Friends of Upton State Forest Newsletter
Ellen Arnold, Editor
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Volume 9, Number 3 Summer 2014

President's Message by Bill Taylor

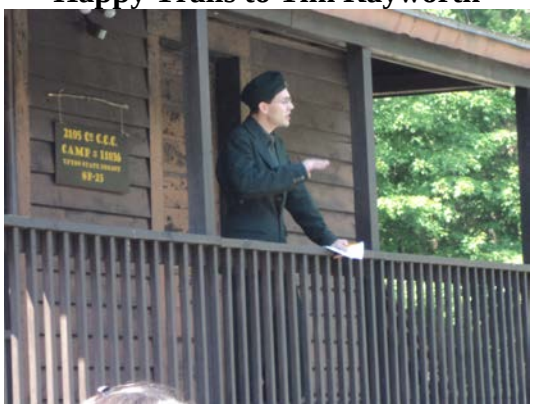
In 2015, two milestones will be reached. It is the eightieth anniversary of the opening of the CCC camp, and the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Friends of Upton State Forest. Nearly 200 young men arrived at the newly built Upton CCC camp, on August 5, 1935. In September 2005, Friends of Upton State Forest signed up our first members. We plan to hold an event marking the two anniversaries.

The anniversaries also serve as an impetus to learn more about the camp and other CCC resources. The Friends would like to locate photos of the picnic areas, and other resources built by the CCC. A newspaper article from the period reported "Old Knob" and "Painted Valley" are the two picnic grounds, with ample parking space, and located only one-half mile from the park entrance on the Westboro-Upton highway. Small open fireplaces have been built to accommodate the public. A fine road has been constructed." (Park Road) Apparently these picnic areas were popular. Another article states "Although it has been less than a year since the state forest was opened to picnic parties, it is now becoming one of the popular spots for family gatherings on Sundays, holidays and for early evening box lunches"

The picnic areas are overgrown and no longer visible today. If you have pictures of them, or know someone who does, we would appreciate being able to scan them. You can contact us at: friends@friendsofuptonstateforest.org.

Thanks, Bill

Happy Trails to Tim Rayworth



Tim Rayworth E. Arnold photo

We say goodbye to Tim Rayworth with mixed feelings as he leaves DCR for a new position. We are happy for him, but will miss his assistance with the third grade program, and all things CCC. Tim worked with Jan Maglione of Memorial School, and Ellen Arnold of FUSF to develop the very successful third grade program at Upton State Forest, "A Day in the Life of the CCC." In addition, he worked with us on several CCC events, both at USF and at the State House. More recently, Tim has been writing the Interpretive Plan for Upton State Forest. He and Val Stegemoen presented a program at one of the first FUSF meetings, and he has always been available for guidance. His knowledge of the natural and cultural resources of Massachusetts, his interpretive skills, and professionalism have been a huge asset for DCR.

In the spring of 2010, he was featured in our Meet the DCR Staff newsletter column. During that interview, Tim said. "Through projects at Upton, I have met some great people that I'm proud to call friends." We feel the same about Tim.

Calendar on page 6

Natural Resources of Upton State Forest

L. Doucette photo

For the past few years we have asked you to report historic resources, and our Resource Inventory Committee has been locating and documenting them based on your reports. Now we are asking you to share information about natural resources at Upton State Forest (USF). Tom Dodd has been sharing his journal and bird lists. Several people have shared photos such as the one above of a wood duckling preparing to leave a nest box and follow his mother into the Upton bog. We were excited to know that the wood duck boxes reported on in previous newsletters had finally been successful. We want to know what you are seeing when you visit USF from the ordinary to the unusual. This could include plants, big trees, butterflies, birds and wildlife in general. It would be especially helpful if you have photos too, although not necessary. Please send your reports to: news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org.

National Moth Week

What is in your backyard? Find out during National Moth Week from July 19-27. Set up a sheet with a light behind it at night to find out. When you are done turn off the light and shake out the sheet. More information at: http://nationalmothweek.org/

Membership Report

By Agnita Knott

Welcome to new members Jim and Nancy Weckback, of Woodville. We have 109 new and renewed members to date for 2014. This means that some of you have not renewed this year, and we hope you will continue to support us with your membership. If you are not sure if you are current, check your card or contact us.

