

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jack Gibson, President  
Ernie Hilton, VP  
Greg Dore, Treasurer  
Davida Barter, Secretary  
Kate Drummond  
Chris Young  
Robert Haynes  
Eric Lahti  
Warren Shay, Attorney  
Ann Dorney, MD  
Patty Hager  
Roger Poulin

## Advisory Board

Tom Hendricks  
Patty Van Horne  
Joe Dembeck  
Greg Drummond  
Sam Horine  
Alan Haberstock  
Eliza Townsend

Special thanks to our newly formed Advisory Board!

## Executive Director

Nancy Williams

*(From first page...history of SWT)* "Appreciation ... has been expressed in the unanimous vote at the annual meeting of the Skowhegan Chamber of Commerce: 'The land near Factory St. you have made possible for the development of a playground, fills a long-felt need in the section of our town in which it is located and the thirteen acre parcel across the river from beautiful Coburn Park opens to the public an unparalleled beauty spot.' The extensive wooded area bordering the old Russell Road and formerly known as Coburn Woods forms a beautiful 'back drop' for the Skowhegan Fair, as viewed from the grandstand by its thousands of occupants."

For several decades, SWT was governed by William Philbrick, William L. Philbrick, E. James Dufour, Kirby Hight, John C. Sealey, Jr., Wallace A. Bilodeau, and Clinton B. Townsend. William Philbrick, a charter member, remained on the board for 69 years and was president when he died at the age of 93. His son, William L. Philbrick ("Bill"), was treasurer for many years, became president at this father's death, and remained so until he died in 1997. With the Philbricks' leadership, dedication, knowledge of forestry and love for Skowhegan, the Route 2 and 201 entrances to Skowhegan are forever preserved for Skowhegan's future. In 1993, the road between Parkman Hill and U.S. Route 2 was named Philbrick Drive in their honor. *-This history provided by Davida Barter, Secretary of SWT.*



# 90<sup>th</sup> Happy Birthday!

Spring-  
Summer  
2017

NEWSLETTER

## NINETY YEARS!

### SOMERSET WOODS TRUSTEES MAY BE THE OLDEST LAND TRUST IN MAINE!

The organizational meeting of the Somerset Woods Trustees (SWT) was held at the home of George Otis Smith on August 1, 1927. Present were: Louise H. Coburn, George Otis Smith, William Philbrick, Gertrude S. Weston, Francis H. Friend, Joseph Coburn Smith and Ernest C. Butler. All were elected Directors, and Louise H. Coburn was elected as president; Joseph Coburn Smith as vice president; Ernest C. Butler as secretary; and William Philbrick as treasurer. SWT was established by the Maine Legislature in 1927, and the directors voted to accept Chapter 109 of the Private Laws of 1927 entitled "Act to Incorporate Somerset Woods Trustees" and adopted bylaws for the organization. The Charter lists the purposes of this land trust as:

"acquiring, holding, managing, arranging, maintaining and where practicable, opening to the public under suitable regulations to be established by said corporation, such tract or tracts of land as said corporation may be able to acquire within the county of Somerset, with the right and power to hold such personal property as may be necessary or convenient in the managing of said tract or tracts of land acquired and held as aforesaid..."

Louise Helen Coburn, in her book "Skowhegan on the Kennebec" published in 1941, further describes this land trust as follows:



Kennebec Riverbank

Somewhat related in purpose to Coburn Park, which preserves so choice a bit of Kennebec river-bank, is the unique land trust initiated by Miss Coburn with the purpose of conserving some of the sylvan beauty of the town for other generations to enjoy... Some of the tracts administered by the trustees with this public purpose are: the woodlands bordering U. S. and Maine Highway No. 2 where it skirts the Kennebec below the Eddy; the fringe of birch and beech trees along the Back Road...; the public playground already established on Jewett St., as well as another planned on the corner of Factory and Hathaway Sts., and the bank of Wesserunsett Stream below Malbon's Mills, long used as the Swimming Hole, for all of which recreation tracts the Town is given a free lease; and the pine grove on the south bank of the Kennebec opposite Coburn Park.

*(continued on back page)*

## PARTY, PARTY, PARTY!

Mark your calendars!

See inside for more details.

**September 10th: Annual Conservation and Awards Celebration**

**September 30th: Annual North Country Celebration: Race or walk from Bingham to Solon**



Somerset Woods Trustees  
P.O. Box 833  
Skowhegan, Me. 04976

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### A Walk in the Woods

**Jack Gibson, SWT President**

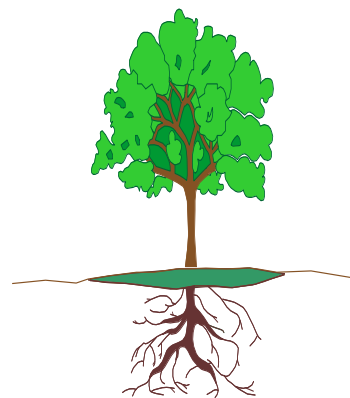
This year marks a very important milestone for Somerset Woods Trustees. This is the 90<sup>th</sup> year since our founding in 1927. Louise H. Coburn, George Otis Smith, William Philbrick, Gertrude S. Weston, Francis H. Friend, Joseph Coburn Smith and Ernest C. Butler were all elected as the original directors. These names may resonate with some of you that have been around Skowhegan much or all of your lives. I was fortunate to be elected the Board of Trustees in 1994 (yes, we don't have term limits!) and at that time William Philbrick, Sr. was still a Trustee and thus I got to know him. His son, William Philbrick, Jr. was president at that time and a friend. He passed away soon after his father and it is a great regret that those of us on the board at that time did not interview them for more of the history of Somerset Woods Trustees.

