Friends of Upton State Forest
Newsletter

http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org
friends@friendsofuptonstateforest.org
Like us on Facebook!

Volume 8, Number 2 Spring 2013

President's Message

By Bill Taylor

It has been a good winter for efforts to preserve the CCC legacy at Upton State Forest. DCR has started the process to stabilize and restore the foundation and roof of the headquarters building, the Cultural Resources Management Plan is well on its way to being finished, and the CCC records project is underway. The plans are to have all three projects completed this year. It is especially gratifying and appropriate that these projects will be finished during the 80th anniversary year of the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Reports on the projects are on page 3.

2013 is the 80th Anniversary of the CCC. DCR and FUSF are planning an event at Upton State Forest sometime later this year. The original date for the program was April 6, but that has changed so watch for a notice.

President Roosevelt signed the bill creating the Civilian Conservation Corps on March 31, 1933. The first enrollees were selected in April and Camp Roosevelt in Virginia was the first camp to open on April 17. By July 1, there were almost 1,500 camps with 250,000 enrollees. This year is also the 75th Anniversary of the closing of the Upton camp, which opened in 1935 and closed in 1938.

It is a real pleasure to report so much good news to you. Spring is also almost upon us. I look forward to seeing you out in the woods. *Bill*

Potluck Supper & Program
May 3 at United Parish Vestry
One Central Square, Upton
Potluck at 6 PM, Program at 7 PM

Quabbin: A History and Explorers Guide

We are combining our potluck supper this year with Upton Historical Society. FUSF will not have a business meeting. After a potluck supper, both groups will enjoy a program by well-known author, Michael Tougias. The public is welcome to come for the potluck or just to come at 7:00 for the free program. Please RSVP for supper to news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org or Ellen at 508-529-6610.

When the Quabbin Reservoir was constructed, in the late 1920's and 1930's, four towns "drowned", it displaced 2,500 residents, and 7,500 graves were moved. Today the Quabbin provides water for Boston and 45 other communities, serving over 2.5 million people. Quabbin and the surrounding forest is the largest tract of open space in southern New England, home to nesting loons and bald eagles, coyotes, porcupines, and moose.

Tougias, author of *Quabbin: A History and Explorers Guide,* will present a narrated slide presentation about Quabbin Reservoir. The program features the demise of the "lost towns" flooded to create the Quabbin, the construction of the massive reservoir, and how the Quabbin works today. He will take the audience on a natural history tour of the Quabbin, with suggestions for day trips. Funding for the program is provided by the Upton Local Cultural Council, Upton Historical Society and FUSF.

Membership Report

Welcome to the following new members: Barbara Bowman and Tom Neu, Dr's Trista and Andrew Evens, and Robert Groth all of Upton and Lynn Paresky of Douglas. If you have not renewed for 2013 we would appreciate receiving your dues by April 1 to save the cost of mailing a reminder.

We regret the omission of Marcella Stasa's name from our Annual Report as a Member at Large on the Board of Directors. Marcella is our longest serving Member at Large and one of our hardest workers!

Annual Meeting

Directors and officers elected at the annual meeting are as follows: President Bill Taylor, Vice President Steve Warren, Secretary Mary McManus, Corresponding Secretary Agnita Knot, Treasurer Chris Scott and Members at Large Chip Kent, Gerry Lemire, Marcella Stasa and Jerry Zaslow.

DCR Documents and Policies

DCR is updating the Parks and Recreation Rules. There was a meeting in January for preliminary comment. We are told that it will be reviewed and that there will be a final public comment period. Here is a link to the draft: http://www.mass.gov/dcr/news/publicmeetings/materials/policiesandregs/draftparkrules2013-jan.pdf

Logo Clothing

You can purchase our line of tee shirts, sweatshirts, hats and tote bags at A Little Common Sense, 8 North Main St, near the Upton Common. You can also visit the FUSF store at http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org/FUSF%20Store.htm

BSTRA is 40!

Congratulations to Bay State Trail Riders Association on their Fortieth Anniversary! This equestrian group is very active in trail maintenance and advocacy. They have partnered with FUSF to support work parties and matching grant projects. You can learn more about the group at bstra.org.

There are two equestrian events at Upton this spring. The **BSTRA ride is May 12 and the Tan Heath Hunt Club is at the forest on May 19**. They will be parking trailers in the Headquarters area. When you encounter horses step to the right of the trail and do not approach without permission. Dogs should be leashed.

Raffle Winners

Annual meeting raffles winners are Massachusetts Calendar-Russ Arnold of Upton, Suet cakes and holder-Ramsey Salem of Douglas, and New England Breakfast Basket-Jane Mosczynski of Douglas.

