



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



CHATTER Winter 2012

Did you choose this place - or did it choose you?

Some of us were born here.

Some married into this place.

Some found work here.

Some vacationed here — to ski, view foliage, or swim and sail.

Some came here for their education — to never leave or to return in retirement.

Each of us is seduced by the quiet, lasting beauty of this landscape.

Here, in this special region, we are changed by these hills and lakes.

Certainly comforted, perhaps healed, enriched by nature's beauty.

These special places have transformative power —

giving us room to be both by ourselves and to be good neighbors.

How we got here — whether native or newcomer — matters little.

What is important is why we stay and that is what Ausbon Sargent is about.

Written by: Nancy Lyon



From the Executive Director:



Everyone has a special place. It might be Clark Lookout where you seek some quiet time or that majestic view you pass by every day. Maybe it's the King Hill Reservation where you walk your dog or the local farm where you pick fresh strawberries. It could be along the undeveloped shorelines of our lakes. Perhaps you take your children or grandchildren exploring on the Cook Interpretative Trail or to the Low Plain Natural Area. The Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region is full of special places and conserving these special places is what Ausbon Sargent is all about. We are saving land today to ensure a legacy of special places for tomorrow.

2012 is an important milestone in the history of the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust. A time for all of us to reflect, assess, celebrate and plan for tomorrow. So what do our land conservation efforts mean to you and generations to come? For some it is spiritual renewal that we feel, for others it may mean recreational opportunities and for all of us land conservation means we have farmlands for local food, we have productive forests, ground water protection and clean air. And, let's not forget that land conservation is important to our economy.

As we look ahead to securing the next 25 years and beyond, the job of land conservation is not done. Far from it... more properties have to be conserved, but we also need to get the message out there that Ausbon Sargent has promised to care for its conserved lands – always. We call this stewardship. Part of stewardship is training our 90 volunteers who monitor and inspect easement properties. It also means that our staff will spend time with landowners to discuss and review land management plans for forestry or agricultural activities, will meet with new landowners when properties change hands and will maintain trails where there is public use. It is important that we have a good relationship with landowners – we want to prevent violations and avoid costly litigation. In the months ahead, you will hear more about stewardship and our *Saving Land for Tomorrow* campaign effort.



Six of the original founders of Ausbon Sargent with Executive Director, Debbie Stanley. Front Row L-R: Jan Kidder, Heidi Lauridsen, and Sue Clough. Back Row L-R: John Clough, Woody Blunt, Debbie Stanley, and Bill Berger.

Photo by: Sandy Delaat



We are proud of the fact that we are an accredited land trust. This mark of excellence in land conservation has only been awarded to 8% of the land trusts nationally. For you, accreditation means that Ausbon Sargent operates at the highest quality standards that you can trust.

Now in my 24th year as Executive Director, I'm grateful to be surrounded by competent staff, talented trustees and dedicated volunteers. Ausbon Sargent is a success because of you and our many generous friends at all levels. Every gift makes a difference. We thank our loyal and giving members who provide financial support to sustain the land trust. We're most appreciative for the significant grant awarded by the Virginia Cretella Mars Foundation and we're especially thankful to the willing landowners who choose to conserve their properties. Together, we have conserved and will continue to conserve the special places you love!

With heartfelt appreciation,

Debbie Stanley

Lake Sunapee's Matriarchs Share Sense of Place, Conservation Values

By Midge Eliassen

Photo by: Midge Eliassen



Left to right, Wiggy Weathers Grassi, Dot Birmingham Gordon, Kay Tilson Murray at Dot's 95th birthday celebration, on Kearsarge Mountain (base) in July 2010.

Is it something in the water? Or the education? Or the families?

Three Lake Sunapee women, now the matriarchs of their five-generation Lake Sunapee extended families, have been lifelong friends. All are dedicated conservationists. At age 96, they and their families have reflected on their friendship, their values, and the importance of preserving the natural landscape where they have received and transmitted a sense of place as part of defining family values.

Kay Tilson Murray's and Wiggy Weathers Grassi's mothers were at Smith College together, and were friendly acquaintances on Lake Sunapee beginning in the 1920's. The daughters, also friends here on the Lake, went off to Smith College in 1933. A Sunapee friend, Cynthia Coonley, suggested Kay look up a friend of a friend; Kay found that Dot Birmingham was actually in her college house. The two soon became close friends, and headed often to the Tilson family home on Lake Sunapee. Dot was familiar with the Sunapee area, having spent summers with her family at Twin Lake Village.

One Thanksgiving a Sunapee friend gave Kay's older sister a ride to the Lake for the holiday. He found himself also driving little sister Kay and her friend, Dot (who was traveling with her pet goldfish which could not be left at college for the break). Thus Dot met Frank Gordon. In 1941 they married, with Kay as maid of honor. Dot's parents actually asked her "Are you sure you're not just marrying him to get to Sunapee?"

Dot came to love the land the Gordon family had owned since Frank's childhood as much as Frank did. Their three daughters teased that he knew every tree on the property, and they and later their spouses used to walk the boundaries with him, long before the days of easement monitoring. Dot says that the appreciation for open space was passed down from Frank's parents, and on to all succeeding generations. Frank's brother, Lincoln, gave a large area of Lake Sunapee shorefront in Georges Mills to NH Fish and Game. Frank and Dot turned to Ausbon Sargent to help conserve their family property on Davis Hill Road and Lake Sunapee: they put it under easement in 1996. The family for generations has "fallen out of bed and into the beauty" that surrounds them, freely exploring nature.

Dot's children and grandchildren and now great-grandchildren share this experience. The daughters say, "We all have an overwhelming sense of place." Dot's daughter and son-in-law, Sue and Gene Venable who retired to Springfield, are easement monitors for Ausbon Sargent.

Kay's family had originally come from Tennessee, and her father, John Q. Tilson, a Connecticut lawyer and majority leader of the US House of Representatives, maintained ownership of the Tennessee land where he was born in a log cabin. Tennessee became a magnet for his children and their children, although none lived nearby. They also shared the Tilson Lake Sunapee property every summer. Eventually Kay and her siblings inherited the Tennessee land. Kay talked with Debbie Stanley about land conservation, and Debbie introduced her to a colleague, Lynn Cox of the Southern Appalachian Highland Conservancy. Cox helped the Tilsons place a conservation easement on a square mile, ridge line to ridge line, of land in the Erwin area of Tennessee. The family returns there a couple of times a year, "drawn like a magnet to their ancestral home."

