

RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST

# 1997 Annual Report

Nineteen ninety-seven proved to be a busy and rewarding year for Rattlesnake Gutter Trust. Foremost was the acquisition of East Leverett Meadow, a 30-acre parcel of primarily grassland which suddenly appeared on the market in the spring. Quick action and dedication on the part of concerned residents, led by Sheila Seaman and Mike Williams, supported and aided by the Trust, resulted in the August purchase of this important parcel, as reported in detail in the October *Rattlesnake Gutter Trust Newsletter*. Trustee Bill Healy is handling the management of the Meadow as we explore the possibilities of this unique land, which will remain open and undeveloped for the enjoyment of bobolinks, swallows, deer and humans.

Working closely with teachers at the Leverett Elementary School, we have seen the Outdoor Classroom and Nature Trail grow in form and usage. Much work has been done to make the Trail more accessible and informative. The Trust has funded teacher workshops with Hitchcock Center staff to expand the use of this area. *The Rattler*, written by LES students and printed by the Trust, has been much enjoyed by children and adults. Mountain Day, with upper grades hiking up Brushy Mountain and lower grades hiking the Long Hill Natural Area, was planned and led by trustees. Support from our younger members appeared when Elizabeth Asche requested that her friends donate to the Trust in lieu of a birthday gift. Way to go, Liz!

This year the Trust has been establishing working relationships with area land trusts involved in mutual interests. Our 9th Annual Meeting in May included representatives from the Valley Land Trust, Kestrel Trust, Mt. Grace Land Trust, and Franklin County Land Trust. The last three groups joined our Trust in an exhibit last fall at Greenfield Community College entitled, "Your Franklin County Land Trusts".

We continue to work with individual landowners interested in establishing conservation easements on land they wish to preserve. And we have a new Rattlesnake Gutter sweatshirt awaiting your purchase!

Membership is open to all Leverett residents. We invite you to join in our activities.

Annette Gibavic  
Secretary