



# FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST

## NEWSLETTER

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January 2006

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### President's Message

By Ellen Arnold

It has been an incredible six months since our first meeting in June. As an organization we have come a long way even though we have a lot still to do.

We have elected our first slate of officers that will serve until January, 2007. They are Ellen Arnold, President; William Johnston, Vice President; Betty Roche, Treasurer; Chris Scott, Secretary; and Joan Shanahan, Corresponding Secretary. Lurissa Capobianco is Chairman of Recreation and Regina Young will be Chairman of Historic Resources. It is a well rounded and qualified team that I am proud to work with.

Our state and local officials have been very supportive of our efforts. They recognize the importance of Upton State Forest to the quality of life for those of us who live in the area as well as the extended central Massachusetts community.

The most rewarding part has been the response from people like you. We are a diverse group with different reasons for appreciating and using Upton State Forest. The common thread that ties us together is our appreciation and respect for this precious resource. I look forward to getting to know all of you and working together.

**\*FYI\***

Did you know that 2005 was the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Upton State Forest?

### \*\*\*Annual Meeting\*\*\*

**January 16 7 PM**

**Upton Senior Center**

Directions: 1 Centennial Ct., W. Upton  
From the light at W. Upton it is the first left after Millhaus Apts. (the old hat factory).

### Agenda

*Check in-regular members pick up voting card. New membership will be accepted at this time.*

There will be a business meeting followed by a program. Refreshments will be served and a penny sale will be held to pay some of our expenses.

### \*\*\*\*\*Program\*\*\*\*\*

The evening will conclude with a program by Rufin Vanbossuyt who will speak and show slides about his work with the American Chestnut Foundation trying to restore this historic tree to the landscape.

Our ancestors used the chestnut wood for beams in their homes and a recent newspaper article touted the health benefits of the chestnuts. At this time of year we picture "chestnuts roasting on an open fire" as we think about spring! So come and learn about the efforts to save this once prominent tree.

In 1935 the state designated the lands purchased in Upton as State Forest and CCC Camp SP25 was established.

## By-Laws Committee

The officers have been working with Barbara Burke, Lurissa Capobianco, Lou, Marion and Glen Despres, Penny Kelley and Karen Ober to develop a set of by-laws. They have been completed and sent to an attorney for review. At our annual meeting in January we will be voting to adopt them. A copy is enclosed for you to review before the meeting. Please bring it with you when you come.

As soon as the by-laws are accepted we will file our articles of organization with the Secretary of State's office to get incorporated status. Each step brings us closer to being a legitimate non-profit organization.

## Committees

Several of you have expressed interest in participating with the Trails Committee. We will be getting together with you soon to discuss ideas that have been coming from our meetings over the summer.

In April Bay State Trail Riders has a clean up day at Upton. Our group will be joining them so anyone who would enjoy brushing back trails or helping with general clean up is welcome. We will have a date and more information before our next newsletter so keep it in mind. We may also join other groups with projects because our combined efforts can make more of a difference and at the same time we will make new friends.

Thank you to Girl Scout Troop 911 who sold hot cocoa at the tree lighting on the common and partnered with us for two bake sales. The project we have chosen is to purchase the materials to repair the entrance porch and railings to the Headquarters Building. State carpenters will provide the labor. Since this is directly behind the Wayside Panel dedicated in October it will make a very attractive and visible project. In the spring we would like to plant flowers there.

## Encounters by Ellen Arnold

*(We thought it might be fun to learn about people and groups that use Upton State Forest. Each newsletter we will try to feature a different use.)*

### The Boston Mycological Club

This group is dedicated to the study of mushrooms. Each month they visit a different site as a group and pick, identify and catalog the mushrooms they find there.

This past summer they visited Upton on a day when Regina Young and I were doing a site walk to look at the buildings. We noticed a group gathered around three picnic tables and at first thought they were having lunch. Closer inspection showed us that the tables were covered with mushrooms of many shapes, sizes and colors. Definitely not lunch! It was a beautiful display and we regretted that we didn't have a camera.

Gathered around the tables the group was very busy with field guides and magnifying glasses. They were very gracious and patient with us when we interrupted to ask questions. It was a fascinating discussion about the evolution, properties and uses of mushrooms. One lady told us that she uses them to make various colors of dye for cloth. Another gentleman talked about their symbiotic relationship with tree roots. Someone else told us about edible mushrooms. **(We definitely do not recommend eating anything you find in the forest unless you are knowledgeable about what it is and how it should be prepared.)**

It was an interesting and fun encounter that taught us about one more use of Upton State Forest. You can find out more about the group on their website,

[bostonmycologicalclub.org](http://bostonmycologicalclub.org)

If anyone has an encounter they would like to share let Ellen know so we can include it in a future newsletter.