



FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST

NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Number 1

January 2007

President's Message By Ellen Arnold

As December turns to January it is a good time to review what we have achieved and to think about our goals for 2007. Most of this newsletter will do that with progress reports.

Recently two events covered by the media pointed out some underlying issues that should challenge us as an organization. The first was a meeting regarding a dispute over trail use at Callahan State Park and the other was about a deer checking station. These confrontations go to the basic principles of sharing our public forests and trails with all legal users. As an organization one of our goals is to foster respect and understanding between user groups.

When I was a 4-H member many years ago there was a song we used to sing in rounds. The words were "Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver and the other is gold." That sums up what a lot of my experience has been this year. Some of you are neighbors that I have known for many years. There are others that I have worked with in other organizations and town committees. Most of you are new friends and I have enjoyed meeting, exchanging ideas and working with you.

Even though we are a diverse group with many different interests we are all individually and collectively Friends of Upton State Forest. What we have in common will be what moves us forward. We are making a difference and together will continue to do so. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

Upcoming Events

**Friday, January 19
6 PM at Upton Senior Center
Annual Meeting, Pot Luck Supper
and Penny Sale**

Bring a main dish or dessert to share. The Friends will provide paper goods, coffee, water, rolls and a salad. **RSVP** to Ellen Arnold at 508-529-6610 or fusf@charter.net. Please let us know how many will attend and what you will bring so that we will not end up with all desserts! Non-members and children (with supervision) are welcome.

The business meeting will be held following supper. This will include reports, election of officers and any other business to come before us. Since there is an election members will receive a voting card as you sign in.

**Monday, March 19
7PM at Upton Senior Center
"Birds and Wildlife of Central Mass"
by Richard Johnson**

Well known photographer and Audubon volunteer, Rich Johnson, will show us his slides of birds and wildlife found in Central Massachusetts. He will encourage us to be more aware of the wildlife around us and share tips on how to photograph them.

Through Mass Audubon he has worked with some of the region's top naturalists and others doing database creation, trail maintenance and teaching. Non-members are welcome. We are excited to bring you this program.

Walking, Hiking and Beyond

By John Fahy



This article is the third in a series about the use of forest trails by those who walk, hike or trail run. Previous articles discussed health benefits, weather and hiking solo.

Since a forest environment includes uneven pathways and some elevation change you should prepare yourself for this level of exertion. Remember to check with your doctor if you are just starting out.

Preparing for a hike must take into account several factors including weather, location, length of hike in time and miles and your equipment. Equipment includes the basics such as boots appropriate to the trail, map and compass, sufficient food and water for the hike's duration and clothing adequate to protect you against the elements.

Walks or short hikes in local forests like Upton State Forest require little advance planning for clothing beyond the demands of the season. Even in the Upton Forest though, it is the wise hiker who is prepared for a sudden summer storm or the impact of a cold winter day.

Hiking groups preparing for a hike in any season will suggest to their participants "...to dress in appropriate, breathable clothing according to the weather." (AMC). This is a reminder **TO NOT** wear cotton clothing but rather, clothing made of polypropylene materials or wool. Polypro materials allow the passage of moisture away from the body through the clothing easily improving the body's ability to maintain a correct core temperature.

Polypro dries quickly after perspiration or when wet from weather conditions. Cotton holds dampness much

longer meaning less transfer of sweat, and while wet, provides no warmth. Wet cotton if exposed to cool summit winds or cold weather will encourage the unwanted development of **hypothermia**. The hiking community goes as far as stating a rule: **Never wear cotton clothing on a hike.**

Outdoor shops carry a complete line of under and outer polypro garments. These items tend to be a bit pricey compared to cotton, but they are long lasting and **potentially life saving**. Wool used as cool and cold weather outer clothing items such as shirts, sweaters, hats, etc: is an exception because while wet it does retain an ability to keep a body warm.

Enjoy your hike by wearing clothing that will provide the maximum safety and comfort.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is proposing a slate of officers for 2007 to be voted on at our Annual Meeting in January. Some of the criteria they used include: **Continuity:** Some of the officers have agreed to stay another year. By choice three members of the Board will step down. **User groups:** Having a variety of user groups represented on the Board. **Broadening representation:** Having representation from another town.

The slate to be presented includes:

President:	Ellen Arnold
Vice Present:	To be announced
Treasurer:	Betty Roche
Secretary	Chris Scott
Corr. Secretary	Joan Shanahan
Member at Large	John Fahy
Member at Large	David Kennedy

If you wish to oppose anyone or propose an alternate please contact Ellen at 508-529-6610 or fusf@charter.net and she will pass it to the Committee.

