

*signed up for
Arboretum &
grounds committee*

GILFORD

"Sports Center of New Hampshire"

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN

DIAL
524-7438

January 7, 1981

not there

J. Cameron Stewart - Indiv. Hc.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| ✓ Mrs. Parkman Howe | ✓ Mr. Stan Knowles | ✓ Mr. Paul Mirski |
| ✓ Mrs. Jane Macalaster — | ✓ Mr. Harold Earle — | ✓ Mr. Benjamin Kimball Ayers <i>members</i> |
| ✓ Mr. Harry Graves | ✓ Mr. Douglas Leitch | ✓ Mr. Don Ames |
| ✓ Mr. Jack Boyd | ✓ Ms. Linda Allard — | Ms. Bonnie Ayers — |
| ✓ Mr. Sumner Dole | ✓ Mrs. Margaret Birch | Ms. Nancy von Lutters — |
| ✓ Mrs. Esther Nighswander | ✓ Mr. John McGonagle | Ms. Grace C. Smith — |
| ✓ Attorney Arthur Nighswander | ✓ Mr. John Goodhue | Mr. Gary Suprenant — |
| ✓ Mr. Milo Pike — <i>Randy Pike</i> | ✓ Mr. Jack Irwin — | Mrs. Lynn Suprenant — |
| ✓ Mr. Arthur Tilton | ✓ Mr. Wilbur Goddard | ✓ Mr. Albert Hall, III |

*also Michael Wallace
Stone man - Phil Sweet*

DEAR FRIENDS:

As you are aware, there has been much interest generated in the possibility of preservation and restoration of Kimball Castle. For this reason, and because we are aware of your interest in the Castle project, you are cordially invited to attend a Dutch Treat Luncheon on Friday, January 16, 1981, at 12:00 noon at B. Mae Denny's Restaurant in Gilford. At the luncheon, Mr. John Ripley Forbes, President of the Natural Science for Youth Foundation will present a slide show which depicts the history of the Castle, and will discuss the plan to stabilize, rehabilitate, and restore the property into a museum.

An effort will be made to conclude the luncheon in one hour to accommodate your schedules, and confirmation of your attendance at our office at the above number will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Sandra T. McGonagle
Sandra T. McGonagle, Chairperson

Lawrence W. Guild, II
Lawrence W. Guild, II

Thomas T. Weekes
Thomas T. Weekes

STM-LWG-TTW/jk

approved
4/10/82

KIMBALL CASTLE ASSOCIATION

Statement of Objectives (*purpose*)

Forest Management

- The prevailing forested nature of the site shall be preserved.
- Timber shall be selectively cut in order to produce a sustained yield.
- A primary purpose of the forest cover shall be as a wildlife habitat.
- Harvesting activity shall not interfere with other activities.
- Use of forest resources shall be in accordance with a professionally prepared forest management plan.

Scenic Views

- Areas shall be cleared to permit exception^d views of Lake Winnepesaukee and the castle.
- Scenic views shall be designed so that the foreground complements the longer vista.
- Scenic viewing areas shall be protected from the confusion of traffic or other distractions.
- Selective tree removal shall be permitted so that the castle is clearly visible from Lake Winnepesaukee.

Education

- The property shall be used to exemplify sound conservation and forest management practices.
- The property and exhibits shall recognize the Kimball family history.
- The history and culture of the Lakes Region shall be highlighted.
- Native flora and fauna shall be protected and exhibited.

Recreation

- A trail system shall be developed for access to views and secluded areas, picnicking, short hikes, cross country skiing and snow shoeing.
- Recreational opportunity shall be provided for all age groups.
- To the extent feasible, a diversified recreational program shall be prepared to allow the enjoyment of many kinds of leisure activity during a single outing.

*covered
manually*

Site Design

- All land use changes and activities shall be consistent with the surroundings, causing ~~no~~ ^{minimum} hardship to abutters.
- To the extent possible, the pastoral qualities of the site shall be preserved.
- Emphasis will be placed on full use of the property, recognizing and integrating its varied assets.

Access and Parking

- Access by vehicle and on foot will be designed to provide a minimum of conflict to neighboring residential properties.
- Auto and pedestrian routes will be designed for optimum safety, with a minimum number of potential conflicts.
- The use of gravel or other pervious materials will be encouraged, except when hard surfaces are necessary to prevent erosion or other environmental damage.
- Parking and property access shall respect the aesthetic qualities of the property and not conflict with the educational and recreational opportunities afforded by the property.

Environmental Quality

- Plans and programs shall be directed toward protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- Facility and utilities development shall respect natural limitations of the environment.
- Wildlife habitats shall be improved, whenever feasible.

Structures

- Emphasis shall be placed on the protection and rehabilitation of structures which existed in 1981.
- Alterations shall be sensitive to the historic character of each building and shall conform to terms required on buildings that are placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Priority shall be placed on emergency repairs and ensuring the structural integrity of buildings.
- Each building will be actively used.

Management

- Property and program management shall benefit from the talent and resources of many public and private groups and individuals.
- The Town of Gilford shall retain ownership of the property.
- The Town of Gilford shall, by contract or other means, ensure that the intent of the Kimball Castle Master Plan, be preserved.
- Administrators of the Kimball Castle property shall report at specified intervals to the Gilford Board of Selectmen and the town.
- Program planning shall be flexible enough to withstand possible setbacks caused by the lack of short term financing.
- A designated group, reporting to the Gilford Board of Selectmen, shall be responsible for keeping the Kimball Castle Master Plan current, for advising the Selectmen on policy decisions and for administering the property.

*Arthur J. ...
work out
con. com.
Rec. Comm
Castle Ppt.*

Funding and Support

- Limited revenues obtained from tree cutting or other use of natural resources shall be used for the continued management, education and enjoyment of these resources.
- Special events, conferences, workshops, performances, lectures and celebrations which help to advance the purposes of the property shall be encouraged.
- A diversified funding program shall be encouraged, using memberships, donations, rental fees, subscriptions, gift shop revenues, volunteer efforts, and tax support, as appropriate.
- Long term leasing of the castle and other buildings shall be considered as a viable way to accelerate and focus the flow of private resources, provided that the terms of the lease specify performance standards that will uphold the purposes set forth in the Master Plan objectives.

*add:
good economic self sufficiency*

Programs, activities and development shall be adjusted to the capacity to generate revenues, maintaining the principle of self-sufficiency

December 21, 1981

Gilford Public Library

Kimball Castle Association
Gilford, New Hampshire
03246

Dear Members of the Castle Association,

As several of you have requested, we have gone beyond our specified tasks to prepare a summary of our ideas for the development of the entire Kimball Castle project. We will begin by recommending basic functions and proceed with a discussion of how we feel they should be developed. We will conclude with an outline of our team capabilities and how they might fit into your plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Leadership for the project should come from the Kimball Castle Association operating within a detailed development plan.
2. The Kimball Castle estate should have two primary focal points: the outdoors and the Castle itself. The total estate should be identified by a name other than the Castle, perhaps as "The Broads" as Benjamin Kimball called it.
3. The outdoors should function as a park for basically passive recreation and education. Primary areas of development should be the views, nature walks, cross country ski trails, picnic areas and planned gardens.
4. Initial emphasis should be on opening up the property for public use in order to generate enthusiasm and support for further development.
5. Educational programming rooted in the site's natural and regional history should be developed as funds become available. These programs should be viewed as an ongoing and limitless process, beginning initially with passive educational elements.

December 21, 1981

Chris Herrin & Rebecca Gould

6. The Castle itself should function as a museum of family and natural history; as a classroom and meeting facility; and as a community and corporate function center. The downstairs area should be an open, flexible, elegant yet functional space for meetings, concerts, lectures, receptions and weddings, with appropriate food service facilities. The upstairs rooms should be used as meeting/ classroom/display spaces.
7. The Caretakers building should function as a natural science center with facilities for living displays and demonstration exhibits.
8. The Carriage House should function as the information center, offices and gift shop.
9. The Stable should be equipped as rest rooms.
10. All development should be marketing oriented.
11. Cooperative ventures with appropriate commercial and non-profit organizations (i.e. Gunstock, The Society for the Protection of N.H. Forests, Squam Lakes Science Center) should be developed.
12. The project should be run as a business, with emphasis on generating operating revenues and traffic.
13. Admission and educational fees should be charged appropriate to the level of development.
14. Publicity should begin immediately and continue throughout the development process. A concerted attempt should be made after basic reclamation work is completed to establish the site as an important regional attraction.

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Chris Herrin & Rebecca Gould

15. 1982 should be viewed as a year for planning and fundraising. Our goal should be to raise the \$ necessary to:

- * implement Phases I - III of the Castle grounds development;
- * restore spaces adequate for functional use as an information center, offices and rest rooms;
- * support a basic operating staff of a director, grounds supervisor and secretary.

THE NEXT STEP

The Castle Association's next task should be to create a detailed development plan that would:

1. Define the roles of the Kimball Castle Association and that of a professional coordinating team.
2. Propose specific uses of both outdoor spaces and buildings.
3. Propose a scheme for the physical development of the entire 260 acre parcel.
4. Propose phased activity and educational programs.
5. Identify target markets for both uses and funding and how to appeal to them.
6. Outline both the development and operating costs of each element of the plan and identify potential revenue sources.
7. Identify potential funding sources and strategies for pursuing them.
8. Define sponsorship(funding) opportunities within the project goals and how they might be "packaged" for funding.

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December 21, 1981
Chris Herrin & Rebecca Gould

OUR ROLE

We would very much like to work with you to create the development plan outlined above, provided we are in a position of professional leadership. We cannot, however, afford to continue working in a situation where both our compensation and control are inadequate.

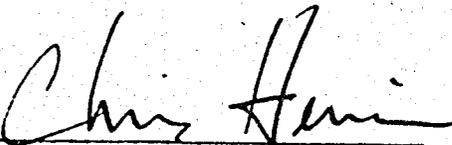
We would like to take on the project as a major effort over several years, carrying it from concept through implementation. As a team we can offer you the following skills and professional expertise:

- * land use planning
- * landscape design
- * horticulture
- * construction planning and management
- * marketing planning, public relations and publicity
- * fundraising - foundation, corporate & community campaigns
- * program planning
- * non-profit organization management
- * graphic design

To find that combination of skills and experience in a small firm is admittedly unusual - the happy result of a personal and professional marriage.

If you endorse our thinking and our approach and want to pursue our continued involvement in 1982 and beyond, we can then discuss role definitions, time tables and compensation.

We do hope to hear from you.



Chris Herrin



Rebecca Gould

KIMBALL CASTLE GROUNDS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Submitted By: Chris Herrin Associates

December 21, 1981

Task Definition:

To generate guidelines for the restoration and development of the grounds surrounding the Castle and outbuildings, including plantings, terraces and other man-made elements, circulation, land usage, access and drainage patterns.