Next year is our tenth anniversary. We are very proud that we have a large number of loyal members who started with us as Charter members.

Your Newsletter

By Ellen Arnold

As we approach our tenth anniversary I am taking a look at our newsletter. The first issue was two pages sent to members in Jan 2006. We sent out four newsletters that year, and eventually increased to five a year, until the costs of printing and postage meant we had to cut back to four again. Ironically, in that first newsletter we reported on a visit by the Boston Mycological Club to USF and in this newsletter, we are reporting on their return in Sept.

I would like to know what you think of the newsletter. What features do you like and what would you do differently? Do you like the format or would you change it? Do you have suggestions for articles? Are there any columns or articles that stand out in your mind from previous editions? Contact news@friendsofuptonstateforest.org or 508-529-6610.

Looking back through our old newsletters I am grateful to those who have submitted articles and photos to share. If anyone has something to share please contact me.

Tom's Journal
By Tom Dodd

Beaver - Natures Engineers

April – May 18

My wife, I and others had great enjoyment watching the beaver at Southborough Road go about their activities. Beaver are incredible engineers, building dams with only branches, mud and stones. We watched one beaver dive below and, after a number of seconds, surface holding a clump of mud against its body. It dutifully applied the mud to a section of the dam they were building. On April 5, I noticed a beaver moseying down the road and then back into the water. Arriving at that location, I didn't notice it along the water's edge, but it let me know its presence with a tail slap on the water. On April 21, near dusk, we noticed a pair swimming around near the road. Having seen a trail of water across the road on previous nights, we correctly guessed they were waiting for us to leave before crossing. We were excited to see them both climb the bank together and cross. It allowed a nice photo opportunity.

There were four beaver living here this spring. They were all trapped by May 18th. It can be difficult and sad to balance the needs of humans with beavers. I was on the Upton Conservation Commission for a couple of years and was directly involved with this site. It wasn't easy. There are a number of stakeholders involved including the state, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), and DCR, and the town, Upton Conservation Commission, Board of Health and DPW. This particular location has the road going through the middle of the bog, creating the biggest concern of road flooding. In the past, beaver have caused flooding along this road, and this spring blocked an unprotected culvert, causing some minor flooding. There is a state-listed species that breeds within the bog. They require specific water levels, and more importantly, water levels that don't change drastically, making it difficult to reduce the water level quickly. Another issue, at other sites in the Upton State Forest, is the possible loss of cultural resources and trails. The Dean Pond dam and a water reservoir for forest fire protection were both built by the CCC. These sites have been impacted by beaver. (Editor's note: Both of the resources mentioned are included in the National Register CCC Historic District nomination.)

There are methods to mitigate some of these issues. They include installing beaver deceivers, pond leveling devices, and exclusion fences. Deceivers are basically a pipe put through a dam at the desired water level with the inlet protected from beaver. Pond levelers use small pipes with many holes so that the beaver can't detect any big leaks that they would plug up. Exclusion fences are used to protect culverts from being blocked. Not all of these work for every condition. High flow streams are more difficult to manage.

On the positive side, beaver provide valuable benefits. They create wetland habitat. The newly created beaver pond feeding into Dean Pond supports increased biodiversity. I have seen many water-birds including Wood Ducks, Mallards, Green-winged Teal, Hooded Mergansers, Belted Kingfisher as well as other animals using this area. Beaver dams hold back water that helps to recharge our aquifer. The dam reduces sediment and pollutants downstream. It can be relaxing and entertaining watching beavers move gracefully through the water, eat and care for their dams and lodges.

I would suggest that when a management plan is drafted for Upton State Forest, that there be some effort made to identify areas that beaver can live without harm.

Beaver waiting to cross Southborough Road

Tom Dodd photo

Headquarters Building Update

Kevin Allen, DCR Historic Curatorship Program Manager, reports that Eagle Point Builders has secured all permits and started the structural repair work at the CCC Camp Headquarters Building. The project involves strengthening the existing framing to ensure its preservation for future generations while restoring the open framework that defined the simple and utilitarian style of the camp buildings that once numbered in the thousands but are today an endangered species. During the construction period access to the interior of the building and the area around the dumpster will be limited.