After summering at the lake her entire life, Kay moved to New London for winter residency, choosing this Lake Sunapee town because she had worked on trails with the Conservation Commission (CC) chair, Esther Currier. Soon Kay joined the CC and took responsibility for the Lyon Brook trail from Parkside Road to Route 11. Later, when the Low Plain area was conserved, Kay, always handy with tools, made the trail signs with her router. Kay also became an easement monitor for Ausbon Sargent. Her son-in-law Dan Schneider is now the monitor for this same property. Kay's daughters and sons-in-law have returned to the area for retirement, where Kiki Schneider is a new Ausbon Sargent board member, Chris McKee has served on the New London CC, and husband Tom McKee is the Forest Society's land steward for the Hay reservation. The members of the extended Tilson family would have liked to place an easement on their Lake Sunapee property, but legal constraints of their inheritance have made it not possible. Instead, the Tilson lake property is in current use and is being managed as a sustainable woodlot.

Though she has never had enough property to conserve, the Sunapee experience and the importance of place for her led Wiggy to work actively for land preservation where she has lived, in Scarsdale NY and then in the Upper Valley. She has been a member of Ausbon Sargent since its founding. On moving to Hanover, Wiggy became a board member and active volunteer for the Upper Valley Land Trust. Wiggy's commitment to land preservation and sense of place have informed her children's volunteer involvements. Son Tony Grassi was chairman of the national board of governors of The Nature Conservancy 2000-2003, as well as a leader in other conservation organizations. Daughter Midge Eliassen, an easement monitor for Ausbon Sargent, is very involved with LSPA, and is currently a trustee of the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests, where she serves as secretary.

These three Lake Sunapee multigenerational families have been blessed with their friendships, a beautiful environment, a family heritage of love of the land and sense of place, and a commitment across the generations to work that preserves these places they love. Their communities have been blessed with their involvements and their conservation efforts.

Like so many, the Ausbon Sargent Community was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Nancy Lyon on October 25, 2011.

A Tribute to Nancy Lyon

By Terri Jillson White in collaboration with Chris Cundey



Nancy's involvement with Ausbon Sargent began in 1996.

Nancy grew up in Madbury, NH — on what she described as a gentleman's farm—surrounded by and caring for a number of animals. Being outdoors with animals—in open spaces—was important to Nancy from a very early age.

After a successful career in weaving, Nancy switched gears and decided she wanted to learn more about dog training and search and rescue. Nancy spent many hours in the woods and open spaces in our area training her dogs and working on search and rescue operations. Her work with Ausbon Sargent was a natural expansion of this love of the outdoors.

My work with Nancy went back to the “early years” at Ausbon Sargent. It was the mid 90s. Ausbon Sargent was a vibrant and growing organization feeling growing pains as the organization positioned itself for the future. Nancy always provided strong leadership in conceptualizing, organizing, motivating others, and launching any endeavor on which she embarked.

Nancy originally approached Executive Director, Debbie Stanley in 1996 outlining her services as a graphic designer and asking if Ausbon Sargent could utilize her services. Very typical of Nancy—seeing a need and seeking a way to fill it.

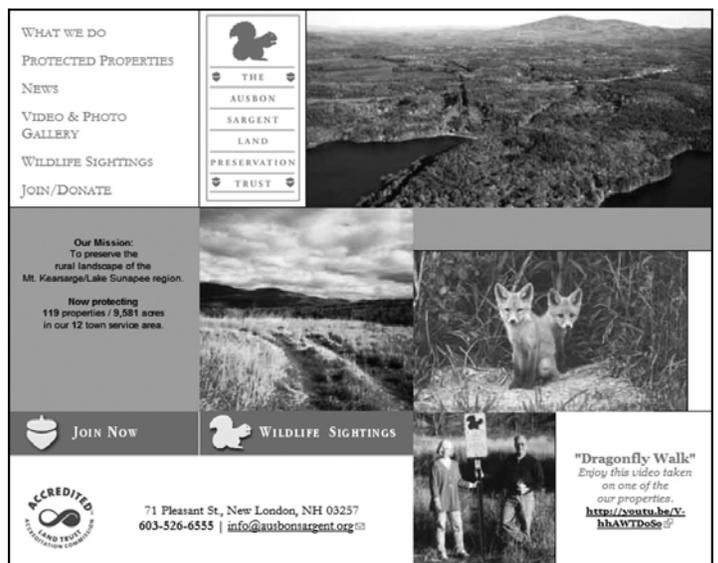
Chris Cundey, who served with Nancy on the Ausbon Sargent Board, recalled a meeting at which Nancy questioned the value being received from a paid public relations professional. “Nancy questioned the value Ausbon Sargent was receiving and, without hesitation, stated she felt she could do a better job and would volunteer her time and talents.”

Fifteen years later Ausbon Sargent staff, members and donors have all been the beneficiaries of her design and graphic talents. All of Ausbon Sargent's public relations materials for land projects, fact sheets, ads and fundraising materials were designed by Nancy. She went on to serve as an Ausbon Sargent Board Member for 9 years, including one year as its Chairman.

I recall some of the projects Nancy took on during my tenure as Chairman [2000 – 2002]. Nancy single-handedly spearheaded the creation of an Ausbon Sargent website. This, at a time, when most people were saying “web what?”

Not only did Nancy see that Ausbon Sargent needed a website, but she took on the project of being sure we had an excellent, first-class website. She and Debbie Stanley secured funds from a single donor and, with Board approval, the first Ausbon Sargent website was launched. Today's website is not only a result of Nancy's steadfast commitment to ensuring that it become a reality but her involvement with it has meant that Ausbon Sargent's website continues as Nancy envisioned it eleven years ago.

Since her passing, I have often reflected on the experience of serving with Nancy as an Ausbon Sargent Board member. Nancy had a unique way of letting you know how she felt about something — for or against — with relatively few words. Her confirmation you were on the right track could be met with “good” and Nancy's approving smile. If she was in disagreement, you were met with a “well, I don't agree. . . and here's why. . .” Nancy always offered sound reasoning with a slightly firm approach — and people listened.



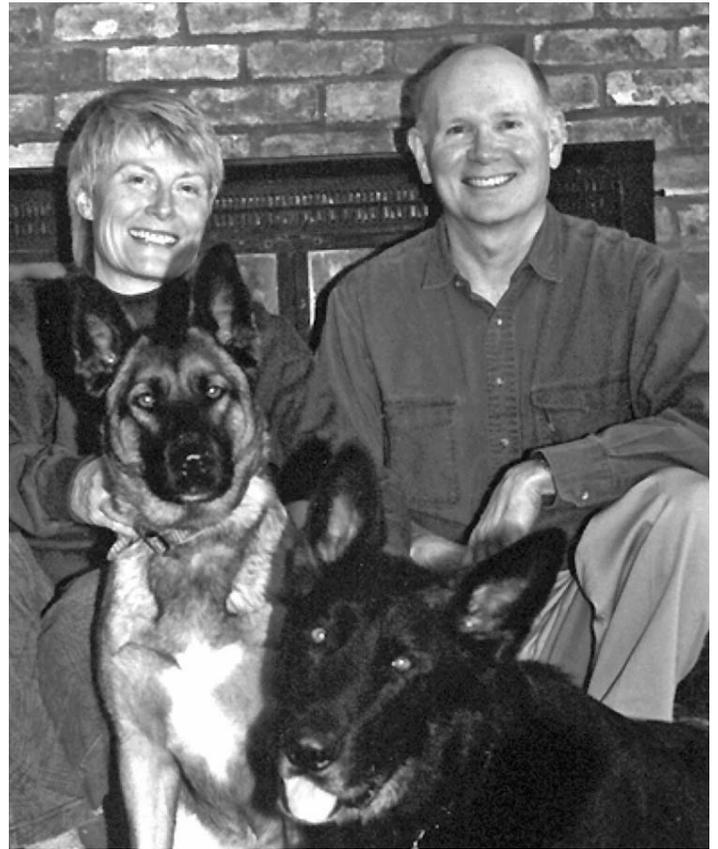
Website designed and maintained since 2000 by Nancy.