Trails Committee

The Board of Directors realizes that the scope of the Trails Committee has broadened so we feel that having cochairman to share the responsibilities would help that committee accomplish their goals. Karen Ober has agreed to join Lurissa Marston as co chair for 2007.

The committee is working on a plan to present to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to improve trail signage with the focus on the major trails that are on the map. They have discussed several places that should have signs indicating private property ahead or the way back to the parking lot. A walkabout will be held in January to review some of the locations.

Members of the trails committee are holding several bake sales to raise money for signs. The intention will be to apply for matching funds through DCR or other organizations to help pay the cost of the improved signage.

Discussion has started about a "Be Safe, Be Seen" campaign to start sometime next summer. This will involve education about wearing blaze orange during hunting season with the possibility of selling vests and hats.

Karen is working on information for the Trails Page that we are planning for our web site. If you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see on that page please let her know.

On December 10 members of the Trails Committee spent the morning brushing back the entrance road to the trailhead parking lot. It was a great help to have Don, from the DCR staff, with a truck to remove the brush. We all had a good time working together and it was very satisfying when we left to look back at what had been done. This opens up the visibility for vehicles using the road as well as to provide a place for

walkers to get off the road when entering on foot. Hopefully the park staff will be able to do some drainage work to help preserve the road.

Ellen Arnold and Chris Scott have been stocking the map box at the kiosk. During the fall Bob Ethier and John Fahy have conducted surveys of park users. This helps get the word out about the Friends as well as helping us understand where our time, energy and limited financial resources should be focused. It also gives us the statistics to show officials that the forest is used by people from throughout central Mass and beyond for many reasons.

The next meeting of the Trails Committee will be February 8, at the Upton Police Station at 7PM. We are a very informal group and everyone is welcome.

Thank you to the DCR staff

Most of us use Upton State Forest with little thought to the time, money and manpower required to maintain a state park. Yes, our state forest has been given little in the way of budget money and there is no daily presence of a park ranger or other staff. We are working to change that but let's not forget that John Pelczarski and his staff do as much as they can to keep up with what has to be done.

Whenever we have held an event or noticed something that needed to be taken care of they have responded. In addition Ranger, Val Stegemoen, has led trail walks on CCC day and during our picnic as well as assisting with the third grade local history tour.

We can help by keeping the staff aware of conditions at the park and with our work parties as well as being vigilant about budget cuts. Most importantly we can say thank you whenever we have the opportunity.

Brown Property Update

Although we did not expect to have an issue of this magnitude on our agenda so soon we recognize the importance of working to have this property become part of Upton State Forest. We want to thank Metacomet Land Trust for giving us guidance.

On November 29, 2005 Friends of Upton State Forest and Metacomet Land Trust held a meeting. It was attended by DCR officials, Senator Augustus, Representative Peterson and a representative of Senator Spilka along with interested parties from Upton, Hopkinton and various user groups. As a result of that meeting \$4500 was raised from several sources that included two anonymous donors to do a property appraisal as a first step. This was an important indicator to public officials of the value of this property to the integrity of Upton State Forest.

After the appraisal was done DCR began title research and title issues have surfaced that will have to be dealt with before a purchase can take place. In addition the DCR Land Protection Specialist that was working with us initially has left to work for the Nature Conservancy and the project has been reassigned.

We will continue to keep abreast of any developments and to work with our public officials to achieve this purchase that will protect the integrity of Upton State Forest for the future.

In Memoriam

George Burnham of Upton and well known as Town Moderator for many years passed away in December. According to his obituary Mr. Burnham was another CCC alumnus of Camp SP25, Upton. We extend our sympathy to his family.

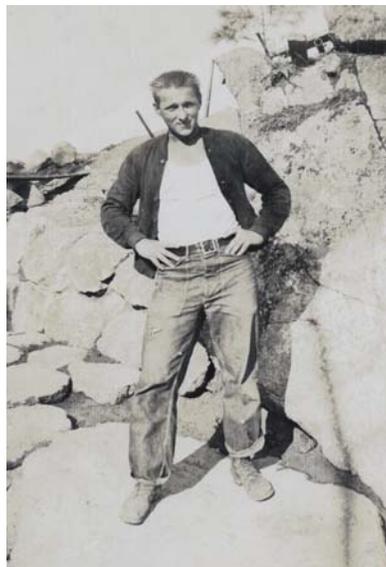
Dean Pond Dam

In September I was privileged to interview Joseph Petrowski, a CCC alumnus who served at Upton. At 20 years of age, Joe was the project leader for building Dean Pond Dam. He came to Camp SP25 at Upton in 1938.