Method:

Chris Herrin Associates was retained on December 4th to proceed with the task of planning the development of the Castle grounds. Over the following two weeks we prepared base maps which indicate existing paths, terraces, rock outcroppings, views, significant original plantings, etc.

We have not yet prepared a complete plant inventory due to heavy snow cover and general shortage of time. That plus the scarcity of currently available photographs or records describing the original Castle gardens make it impossible to accurately reconstruct what the grounds originally looked like.

Recommendations:

In light of our understanding of the Castle Association's basic goals, we feel that it would be unwise, due to prohibitive costs, to try to recreate the grounds exactly as they were. Rather, we should first try to restore the network of paths and terraces and the spectacular views that made the property so special, and secondly, spend our resources in the directions that will generate the most educational and recreational uses.

We recommend that the development of the Castle grounds proceed in phases, focusing first on general restoration and access and later on specific garden development. That recommendation is consistent with our proposal that the estate grounds function first as a park for passive recreation, hiking, cross country skiing and public functions and festivals. As more dollars become available both for construction and ongoing operations, its functions as a nature education center should be developed.

Documentation and historical reconstruction of the Castle grounds should be an ongoing process. As we continue to explore the site and collect photographs and records from the community and friends of the Kimball family, we can gradually piece together a picture of the original gardens and outdoor living spaces.

NOTE: The budget figures indicated below for each phase are very rough, ballpark estimates for initial planning purposes. They are included to help in the development of the master plan and subsequent fund-raising.

Phase I - Reclamation:

- Selectively cut wooded areas to restore open spaces and views of the lake from the Castle.
- Mow existing fields for views and visual interest.
- Rebuild existing stairs, pathways, terraces, retaining walls and remove infringing vegetation.
- Develop views of lakes from the top of Lockes Hill.
- Close off all access points with gates.

The development of this phase is labor and equipment intensive. We estimate that a crew of five working full-time for eight months using the appropriate equipment could accomplish the task for a total cost of \$125,000.

Phase II - Access:

We recommend that the access to the Kimball Castle begin on Lockes Hill Road, run south through the 10.4 acre parcel, behind the MacAlaster property and then turn back towards the Castle to end in a parking area behind the carriage house large enough to accommodate several buses and approximately 40 cars.

The existing access road should be narrowed to a pedestrian path. We are strongly opposed to widening the existing access road because:

- An open field valuable for potential garden development would be lost;
- Considerable damage would be done to the lower entry wall;
- The site's only stands of rhododendron and mountain laurel would be lost;

- Cars would be brought right through the heart of the Castle grounds;
- Necessary landscape restoration work would make the overall construction cost greater.

Our proposed access route would allow for expanded parking as well as provide access to valuable timber areas. It would also eliminate the Castle's long standing problem with abutters.

The estimated cost of developing a gravelled road and parking area, based on an engineer's report from Pike Industries, is \$50,000.

Phase III - Pedestrian Circulation and Outdoor Facilities:

- Establish a water source for fire fighting and irrigation.
- Create a septic system.
- Establish nature and cross country ski trails extending throughout the entire 250 acres.
- Develop paths to the top of Lockes Hill, creating a loop with several shortcuts.
- Establish picnic areas, rest rooms and an information center.
- Create paths from the parking lot to the information center, picnic areas and nature trails.

Begin a signage program, both to identify access and activity areas and to identify plants and points of natural interest.

With adequate signage and annotated site maps, educational programming could begin at this phase, as could the primary recreational functions of ski touring, nature walks, picnicking, etc. At this point, the Castle could function well enough as a strong regional attraction and community park to warrant a \$2.00 admission charge.

As many of the elements presented for this phase are not directly related to this task but pertain more to the overall master plan, we have not ventured a budget estimate.

Phase IV - Central Plaza:

The open space between the estate's buildings should be developed as a high traffic, paved plaza which would function as a grand entrance to the Castle, as a space for functions (weddings, receptions), educational seminars and meetings, concerts and seasonal activity festivals such as the Cornell

Plantations "Fall-In" (see report of Cornell visit). Plantings in this phase would be to establish shade, windbreaks, circulation patterns and ground cover.

The estimated development cost for Phase IV is \$35,000.

We see Phases I-IV as basic to the development of the Castle project. They represent a one-time capital construction investment and limited maintenance. They serve the purpose of opening the property to public use for recreation and passive education.

Phases V through VIII discuss the development of four major gardens or planting areas which would transform the Castle grounds from a park into an arboretum (botanical gardens) of significant educational and aesthetic value. The gardens would be costly both in their construction and in their ongoing maintenance; however, they would also be attractive to potential funding sources be they private individuals, garden clubs, the U.S.D.A., private foundations or corporations.

With one or more of the gardens in place and well documented, we foresee no problem with charging a \$2-\$3 admission to the grounds and fees for educational field programs.

The four basic gardens or planting areas: an herb garden located behind the stable; a large rock garden extending north down the slope from the gazebo; a wildflower garden below the Castle at the base of the lower terraces and stairways; and a shrub and small ornamental tree planting extending primarily along the existing access road into the lower field.

These gardens were chosen not only for their appropriateness to the site but also for their public appeal.

Each of these gardens is discussed in detail in our report on the proposed Kimball Castle Arboretum. A summary of their estimated development and maintenance costs is also included in that report.



Benjamin Ames Kimball

And

His Historic Gilford Castle

By: Nicholas Richardson

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Gil
Kimble
castle box

May, 2000

Benjamin Ames Kimball

And

His Historic Gilford Castle

By: Nicholas Richardson

Benjamin Ames Kimball was born in Boscawen, NH, on August 22, 1833 to Benjamin and Ruth (Ames) Kimball. However, young Benjamin's father died a year after his birth. Upon reaching young adulthood at the age of 16, he joined his older brother John in the Concord Machine Shop. The shop is said to have been unequalled in the entire U.S. because of its massive structure measuring 300 by 65 feet. It had been set up to take care of the area's railroads for over fifty years and therefore the primary business there was that of the repair and construction of railroad equipment.

Benjamin Kimball was a very enthusiastic apprentice and showed special skill in the drafting department. He loved working with machinery and heavy equipment and was advanced rapidly in the shop. However, Benjamin knew that he needed an education to accomplish his goals and resigned from the shop in 1851. He had been educated at Concord High School, Hildreth's Preparatory School in Derry, and then after leaving the shop in 1851, joined the first class of the Chandler Scientific Department at Dartmouth College.

Benjamin graduated with a B.S. with highest honors in 1854 and immediately entered the service of the Concord Railroad as a draftsman and machinist. Although only twenty-six, he was a foreman, master mechanic, and then superintendent of the locomotive department within two years of joining. Then, in 1858 he succeeded his brother John as mechanic in charge after a hot debate among the Railroad Board of Directors. No one had ever been given such responsibility at that young an age, but it was decided that the quality of his work warranted the elevation.

The Company's confidence in Kimball was not misplaced, for he dug in and managed his duties with skill and imagination. In 1861 he married Myra Tilton Elliot of Canterbury, who was a teacher in the Concord school systems. She was a great lover of the arts and with Ben owned a collection of fine paintings and art treasures. She led a fairly secluded life, but was relied upon for judgement by her husband outside of his business ventures. Together, they had one son Henry Ames Kimball.

In 1863 the news came that President Lincoln had freed the slaves and as the newest tender rolled out of the shops, Kimball took his chalk and wrote "Liberty" on its side. From then on, all the models of that equipment were known as Liberty engines.

However, Kimball was determined to stand on his own two feet as a success and for him this job was not the answer. So in 1865 after eleven years of service, Kimball resigned from the Concord railroad and became a partner in the firm of Ford and Kimball, which manufactured parts for railroad rolling stock and especially car wheels. Not only did this foray into the vast world of business prove to be successful, but also it showed Kimball the many opportunities existing in the growing railroad business. He now saw the immense possibilities of the railroad industry and resolved to see himself as one of the chief architects of the railroad systems that were sure to come to New Hampshire.

Things soon prospered as Kimball became the founder, director, and president of the Cushman Electric Company of Concord and was elected to the New Hampshire House of Representatives from Concord's 6th Ward in 1870. In 1873, Kimball became the president of the Manchester and North Weare Railroad and in 1874 became the President of the newly reorganized Concord Savings Bank. In 1873 he helped

Concord develop a public water system, which was drawn from Long Pond at a cost of \$350,000. He was a delegate at the New Hampshire constitutional convention of 1876 and went on to serve at the conventions of 1889 and 1902. Also, he helped organize the Mechanic National Bank of Concord in 1877, became Vice President in 1880, and President in 1900.

In January of 1879 Kimball got the position he had been waiting for, for years. He succeeded Gov. Onslow Sterns as a director of the Concord railroad and would go on to be the director and finally president of its successor, the Concord and Montreal Railroad. He was also a director of all of the leased railroads connected to the Concord and Montreal.

Kimball was a member of the NH Executive Council 1884, an alternate delegate in the Republican National Convention of 1880, and a commissioner in a convention of commissioners from several states arranging for the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the United States Constitution held on September 15, 16, 17, 1887, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was a member of the Commission to erect the New Hampshire State Library Building in 1889, the incorporator and director of the Manufacturers & Merchants Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and a member and trustee of the New Hampshire Historical Society. Last but not least, he was a trustee and chairman of the finance committee at Dartmouth College.

During his long affiliation with the railroads of New Hampshire, Kimball applied his administrative and mechanical expertise to the upgrade of the systems and he built beautiful new stations using state of the art equipment. He consolidated small connecting systems and continually fought off attempts by the Grand Trunk Line to install a north-south route from Vermont to Boston in direct competition with the Concord and Montreal. The Grand Trunk Plan failed after Kimball had stated his lines efficiently

served Boston and that his lines could also handle any and all freight coming from Canada that was destined for Boston or points south. Also, Kimball built a railroad spur from Dover to Glendale titled the Lakeshore Railroad and he appropriately changed the railroad line's name to the Concord, Montreal, and Lakeshore Railroad.

Kimball continued to exert a powerful influence on New Hampshire's railroad lines and soon his line discovered a second growing opportunity in the business of tourism. They took over ownership of the *Lady of the Lake*, a steamboat on Lake Winnepesaukee, complimenting his rail monopoly in the Lakes Region. The *Lady* brought passengers from Alton to Center Harbor and was in hot competition with the steamships *Dover*, which was owned by the Boston and Maine Railroad, the *Chocurara*, and the *Jim Bell*. However, the competition just about ended when the Boston and Maine built the biggest and fastest ship on the Lake, the *Mount Washington*.

