Donald Myhr*	Weare
Donald & Marion Buck	Hadlyme, CT	George Naum	Manchester
Andy Cadorette & Reta Chaffee*	Goffstown	Thomas & Patricia Pine	Exeter
Steve & Angie Caggiano**	Tyngsboro, MA	Daniel Pouliot	Manchester
Richard C. Cilley	Francestown	Burton Reynolds	Lyndeborough
Brenda Dello Russo & Jim Parker	Lafayette, CO	Caroline S. Robinson***	Stratham
Amy & Tim Doherty	New Boston	Pamela & David Ryan	Goffstown
Scotti Miller Jencks	Goffstown	Lawrence & Diane Savage *	Francestown
Suzanne Lamport	Francestown	Rod & Alana Stark	Goffstown
Louis B. Lanzillotti*	New Boston	Paul Susca, Peg Lopata & Family*	Francestown
Matt & Janet Lewis**	Francestown	William C. Swan	Francestown
Linda & Bob Lindgren**	Francestown	Steve & Jackie Tippet	New Boston
Paul Livingston*	Millbrea, CA	John Turcotte & Alison Williams*	Goffstown
Verna Martin	Weare	Peter, Sandi & Nat Van Scoyoc	New Boston
Don & Martha McGinley	New Boston		

OTHER GIFTS

Martha Colburn, Laconia
Stewardship Contribution

Gerald & Dona Fairbairn, New Boston
Unrestricted Gift

David Souter, Weare
Gift in Support of Land Protection

* Contributing Member (\$50)
** Supporting Member (\$100)
*** Guardian Member (\$250+)

Help protect the places you cherish. Invite your friends to join the PWA!

Tom's Coming – and He's Bringing *Birds!*



WHEN: Friday, November 10, 6:30 PM

WHERE: Holy Cross Episcopal Church, 118 Center Rd., Weare

Join us for a breathtaking, 90-minute, educational program by Tom Ricardi of the Massachusetts Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center featuring 5-6 live, non-releasable raptors. Get up close and personal with a Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vulture, or a Snowy, Barred, or Great Horned Owl.

In addition to learning about and observing these spectacular birds, we'll hear about Tom's important work with the Rehabilitation Center where he cares for injured birds and operates a captive breeding program. The project has successfully produced offspring for reintroduction, bolstering the wild population of the Bald Eagle, American Kestrel, Barn Owl, and Red-tailed Hawk. Many of Tom's Bald Eagle

offspring have been reintroduced right here in southern New Hampshire, where this still endangered species has come back from the edge of extinction. Only two were recorded in the state 50 years ago. Last year 44 were counted – up 38% from the previous year.

Seating is limited. Admission is free for PWA members and \$5 for nonmembers, with a maximum of \$20 per family. Advance reservations are available to members and their guests by calling 487-3331. Reserved seats will be held until 6:20 PM. It is strongly suggested that members pre-register, as this event is likely to sell out! Call **487-3331** or email pwa@pwa-nh.org.

A Secretive Watershed Resident:

The American Bittern



American bittern (Photo by Pat Nelson)

If you're lucky, you might have heard the odd call of an American bittern coming from its hiding place in the marsh. It is more often heard than seen.

Pat Nelson was fortunate to catch this rare glimpse of a bittern enjoying the evening air in a wet field abutting the Piscataquog River. When a threat approaches, the bittern will stretch its neck up nearly straight and freeze so that it looks like a stick. The stripes on its breast and belly help it blend into tall grasses. American bitterns still nest in NH, but are listed by the NH Fish & Game Department as a species of concern because their marsh and wet meadow habitats are disappearing to development. Learn more at:

<http://www.nhptv.org/Natureworks/americanbittern.htm>

<http://wildspace.ec.gc.ca/media/sounds/ambi.wav> (recording)

If you hear or see an American bittern, please make a note of the location and contact PWA. We want to track this and other threatened plant, bird, and animal species to enrich our database of important habitat areas in the watershed.

Address Service Requested

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- October 21** 36th PWA Annual Meeting
& hikes at Crotched Mountain
in Greenfield
- October 22** Hike at recently protected
Porritt Hi-E-Nuf Farm
in Goffstown
- November 10** Birds of Prey Program
in Weare (Details inside)

*For more information, see the flyer
recently sent to members – or call
the PWA office. Nonmembers are
welcome at public events.*

September / October 2006 Volume 18, No.5

Watershed News

THE PISCATAQUOG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

- PWA's New Look Kicks Off Year 37** Page 2
- Meet PWA Volunteer** Page 3
Jerry King of Weare
- Calling All People Persons!** Page 3
- Tax Law Changes Favor Land Protection** Page 4
- Birds of Prey Program** Page 5
to Feature Live Specimens
- Meet a Secretive Neighbor:** Page 5
The American Bittern

Read more about it...

Colburn Family Entrusts PWA to
*Protect a
New Boston Landmark*



...inside this issue!