Along with so many other things, Nancy also saw the need for a Development Committee to ensure the long-term viability of the Land Trust. She also coined the phrase “Living Legacy,” which has become an important phrase in Ausbon Sargent fundraising promotional materials.

Ask anyone who worked with Nancy to tick off single-word adjectives and the ones which appear on all lists are: committed, dedicated, creative, intelligent, considerate, generous and kind. Debbie Stanley, Executive Director of Ausbon Sargent, commented that, “Nancy was the ultimate volunteer. She was a true friend—both personally—and of the land trust.”

Doug Lyon shared “This whole notion of giving people the opportunity to experience the nature she loved, created the passion for her work with Ausbon Sargent. Nancy was convinced that Ausbon Sargent was a quality organization and she became very friendly with Debbie and shared her passion for open spaces. I can’t think of a single organization that better epitomizes opportunities for the public to enjoy nature and the open spaces. Ausbon Sargent was the organization that gave Nancy the excuse to do the kind of things she loved to do.”

People will benefit for many years to come from contributions Nancy made to Ausbon Sargent. She lived the slogan of creating a living legacy and all of us—and future generations—are recipients of her efforts.



Terri Jillson White served on Ausbon Sargent's Board from 1994-2003 and was Chairman from 2000-2002. Chris Cundey served on the Board from 2001 -2007 and was Chairman of Ausbon Sargent from 2004 -2006.

In one of her last e-mails Nancy wrote to Debbie Stanley:

**“I’ve had a very good life—
wonderful parents, good friends, and a husband of such
kindness, humor and strength. I am proud of having been
able to help you and everyone at Ausbon Sargent make
a difference in the future of this region!”**



Her imagination and creativity are clear in all of our marketing materials.

Battles Farm Conserved!

By Beth McGuinn



The
Battles Farm
Conservation
Alliance

The
Ausbon Sargent
Land Preservation
Trust

The Bradford
Conservation
Commission

The Rural Heritage
Connection of
Bradford

Beefalo raised on Battles Farm supply restaurants and customers with low cholesterol, high protein meat.

This past summer, the Battles Farm in Bradford was typically busy - a new calf was born, lambs and kids grew, portable fencing was installed in the new beefalo pasture, eggs were collected, hay was mowed and baled, cows were milked and chickens were processed for sale. But there were some new activities also - a boundary survey, a new appraisal and a hazardous waste assessment were completed, all in preparation for conservation of 150 acres of fields, wetlands and forestland.

The Battles Farm is now conserved! Its iconic New England farm vista is protected - forever. Land which has been farmed since before the Civil War will remain available for agricultural uses - forever. Roofs and driveways will never divert concentrated flows of water into Hoyt Brook, so these 149.86 acres of farm and forestland will continue to help control the flooding downstream. Wildlife will continue to use the fields, streams, wetlands and forests. The public will be able to walk through the forests to experience wildlife in its natural habitat. No matter who owns this farm in the future, it is conserved!

Conservation of the Battles Farm was possible because landowners Nita and Ed Erickson were committed and worked hard to make it so; because a variety of organizations, including the Bradford Conservation Commission, the Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford and Ausbon Sargent stepped up to the plate to write grants and ask friends and neighbors to donate funds to make this dream a reality; because the community made individual donations and because granting agencies saw value in the project. Partnerships made this project a success. This farm's conservation is a great accomplishment, the realization of a dream for all involved. Ausbon Sargent thanks all of our partners who made that dream come true!

Conservation Partnerships

Ausbon Sargent works with many partners who make our work possible. Our members are the foundation that provides the resources for us to meet with landowners, evaluate important conservation properties and negotiate conservation easements. Landowners willing to donate land or an easement are critical partners, since we work primarily with land and easement *donors*. However, each year we encounter important conservation opportunities that can not be successful without funding to purchase an easement or property. When the conservation values are exceptional and a donation is not possible, Ausbon Sargent may choose to *purchase* an interest in land at a discounted price, with the help of our funding partners. The funding partners who facilitated purchase of the Battles Farm easement are critical components of our land conservation efforts when landowners can't make a full donation. We have relied on strong support from the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), the Conservation License Plate Program (Moose Plate) and town Conservation Commissions over the past 5 years to purchase easements on the Courser properties in Warner and Webster, the Hersey Farms in Andover, and the Battles Farm in Bradford. We'd like to introduce you to these funding partners.



Rural Heritage Connection of Bradford



The Battles Farm conserves prime agricultural soils and panoramic views enjoyed by the public.

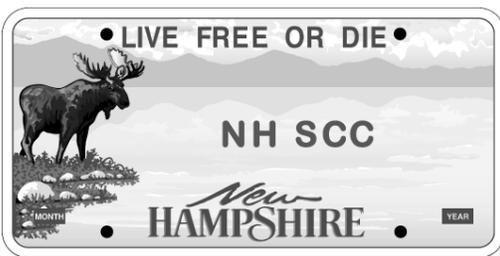


The Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)

LCHIP is an independent state authority initiated by the New Hampshire Legislature in 2000 to spur public-private investment, through matching grants. Since then, LCHIP has helped conserve over 220,000 acres throughout the state, including grants of \$385,000 to Ausbon Sargent to conserve over 550 acres in the Mount Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region. Each dollar spent by LCHIP leverages over \$5 in matching funds.