Meet the DCR Staff

E. Arnold Photo

Upton is a satellite of the Blackstone Complex which means you may see DCR staff from River Bend or Douglas working here. Shown above are three Blackstone seasonals, Jody Madden, Jenna Perschka, and Dee Johnston, with Don Watt, the only full time River Bend staff member left. Also returning for the season are Kathryn Parent and Bill Paul We appreciate all they do to help maintain the CCC Camp and our trails. Say hi and thank you when you see them.

SCA at Upton

E. Arnold photo

Once again, members of the Student Conservation Commission (SCA), worked at the Forest making trail improvements. The five-member crew came from the states of Michigan, Virginia, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin, staying at River Bend Farm in Uxbridge while they were here. They are shown above in front of the CCC Headquarters building with FUSF president, Bill Taylor, Val Stegemoen, Blackstone Field Operations Team Leader, and CCC alumnus, Frank Evans.

They made improvements to Park Road near the CCC waterhole, using stone to replace the wood water bars placed several years ago. This should help prevent trail erosion on years when the water overflows from the waterhole, and from the hill on the trail leading to this area.

FUSF thanks the Blackstone staff for arranging to have the SCA crew here.

Interpretive Plan

We are pleased that DCR is working to develop an Interpretive Plan for Upton State Forest. This is the final stipulation in the Memorandum of Agreement reached after the collapse of the North Barn.

Hidden History

D. Furey photo

On June 22, twenty two people joined us for a hike to the Bradish Cemetery and Leclaire Square. Thanks to Katherine Parent, Dave Furey, and Val Stegemoen for their assistance. During the hike Ellen Arnold interpreted the history of the cemetery and square at the intersection of North St and Westborough Rd. Bill Taylor was unable to attend but helped prior to the hike with research about some of the people buried at the cemetery. Maureen Byrne, member of FUSF and Upton Historical Commission, explained some of the recent work the town has done to remove trees threatening the stones. Ellen concluded by saying that the people we learned about were nation builders and nation defenders.

Nation Builders

Upton was established in 1735 with portions of land being taken from Sutton, Hopkinton, Mendon and Uxbridge. In the North part the land came from Sutton and Hopkinton. Most of the settlers in this area came from Westborough or Hopkinton and traced their ancestry to Watertown, Weston, Marlborough and Sudbury. Because of the distance to travel to meeting in Upton they remained loyal to Reverend Parkman of Westborough. Many of the people buried in the Bradish Cemetery, aka Old North lived near or on the lands we know today as Upton State Forest. The Buck family cellar hole is at the intersection of Swamp and Loop trails. You can see the cellar holes of the Stearns family along the Hopkinton Spring Trail, while the Whitney's lived on North St. James Bradish Jr and his family lived at the crest of Ridge Rd, but his lands extended to the cemetery which he donated about 1760. The District 7 school house was on land owned by him very near the CCC Camp. The building was actually listed in the inventory of camp buildings in 1938 when the camp closed.

Nation Defenders

At least five of the men were soldiers of the Revolution who left their farms and families to serve in the Continental Army. They returned to work their farms, raise families and lay the foundation for the town we know today.

Nearby Leclaire Square memorializes Ovila J. Leclaire who was killed in action at age 19 during the battle of Leyte Gulf during WW2. A series of encounters, this was the largest naval battle in history and the last major naval battle of WW2. Ovila served on the cruiser USS Birmingham which went to the aid of the light cruiser, USS Princeton after the ship was struck by a Japanese plane. He was killed in one of the explosions caused by the horrific fires.

Ovila grew up in a home on Westborough Rd between Southborough Rd and Bradish Farm Rd. He would have been there when the CCC Camp was open and the C's were building Dean Pond Dam and Park Rd. After high school he worked at American Lumber in Westborough. His parents received a letter after his death from his commanding officer that he was a good shipmate whose quiet manner and high principles won him respect and admiration.

At the annual town meeting in 1947, $300 was voted to set markers to honor Upton men who made the supreme sacrifice.

Calendar of Events

Friends of Upton State Forest Board of Directors Meetings

Due to renovations at the police station this summer, locations will be announced prior to the meetings.

July 21, August 18
September 15, October 20

Wildlife Reminder

Wildlife is everywhere and this is the time of year when we may encounter their young. Mass Wildlife sends a reminder that we need to "Keep the wild in wildlife" and leave them alone. Most of the time when we find what appears to be an orphaned fawn, an abandoned baby or a bird that fell out of a nest the mother is nearby. If we interfere we are jeopardizing their safety.