In 1893 after an eighteen-year rivalry, competition won out and the *Lady of The Lake* was towed to Glendale to provide living quarters for his latest project. Kimball had taken a trip to Germany and while sailing down the Rhine River gazed in awe at the wondrous castles on the hilltops. So on top of Locke's Hill in Gilford, Kimball set out to build an exact replica of a castle he had seen on the Rhine. It would command a panoramic view of the land around the Lakes Region, and it must have occurred to him that he could keep an eye on his marine activities, while listening to the soothing sound of his locomotives puffing down the Lakeshore line through Glendale. Kimball's Castle would stand tall as one of the greatest summer homes of New Hampshire for decades to come.

Work started on the castle in 1897 and took two years to finish. Nothing was spared and no detail left out to keep the castle from being a fitting place for his family to spend a good part of the year there, which usually went from early spring to late October.

The stone used to build the castle was hauled to the building site by oxen from the construction site on the south side of Locke's hill, but since a part of the Lakeshore Railroad just happened to run by the site, the cut granite used for the parapets was hauled by rail from Concord. An English architect, who also made all of the interior furnishings, designed most of the woodwork and ironwork. Then it was shipped over to Boston by boat, where it traveled to Locke's hill on the Lakeshore line. However, oxen carried it directly to the castle and it was then re-assembled inside.

A long service road, which today is the only one accessible by motor vehicles, winds up around the side of the castle and pulls up behind the group of buildings. The main driveway curves up towards the castle from a now closed off section of Locke's Hill Road, and once entered the property through a massive wooden gate that hung on huge wrought iron hinges from two thick stone gateposts, which still stand there today. They act as if making their final attempt to ward off all unwanted visitors from the castle grounds. However, they don't quite do the trick anymore because vandals attached chains to the gate and pulled it off with a truck. So the posts still stand and the hinges swing in the breeze with nothing to hold.

Looking from a parapet of the castle one could see with ease the high peak of Rattlesnake Island along with Locke's, Welch, and Diamond Islands lying directly below. In the center of the view were forty islands including Governor's and Bear Islands.

Over the front entrance hung a large wrought iron lantern brought from Germany. Fastened to the each side of the entrance are iron fish that act as spouts for the water that ran off the entrance roof. The front door is three inches thick of solid oak and had an oriel window in its center. The door was once decorated with beautifully hand carved hinges and a doorknocker in the shape of a lion's head, which is in itself a work of art.

There were originally four gargoyles in the shape of dragon's heads, one on each parapet, which served the same purpose. On the left side of the house, if facing the entrance, there is a large stone porch that provided another great view of the lake and beyond. There are large, arched, semi-circular openings that allowed a viewer to access more of the lovely lake view and there is a metal pole railing built into the stone work. On the wall high above the porch is an iron fixture, which once held a flagpole for all of the passersby on boats to see and it probably caught one's eye while gliding across the lake on a sunny day.

The castle has a large two and a half story, main house section and a one-story section that leads to a smaller two-story kitchen wing, which also served as the servant's quarters on the second floor. There are a total of six chimneys in the house, each topped with a metal chimney cap, for although there are seven fireplaces in the house, the one in the kitchen is directly below the one in the servant's quarters.

One door travels into the front of this section and there is yet another on the right side that is covered by a small shingled roof. Above the main entrance landing is a copper sheathed sitting room with battlements that was added to the castle as an afterthought. Mrs. Kimball (daughter-in-law of B. A. Kimball) liked to use it as a sewing room, for there was an oriel window on the front and a large window on each side. This must have allowed her to catch all of the sun possible, and the great windows surely provided a breathtaking view looking out over the main driveway to the lake.

The room today is almost a shade of light green after decades of the copper paneling being exposed to the elements. Most of the other windows on the building are stone framed and with an arch at the top. However, all around the base of the house are small square windows no more than a foot high, which are now screened and were

probably installed as vents for the basement, which was used only for a heating plant and storage.

Upon entering the castle through the front door and passing the wide steps leading to the second floor, one would enter into an octagonal space, surrounded by an octagonal balcony, lit by an octagonal skylight and supported in part by octagonal columns. The skylight once contained amber glass. This has been referred to as one of the castle's most interesting features.

The first floor of this room was the castle's main room and was used as both a living and dining room. The gas fixtures, which were later converted to electricity, are of wrought iron and feature a lion's head in their center with an iron ring dangling from its mouth. The walls were made of plaster and the floor of hardwood. There is a large brick fireplace with a polished tile hearth, and large arched windows to the east and west. The fireplace is one of the two on the first floor, for there is also one in the kitchen. This particular fireplace in the dining room was once decorated with a helmet, breastplate, mesh gloves, battle-axe, and spear that adorned the paneling above the fireplace. It is also indicated that at one time there was a gigantic stuffed moose head hanging in the castle's living room.

The furniture in this dining room was very unique for it was made both of oak and black cherry. To the left of the fireplace was a side board made of black cherry that was referred to by many as, "without a doubt the finest piece in the castle". If only it were there for us to view today. To the right of the fireplace was a high-backed bench that was magnificently decorated with eagles and flowers. The bottom of this bench pulled out to reveal a storage space. Beneath the window to the left of the entrance was a large oak table with bulbous legs and two deep drawers. The tops of the windows in this room, as well as many of the others, were decorated with lovely green bullseyes or spun glass.

The large, round dining table had splendid bulbous carved legs that featured an unusual mustached face. The six chairs, which were made of oak, are equally as interesting for the same mustached face of a man is on the back of each one. However, here the carving is so cleverly done that the curly hair on each side forms an entirely different face when viewed from the right or left profile. To the left of the dining table and the entrance French doors led out to the already described stone porch. It was on this porch that Kimball loved to sit in his rocker during his free time and gaze out over the lakes and mountains. This was a view he said was, "the most beautiful in the world". He also often queried his guests on, "where in the world could one find a more superb view that lies before us?"

The section of the first floor that connects the dining room to the kitchen served as a pantry that contained cases for glass and china, and on the front room of the section there was another door serving as an alternate entryway.

The kitchen was large and its many windows made it a bright cheerful place to work. There were two sinks, one of black iron and one of porcelain, and there were two, deep stone washtubs. In the corner there was an old wood stove, which provided the houses occupants with many delicious things to eat. Also, a large built-in icebox provided refrigeration and a door on the outside allowed the iceman to fill the ice chest without disturbing the household. In the center of the room was a small door with a handle that served as a dumbwaiter, which could be raised or lowered by pulling a brass ring in the floor. Cheeses, jams, and preserves could be kept in the cold cellar until needed and then brought to the kitchen using this device. A large oaken side door, much like the main door, provided a side exit and was also decorated with wrought iron. There is a small door at the bottom of the stairs leading to the servant's quarters located above the kitchen. This door lead to a wood storage area for wood used in the large fireplaces.

Stairs from the kitchen lead to two servant's rooms and possibly a bath. Since there is no second story in the connecting section of the castle the servant's quarters are not connected to the bedrooms on the second floor of the main house.

The stairs in the dining room leading to the second floor are off to one's right when entering the room and contain two flights of steps. At the first landing are two steps, which lead to the copper sheathed sitting room Charlotte Kimball loved to sew in. The second flight of stairs continues up to the top of the balcony. Looking down through it one can see the dining room. There are turned banisters and hefty corner posts with pendant drops below.

On the second floor, there is a hall that circles the balustrade of the balcony that contains five doors. Four of these doors opened into the main bedrooms, which were located in each corner of the house, each containing a fireplace in the corner. There were also two windows in each bedroom, a triangular closet, and plaster walls and ceiling, making each room identical to the next. Mr. Kimball used the Southwest bedroom while Charlotte Kimball used the Northeast bedroom. Both Mr. and Mrs. Kimball's bedrooms were furnished in identical maple beds, dressers and commodes.

On the second floor there is also a bathroom that contained a "Duncan Phyfe" tub and two alcoves, one to the north, one to the east. The bathroom also contained settees and a large oaken storage closet.

Outside of the castle an octagonal stone gazebo (The Sun House or Roundhouse) stands on the lawn South of the castle. It is an open shelter with low, stone walls and eight piers of rounded stone masonry supporting a shingled octagonal roof. Cut granite steps lead to openings at the four quarters and the ceiling is tongue and grooved boarding with exposed beams and rafters. Mrs. Kimball had this structure built so that she could sit and watch the sun rise and set.

Further across this lawn is a shingle style caretaker's cottage, facing the castle. This was once used by a gardener and is now occupied by a caretaker. A high, rough stone foundation supports its shingled walls and shingled piers on the porch facing north. This house and porch are supported by a broad hip roof. The "eyebrow" window in the roof over the porch steps, the splaying bases of the walls, and the porch piers, all enliven this simple but charming structure.

The front door opens directly into the living room, which, like the other original rooms in the cottage, has a hardwood floor and horizontal tongue and groove boarding walls. It also has a small mantelpiece with a built-in mirror and a boxed board ceiling. The other original rooms of the house are two bedrooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. In the 1960's a three-room addition was built on to the south. It has concrete block foundation, shingled walls, gabled roof, and modern interiors. Despite some kitchen alterations and the addition the cottage is very much unchanged.

The simpler one-story stable is located nearby. It is like the cottage with its broad hip roof and shingled walls, which splay out at the base. However, on this building there are simple bracketed eaves, a four row band of fish scale shingles, and a louvered ventilator-birdhouse on the roof. The only entryways are a large sliding door on the west and a smaller door to the south. Three stalls and a privy open up to a large general workspace. The walls are strictly utilitarian, sometimes covered by the tongue and grooved boarding. Since the stable is built on a slope, there are hinged doors at the base that swing up to reveal the area where the horse manure was shoveled through a hole in the floor, ending up on the ground under the stable. If one looks under these doors today, they will find a large barrel looking old enough to be there from the days of Mr. Kimball himself.

To the south of the stable is a driver's or hostler's house. It is a small, single-story, gable roofed, shingled structure with two rooms. To the north is a living room/bedroom and to the south is a kitchen. The living room contains the house's original, white door, a dresser, and a white closet in one corner. The kitchen contains rolled up rugs, a rusted sink, cabinets and shelves. The interior is once again done in tongue and groove boarding.

The one and a half story carriage house is a long shingled building with five bays that open out into the service yard to its north between the gardener's house and the stable. The roof is asymmetrical, normally sloped on the south but steeply pitched on the north. Bracketed eaves, (as on the stable) and three gable dormers are the only embellishments to the structure. However, attached to the rear of the carriage house is a shingled, gable-roofed shed opening to the south. Three of the bays are covered by sliding doors and pairs of hinged doors cover the other two. These bays housed vehicles, equipment, and in the westernmost bay there was a shop. The interiors of both buildings are again utilitarian with exposed framing.

Between the driver's house and the carriage house there is a one room, gable roofed icehouse. The structure's concrete foundation and novelty siding on the exterior suggests that it was built at a later time than the other buildings in the complex. The walls are sheathed on the interior with the same tongue and grooved boarding and judging by their thickness were probably once filled with sawdust insulation.