We talked about the camp and he was able to describe the layout of the buildings and identify how each one was used. Twice a week he went to the Administration Building to meet with the Camp Superintendent and review the plans for the dam to prepare him as the work progressed.

I had planned to write more about our interview and the dam in this newsletter but I will do it another time. This afternoon I received a call saying that Joe passed away on December 26. Our sympathy goes out to his family.

Joe had become a member and told me that we were living his dream. "To come back and help take care of Upton State Forest." We owe Joe and all the men of the CCC a debt of gratitude for the legacy they left us.



Joseph Petrowski in 1938 while building Dean Pond Dam

Historical Resources

Part of our mission statement is to preserve, enhance and protect the historical resources at Upton State Forest. Now that the Trails Committee is well established one of the goals for 2007 is to establish a Historical Resources Committee. Many of you expressed your interest in this on your membership applications.

March 15 will be the first meeting of the Historic Resources Committee. It will be at 7PM at the Upton Police Station and all are welcome. I will be contacting some of you before that date if you have already expressed interest.

Round Table Discussions

At our November meeting the members in attendance divided into groups to discuss some of the things they would like to see done. We talked about meetings, programs, newsletters, events, work parties, committees, fund raising and the web site. Some of their suggestions are in this newsletter including the pot luck supper for our annual meeting and the calendar of events that can be put on your fridge.

Anytime you have ideas or comments about what we are doing please get in touch with any member of the Board of Directors.

Web Site

We have been working on the website and hope to have it available in January or February. Thank you to Nick Lux, Karen Ober, Mike Penko, Betty Roche, Rufin VanBossuyt and Ellen Arnold for their help. We have registered the following domain name:
friendsofuptonstateforest.org

Membership Renewal Due

If your membership card says 2006 it is time to renew. We are offering a 20% discount to anyone that renews by or at the Annual Meeting on January 19. A renewal form has been included with this newsletter if you have not renewed.

We can't stress enough how important your membership is. Your dues support our activities including this newsletter. In addition, your membership is a statement of the importance of Upton State Forest to you. When we speak to public officials they realize that we have the strength of 120 members.

Even though we do not have life membership and your dues are annual being a Charter Member is an honor. It indicates that you were among the first to recognize the importance of joining together to protect an asset we all enjoy.

Fix It First Friends Grant

Last year with the help of Girl Scout Troop 911 we raised \$300.00. This money was used to apply for a matching grant from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. We have received notice that our application was accepted and they are awarding an additional \$700.00. The project will be restoration of the Entrance Gateway to Upton State Forest.

Civilian Conservation Corps 75th Anniversary

2008 is the 75th anniversary of the CCC and plans are underway on both the national and state levels to honor the occasion. Since Upton has 3 of only 5 remaining camp buildings in the state we should be involved in some way. If you have any ideas Ellen would like to hear from you. (508-529-6610)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Upton State Forest

- January 19 Annual Meeting & Potluck Supper and Penny Sale (RSVP) 6PM, Upton Senior Center
- February 8 Trails Committee Meeting, 7PM Upton Police Station
- March 15 Historic Resources Committee Meeting 7 PM Upton Police Station
- March 19 Program, 7 PM Upton Senior Center "Birds & Wildlife of Central Massachusetts" By Rich Johnson

*all events subject to change

? contact fusf@charter.net or Ellen at 508-529-6610

Spring Yard Sale

Sometime this spring we will be doing a yard sale to benefit the work of the Friends of Upton State Forest. It will be held in a visible location with lots of traffic.

Please keep us in mind if you are doing any cleaning out. The yard sale committee asks that you be selective in your donations as they reserve the right to turn away any items not appropriate or saleable.

Contact any officer if you have any questions or to make a donation. Watch the next newsletter for more information.

Other Events

Winter Walks sponsored by Upton Open Space Committee: **(both begin at 1pm)**

*January 14 Upton Railroad from old First Cemetery to Chestnut St. Meet at Friendly Fire Paintball Parking Area (Take cart path across from 108 Grove St.)

*February 11 Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area from Taft Street Entrance

*FUSF is listing these events for your information. We take no responsibility for them. Questions should be directed to <uptonopenspace@charter.net>, Mike Penko at 508-529-6811, Rick Holmes at 508-529-4217 or Tom Dodd at 508-529-3392.

Bake Sales at Upton Town Hall

To benefit the work of the Trails Committee

January 6 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

January 27 " " "

February TBA

Contact Karen Ober 508-529-9029 if you can bake or give an hour or two to help either day.

The addition of this Calendar of Events is a suggestion made during the round table discussions at our November meeting. If you are aware of an event at Upton State Forest or have another appropriate event let us know. We will list it as long as it does not conflict with one of our events.