Call For Artists

The annual Call For Artists to paint Iron Rangers at DCR parks has been announced. Submission deadline is April 26, 2013. You can find more info at http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/trust/IronRangerCall.htm. This photo shows the Iron Ranger at the trailhead painted by Marcella Stasa. There is another Iron Ranger at the Headquarters Building. It would be great to have a design that honors the CCC heritage of our park. FUSF can provide CCC photos to anyone researching for the project.

DCR Project Updates

By Bill Taylor

Design, engineering and permitting for work on the headquarters building has begun! DCR plans to have the foundation work underway by May, and they hope to start the roof work by summer or early fall. In addition to improving the structural integrity of the roof, they also plan to recreate the CCC era look of the roof inside the building. The cost of doing this, available funding, and the pace of permits and inspection will determine timing of the restoration.

I think it is a testimony to FUSF and in particular Ellen Arnold's, tireless advocacy for rehabilitation of the CCC buildings that Commissioner Lambert called Ellen at home, and on a Saturday, to let her know that DCR would be starting work on the building.

The DCR Office of Cultural Resources completed a draft of the Cultural Resources Management Plan in December. It was shared with FUSF and the Upton Historical Commission for comment. We provided our comments to DCR and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). MHC will review the draft plan and all comments and then provide their feedback. If necessary, there will be a meeting with all parties to resolve any issues, after which DCR will finalize the plan.

The CCC Records Preservation Project is underway. A contract for the project, which sets out specifications for the work, is being reviewed. When that is finalized, the job will be put out to bid.

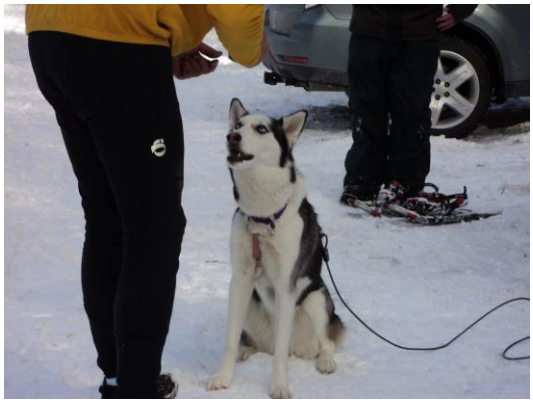
Quarterly Quote

If everyone is moving forward together then success takes care of itself.
Henry Ford

Historic Resources Committee

The Historic Resources Committee will resume the inventory of cultural resources in Upton State Forest in the spring. We will be focusing on parcels not connected to the main recreation area. If you are interested in helping, or would like to report a feature, please send an email to Ellen at news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org.

Recreation Committee



E. Arnold photo

Upton is a four season park and winter is one of the busiest times on the trails with people enjoying cross country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and yes, even biking! New Year's Day found the parking lots full and throughout the winter, we have observed many out of state plates. When I stock the map box, I enjoy meeting and talking to visitors.

In the picture above, Faith enjoys a treat from a new friend. Faith's owners had her out on the trail for a hike on New Year's Day but the day before she had been on the trails training to pull a sled.

Another day I met a hiker who told me he often donates to the Iron Ranger at the Trailhead. He knows that all donations support the park where they are made, and he appreciates having a place like Upton State Forest to visit.

Wood Duck Boxes-Part 2

By Joe Nava, FUSF member
(Editor's note: Joe worked at Phillips Wildlife Lab at Upton State Forest from 1948 to 1956. Since 1960, he has continued his career in Alaska.)

When I worked at the Phillips Wildlife Laboratory in the Upton State Forest one of my jobs was putting up wood duck nesting boxes all over the State. It was a new project so we had to develop methods for putting the boxes up. We did not want to put them on trees since it was too easy for a raccoon to get into the box and eat the duck eggs so we decided to put the boxes on poles in the water. We cut cedar poles from a swampy area at Upton State Forest (editor's note: the Upton bog). Then we sharpened the small end of each poles so we could push them into the mud.

We erected the boxes during the winter when there was at least two inches of ice to support the operation. Many a time, one of us got wet checking the ice to see if it was safe but no one drowned or froze.

We bought a stepladder and a 12-pound, wooden maul. First, we cut a hole in the ice of a pond with an ice chisel. Then we put the cedar pole into the hole and pushed it into the mud a bit. I would climb the ladder and pound the top of the pole with the maul. Another crewmember would hold the ladder steady as I slowly pounded the pole until it was at the correct level for hanging the box. Then we nailed the boxes to the pole, filled them with sawdust, and they were ready for the ducks in the spring.