I would ask that any of you that may be able to provide some insight into the lives of the other original Trustees contact us. History is important and time will pass and more of it will be lost if not written down.

Also, take a look at our current Trustees and thank them when you see them. They, along with our Executive Director Nancy Williams, are a dynamic, talented and dedicated group. SWT is fortunate to still be, 90 years down the road, in good hands.

Lastly, I want to welcome the initial members of our Advisory Board. You will find them listed in this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support and I hope to see you at one of our upcoming events.



## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION EVENTS!

### Annual Conservation and Awards Celebration

Our annual celebration will be held in the evening of September 10, 2017 at Lakewood Inn. Skowhegan. Come enjoy good friends, kindred spirits and a big birthday cake at this beautiful inn on Lake Wesserunsett. Watch for emails, postcards and our Facebook page for more details.

**Please join us to thank this year's award winners!**

We are so honored to announce that this year's winner of our annual **Friend of Conservation Award** is **Alfred Jackson** of Madison for the trust he has placed in SWT to protect his land into perpetuity. Alfred's love of his land is reflected in the beauty of his forests and fields that he has stewarded for over six decades.



Our **Stewardship Award** goes to **Jeff Lloyd** for his donation of gravel for the new trail access into Coburn Woods. The access is now vastly improved as the gravel raised the trail above seeps and ticks!

Our **speaker** will be **Andrew Barton**, University of Maine at Farmington professor of biology, researcher and Maine author. He was the recipient of the 2013 Maine Literary Award by the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance.

Barton will speak on the subject of his book, "The Changing Nature of the Maine Woods", discussing the ecological forces that shaped our forests.

### ANNUAL NORTH COUNTRY CHALLENGE

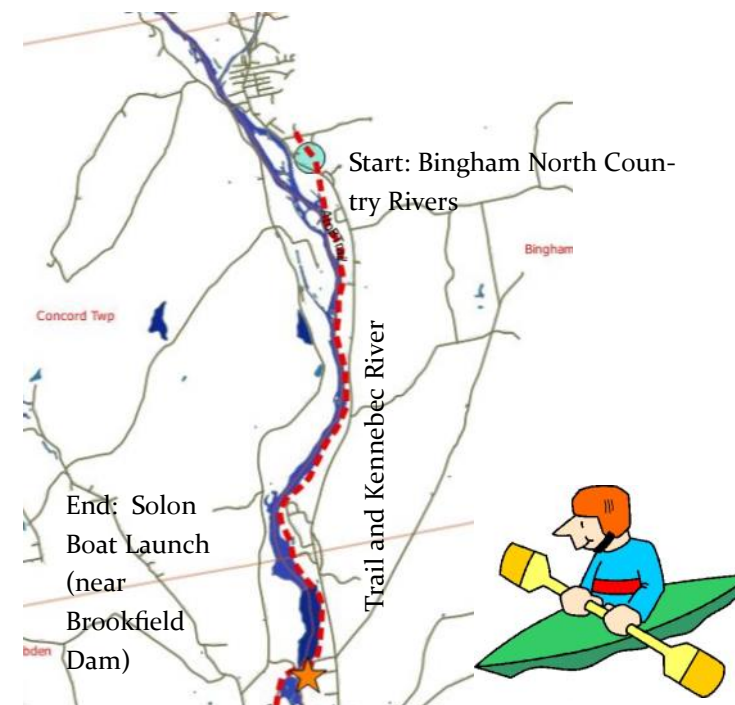


Don't miss this challenge! Come hike, run, bike, canoe or kayak the Kennebec between Bingham and Solon on September 30th (rain date October 1st). We'll be celebrating the beauty of the North Country and introducing the Maine Long Trail.

We'll start at North Country Rivers in Bingham with an optional hearty breakfast. There will be t-shirts to identify the participants. Race categories will be given different start times so that we'll all end up (theoretically) in Solon at the same time for awards and a box lunch together.

Watch for notifications for registration on our website, Facebook and emails. If you are not a member of SWT, just sign up for our emails by sending an email to [somersetwoodstrustees@gmail.com](mailto:somersetwoodstrustees@gmail.com).

### NORTH COUNTRY CHALLENGE



## POLLINATORS AND PARSONS FAMILY PRESERVE

On April 23rd SWT hosted a program about pollinators and plants that attract pollinators. Our first speaker,



**Frank Drummond** from the School of Biology and Ecology & Cooperative Extension University of Maine gave a brief overview of the many species that are active pollinators and an extensive and fascinating talk on bees.



**Warren Balgooyen**, Naturalist, gave us many ideas about plants that we should all strive to have in our gardens.

This summer SWT will be carefully inventorying the flowering plants that grow in Parsons Family Preserve to determine if a prescribed burn or other actions will improve the soil to encourage native wildflower seeds and small shrubs that are growing on the barren, sandy soils. Last spring we planted a plot of native wildflowers so we'll see if they bloom this year and could serve as seed stock for succeeding generations.

### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST TRUSTEE: PATTY HAGER



The Trustees of SWT are so pleased to announce that Patty Hager has joined our board! Patty Hager is a retired school teacher and administrator who spent her career in California and Massachusetts, most recently as Academic Dean at Concord Academy. Since her parents retired in Skowhegan in 1981, Patty and her family have oriented their lives in rural Maine. She and her husband Brad enjoy a cabin on the Kennebec River in Norridgewock and a home on the Sandy River in Mercer. Until she can convince Brad to retire, they commute between Somerville, Massachusetts and Mercer. Patty has canoed extensively in Maine and in Canada, and also enjoys fishing, hiking and cross-country skiing. She has served on various school boards and is currently vice president of the board of the Natural Resources Council of Maine.