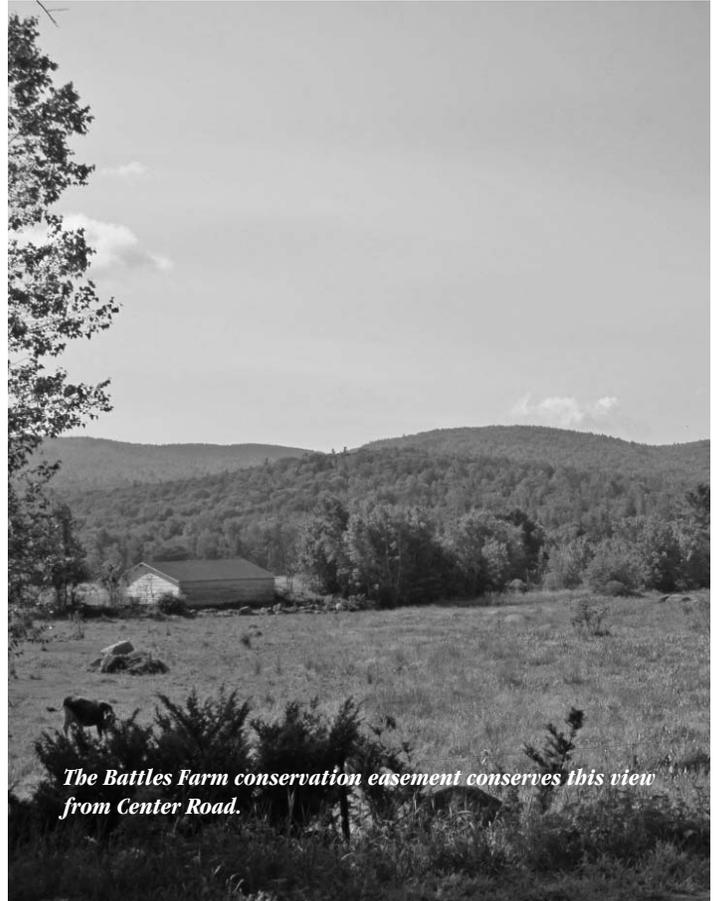
For Ausbon Sargent, and many other conservation organizations around the state, LCHIP grants make the difference between conserving important properties and having to let them go without being protected against development. The Battles Farm project is a perfect example, since LCHIP was the only grant opportunity that could provide anchor funding to match the Town's conservation commission funds.

Grants from LCHIP are made through a "dedicated" fund, generated by a \$25 surcharge on certain deeds and plans recorded at New Hampshire's ten county registries of deeds. For the next two years, however, there will be no new funds coming into LCHIP's grant fund because the surcharge is being diverted to the state's general fund to help balance the state budget. We are hopeful that these important grant funds will become available again in 2013, so that we can use the leverage provided by LCHIP to conserve important natural resources.



The Moose Plate Program

You've likely seen the Moose license plates on your travels. The \$30 additional fee charged for the moose license plate is used to fund a variety of conservation projects including land conservation. Ausbon Sargent has received \$60,000 total from this fund for the Courser – Trumbull Pond project in Webster and the Battles Farm in Bradford. The NH State Conservation Committee makes these grants available. Though Moose Plate grants are smaller than LCHIP grants, they have reduced Ausbon Sargent's need for private fundraising significantly – a very important role. The Moose Plate program also funds administration of LCHIP.



The Battles Farm conservation easement conserves this view from Center Road.

"Each generation takes the earth as trustees.

We ought to bequeath to posterity as many forests and orchards as we have exhausted and consumed."

J. Sterling Morton

(Father of Arbor Day, 3rd Secretary of Agriculture)

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Conservation Commissions

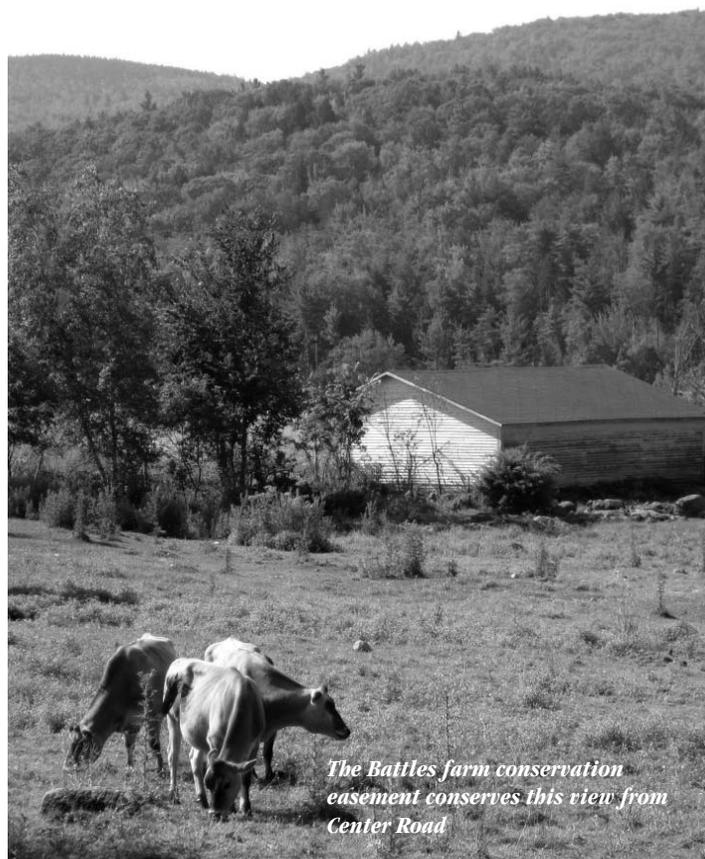
When Ausbon Sargent has a potential conservation project, we typically contact the Town Conservation Commission. These folks know their town and they know the most important conservation opportunities in their town. Conservation Commission interest often translates to funding if an important project requires it. Over the past 5 years the commissions in Bradford, Andover, Webster and Warner have helped fund Ausbon Sargent projects, contributing a total of \$389,000 to purchase easements on 1,358 acres of farmland, shorefront, forests and wetlands. Most Conservation Commissions get some funding from penalties paid when current use land is developed or subdivided and some commissions receive funds through the town warrant for general land conservation or for conservation of specific properties.

Our partners recognize that land conservation is an important part of preserving the rural character of the Mount Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region. Without these funding partners, Ausbon Sargent would be much less able to work with landowners who simply cannot donate the full value of their land.