Now picture me near the top of the stepladder, which was on slippery ice, trying to hit the top of the pole with a 12-pound maul. I was not always accurate. Sometimes I missed the top of the pole and the maul would continue its path on down the ladder below my feet. When the maul hit the ladder, the ladder went out from under me. I came down, usually on top of my partner who was holding the ladder. Crunch! Ouch! Ugh!

Fortunately, we were young and tough so no one ever got seriously hurt. We were scraped and bruised, but the boxes went up and the ducks were happy.

We wanted to put up more boxes so we tried putting them up during the summer by boat. That was a disaster. Can you picture me on a stepladder, in a boat, on the water, with a partner trying to hold onto the boat and the pole at the same time to keep things steady? It did not work. Too many times, when I missed the pole, I tumbled off the ladder into the boat, or the water. Crunch! Ouch! Ugh! So we stuck to winter operations.

We finally developed a better winter system. We set the pole into the mud and chained another pole crosswise onto the upright pole. I would stand on the cross pole and jump up and down, pushing the upright pole into the mud. My weight actually had more force than the 12-pound maul.

Then we discovered we could turn the pole into the mud. My partner would take one end of the cross pole and walk a circle around the upright pole while I jumped on the cross pole. This sent the pole into the mud much more quickly. Of course, the pole turner had to put ice creepers on his boots to get traction on the ice. This system worked very well, and the ducks were happy.

I still remember all the bruises from falling off the ladder many more times, than I'd like to admit.

Our next problem was raccoons raiding the duck nests, but that is a story for another day.

The Visitor, a Tale
By FUSF member, John Fahy

The sun was rising as I walked the last few yards of the gentle slope to Dean Pond. Mist rose into the morning air; a fish slapped the surface, while a crow flew silently into the still dark pines. As the sky brightened, the sound of a horn from Hopkinton Road reminded me of civilizations encroachment on natures' fragile places. Then I heard the soft, mellow sound of a flute.

Moving quietly over a moss-covered rock, I pushed brush aside. Peering around a small tree, I saw a man of middle years dressed in simple dark clothes sitting on a tree stump near the pond. Small and sturdily proportioned, his head seemed too large for his body while the hands holding the flute were strong. Near the stump he sat on lay a leather satchel, a book that looked like a diary, and a spyglass in its case.

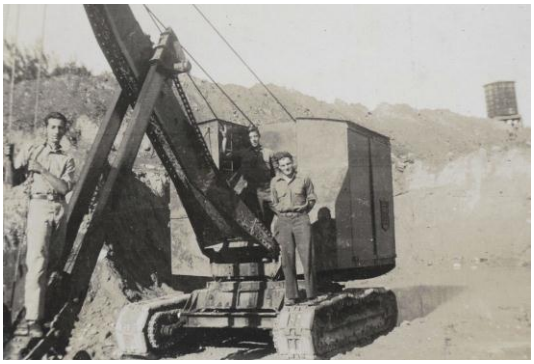
The man stopped playing turning to look at me. "I'm sorry to disturb you," I said, "please continue." Making no reply, he stood, carefully gathering his possessions placing them one-by-one into the old leather bag. Moving a few steps toward the path he paused, and silently beckoned me. As I joined him, he spoke. "The morning is my favorite time of day, especially this first hour, when some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night." He continued speaking about the symbolic relationship between morning and rebirth. As I listened, the realization that this person could be an apparition from the past came over me. He finished and asked, "Do you know who I am?" I said, "You are a great literary figure, and a renowned conservationist, but I think of you at Walden Pond, not Dean Pond here in Upton."

"I hoped my experience at Walden and other places would enable me to teach men to enjoy the world around them, and to make better use of our time while we are still able. Roads and homes now surround my Walden Pond, but here in Upton the forest is healthy and full of life."

He used his spyglass to observe ducks on the opposite shore. Then, placing it in his bag he looked over the woods and pond as if for one last time. "My time has passed but I hope that what I learned at Walden has some value in your world today."

I turned to reassure him but he had disappeared. I stood alone and watched a crow fly silently up and over the still dark pines.