Located on the service road that pulls up to the complex from behind the caretaker's cottage is a shingled, hiproofed, one-room pump house that provided the estate with its water supply. The motor and pump assembly still remains inside this building but is most likely not in working order. There are remains of what seems to

have been a small chicken house lying just beside the pump house. Also, about thirty feet behind the east wall of the castle's main building there is a rounded stone well measuring about five feet in diameter that is covered with a sheet of plywood, but in Mr. Kimball's days it most likely pumped water to the castle's flower gardens.

The last element of the castle's 280-acre estate that is necessary to describe is its wonderful landscape, which went on for about a hundred acres. The castle's surroundings were once well landscaped with flowerbeds, terraced gardens, shrubbery, and trees. But most of the property has grown up into dense woodland. Granite steps led down to the lake but now stop at relocated Route 11, which was not there at the time the castle was built. There are many flat places along these steps where the Kimballs would stop to enjoy the view. Also to be found in the woods today are other steps, terraces, walls, and gateposts often carefully built of cut stone. Just to take a look in the woods through the trees on the edge of the forest one can observe at least twenty stone terraces in one area and it is still possible to walk down the long winding granite steps today.

The Kimballs were great lovers of nature and throughout the woods there were many flowerbeds that once bloomed in profusion on Locke's Hill. Today, the high trees that seem to stretch up to the sky, block the view from almost any part of the property. These were once well pruned and topped in the days of Mr. Kimball to allow full view from his castle. There is more to be described of the castle grounds that neither time nor space can allow for a thorough description.

Benjamin Kimball was happy with "the Broads" as he called it. When it was finished, he used it until he died in it at the age of 86 in July of 1920. The train schedules just happened to fit into his schedule and he traveled between Concord and Gilford in his private car. Mr. Kimball must have wanted to change the castle's look after a while because in 1906 he had a thick coat of white stucco applied to it. Today much of it has

fallen to the ground around the castle's foundation, but it can still be seen around the front entrance. However, there is no record of how the local castle watchers of the time reacted to this new look of white stucco.

As he looked out over the panoramic view Kimball could recall with satisfaction the days when he was so involved with a piece of the action. So far as is known, Kimball never made any effort to participate in the affairs of the town or to become involved socially with area neighbors or acquaintances. In his lifetime Kimball had seen great changes and he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had made a major contribution to the character and progress of these changes in New England.

Mr. Kimball's body was taken to Concord and buried in the family plot in the Blossom Hill cemetery. His beautiful old Town House in Concord is now the Masonic Lodge and it is said that a rare Tiffany ceiling lamp lighting the main hallway is appraised at \$10,000.

Mr. Kimball's son Henry Ames Kimball had died the year before his father in 1919. After much traveling, he had finally returned to Concord to take over some of the family business responsibilities. When Benjamin Kimball and his wife had both died, Henry's wife, Charlotte Atkinson Kimball, continued to live in the castle during the summer until she died in August of 1960. It is said that in her final years she didn't like living in the castle at all. She found it cold and drafty, dark and dreary, and beset by young vandals who seemed intent on making life miserable for her.

At one time the castle must have been offered for sale. An old Meredith Real Estate broker's brochure stated that at least \$50,000 had been spent on the beautification of the grounds, and the outbuildings had cost \$25,000. In 1897 the castle had cost Kimball only \$50,000 to build. The brochure offered the entire property, land, and buildings for \$100,000. However, Charlotte Kimball, worried about the property's

future, had willed 125 acres or more to the Mary Mitchell Humane Foundation in 1957, then two more tracts of land to the Alvord Wild Life Sanctuary, and three more tracts were donated in 1958. Finally, in 1959 the castle and remaining property was also deeded to the Mary Mitchell Humane Foundation. The deed called for Foundation management, but allowed the land to be sold to benefit the Foundation. A sum of \$400,000 was also given to the Foundation, but sadly it would never be used for maintenance of the property.

Trustees from this foundation proposed subdividing the property, despite Charlotte's refusal to even consider it when she was alive. The New Hampshire Attorney General became involved because of the plan's contradiction to Charlotte's well-known wishes. The Attorney General obtained a court order, which prohibited the subdivision of the property because it did not conform with Charlotte's wishes.

The Foundation's trustees remained quiet for the time being and installed a caretaker on the property. They proposed to give the castle to the town, but the town backed off when they learned that they would not get all of the property. Then in 1977 in response to Selectman's inquiries, the trustees offered all of the property to the town. Since the Attorney General's office had determined the property could be given to an appropriate organization which would respect Charlotte's wishes, the Selectmen voted for acceptance of the property and buildings in July of 1978. This also went along with public sentiment, which had begun to favor acquisition of the property. So in 1979 the town voted to accept the property. Although most felt that a revenue producing facility should be kept there, they thought that the town should not expend funds on improvements.

The town of Gilford accepted the property as a gift to use it to match federal improvement funds. However, a technicality required that the town accept it as a gift

from a pass through agent. The Natural Science For Youth Foundation provided this service and deeded the property to the town in July of 1981 after receiving it in April of 1980. After this happened the Attorney General stipulated that the acreage and buildings could never be used for commercial, residential, or industrial use. The Natural Science For Youth Foundation agreed to assist in trust administration, the recovery of the money lost to the Mary Mitchell Humane Fund, funding for property restoration, and program development. So in 1981 the Foundation sent an employee to live in the caretaker's cottage as the beginning of the supervision to a large restoration project. The town established a Kimball Castle Association to advise the Selectmen on the proper management of the property.

In 1980 the town of Gilford received a grant from the Cooperation Extension Service to complete a master plan to outline the different options of property development, concentrating on wildlife preserve alternatives in keeping with Charlotte Kimball's wishes. The Kimball Castle Association had the responsibility of supervising the development of this master plan along with representatives from the Gilford Board of Selectmen, Gilford Conservation Commission, Gilford Recreation Commission, Natural Science For Youth Foundation, Kimball descendants, and the Extension Service. This plan was developed, but the restoration of the property into a natural science education facility was never carried out due to the town not being able to spend the money or voting not to spend that amount of money on the castle's restoration.

Nothing was decided about the castle up through the rest of the 1980's and the first half of the 1990's. However, in October of 1996 developer's Don Leavitt and Rick Miller of Bear Island Restorations in Meredith and owners of the Red Hill Inn in Center Harbor announced that they had obtained the \$3 million in financing needed to complete the restoration of the castle into a fine country inn and restaurant. Also, they would bring

up the old Lakeport railroad station, built by Benjamin Ames Kimball, to provide, along with the caretaker's cottage, twenty guestrooms with fireplaces and jacuzzis in them. They would install an 8,500 square foot addition to the 6,000 square foot castle, which would contain a 120-seat dining room and kitchen. They would build a new road from Route 11 to the castle and restore the old view by removing three quarters of the trees on the hillside, which are now blocking the once breathtaking view of the lakes and mountains. However, four years later the castle still remains the same and it is not clear whether the developers still intend to carry out their plan of restoration for the landmark.

Through all these years of being argued over, the castle remained exposed to the elements sitting out in the open on top of Locke's Hill. The castle suffered from moisture damage and vandalism throughout these years. Leaks in the roof and walls have led to plaster, masonry, and beam damage. The castle has been literally stripped by vandals who have taken every piece of rare tapestries, hand crafted furniture, and exquisite paintings from the castle, including just about every item in the list of things that decorated inside the rooms of the castle. It is already mentioned that the gates were ripped off their supports and even a fireplace mantel from one of the bedrooms was taken. Also, the oak banisters on the balcony were stolen and all of the four gargoyles on the castle's parapets were taken. There is hardly anything left inside and all of the stained glass decorated windows are broken, along with every other window in the castle.

On a visit to the castle in April 2000, I realized the total state of disrepair that the castle was in. Although it is not written in any papers done on Kimball's Castle thus far, I will state that the building itself is now falling apart. The mortar in between the stones of the castle has begun to fall out in almost every wall and on the back wall of the castle many of the stones forming an arch that once held a beautiful window have fallen to the ground. Also, part of the masonry on the same wall of the castle has fallen to the ground

and the area above and beside it looks like it too, could fall down at any time. The small roof above the side door appears to be slowly tumbling to the ground and the tallest corner of the building looks like it may only have a few years left. If this supporting corner comes down the castle itself is soon to follow.

The carriage house is in poor shape along with the stable, driver's house, ice house, pump house, and the caretaker's cottage. The trees, which were once carefully pruned and topped, are now grown up, along with many others, thereby blocking the view that was so beautiful, so long ago. Also, the flowerbeds are dead, most likely from brambles and neglect.

So, atop Locke's Hill in Gilford, Kimball's Castle remains in a state of limbo. It is a landmark with a great deal of value that most Lakes Region citizens don't even know exists. The drivers on Route 11 fly by it everyday not knowing that above them sits a monument to their own heritage. It is a crumbling monument, which within years will go from a forgotten piece of history to a pile of rubble that once was a piece of history. Kimball's Castle is New Hampshire history slipping away into the abyss of time.

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Laconia, N.H. 03246
Mrs. Ruth S. Pratt, Librarian

March 31, 1980

State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Resources and Economic Development
6 Loudon Road
Concord, N.H. 03301

Dear Sirs:

This letter is to express our support for the placement of Kimball Castle in Gilford, New Hampshire, on the National Register of Historic Places.

This Castle, and its magnificent property, is one of the most unique phenomenons of historical and cultural significance in the Lakes Region, New Hampshire and New England.

Benjamin Kimball's building of the Boston-Montreal Railroad to such importance that one cannot determine the growth of New Hampshire without it, his commissioning of some of the State Capitol's most impressive buildings, and, of course, the Castle are just a few attestations to Kimball's significant place in New Hampshire and New England History.

This placement of the Kimball Estate on the Historic Register will, hopefully engender the support and wherewithal to return this monument to its rightful status as a leading attraction in the Lakes Region and the State.

Respectfully yours,

Madelyn B. Connelly
Madelyn B. Connelly, Chairman
Nancy E. Johnson
Edward A. Merski

Board of Trustees of the
Gilford Public Library

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GILFORD

A Tale of Two Millionaires

By DEL BRANDT
Citizen Columnist

This is a tale of two millionaires, each living in a castle on high ground overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire.

One of the millionaires was named Thomas Plant, who made a fortune as an investor. The other was Benjamin A. Kimball, president of the Boston, Concord and Montreal Railroad.

Kimball was the first to build his castle atop Locke's Hill on the Gilford side of the lake, beginning construction of the large stone building in 1897 and finishing it two years later. In 1914, 15 years after the Kimball Castle was erected, Plant built his castle on the Moultonboro side, thereby fulfilling a long-cherished dream. It was difficult to say which of the two castles was the most elaborate. It was just as difficult to judge which one had the best view of the Lakes Region's many beauties as each commanded a sweeping view of the Big Lake and its surrounding mountain ranges.