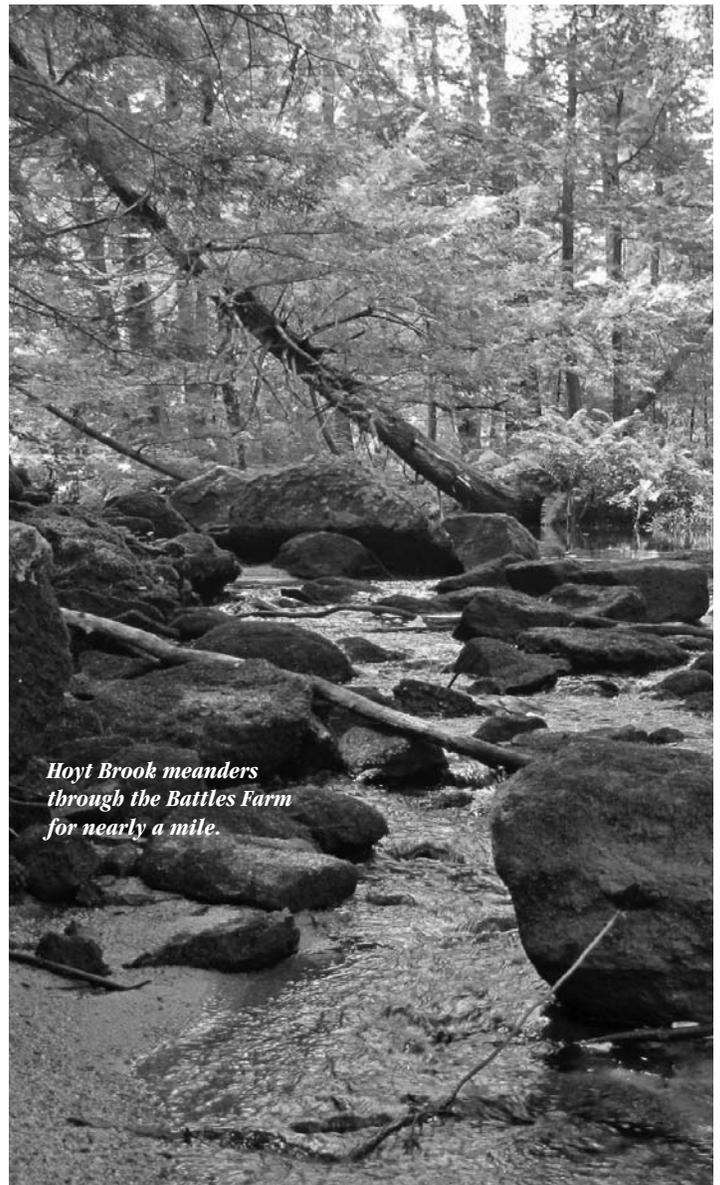
Beth McGuinn is a Land Protection Specialist at Ausbon Sargent. She works with landowners who wish to conserve their land, drafts the conservation easement deeds, collects field data and creates the documentation to complete land conservation projects. Her background is in forestry, land management and easement stewardship.



Battles Farm fields are visible from the conserved forestland where the conservation commission plans to open a trail for public use.



The Battles farm conservation easement conserves this view from Center Road



Hoyt Brook meanders through the Battles Farm for nearly a mile.

Your Help is Needed

By Andy Deegan

Ausbon Sargent currently has a unique opportunity to work with a longstanding local family towards the protection of their property in Springfield. The Patten family owns 46 acres of land on George Hill Road, just north of New Hampshire Fish and Game's McDaniel's Marsh. This beautiful property includes a large field where prime agricultural soils are managed for the production of corn, pumpkins and hay. Cattle and oxen are also grazed on the property when the crops are not being grown. The Patten's land also ranks highly as important wildlife habitat, and its protection will help protect the water quality at McDaniel's Marsh. Views of the surrounding mountains, as well as McDaniel's Marsh, can be enjoyed from the property in many seasons.

This project will consist of the purchase of a conservation easement on the entire 46-acre Patten property. We are delighted to announce that we have already secured funding from LCHIP, the Town of Springfield and the State of New Hampshire Conservation Commission's Moose Plate Program. However, even with the support of these programs, we have a long way to go to raise the necessary funds to ensure that the property is protected forever. We hope to secure additional funding from other grant programs and foundations, but we will also be looking to the public for help in protecting this important piece of land.

Be on the lookout for future announcements concerning the protection of the Patten property, and please let us know if you are interested in learning more about and/or making a contribution to this project.

After graduating from the Vermont Law School in 2004, Andy Deegan practiced law in Essex, Vermont. In 2008, he joined the Ausbon Sargent staff as a Land Protection Specialist and Stewardship Manager. He and his wife Carrie and their two children enjoy the outdoors, especially bird watching. Andy also serves on the New London Conservation Commission.



One of the many benefits of the Patten property is the view of the surrounding hills. The conservation easement will protect these fields and the valuable agricultural soils that are located adjacent to McDaniel's Marsh in Springfield.

More than Just a Tree

By Peggy Hutter

Substantial studies show that when patients in the hospital can see a tree or have a view of the outside from their window, the healing process goes more quickly and the patients require less pain medication (Edward O. Wilson from his book, *Biophilia*). Numerous large cities such as Pittsburgh, New York, and Minneapolis have invested in hiring Urban Forestry specialists to reintroduce trees and greenery to the city. The reason? It



Laurie DiClerico and Peggy Hutter enjoy a picnic lunch while hiking on the Ledge Pond conservation easement property.

Visit our website:

www.ausbonsargent.org

to download the Ledge Pond trail map.

has been documented that in areas where there are more trees, the crime rate decreases, healing increases and school children are better able to focus and concentrate. Aesthetically, trees are pleasing to look at and they certainly assist cooling in the summer and warming in the winter, but, most importantly, those who have the benefit of trees can improve the quality of their lives.

Richard Louv, a journalist and author of eight books connecting families and nature, coined a term "Nature Deficit Disorder." This is not a medical condition, but Louv describes

in two of his books, *Last Child in the Woods* and *The Nature Principle*, the lack of a relationship that many children and adults currently have with the environment. Luckily, for those of us in an area like New Hampshire, the cure for "NDD" can be found in the everyday nature of our own backyards. But can we be guaranteed that we will always be so fortunate?

Ausbon Sargent, our namesake, and the original founders of the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust most likely never heard the term Nature Deficit Disorder. Richard Louv's first books were not published until 2005, seventeen years after Ausbon died at age 97 and eighteen years after the incorporation of the Land Trust in 1987. But Ausbon and the incorporators recognized inherently the joys of seeing trees and open spaces. They may not have realized the risks of "NDD," but they knew how important the properties around our area were to them, to their children and the generations to follow. They followed their hearts and made a commitment to balance the growth of our communities with the conservation of properties. In doing so, each of us has been given the gift of trees and nature, and as with all gifts, we can choose to use the gift or toss it aside because it "just doesn't fit."

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The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust has now conserved 119 properties in our region, and most of these properties offer public access. Do yourself a favor and combat “Nature Deficit Disorder” by taking a stroll, a hike, or a snowshoe/ski adventure and acquaint yourself with a property of your choice. Take a friend, a partner or a child and share the pleasure. Below you will find some suggestions, but you can see pictures and find descriptions and locations for all of the Ausbon Sargent properties by visiting www.ausbonsargent.org.

- Cordingley Preserve in New London
- Johnson Conservation Easement in Sutton
- King Hill Reservation in Sutton
- Trumbull Pond on the Courser property in Warner/Webster
- Webb V-Oz property in Sunapee
- The Bradford Bog
- Woods Without Gile in Springfield
- Or help your children or grandchildren complete the Quest on the Cook Interpretive Trail in Elkins

Peggy Hutter taught in the Kearsarge Regional School District for 31 years before retiring in 2010. In 2002 she was honored with the National Middle School Teacher of the Year Award.