It is also important to watch for wildlife crossing the roads when you are driving. This is especially true in Upton where turtles and other wildlife cross frequently. A recent motorcycle/deer collision on the curve beyond the causeway underscores the importance of this.

Enjoy the sightings!

BSTRA Ride

Bay State Trail Riders Association is planning a ride at Upton State Forest on September 28. They will be parking horse trailers near the Headquarters building.

Remember if you encounter horses in the forest, step to the right of the trail and let them pass. Dogs should be restrained on a leash. Don't allow children to run up to a horse and always follow directions from the rider.

Trail Safety Tip

When you go for a hike always let someone know. Tell them what trails you will be using and when you plan to return.

Discovery Walk

The Upton Open Space Committee and Friends of Upton State Forest partner for Discovery events. Liability waivers are required with a parent signing for and accompanying anyone under 18. Some people are fearful of dogs so please leave pets at home. Please remember water, insect repellant and wear appropriate shoes for hiking. We suggest light clothing so you can see ticks.

Wild Food Foraging at Stefans Farm With Russ Cohen

July 31, 2014
Registration 5:45 PM, Hike at 6:00 PM
Meet at the Upton Community Garden near the power lines on Mechanic St.
Program is free

Russ Cohen has been teaching about wild foods and leading foraging walks for over 40 years. He is the author of *Wild Plants I Have Known…and Eaten*, a guide to wild food foraging in Massachusetts, and has written for numerous publications. For more go to http://users.rcn.com/eatwild/bio.htm.

Boston Mycological Club

Members of FUSF have been invited to join the Boston Mycological Club to inventory mushrooms and other fungi in September. If you are interested, contact Bill at friends@friendsofuptonstateforest.org for the date and registration details.

Quarterly Quote

Teamwork allows common people to attain uncommon results. Anonymous.

Park Serve Day

Frank Evans signs in to work

In spite of the drizzle and gloomy sky, twelve FUSF members volunteered at Upton State Forest for the annual Park Serve Day event. They were joined by Val Stegemoen, Lois Breault-Melican, and Jenna Perschka of DCR. The group did general spring clean-up around the Headquarters area, cleaned and mulched the gardens and planter box at the entrance, planted pansies donated by FUSF, picked up trash on Southborough Rd, and brushed back multiflora rose on CCC Way. This added up to 44.5 volunteer hours with a total value of $1201.50.

Following a morning of work the group enjoyed pizza provided by FUSF. Alice Evans, Marcella Stasa, and Ellen Arnold donated salad and dessert.

Thanks to the following foul weather Friends: Ellen and Russ Arnold, Maureen Byrne, Tom Dodd, Frank Evans, Agnita Knott, Marcella Stasa, Martha Stegemoen, Bill Taylor, Lillian Tolstrup, Richard Weiser and James Willitts.

New Merchandise!

By popular demand, FUSF has added safety orange tee shirts to our line of logo clothing! They are available at A Little Common Sense.

Stone by Stone Workshop

Field Trip to Peppercorn Hill

About 50 people came to the Upton VFW for a presentation by Robert Thorson about stonewalls and other stone features. After lunch, 35 people joined us on a field trip to Peppercorn Hill. All who attended agreed they would never look at stonewalls in the same way again.

This program was a partnership between FUSF, Upton Open Space Committee, Metacomet Land Trust and the Upton Local Cultural Council.

Walkabout at the CCC Camp

E. Arnold photo

There were many new faces among the 30 people who enjoyed a walkabout at the CCC Camp with Ranger Chuck Arning from the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

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

Please print clearly.
Information is for Friends of Upton State Forest only.

NEW ____ Date: _____
RENEWAL ____ (check one)

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
Education	Historical Resources	Program Development	Telephone Committee
Events	Membership	Publicity	Trails 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	Historical	Mountain Biking	Snowmobiling
Cross Country Skiing	Horseback Riding	Orienteering	Wildlife Watching
Snow Shoeing	Hunting	Open Space Preservation	Other (what?):
Hiking	Letterboxing	Photography/Art	_____

Membership Categories: (Prices effective through September 30, 2014) (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

Additional Donation Amount:
Anonymous? Yes___
No ___

General Fund or Special Fund:
Memorial or Honorarium?
Name of person being recognized?

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

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