

Exhibit CK-9

# Vermont's mystical Lake Willoughby springs back

By Christina Tree  
Special to the Globe

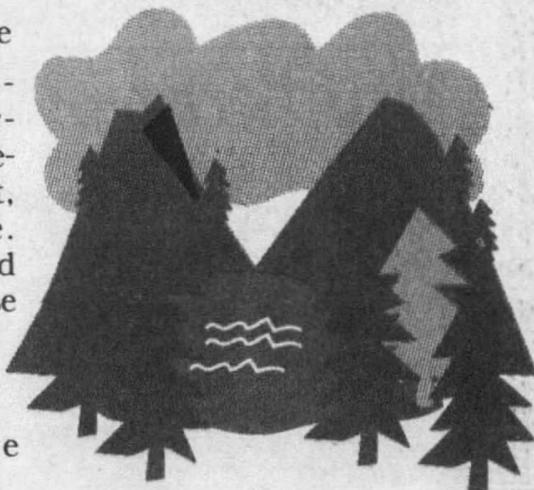
Lake Willoughby is Vermont's most mysterious, magnificent, magical lake. Mounts Hor and Pisgah, which rise abruptly from opposite shores, create a fiord-like effect above narrow waters.

It's the kind of "romantic" landscape beloved by 19th-century tourists. By the 1890s, two substantial hotels hugged its shore and another perched high on Mount Pisgah's south shoulder. There were a number of Gothic-style cottages, two lake boats and a lively dance hall. Lake Willoughby was known as "The Lucerne of America."

But just a few years ago, Lake Willoughby offered no place to eat, and lodging was limited to seasonal, by-the-week cabins. So its revival has been sudden and dramatic.

In little more than a year, an upscale inn with an outstanding restaurant has opened on one side of the lake, and a former estate has become a bed-and-breakfast inn on the other. A former general store has begun selling Christmas decorations, crafted gifts and T-

LAKE WILLOUGHBY, Page A10



Anthony Schultz illustration

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**■ LAKE WILLOUGHBY**  
Continued from Page A1

The new Willoughby Inn replaces the old farmhouse that it replaces. That's how much the present owners, longtime summer residents of nearby Burke, follow, carried about the history of the exterior of the old local eatery. But inside, the decor is downright elegant, and the new dining room's windows manage the spectacular view. The food is haute cuisine at dîner prices.

Mark and Crots, one of Northeast Vermont's best-known chefs, is in the kitchen, and the \$1.50 clam chowder soup is rich and tangy; the \$12.50 wrapped shrimp and Vermont veal melts in your mouth; and the herbed zucchini is fresh. What you notice most is the combination of superb menu, view. Upstairs, the nine rooms—six overlooking the lake—are neater resort-area prices: \$60 for a double, \$75 for a suite with a four-poster bed, \$110 for the effervescent suite. The lake rates range from \$400 to \$500 per week; they are also available on a daily basis. Fox Hall, a B&B across the lake, also commands a commanding view of the water-filled notch, but the feel is homier. The expansive, twin-turreted mansion has been painstakingly restored from its rich pasting and third-floor skylight to its foundations—by the same family—since 1976. The lake rates are \$100 and morning muffins. Michigan natives Sherry and Ken Peycoden, with the help of their four children, have turned the old lakehouse into what his family has owned since 1953. "It's not over-run with tourists, and people here are family people," they say, as well as split and polish to this airy old ark.

Hillside Lodge was built as a summer home for the mayor of Yonkers, N.Y., and served as administrative and parents' quarters for Songadeewin, a prestigious girls

camp from 1921 until 1976. But it was just another of the lake's old woods when the Peycodens arrived, and they are still surviving camp cabins and outbuildings on its 76 acres—which include a large lawn that rolls off the porch and down, down, almost to the lakeside canoe and paddle boats.

**A view to remember**

The porch itself is my idea of the porch in New England to end not foliage, but a long, long day or night (with the moon silverying the lake and the walls of Pisgah and the stars again in the stars). It's a difficult seat to walk away from. Bed and breakfast at Fox Hall costs \$85 with private bath; \$65 with private bath if you're alone or a senior citizen.

Lake Willoughby is in the town of Westmore, year-round population 100, and the area's 1,000 farmers. It's generally agreed to be the very heart— you might say the watery jewel—of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.

The Northeast Kingdom—a name for the three northeastern counties of Vermont—encompasses 2,000 square miles of lake-spotted country. There are high mountains, namely Jay Peak on its northwestern edge, and low mountains, not far from Willoughby. There are some touristic pockets (both Jay Peak and Burke are ski areas with lift-served offshoot hills), but generally this is an open, gloriously carved land of humped hills and high, thin forests. The people here are friendly, and they've discovered an older way of life.

**Family-oriented resort**

Hillside Lodge itself retains the easy grace of a well-established, family-oriented resort. The

several common rooms include an inviting library and a parlor with ample sitting and game-playing areas. Guests are welcome. Guest rooms are comfortably furnished; those in the cottages have their own porches and sitting rooms. Rates run \$125 to \$165 per couple, breakfast, dinner and the 15 percent service charge included.

For those who are more energetic than nothing to do, and after a while they discover that that's what they like," says Peycoden. "They can walk to the tennis court and down to the beach house and boats on Captain's Lake, he usually finds guests who are traveling here new to the Hill Nature Preserve and explains that the inn's own 120 acres are with him. Guests can go on a nature tour, the inn's own, off the meals served at Highland Lodge, whose dining room is open to the public.

Lake discoveries range from Craftsbury Common, a vast village community that's unusually high up in the mountains, to the Burke Puppet Theater Museum in Glover, an extensive display of the human-sized puppets, dwarfs, giants, devils, and other fantastic figures for which the troupe is internationally known.

**Gifts and ice cream**

Sugared maple syrup is part an expression of the Northeast Kingdom, as is syrup. The red barn down on Route 16, just south of Barton Village, is now a combination gift shop and maple syrup marker with a Model-T Ford parked in the corner and a covered bridge behind. Brothers Michael and Norval have been here since 1976, and are just trying to preserve the family farm. Proceeds from the ice cream go to a local school, and the barn has been a part of the family since 1926. Our visit to the gift store, stocked with local maple syrup and crafts, was a highlight of the day. We ate in the attached house (it happened to be lunch time), and we drove away

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A church symbolizes the tranquility of northern Vermont.

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