Wish List

Folding table to be used at events - \$80
Docking station and power cord for Laptop computer – \$230
Photo software for our Land Protection Specialist – \$100

*Can you help us purchase any of these items?
Contact Debbie Stanley at 526-6555*



Photo by: Dong Peel

Our delightful progressive dinner fundraisers are held in July and benefit land conservation. L-R: Marilyn Burton, Gene Burton, Bonnie Guterl, Tom Guterl, Jane Peel, John O'Dowd, Yim Kim, Stan Bright and Pam Bright

Chairman's Remarks

Annual Meeting – October 2011

I can, in all honesty, say that I have been to an Ausbon Sargent protected property every day this year. My daily commute takes me through fields, an orchard, a seasonal view of Mt. Kearsarge and the opportunity to walk the woods. I'm fortunate that my work involves me with four protected properties, all being used for agriculture, and that in itself is testament to the mission of Ausbon Sargent ... “To preserve the rural landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region.”

Of course, “rural” can mean different things to different people. To me it means lands used for forestry and agriculture, with open vistas over fields and a balance between wildlife and local food production. For others, it means an undisturbed watershed to help keep our streams and lakes in pristine condition. Our neighbors in town, the elementary school and out-club, use the Kidder/Cleveland/Clough property. Perhaps their definition of a rural landscape is land used for educational classes, for recreation and for fitness.

Ausbon Sargent now protects 119 properties for a total of 9,581 acres. That's over 3,000 corn mazes. That's 143 Messer Ponds. 15 square miles ... Half the area of Wilmot, NH. (which is ironic, since we have yet to conclude an easement property in Wilmot!).

This past year we've completed projects on eight properties in the towns of Bradford, Sunapee, East Andover and New London. On each project, we've worked with other non-profits, with local conservation commissions, with private donors and with state and federal agencies. These partnerships are vital as more of our land projects become complicated puzzles with each entity holding a key piece. Ausbon Sargent facilitates the connections that fit these puzzle pieces together, creating a successful easement.

Beth McGuinn and Andy Deegan craft these documents. Each project is unique and there is no such thing as just plugging numbers into boiler-plate language. A range of skills are needed: forestry skills, legal skills, historical perspective, experience, and friendly, hardworking personalities. All of these are crafted into the “deal”. These easements are then held together by the legal statutes of our governments, and these easements are upheld with careful stewardship by Ausbon Sargent and other land trusts.

All of the puzzle pieces for a conservation easement are put together by our experienced staff. However, the largest and most important puzzle pieces by far, the pieces that are the crux of our organization, are the landowners and their lands. On behalf of the board, staff and members of Ausbon Sargent, I say “thank you” to the landowners who have made the choice to protect their properties.

The benefits of conserved acreage are all around for us to enjoy...I pose this question: How do you appreciate these acres? Do you view a familiar vista as you drive about? Take friends on a favorite hike? Enjoy some locally grown food? Go for a quick dip in a clean “Class A” lake? Spot an endangered turtle in a wetland area? As the winter season progresses, I urge you to take a fresh look at the lands around us.



Volunteers help Office Manager Sue Andrews with the membership mailing. L-R: Gail Goddard, Bobbie Hambley, Sue Andrews, Jane Landenberger and Terri Bingham

2012 marks our 25th Anniversary. The Land Trust Alliance, a national organization that represents more than 1,700 land trusts across America, speaks to the first few land trusts that began as grass roots efforts... "The first land trusts were true pioneers with little money, but lots of pluck and determination."

Ausbon Sargent was formed in 1987 and the ensuing 25 years have proven our pluck AND determination. But as the saying goes, what good is pluck without a great staff? Debbie Stanley has been our Executive Director since that first year, and the long tenures of our staff speaks to her executive abilities, her organizational skills and her friendly demeanor. Thank you, Debbie.

And back to that quote from the Land Trust Alliance about pluck and determination, what good is determination without an energetic cadre of volunteers?

Ausbon Sargent started with a small yet strong base of volunteers and founders, and continues to benefit from an expanding group of members & volunteers. We currently count 165 volunteers who donate their time and talent to Ausbon Sargent. In fact, I'm estimating that last year we logged well over 2,000 volunteer hours. Now as a small business owner, I know that labor is our most expensive, and at the same time, our most valuable input. All of those hours add up to tens of thousands of dollars for everything from folding letters to desktop publishing to legal support and land monitoring.

But of course that is just looking at dollars and cents...our volunteers and staff also infuse the organization with energy and courage. At the end of our regular meeting today, we'll have a presentation paying tribute to one volunteer in particular who exemplified what it means to give so much energy and courage to a cause near and dear to her heart.

(See Nancy Lyon tribute on pages 4 & 5.)

Twenty-five years ago, a small group started the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust. Now, volunteers and staff are busy with planning for

our 25th Anniversary - which begins in 2012. We are planning dozens of activities and events for our 25th, including a roving video presentation to visit each of the 12 towns in our coverage area, a celebration around the time of Ausbon Sargent's birthday in June, a barbecue picnic at Star Lake Farm in July, a very special appreciation event in September, resolutions, proclamations, tours of properties, art shows, and of course, the Saving Land for Tomorrow campaign to raise moneys for stewardship.

If the initial conservation easement is the exciting part, the courtship and the honeymoon you might say, then stewardship is the long and successful marriage. The land trust is charged with working alongside each property and property owner, through the generations, to steward the land and be prepared to defend it. This takes dollars and the board and staff have spent quite some time understanding the issue of stewardship and preparing a budget and plan that will meet our current obligations. This stewardship plan also needs to grow as additional easement properties are added.

Our current five year strategic plan, as adopted in 2010, spells out the need for this endowment. The campaign goal is to raise \$1.5 million dollars. This money will be added to 1 million in funds that we already have, for a total of \$2.5 million. The board has determined that this endowment should provide 20% of our operating budget in the future - an amount sufficient to meet the costs of stewarding our current and future obligations.

Our committees work diligently and creatively to tackle the challenges of outreach, investments, land projects, budgets, membership, development and leadership. As many of you know first-hand, there are dozens of organizations in our small community that rely on volunteers, and as it turns out, fish in the same pond for the talent and resources of volunteers. (Bear with me on this analogy...) There are many lures in the pond, all trying to catch those fish who can help with time, treasure and talent. I believe that Ausbon Sargent is one of the best run nonprofit organizations in our area, and that is what continues to attract high quality volunteers.

A few years ago, I ended the day and remembered that I had a land trust board meeting the next morning. My daughter, Erin was hoping for a bedtime story, but the best I could do was review the meeting agenda and some committee reports with her. Hard to believe, but she wasn't engrossed in the reading. She did ask, though, what Ausbon Sargent was. I told her that Ausbon Sargent was a man who gave all his life savings to buy and conserve the town green in New London for future generations to enjoy. I told her he worked in town all his life; and that he had a garden all his life. As I told her his story, she had that faraway look of concentration in her eyes. "That was really nice of him," she said. I agreed and told her that there were hundreds of people who thought the same. Those members, volunteers and staff continue to work towards the same goals: "To preserve the rural landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region." Thank you for your time and efforts.