When Tom Plant walked out on the veranda of his castle, he looked across the wide expanse of water to the Belknaps while Kimball was viewing the Ossipees. Which man was the most blest? They both had a piece of heaven in their respective pockets. Could anything possibly go wrong? Fate has a way of dealing blank cards and time has treated one castle more kindly than the other.

When financial misfortune and domestic problems overtook Plant and his health failed, his holdings were sold outright, clearing the way for others to take over his castle and to eventually turn it into a tourist attraction we now know as "Castle in the Clouds."

Ironically, Plant called his castle "Lucknow," but his luck ran out as others stepped into the picture. After years of private ownership, the castle is now open to the public and is rated as a foremost tourist stop in the area. Its original elegance has been retained — even enhanced.

Over on the other side of the water it has been a different story. Kimball had heirs and undertook the right thing for them by establishing a trust for his property in the sky. Death, however, was another matter and even railroad magnates and their kin die.

Since 1960, the last time a member of the Kimball family occupied it, the castle has been dying a slow, agonizing death while the town of Gilford, which finds itself holding title to the remains of a deteriorated castle and surrounding acreage, ponders what to do.

The question arises: "How come the folks in Moultonboro were able to turn the castle of Tom Plant to a constructive use while Gilford remains unable to act?" Probably the biggest reason is that the Kimball estate became a legal mess for the town to deal with and it has been dealing with it as best it can, considering the restrictions of its use.

Some townspeople have expressed a willingness to see the castle restored, not necessarily Castle in the Clouds II, but as part of a private estate it once was. The possibilities of that happening seem to be there if a buyer with the wherewithal, willing to give the castle the proverbial "tender loving care" can be found. Others say the crumbling old castle should be demolished and that Gilford should move into the 21st century with this white elephant off its back.

That would be a sad ending to one of the Lakes Region's finest treasures, an ending we are sure would have made Benjamin A. Kimball quite unhappy.

No, Kimball did not build the castle with his own two hands but he personally supervised its construction. He wanted it to look exactly like the castle he had seen along the Rhine River during his travels in Europe. Most of the rock used to build Kimball's castle was dug out of the side of Locke's Hill just as the rocks used to build Plant's castle were cut from local granite found on the mountainside.

Rocks for Kimball's castle were carted to the building site by mule teams. The larger pieces of granite which topped the structure were shipped from Concord. The interior woodwork, much of it still restorable, was built to specifications in England at Kimball's request and shipped to America where it was carried by train to Glendale, and from there, by oxen to the castle for assembling. It would seem that something built with such care should be worthy of preserving even at this late date.

No less an authority than historian Arthur Tilton recently stated that the castle as it stands today, ravaged by time and vandalism, is not beyond repair. Even Amy Justin Matlage, a first grader at Pleasant Street School in Laconia, believes her great-great-great uncle's castle should be saved. "If Kimball Castle is wrecked I will be real sad," she wrote in a letter to Readers' Forum in the Citizen.

Meanwhile, everybody is waiting to see what eventually happens up there on Locke's Hill and if the tale of the second of the two millionaires' castles can have a happy ending.

Town Meetings

Gilford Voters Favor Protection Of Harris Farm

GILFORD -- This community became the first town in New Hampshire to implement a prototype approach for saving valuable agricultural land when voters agreed Wednesday night to purchase the development rights of the Harris Farm.

The town will pay \$75,000 for those development rights, thus ensuring the 40-acre farmland will escape development.

Officials said removal of the development value of the land will allow farming based on the agricultural value. The plan provides compensation to the owner of the farmland and the town becomes the permanent guardian of the land's development rights, a spokesman explained.

In other action at the three-hour town meeting, voters approved a net budget of \$2,089,305, representing a decrease of \$13,303 from last year.

Voters also asked for a \$100 fine against non-residents who illegally use the dumpsters located at the Glendale Town Docks. The new ordinance also restricts the type of trash that may be placed in the dumpsters.

Selectmen were refused the authorization to negotiate the conveyance of the Kimball Castle property to a non-profit organization because voters believed the request was too vague.

Voters also rejected a move to purchase the Fred Grey property, believing the building should be restored instead of being demolished to widen the access road into the Village Field.

Gilford Public Library

5/25/84
**Committee Ponders
Future of Castle**

By MIKE MORTENSEN

GILFORD — A committee is being formed to decide what should be done with Kimball Castle and the land which surrounds the decaying landmark.

The group, to be headed by local resident John McGonagle, will explore how to make best use of the property on Lockes Hill; according to head Selectman Lawrence W. Guild Jr.

Thursday, a group of interested citizens met with selectmen to discuss possible future action in light of the defeat at last March's town meeting of a proposal which would have allowed the selectmen to sell all or part of the property to a non-profit group for preservation.

Guild stressed that while he is opposed to spending tax money on the castle-like mansion, he said he does not want the dilapidated building to crumble apart. "We ... have got to do something or other," Guild told the group.

Resident Esther Nighswander suggested the land around the castle be opened to the public, but she urged nothing be done to make the castle building a public attraction until another

road can be built to give access to the property.

Currently "No Trespassing" signs ring the property to keep people away from the structurally unsound castle. Town Administrator Phil Arel noted that unless steps are taken to make the castle secure, the cost of the town's liability insurance could become prohibitively expensive.

Mrs. Nighswander called the future of the castle building "the crucial question," but she and others said decisions need to be made about clearing and using the surrounding woodlands which are part of a wildlife sanctuary. Arel said trails needs to be cleared of scrub brush, and that consideration should be given to harvesting some of the timber on the property.

Guild said the town needs to make a decision of whether to allow the existing caretaker to remain on the property. The caretaker moved in more than a year ago when the town was expecting to lease the property to the National Science for Youth Foundation. That lease, however, was never signed, thus putting the caretaker's status in doubt.

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Part of Area's Heritage Lost as Castle Decays

By E. V. SPILLER

After the battle — of summer-Sunday traffic — it is always nice to find a quiet place of refuge. Doris Osgood's cottage on Varney Point, Gilford, is such a place.

Eighteen members of the Pasquaney Snowshoe (those contraptions on hiatus) Club gathered here at the entrance to Smith Cove near Glendale on Doris' lawn to watch instead the watery highway activities as we ate a delicious pot luck meal.

With a taste of all the concoctions set before us, we joined the world of the onlooker and watched the traffic go by.

The far distance was in silhouetted haze. White sail seemed to surround Welch Island and high white wake of intruding speed boats frequently appeared between the sail.

From our vantage point, the lady — M.S. Mt. Washington — seemed rather small as she made her way back to home berth. It certainly was a perfect day for her passengers to enjoy one of the pleasures of New Hampshire.

One sees few canoes or rowboats or even swimmers anymore in Lake Winnepesaukee. How heavenly it used to be. Now it seems visitors leave the

exhaust polluted cities and climb into exhaust polluting boats.

Permission granted, we went over to see Kimball's Castle.

Interesting only, now, this must have been a grand conversation piece in its heyday. It was built under the supervision of Benjamin Kimball, president of the Concord, Montreal & Lake Shore RR and took two years to complete. The outer walls were of local rock.

Located on the top of Locke Hill, it once had a commanding and sweeping view of much of the Lakes Region, from its spacious porch and living areas. The interior oak woodwork was fashioned to its many purposes in England and shipped here for installation as flooring, fireplaces, bannisters, railings, doors, framing for stained glass windows and much more.

In beautiful condition from 1897-1960, the castle is now in a stage of great disrepair. Vandals, three of whom we flushed from their inane pleasure, have shattered every window, torn apart brick fireplaces, smashed and or ripped out plumbing, stolen brass knobs and light fixtures and iron lids to stoves.

Gilford Takes Castle Ownership

Citizen 3/19/79

GILFORD — Voters here Friday approved accepting Kimball Castle and the 200 acres of Belknap Mountain foothills it embraces. Accepting the property holds out the hope another 660 acres in the foothills may come to the town free of charge.

Voters Wednesday night, in the first leg of a three-night town meeting, approved the purchase of the Powell property, 660 undeveloped foothill acres on the south border of the

town. Half the funds for that purchase, about \$86,000, would come out of town coffers and half from the Federal Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Steve McCabe, administrative assistant to the selectmen, said this morning an effort now is being made to offer the 200-acre Kimball Castle property as the town's share of the Powell Property purchase.

"It's a long shot,"

McCabe said. "We've heard it can be done and were proceeding to see if the property can be accepted as a gift. But we're not making any promises."

The castle itself is atop Locke's Hill and overlooks a broad expanse of Lake Winnepesaukee. Trustees of the Mary Mitchell

Humane Fund are the owners, making the donation to the town.

In other action at the three hour long last leg of

the town meeting Friday, voters rejected a move to reconsider purchase of the Jewett property at the Glendale town docks.

Voters agreed to establish a committee to study the need for a commercial resort zoning category for the town. The committee will report at the next town meeting.

Also established by action of the voters was a citizen sounding board to study the question of growth in Gilford.

Gilford Public Library

Castle Lease Still Unsigned

GILFORD — Selectmen are growing anxious about the future of the Kimball Castle.

For about one hour last night, the board engaged in a sometimes heated discussion regarding the status of an unsigned lease for the 19th summer mansion on Lockes Hill. The town, which owns the historic building, has agreed to lease it to the Natural Science for Youth Foundation. But the document remains unsigned by the foundation after six months.

The foundation has indicated it wants to turn the castle into a museum of 19th century Lakes Region history. But there has been no apparent progress toward implementing the plan. "The whole matter is in limbo," town Administrative Assistant Phil Arel said.

Also last night, the selectmen urged the Conservation Commission to subsidize up to \$500 of the cost for this summer's milfoil harvest in Smith Cove. A group of Smith Cove residents estimates the harvest will cost \$2,600.

The board also agreed to sell its interest in the Tebbetts land on Young Road back to the owners for \$1. The town laid a claim to the 16 acres of swampland several years ago when the previous owners failed to pay their property taxes. Subsequently the Tebbetts bought the land without realizing that the town had a claim to it.

Selectmen discussed a list of questions regarding the operation of the Gilford Sewer District. The questions were drawn up by the Laconia city solicitor in connection with a pending lawsuit against the town over allegedly unpaid sewer user fees.

Administrative Assistant Arel signed his employment agreement with the town yesterday. Arel was hired in January on a temporary basis. Last month selectmen decided to make him a

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Gilford Public Library

Citizen Apr

Report Outlines Kimball Castle

By MIKE MORTENSEN

GILFORD — The restoration of Kimball Castle could cost \$164,000, a planning expert told a public meeting last night. But such a project, he cautioned, could be years away.

Planner Roger Ackley

made the comment during a presentation of the new master plan for developing the area around the decaying summer mansion overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee.

The plan states there is need to make immediate

repairs to prevent further deterioration to the exterior of the 19th century landmark, but that interior renovations be deferred, according to Ackley who is executive director of the Lakes Region Planning Commission.

