



Colleague Profile



When we decided to publish this newsletter, we agreed to run profiles of our staff. Fortunately, we knew that **Ellen Lowery**, our auditor, would be able to produce the newsletter on schedule in spite of the last minute chaos of trying to coordinate the volunteer “authors”.

We are a group that likes consensus. On the issue of invading staff member’s privacy, when they are due to be profiled, there was consensus that we would allow our colleagues to write about us.

I say this to remind Ellen, who will design and edit this newsletter, that she is honor bound to reproduce her profile in its entirety. We may have cause to issue this reminder. In this context, the picture of Ellen appearing above is her submission to our request for a photo. Some of us suspect that it constitutes an “act of ambiguity”.

As most of you know, we all worked in a Bank environment before starting our Trust Company. Ellen, however, is the only one of us who did not work in the trust department. We first became familiar with Ellen when she “readily” showed up to audit us many years ago. It seems that most of the bank auditors were not eager to examine the trust department, with its unfamiliar esoteric rules governing its fiduciary behavior, and the department’s head willingness to engage in long run-on sentences when responding to inquiries.

So, who was this person who seemed to have an immediate grasp of what we did? We were suspicious. For one thing, her office didn’t look like an auditor’s office, or, for that matter a banker’s office. It looked like the den of a Victorian scholar.

What we discovered was a renaissance woman. If you look at Ellen’s professional and personal interests, they only support our discovery. An incomplete list follows: the piano, stitching petit point oriental carpets, cooking, designing websites and our print ads, discussing Nero Wolfe mysteries on line, all things Irish, and reporting audit results.

Ellen grew up on Long Island, where her father was a school district superintendent and her mother a kindergarten teacher. She came

to Vermont in the early 70’s to attend Windham College in Putney, Vermont. After graduation, she decided to settle in the area. Finding a job in southern Vermont in the recessionary period of the early 70’s, armed with a BA in Classical Music, required a certain amount of expedient occupational agility. In short, she practiced the piano during

the day and managed a fast food restaurant at night.

She continued her education by sampling a variety of career paths: nursing, computer science, psychology and personality theory. In 1982, she started with the former Vermont National Bank as a

Staff Auditor and subsequently graduated to the more complex world of examining the trust and data processing areas. That’s when we first became acquainted with Ellen.

Ellen joined us in 1999 when we started the trust company. Her primary role is that of our Internal Auditor. Ellen is a certified member of the Fiduciary and Investment Risk Management Association and also holds the Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA) designation.

Her secondary role is marketing. Our website and newsletters are examples of Ellen’s handiwork. Ellen holds an MS in Internet Strategy Management from the Persons School at Marlboro College, where she was awarded the LeBlanc Prize for Website Design & Strategy. She also provides pro bono assistance to various non profits in regard to web site issues and promotion.

As you can see, Ellen possesses an interesting combination of skills. It is very odd to find someone talented in art and numbers, and it is serendipitous that these are precisely the skills we need.

Although rare, it has happened before. One only needs to be reminded that Alan Greenspan started his career as a tenor sax player with the Henry Jerome Band. But unlike Mr. Greenspan, who was once quoted as saying “If I seem unduly clear to you, you must have misunderstood what I said.”, Ellen is a born communicator in the complex world of fiduciary administration.