Impounding Dean Pond Dam



Steam Shovel used to build the dam
Total cost to impound the dam-$2164.00

Photo courtesy of the DCR CCC Archives, donated by Joseph Petrowski

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Upton State Forest

Board of Director's meetings
At Upton Police Station, 7PM
April 15
May 20
June 17
July 15

Potluck Supper
May 3 at United Parish Church
Supper at 6 PM, Program at 7PM
Quabbin: A History and Explorer's Guide
By Michael Tougias
Details on page 1

Preservation Month Open House at Upton State Forest,
205 Westborough Rd
(Near the intersection of Southborough and Westborough Rd)
May 14, 3PM to 4PM

The Headquarters Building is one of only two surviving buildings from the CCC camp at Upton and the only surviving CCC Camp Headquarters building in MA. DCR is in the process of stabilizing the foundation and restoring the CCC era framing of the building. This project presents a unique preservation challenge: how to provide for the long-term stabilization of a building built to be dismantled in a few years, all while retaining the historic appearance of a temporary building. Kevin Allen of DCR will describe the plan, update the progress, and if possible take us for a look inside to get a better sense of the scope of the project. This program will take place rain or shine. Please RSVP to 617-626-1361 or kevin.allen@state.ma.us. Appropriate for adults and older children. Access to the building will depend on where work is taking place at the time.

Park Serve Work Party Saturday, April 27

Registration and coffee 8:30 AM
Work 9AM to about noon

Many hands make light work so please join us for our spring work party. Meet at the Upton State Forest Headquarters Building near the intersection of Westborough and Southborough Roads. We provide a light lunch for volunteers. A liability waiver is required. Youth over 12 are welcome with a parent's signature. Youth groups are required to pre register. Bring tools such as rakes, shovels and loppers. No power tools. Dress for work and the weather. Don't forget gloves, sunscreen, and insect repellant. Water is provided. Contact news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org with questions or to pre register.

Discovery Programs and Hikes

The Upton Open Space Committee and FUSF partner for Discovery events. Liability waivers are required, with a parent accompanying and signing for anyone under 18. Some people are fearful of dogs so please leave pets at home.

Shed Hunt at Stefans Farm
March 24, 9AM to Noon

Meet at the Community Garden on Mechanic St near the power lines. We will divide into groups to look for deer antler sheds. This property has both steep and wet areas so dress accordingly. We will be off trail at times so plan for brush and brambles. For more info or notice of a cancellation, send an email to uptonopenspaceevents@charter.net.

FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST
PO BOX 258
UPTON, MA 01568-0258

NEW MEMBERSHIP ----- MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL------ (check one)
(Please Print Clearly.) (Information is for Friends of Upton State Forest only.)

Date_____

Name: _____

(For family membership please put names of two adults)

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____State_____

Telephone: _____E-mail _____

Would you consider being a member of one of our committees? Please circle your choices.

Auditing	Fund Raising	Newsletter	Refreshments	Trails Committee
Education	Historical Resources	Program	Resource Inventory	
Events	Membership	Publicity	Telephone Committee	

What is your interest? Circle all that apply. (Please use the reverse for comments, or to tell us, if you wish, of other organizations, you belong to that support these interests.)

Bird Watching	Horseback Riding	Orienteering	Snowmobiling
Cross Country Skiing	Hunting	Open Space Preservation	Trail Running
Hiking	Letterboxing/Geocaching	Photography/Art	Wildlife Watching
Historical	Mountain Biking	Snow Shoeing	Other (what?)

Membership Categories: (Prices effective through August 31, 2013) (Circle one)

Family of 2 adults & children (under age 18) ---------- $ 30.00
Individual ----------$ 20.00
Senior 65+----------$ 10.00
Student full time with current student id ----------$ 10.00
Associate member (no voting privileges or discounts) ----$ 5.00

(* Please note: There is a $20.00 charge for returned checks.)

Below this line is for office use only:

Payment: Cash Check # Amount paid: Category: Year paid:

Card(s) issued by: Newsletter address entered by:

Friends of Upton State Forest
PO Box 258
Upton, MA 01568-0258

Have You Renewed?

If you have not renewed your Friends of Upton State Forest membership for 2013, we would appreciate receiving your dues before April 1. This will save the expense of reminder letters that will be sent in early April. There is a membership form on the reverse of this page. If you have renewed, please share the form with a friend who uses or just appreciates Upton State Forest. Our website is www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org if they want to learn more about us. Please like our page if you are on Facebook. If you have already liked our page but are not seeing our posts, check your pages feed. If we are not in your pages feed, go to our page, and click on the gear icon, then click "add to interest lists".

Thank you to those who have shared your email address with us. If you have not shared it with us, we would appreciate having it to save postage. You can choose to be on our regular list or to receive the newsletter only. If you are on the regular list, we send reminders of meetings, hikes, and events. We may also send newsletters of interest from other organizations as well as alerts of interest to our members. All of the information you share with us is confidential and not shared with others. To give us your email address, either put it on the membership form or send an email to us at news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org.