A poll of individuals across the state interested in the castle and the 250 acres of woods surrounding it indicates there is more interest in developing the land for an arboretum, wildlife habitat, and various recreational uses, than in restoring the building as a museum, Ackley told the 20 people at the meeting.

The master plan, which will be released soon, contains specific recommendations for landscaping, forest management, development of scenic views, protection of the area's ecology, Ackley said. The plan recommends that the town lease the property to a private group which would manage the area. Financial support, it states, should come from

user fees and donations. The plan further suggests the Gilford Conservation and Recreation commission oversee the operation, along with the Kimball Castle Association — a 21-member group comprised of private citizens, major area

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agencies, and experts in
various fields.

"The mistake," Ackley
warned, "would be to
move too quickly." The
need for caution was
reflected in the master
plan's emphasis on
developing the land rather
than the castle. "I think

(those surveyed) put a
high priority on land
improvements because
they believed they would
be easier to accomplish,"
he explained.

The master plan differs
significantly from a docu-
ment made public in
January by the Natural
Science for Youth
Foundation. "It didn't
deal with alternatives,"
Ackley said. "It was more
a proposal for use of the
building."

Recreation Commission
Chairman Arthur Tilton
hinted that the founda-
tion's plan was un-
acceptable. "This is our
second go-round," Tilton

said, adding: "The other
time didn't prove very
satisfactory."

Head Selectman
Thomas Weekes said the
foundation — a non-profit
group based in Con-
necticut — would be "a
valuable candidate" to
lease the castle grounds.
He hoped the Recreational
and Conservation com-
missions would be able to
work with the Kimball
Castle Association to
manage the forest. Sandra
McGonagle, the other
selectman to attend the
1½-hour meeting, was
pleased with the plan.
"It's very thorough, and
has excellent insights,"
she said.

Public Library

KIMBALL'S CASTLE PROJECT GETS FINANCING

... could become the premiere country inn in New England

by Roger Amsden
News Correspondent

GILFORD — A castle atop Lockes Hill here, built a century ago as an exact replica of one along the Rhine River in Germany, has been sacked and defaced by vandals and stripped of its armor, tapestries, and furnishings over the last 30 years.

But even though the weathered exterior stonework of Kimball's Castle is crumbling, the basic structure is still sound, and developers Don Leavitt and Rick Miller are hoping that it will be opening its doors next summer as one of the top tourist attractions in the Lakes Region.

Miller and Leavitt, partners in Bear Island Restorations in Meredith, have se-

cured the \$3 million in financing needed to undertake the project, which will see the original stonework restored and the construction of an 8,500 square foot addition to the castle, which was built by railroad magnate Benjamin Ames Kimball just before the turn of the century.

The addition will be slightly larger than the 6,000 square foot castle and will provide space for additional guestrooms, a 120-seat dining room and a kitchen.

The castle, together with the caretaker's house and the former Lakeport railroad station, which was also built by Kimball, will provide the new resort with 20 guestrooms, all of which will have fireplaces and a

jacuzzi.

Leavitt said a financial package involves some local investments and financing from the American Money Network of Atlanta, Ga., and Merrimac Corporate Securities Inc., of Londonderry.

A new corporation, Historic Inns of New England, has been formed to manage the castle and Red Hill Inn in Center Harbor, which is also owned by Leavitt and Miller.

A new road from Rte. 11 to the castle will be constructed and water and sewer lines will be installed as part of the project.

The castle property itself will encompass 20 acres and is adjacent to a 200 plus acre nature preserve owned by the town of Gilford.

Leavitt said the spectacular views of Lake Winnepesaukee will be restored by removing three-quarters of the trees on the sloping hillside below the castle, helping create what he and Miller hope will become one of the most popular resort settings in the Granite State.

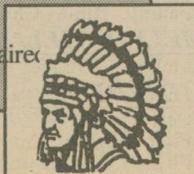


Developer Don Leavitt in Meredith at a recent press conference. Leavitt, together with Rick Miller, is happy to announce that the financing needed to convert the castle into a fine country inn is in place.

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Developer Don Leavitt of Bear Island Restorations in Meredith at a recent press conference at Kimball's Castle in Gilford. Leavitt, together with his partner, Rick Miller, were happy to announce that they have secured the \$3 million in financing needed to complete the renovation of the historic castle into a fine country inn and restaurant. AMSDEN PHOTO

Town of Gilford

*Kimball
Wildlife Forest*

Lockes Hill Trails

**TRAIL
GUIDE**

**A Wildlife Habitat Demonstration Area
with Interpretive Trails**

This habitat demonstration area of 300 acres is being provided by the Town of Gilford with assistance from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension for the purpose of increasing public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the relationships between wildlife and their forested habitats.

Written By:

**David Langley
Assistant Wildlife Specialist
UNH Cooperative Extension**

and

**John Kanter
Wildlife Specialist
UNH Cooperative Extension**

Illustrated By:

**David Langley
Assistant Wildlife Specialist
UNH Cooperative Extension**



University of New Hampshire, Belknap County, N.H. Department of Resources and Economic Development, N.H. Fish and Game Department, N.H. Division of Forests and Lands, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service and, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cooperating. UNH Cooperative Extension is an Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer.

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For additional information contact:

Office of Selectmen
Town Hall, 47 Cherry Valley Road, Gilford, NH 03246
Phone (603) 524 - 7438

Kimball History

The property known as Lockes Hill was once the estate of Benjamin Kimball. A successful Concord businessman, he became president of the Boston and Montreal Railroad in 1895.

While traveling in Germany, Kimball was so inspired by castles along the Rhine River, that he built a castle on Lockes Hill overlooking Lake Winnepesaukee. The location, known as "The Broads" was chosen for its glorious panoramic view. Kimball constructed a special railroad spur from Laconia to "The Broads" for his personal use.

The castle was constructed between 1897 and 1899 by Italian stone masons that lived on "The Lady of the Lake," which now resides at the bottom of Lake Winnepesaukee as a popular scuba diving site. Some of the stone used in the castle was quarried from the south side of Lockes Hill and hauled by teams of oxen and horses. The old quarry sites and tote roads are still visible along the Quarry Trail.

The property consisted of approximately 280 acres and was used by Ben Kimball until his death in 1920. The property passed to his wife and then to daughter-in-law Charlotte. She spent summers at the castle until her death in 1960. Charlotte Kimball had established a trust for the land and the castle, stipulating that the property be utilized for the study and enjoyment of wildlife habitat. In 1981, the Town of Gilford was appointed trustee by the State Attorney General.

The Town received matching funds from the U. S. Forest Service to develop a management plan. The plan addresses the improvement of wildlife habitat through sound forest management and the development of educational and recreational opportunities.

As a result, a wildlife habitat demonstration area with interpretive trails has been established. The trail is self guided. The information in this trail guide is keyed into the interpretive stations identified by numbers along the trail.

The trails, marked with blue rectangles, form a loop between the top of Lockes Hill and the trailhead parking area accessed from Route 11. The Lakeview Trail is approximately 0.65 miles in length and the Quarry Trail is about 1.2 miles long.

Resource Management

The natural resources of Kimball Wildlife Forest are managed for education, recreation, wildlife and timber. A management plan for accomplishing these objectives has been prepared by an interdisciplinary team of resource professionals for the Town of Gilford and the committee charged with the responsibility of stewardship for this land.

Timber harvests are designed to enhance wildlife habitat, protect water quality and aesthetic values, and provide a sustainable supply of wood products. A professional forester will supervise all harvesting activities.

Visitor Responsibilities

The Kimball Wildlife Forest is open, free of charge, to the public during the hours of sunrise to sunset. Visitors are free to enjoy the forest on foot, as this is a passive use area. Hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing are permitted, while camping, fires, overnight parking, and motorized vehicles are not.

It is hoped that visitors will self-maintain this area by carrying out what you carry in to the benefit of all.

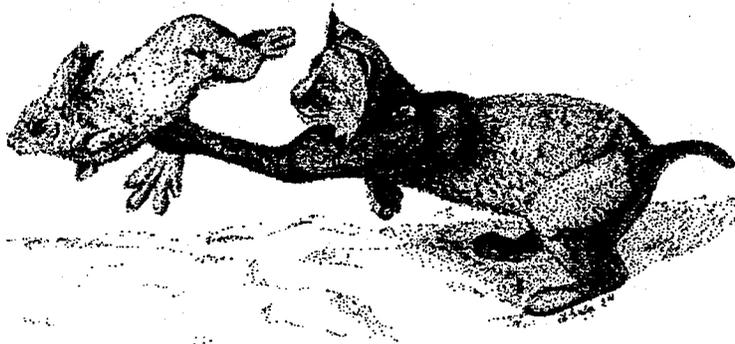
Thank you and enjoy your visit.

3. Bark Chewing: This young hemlock and several others of about the same age show signs of bark chewing. The evidence clearly shows teeth marks gouged into the stems. These indications combined with the forest type, demonstrate winter use of these woods by **white-tailed deer**.

This young hemlock doesn't represent the best quality forage for deer. Nevertheless, it helps to fill the belly of an animal that finds it more advantageous to eat hemlock bark rather than trudge out into deep snow in search of better quality food.

4. Pileated Woodpeckers: Look closely at many of the trunks of these trees and you will see the telltale large oblong excavations of the **pileated woodpecker**, whose quest for insect food or a nesting site have caused it to bore into decaying wood. Often times the trees they peck into show little outward sign of decay, but the pileated knows which stems will harbor heartrot and thus a meal of ant larvae. With any luck you may hear the slow methodical tap of a pileated working a tree nearby.





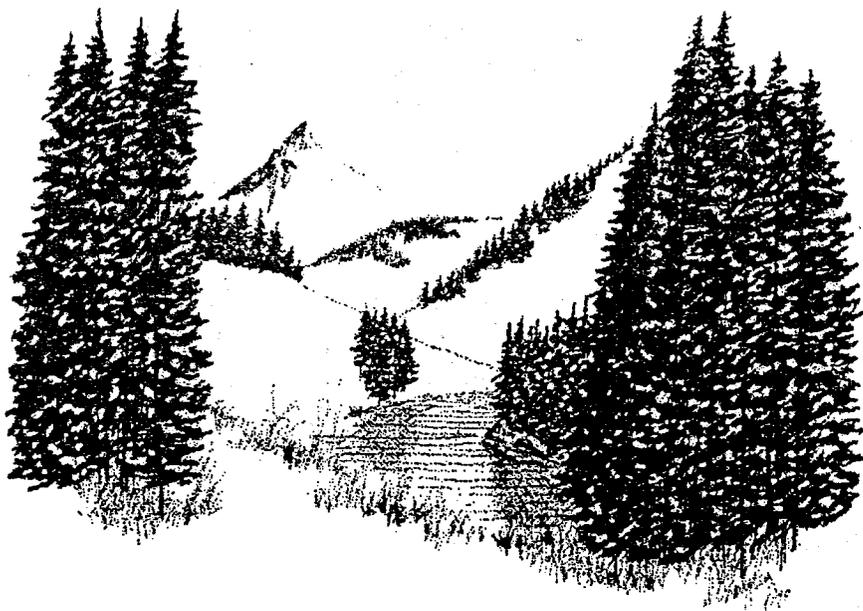
Other excavators may be active in this forest as well, such as the **downy** and **hairy** woodpeckers. The holes these birds carve out will be used not only for nests to raise their young or for feeding sites, but in subsequent years they will be used by a succession of birds and mammals that find nesting in tree cavities preferable to other forms of shelter.