Greg Berger is the owner of Spring Ledge Farm. He joined the Ausbon Sargent Board in 2004 and is currently in his 2nd year as Chairman. Greg and his wife Astrid have two children, Calvin age 13, and Erin, age 9.

The Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust

Gifts and Thank Yous

We only print the list of our Membership and Annual Fund donations once a year, in the summer issue of Chatter.

If you have any questions concerning your membership status please call Operations Manager, Sue Andrews at 526-6555 or email aslptsea@lds.net.

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(since June 3, 2011)

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WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK:

Charlie and Mary Lue Belden

for office recycling.

Mary Jane Ellis

for fulfilling our wish list.

The Kearsarge Shopper

for all they do for us.

Mark Lennon

for his beautiful notecard

creations.

Betsy Forsham

for proofing easement deeds.

Lee Morrill, OnTrack Design

for creating our 25th anniversary

logo and for producing this edition of Chatter.

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for volunteering in the office on a regular basis.

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Our sincere appreciation to those who share their passion for natural places through land and easement donations.

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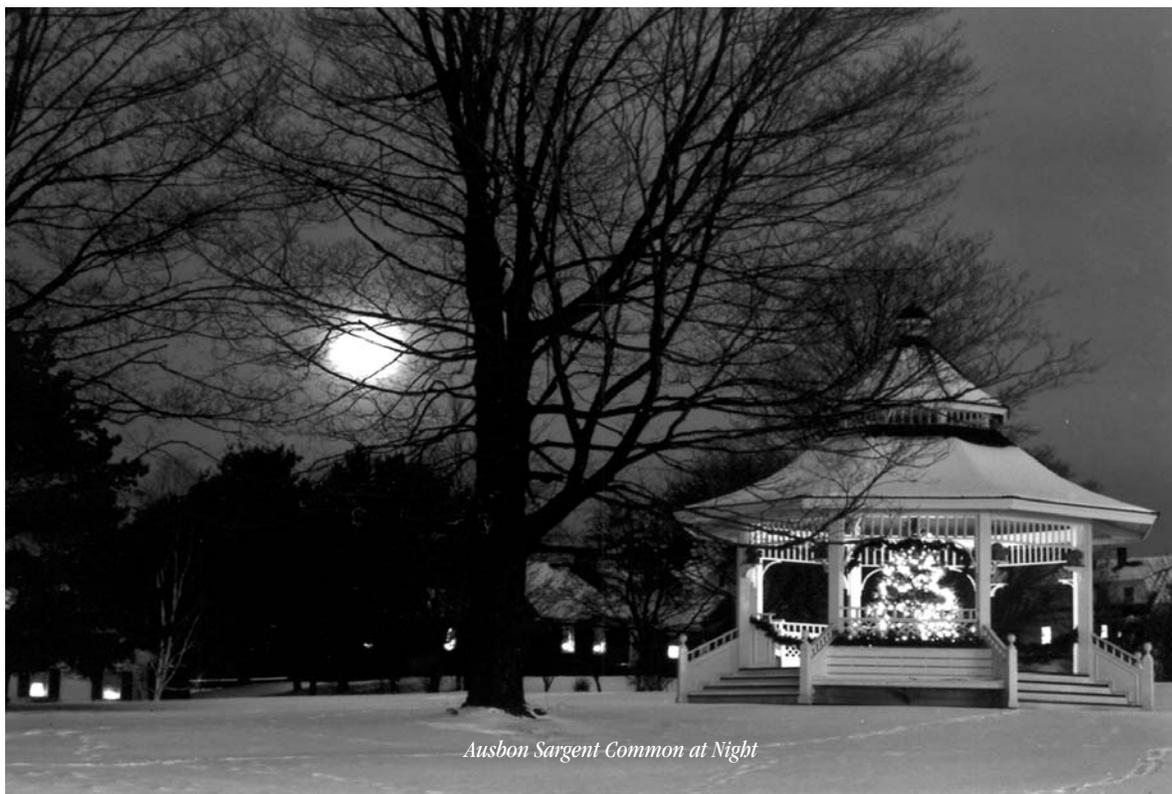


Photo by: A. Blake Gardner

Ausbon Sargent Common at Night

25 Years And the Beat Goes On

By Peggy Hutter

Twenty-five years, a quarter of a century, a silver anniversary. No matter how you describe it, each represents a lot of years together. 2012 marks the 25th anniversary of the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust. Through hard work, perseverance, and many positive connections, the land trust has made great gains in their mission to preserve the rural landscape of the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee Region.

In 1987, with escalating property values, the Town of New London found it difficult to continue to purchase and preserve open land. The Selectmen appointed a committee consisting of representatives of the Planning Board, the Budget Committee, the Conservation Commission and local realtors to conduct a special study to determine other options to slow the growth and protect the land in our area. In addition, the Selectmen felt having a State Representative on the committee would be an asset as a link to Concord, the State Capital. After much deliberation, and consultations with environmental and policy groups, the committee concluded that a private non-profit land trust was the appropriate solution to address their needs. The name selected to represent the Land Trust, Ausbon Sargent, was chosen as a tribute to a generous man whose gift of the New London Common to the town in 1985 provided an example to the newly formed non-profit Land Trust. Ausbon recognized very early the pleasures of open space where picnics, fairs, musical performances, recreational activities and other community events could take place. When this 3-acre parcel of land was put on the market by Colby-Sawyer College and in jeopardy of being developed, Ausbon, at age 94, spent his life's savings to preserve the property that he loved.

Although the Land Trust's origins were in New London, from the beginning the organization laid the groundwork to serve other towns in the area. The Trust has now completed 119 conservation projects in our region, covering 9,581 acres.

In celebration of 25 successful years, we are planning a year full of events. We hope that you will join us for some or all of our activities. Take a look at what's coming up between February and June, 2012.

Saturday, February 4, 1-3 pm: Webb Timber Harvest Tour, Sunapee
(Snow date February 11) Join licensed foresters Van and Tyler Webb on a tour of a timber harvest in process on the V-Oz conservation easement property. The V-Oz property is located on Harding Hill Road *(off of Rt 103 and Stagecoach Rd.)* in Sunapee. Look for signs for parking.

Saturday, February 25, 1-4 pm: Cline Snowshoe Hike, Andover
Enjoy a guided snowshoe/X-country ski hike across the Cline property in Andover as land owners, Lorraine and Don Cline and Land Protection Specialist, Beth McGuinn share their expertise. More details on our website.

