

1991 ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS

RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST

A sign at the crest of the Gutter proclaims it to be "Rattlesnake Gutter Conservation Area". On April 27, 1991, the 40 acre parcel became the property of the Town of Leverett, for all to enjoy. We are proud of our contribution toward this accomplishment. A subcommittee continues working towards preservation of the remainder of the area along the road from the west end stone bridge to the east end wood bridge. We are relieved that the many pole hearings this past year resulted in no utility poles being allowed on the Gutter road.

Another subcommittee has been looking at the Leverett Pond area, designated as our second area of concern. This committee has been studying the various forms and choices of land easements and has brought this information to land owners. We also purchased two copies of the Conservation Easement Handbook, a video "Land in Trust", and printed our own Conservation Gifts brochure.

We had hoped to follow through with last year's Annual Meeting speaker, Tom Litwin, and begin a species count on the Rattlesnake Gutter Conservation Area. Although those plans had to be postponed, we hope to arrange it during the coming year and we welcome participation.

The Trustees voted to accept the easement proposal on Laurel Hill and are awaiting further developments there. We have indicated willingness to assist the Conservation Commission in a land purchase on Depot Road. A "Pole Mole" subcommittee is investigating underground utilities at the beginning of Putney Road, to preserve the town center view. Another subcommittee plans a cleanup of trash in the Gutter.

Two new items have been added to our fund-raising efforts. In keeping with conservation goals, we now have Rattlesnake Gutter canvas bags to offer. And the first annual Leverett Photo Contest, with entries exhibited at the Harvest Festival, yielded five photos chosen for the first Leverett Calendar, which is being enjoyed near and far. Again we are indebted to the Oxbow Press for contributing their expertise in producing this lovely calendar. Our two faithful standbys continue to be productive: T-shirt sales are active, particularly in the summer, and the refundable booth at the landfill is our biggest money-maker. Friends of Rattlesnake Gutter membership is over 200, with 62 Life Members. Response to the annual membership drive so far has been good. We will continue to use the Town Newsletter for alerting you to special events. By the way, Rattlesnake Gutter Trust was mentioned in the December 10 issue of Newsweek!

We are asking our membership for volunteers to work on subcommittees. This allows you to choose an area of interest, in an on-going or short term effort. We need help on membership, publicity, stewardship, education, fund-raising, as well as such specifics as the Pole Moles or the Gutter cleanup. Let any trustee know where you'd like to help.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette N. Gibavic, Secretary