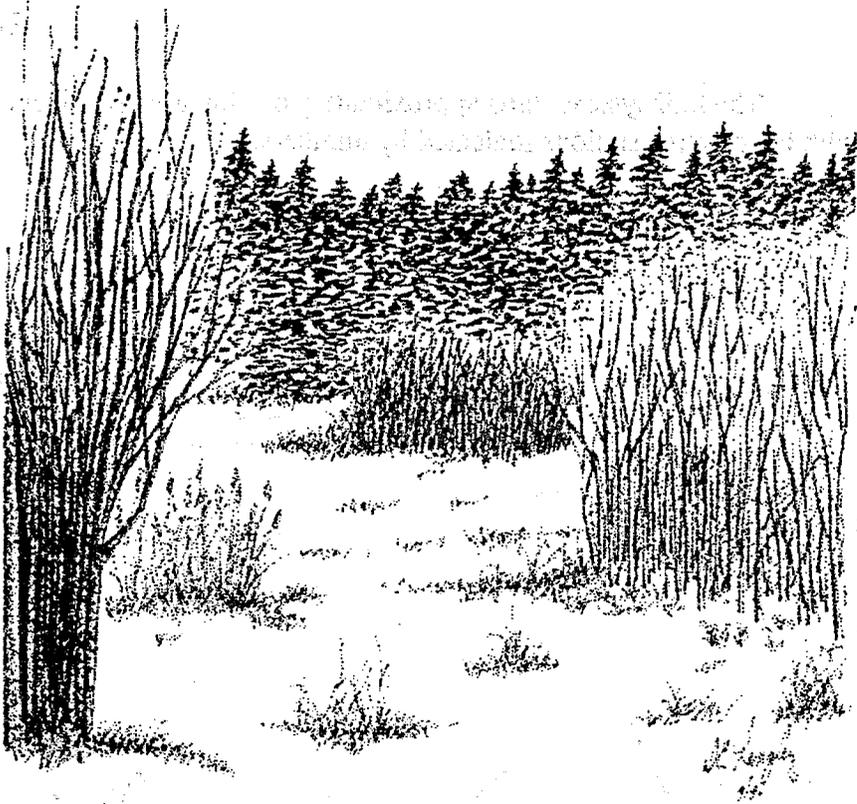
5. New Hampshire's Landscape: If its a clear day when you've broken out of the woods and entered this powerline right-of-way you have the chance to take a spectacular look north. Framed by the edge of the powerline right-of-way there is a wonderful view of Lake Winnepesaukee. If you look beyond the lake, the view that you get is a microcosm of New Hampshire's landscape.

New Hampshire is presently over 87% forested. The structure of New Hampshire's forestland has changed over the years. In presettlement times, New Hampshire was probably 90% forest with small openings created by natural disturbance (ie: flood, wind, or lightning caused fire). Indian burning activities also created openings. The balance of the land area consisted of wetlands, streams, rivers, and lakes.

When Europeans began to settle the New England region they initiated land clearing to establish farms. Their efforts resulted in 40% of New Hampshire's landscape being cleared by the mid-1800's. The marginal farmlands of the northeast were slowly abandoned upon the opening of more fertile and easily worked land in the west. By the turn of the century, much of the remaining forest had been logged and, along with abandoned farms, were beginning to regrow into forest. As the decades passed regeneration of the forest continued.

Much of New Hampshire's forestland is currently privately owned. Therefore stewardship of our woodlands rests primarily in the hands of landowners. The health and vigor of not only timber resources but also wildlife and water resources are the responsibility of New Hampshire's landowners. Whatever an individual does on his or her land has an effect on the wildlife that makes use of that land. By enhancing habitat features, landowners can have a positive impact on wildlife.



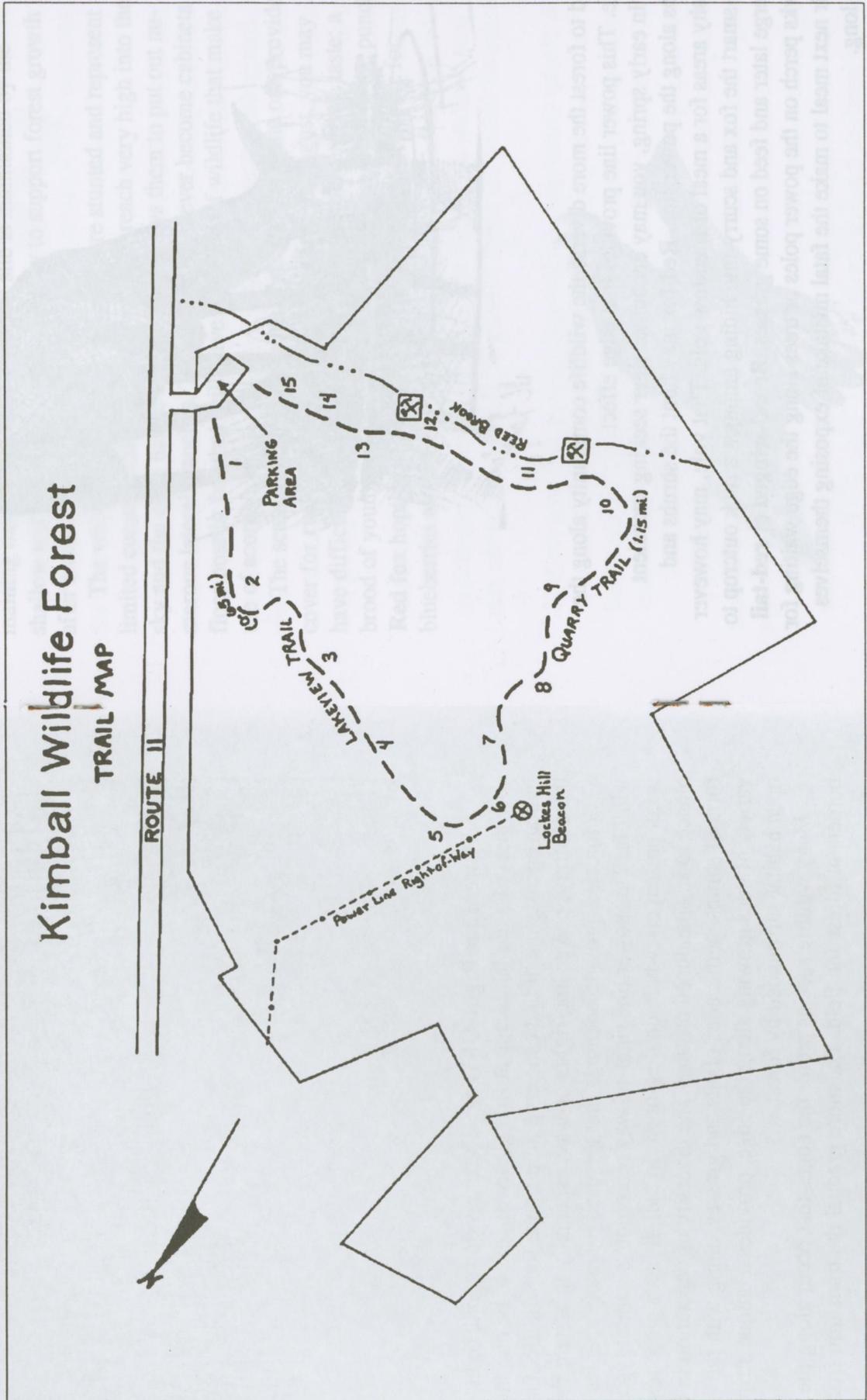


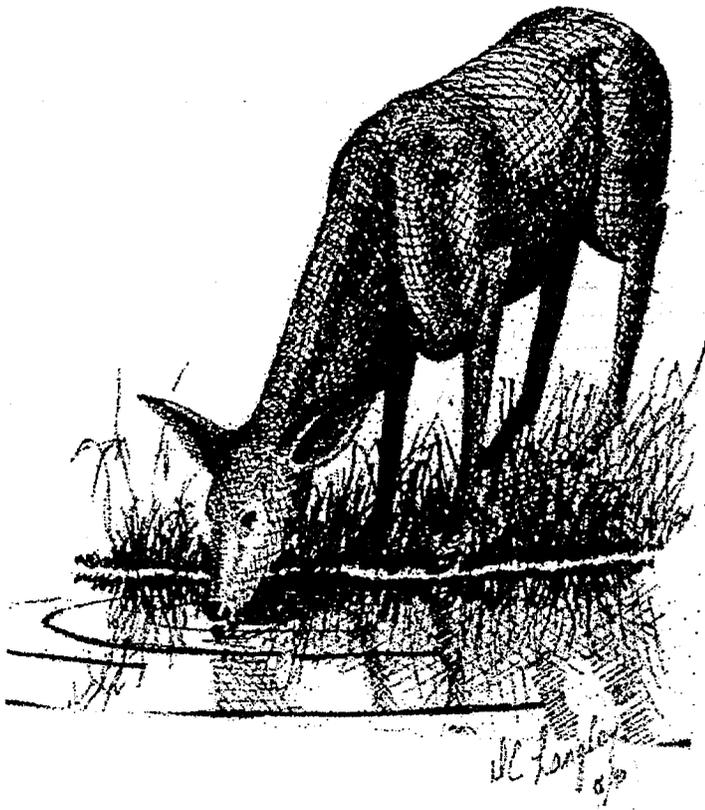
6. Power Line Right-Of-Way: The many power line rights-of-way that cross our landscape at first glance appear to be one more human encroachment that can serve no purpose for wildlife. On the contrary, power line rights-of-way, especially in a state that is 87% forested, provide openings that are used by many species of wildlife. This power line right-of-way represents a habitat type that is not present elsewhere on this forest. In fact, it bears close resemblance to an abandoned pasture. The diversity of vegetation in the form of shrubs, herbaceous plants and grasses, along with the variety of trees growing along the edge, provides a unique strip of open habitat surrounded by forest.

Many wildlife species prefer the edges that occur along the borders of forest and field. The more gradual the transition from

Trail Information

The trail system starts approximately one hundred feet from the entrance to the parking area off Route 11. The trail is marked by blue rectangles with interpretive stations indicated by numbers.