March 7, 8 or 9, 9 pm: Moonlight Madness Snowshoe Hike, Elkins
(TBD based on weather) With a full moon and a 180 degree view of Ragged Mt., Mt. Kearsarge and Mt. Sunapee, this mile hike makes for a very special winter evening adventure. The hike will leave from the Cook Trail on Whitney Brook Road in Elkins.

May 24th-mid September: "Landscapes for Landsake" Art exhibit at the New London Hospital

12 local painters and photographers have spent the year 2011 capturing the beauty of many of the Ausbon Sargent conservation easements and will be exhibiting their work through the hallways of the NLH. The artwork can be viewed for free, however each piece will be offered for sale, a percentage to benefit the hospital and Ausbon Sargent.

May 31: Thursday's Child Benefit Dinner at the New London Inn

Make reservations and bring your family and friends to a wonderful dinner at Rockwell's where a portion of the proceeds will benefit Ausbon Sargent.

June 10, 4 pm a Spring Ledge Farm Feature, New London

One of the joys of conserving properties is to protect our agricultural lands as well as our forests and open fields. Join us for a tour of Spring Ledge Farm and enjoy listening to our guest speaker, the former NH Commissioner of Agriculture, Steve Taylor.

June 11, 11 am-1 pm: "Happy Birthday, Ausbon!" on the New London Town Common

Grab your lunch and come to the party on the green as we pay tribute to our namesake, Ausbon Sargent, on his birthday. There will be music and stories and entertainment reflecting on Ausbon and the New London Common that he purchased in 1985 and gifted to the town that we might continue to use and enjoy this open space forever.

When you are considering what you might do for fun in our local area, refer to your calendar, gather your family and friends and join us. There is so much to appreciate on 9,581 natural acres of property.

Peggy Hutter is the 25th Anniversary Coordinator for Ausbon Sargent, helping to manage many of the special events of 2012. Peggy and her husband, Bob, live on Whitney Brook Road in Elkins and frequently enjoy hikes on the Ausbon conserved Cook and Deming properties.



An Unexpected Gift

The Estate of Andrew J. McDonald Leaves Ausbon Sargent a Bequest

By John O'Dowd

This fall, Ausbon Sargent was the recipient of a generous bequest from the estate of Andrew J. McDonald, a member of the Board of Directors of Paine, Webber, Jackson & Curtis and an Allied member of the New York Stock Exchange.

Mr. McDonald, a resident of Stoneham, MA was an avid aviation enthusiast and held a commercial pilot's license having been an aircraft owner since 1951. He was a former Director of the Aero Club of New England and a Governor of the Federal Club of Boston. He held memberships in the Downtown Club of Boston, Yale Club of Boston and the Flight Safety Foundation, an international non-profit organization dedicated to global aviation safety.

Mr. McDonald and his friend and fiancée, Ann M. Philbin of Boston, MA came to New London throughout the seasons as a respite from city life for several years. Recently, I was able to speak with her about the motivation behind Mr. McDonald's estate plan gift to Ausbon Sargent.

"Andy came from the mid-west and loved the rolling hills of the New London area," as it reminded him of the landscape he grew up in, she explained to me. Ann added that both she and Andy were "four seasons' visitors" and enjoyed snowshoeing on trails, walks around Pleasant Lake in the summers and the views of the fall color from the Emerson property protected through Ausbon Sargent.

Mr. McDonald's gift to Ausbon Sargent was "not about planned giving, but a thank you to New London," according to Ann. They both believed strongly that the views and lovely geographic location of New London captured the beauty and essence of New Hampshire. By making the generous gift to Ausbon Sargent through his estate, Mr. McDonald hoped the land and "tranquility of the woods" in New London and surrounding region would be conserved and protected for future generations.

By naming Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust in his estate, Mr. McDonald has helped leave a lasting positive impact on the Mt. Kearsarge/Lake Sunapee region for current and future generations



Left to right:
Ann M. Philbin and
Andy McDonald

to come. And for that we express our deepest thanks and gratitude. When you name the Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust in your estate, you become a member of the Acorn Society. Members of the Acorn Society receive special recognition and are honored in our publications. Members who prefer not to be recognized can remain anonymous.

John O'Dowd is a member of the Development Committee and an Ausbon Sargent Trustee. He is a Senior Financial Advisor for Ledyard Financial Advisors in New London.

Welcome Recently Elected Board Members:



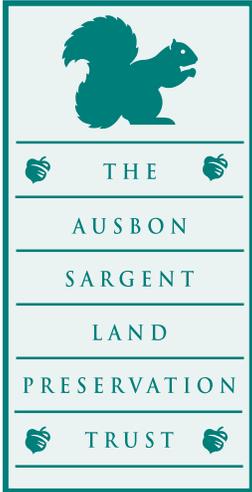
John O'Dowd has over 20 years of investment and wealth management experience in New England and the New York metropolitan region and is currently employed as a Senior Financial Advisor at Ledyard Financial Advisors in New London. A Certified Trust & Financial Advisor, John is a graduate of the American Bankers National Trust and Graduate Trust schools at Northwestern University.

John states that he was brought up in a small farming community in upstate New York and is concerned about the loss of the family farm over the past few decades both nationally and here in New Hampshire. He is a strong believer that conservation easements through a local land trust, such as Ausbon Sargent, allow for the protection of farm soils and watersheds for future generations. He is proud to be associated with Ausbon Sargent; an organization which is dedicated to preserving farms, forests and open natural space. He initially became involved with Ausbon Sargent as a member of the Development Committee.



Kiki Schneider has lived in Sunapee fulltime for the last five years after being a lifelong summer resident. She became interested in the Land Trust because of her appreciation for the rural character in our region. She is also concerned about the pressures on our clean water, clean air and the clear night skies. Kiki began her involvement with Ausbon Sargent by arranging hikes to showcase new properties and is looking forward to many more properties to showcase!

She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Smith College and a MSLS from Simmons College. Kiki is an active volunteer at the Fells where she leads workshops and works in the gardens, is a member of the Sunapee Gardeners and the New Hampshire Master Gardener Association. Kiki is also a long-time member and volunteer at the Lake Sunapee Protective Association.



71 Pleasant Street
 P.O. Box 2040
 New London
 New Hampshire
 03257-2040
 603.526.6555
 aslpt@tds.net



This past fall during a heavy downpour, Nancy and Doug Lyon saw this mother moose and little one eating apples in their backyard.

Encounter more "Wildlife Sightings" at our website.
www.ausbonsargent.org



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Newsletter layout by Lee T. Morrill, OnTrack Design. Special thanks to all our guest authors!

Won't you become a Member?

Won't you join us and become part of the living legacy created through land conservation?

You can find out more about us on our website at: www.ausbonsargent.org

Please make checks payable to: **Ausbon Sargent** and mail to: **P.O. Box 2040, New London, NH 03257-2040**
 or call and use your credit card: **603.526.6555**

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