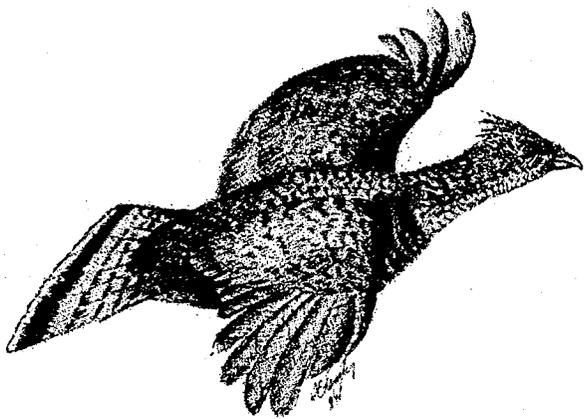
field to forest the more diverse the wildlife community along the edge. This power line provides that edge effect.

In early spring, you may encounter deer seeking succulent forbs along the power line. Red fox may hunt the shrubs and brushy areas for a meal of meadow vole. That vole, may however out-smart the fox and scurry into hiding amongst a rock outcrop to emerge later and feed on some grasses. Broad-winged or red-tail hawks perch on the power poles or trees along the edge waiting for their next meal to make the fatal mistake of exposing themselves too long.

7. Oak Savanna: The conditions on the hill top area around you resemble savanna conditions; where white oaks predominate above an open grassy ground cover. This relatively unique feature was created by a fire that burned away the understory and the more volatile trees such as hemlock and white pine, leaving the way clear for grasses and low bush blueberry to take over under the remaining oaks. The character of this site is maintained by the shallow soil conditions which are slow to support forest growth after a disturbance such as fire.

The white oak, although vigorous, are stunted and represent limited commercial value. They will not reach very high into the sky and the open nature of this stand allows them to put out numerous lateral branches. These trees will never become cabinets or floor boards, but they will serve the needs of wildlife that make use of acorns.

The scattering of low hemlock mixed with white oak provides cover for **ruffed grouse**. If you come here in August, you may have difficulty finding enough blueberries to even get a taste; a brood of young grouse may have already beaten you to the punch. **Red fox** hoping to dine on grouse may have had to settle for blueberries as well.





The acorns released by the oaks will also find their way into the crops and gizzards of grouse in the fall. Deer will put on much needed fat reserves for winter by consuming many pounds of these high energy nuts. **Blue jays, black bears and wild turkey** also eat acorns.

The oaks probably harbor **grey and flying squirrels** in the cavities formed by fungal infestation; larger cavities might support a **raccoon**. With the acorns supplying food for all.

Birds like the **least flycatcher** who likes the openness of areas like this may be nesting and feeding here in spring and summer. The **tree swallow** might find this area, along with the power line, provides all that he/she needs to bring off their young for the year.

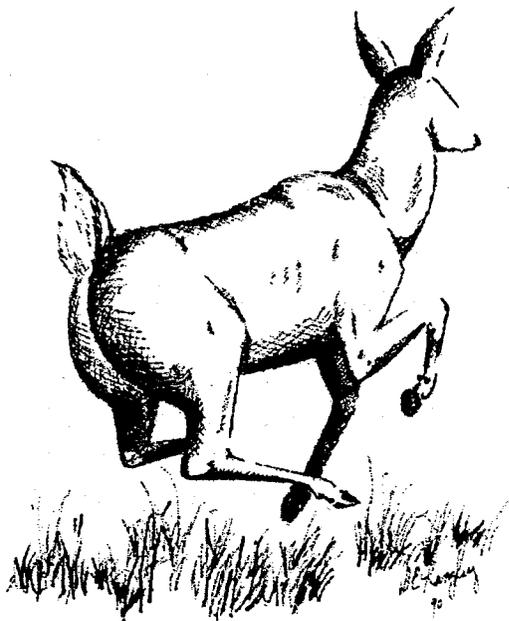
8. Rocky Outcrops: As you walk through this area you will note where rock ledge pokes out from under the soil. These rock outcrops are fairly abundant on the hillside. They have the added benefit of being on the southeast slope which makes them desirable sunning spots for wildlife.

Being exposed to sun, the snow in this area will melt rapidly making it accessible at all times of the year. **Deer** may pop up here in winter to feast on the remaining acorns exposed by the sun's rays acting on snow. They may also lay down on a calm sunny day to reap the warmth supplied by the sun before returning to the more protected hemlock forest below.

With a sparse understory and low ground cover below scattered oak, there are many warm spots to sit and relax. **Bobcats** might take the time to loaf on one of the exposed ledges. The crevices formed by the layered effect of the rock harbors small mammals like **chipmunks** and **voles**.

9. Deer Wintering Areas: Deer wintering areas, also known as deer yards, are critical habitat for deer at the northern edge of their range. In New Hampshire yarding areas are very important for deer survival during harsh winters. They consist of dense softwood cover, usually on a south facing slope.

The area you are in now meets those qualifications by being composed of dense hemlock on the south slope of Lockes Hill. In fact, a strip of dense softwood cover rings the entire hill. Intermixed with the hemlock are red oak, red maple and other hardwoods. On the outer fringe of the yard are the white oaks above and aspen below.

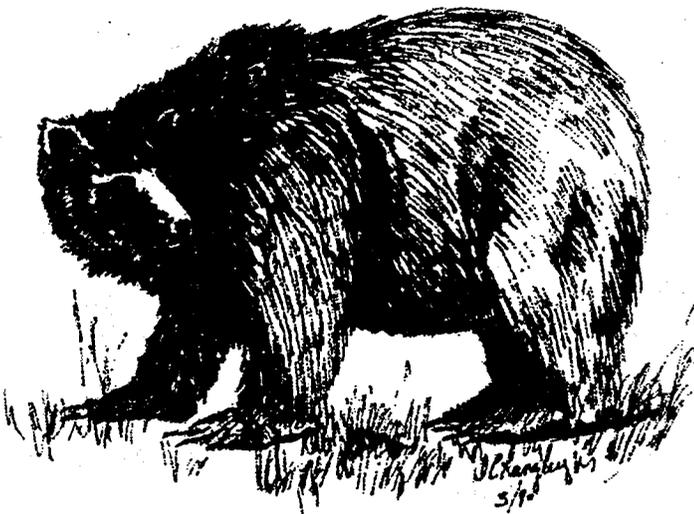


A denser understory of hardwood sprouts resulting from thinning operations may attract songbirds like the **black-throated blue warbler**. Leaving some older red maple as well as the oak with signs of decay will help support cavities for birds and mammals for years to come.

11. Beech and Northern Hardwoods: Notice the change in the types of trees along this portion of the trail. On one side you have hemlock with a scattering of oak and pine. On the other there is birch, maple, and beech. As you move north in New Hampshire, you find fewer oaks and hickory. Beech, maple, and yellow birch dominate the hardwood forests in higher elevations and points north of Gilford.

Less oak in these forests means fewer acorns for wildlife. Nevertheless, the abundance of beech trees produces an alternative nut source for northern forest wildlife. **Black bear** are particularly fond of beech nuts. They help build needed fat reserves for the long winter sleep ahead.





Beech trees don't begin to produce nuts until they are better than 40 years old. It is essential for wildlife that a fair number of trees of nut bearing age be available to provide a bountiful supply of nuts. Because of the relative scarcity of beech on this forest they will be favored and allowed to mature wherever possible. Thinning competing trees will provide space for them to grow and produce a healthy crop of nuts.

12. Old Quarry Site: Reed Brook provides water for many animals in the surrounding area. Deep pockets like this one created by quarry activity are attractive breeding sites for amphibians.

Peepers and red-spotted newts may use the area for breeding early in the spring followed later by toads and green frogs. The survival strategies of amphibians is to produce an abundance of eggs and young because most fall victim to predation before they are able to reproduce. This abundance of young provides food for many larger animals in the area; like fox and mink.

It is best to minimize disturbance from logging in the area surrounding brooks like Reed Brook and temporary pools like this old quarry hole. This can be accomplished by leaving buffer strips of uncut or minimally cut forest along the margins of brooks and pools.

Any crossing of wetlands must be done with the proper culverts or bridges in place. These precautions minimize the amount of sediment entering the wetlands and damaging their value to amphibians and other organisms.

13. Aspen: Aspen or "popple" is not particularly valuable as an economic product of the forest. But many species of wildlife find this tree extremely valuable. **Deer, hare and moose** browse the buds, leaves and twigs, while **grouse** will over-winter on the buds. **Yellow-bellied sap suckers** excavate holes in the soft wood for nest sites.

Forests containing aspen of varying ages are particularly valuable to **ruffed grouse**. Dense young stems provide superb cover for a hen grouse to raise her chicks. Dense stands of middle-aged aspen are attractive feeding sites during fall, and preferred as drumming sites by male grouse in the spring. The buds of mature aspen are the top winter food for these elusive birds. Twelve to fourteen mature aspen will carry one individual through the winter.

Aspen will only regenerate after some form of disturbance such as cutting or fire. It needs full sunlight to out compete the growth of other trees. Once cut, it sprouts prolifically from its roots. To maintain diversity of ages in this aspen stand periodic patch cuts will be made to stimulate new growth. Don't be surprised if you hear the flush of wing beats of a grouse breaking from cover.

14. Log Landings: This open area near the end of the trail is one of the log landings on this forest. It is used for sorting and lobading of logs harvested during timber operations. Following cutting operations, this area is seeded down to control erosion and protect the nearby brook from sediments.

The mixture of grasses and clovers in the seed mix will produce quality forage for deer and snowshoe hare. Broad-winged hawks which nest in the nearby forest will hunt the mice and voles found in this opening.

15. Alder Wetlands: The water from Reed Brook and surrounding slopes funnel down into this low spot forming a wetland. Although you may not see standing water in this area year-round, the ground will always be soggy. Wetlands are often identified by the type of vegetation growing within them. This shrub wetland is dominated by alder with ground cover consisting of sensitive and other ferns.

Wildlife that uses alder wetlands include the yellow warbler, common yellow-throat and the woodcock. Woodcock are attracted to stands of alder because they provide dense cover from predators. Underneath the shade of these shrubs the ground is exposed, making it easy for them to probe for earthworms; the primary food of adult woodcock.

Alder is short lived and begins to fall over at about 2 inches in diameter thus diminishing its value for wildlife. To keep an alder stand vigorous; one should wait for winter snow and cut back the alder to the surface of the snow. The cutting should be done in strips with an alternating pattern leaving a combination of young and older alder growth to provide habitat for woodcock and other wildlife.

Acknowledgments

TOWN OF GILFORD

Kimball Wildlife Forest Committee

Board of Selectmen

Conservation Commission

Public Works Department

New Hampshire Department of Corrections

Shock Incarceration Unit

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Conservation and

Stabilization Service

Soil Conservation Service

UNH Cooperative Extension - Belknap County

Adair Mulligan