



FRIENDS OF UPTON STATE FOREST INC. NEWSLETTER

<http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org/>
fusf@charter.net

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March 2007

President's Message By Ellen Arnold

Shortly after his inauguration in March of 1933 Franklin Delano Roosevelt initiated legislation that formed the Civilian Conservation Corps. 2008 will mark the 75th anniversary of that event. This program put men to work reforesting our nation and conserving our natural resources at a time when the nation was in economic turmoil. Each man earned \$30.00 a month keeping \$5.00 with the remainder going home to his family. There was a direct benefit to the environment as well as support for desperate families.

Those of us that enjoy Upton State Forest and other state and federal parks are benefactors of that legislation and the work of the men of the CCC. On a personal level I have enjoyed parks created by the "C's" since I was a child. I spent countless summer days at Bear Brook State Park in NH and visited parks in the White Mountains. Russ and I have climbed Mt. Tom many times with Frank Evans. Our climbs were always enlivened with stories of his time in the "C's" building the park we were enjoying. When we purchased our home the fact that Upton State Forest was in the backyard was a deciding factor for us.

I like to think that by being stewards of Upton State Forest we are carrying on the legacy of the CCC.

Starting March 30 there are events being planned on a state level for 2007 and 2008 to honor the men of the CCC. I hope that you will participate in some of them as a way of saying thank you. Watch this newsletter for dates.

Upcoming Events

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 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.

There will be a brief business meeting before the program. Since we will be electing officers (see page 3, Nominating Committee) sign in will be required and you will receive a voting card.

Annual Picnic and CCC Day at Upton Saturday, May 26 At Upton State Forest

Plans are being made for a combined picnic with Upton Historical Society. After lunch there will be a tree dedication and fireside chats with CCC alumni and others sharing their memories of the C's and Upton State Forest. There will be trail walks, raffles displays and other activities. Children and guests are welcome. Watch for information in the May newsletter.

Walking, Hiking and Beyond

By John Fahy



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

Most hikes in the forest include little interaction with the native wildlife. Two or more people will make enough noise to warn off any animals. An occasional squirrel or chipmunk can be expected. Songbirds will be heard and sometimes seen. Fish break the surface on ponds where you might see ducks, geese or swans gliding by.

Vernal pools have an interesting community of salamanders, frogs and insects that can be observed during different seasons of the year. Most summers these pools are dry but the animals in them can be harmed by thoughtless travel through them.

At Upton State Forest water flows downhill from the swamp near the parking lot to Dean Pond and nearby wetlands. These wetlands encourage the development of insects but this is also why songbirds are so common making bird watching a popular activity.

The woodlands of New England are infamous for the variety of insects in spring and early summer. Black-flies and no-see-ums are particularly vicious from May through July while mosquitoes and ticks continue through the season. One effective repellent is DEET (diethyl-meta-toluamide) available in several strengths. It is not recommended for children and some people prefer to use natural products such as Citronella Oil. You can also protect yourself by wearing long sleeved clothing and using netting material to protect your head and ankles.

It is wise not to use the forest alone. Most users prefer to be with small groups although many experienced

outdoor enthusiasts do enjoy a solo experience and the best chance of seeing wildlife is when you are alone. In New England forests, deer abound, turkeys and other game birds will explode from the underbrush and the furtive coyote, fisher cat or fox are not uncommon. In recent years the black bear has been moving east from the Connecticut River Valley.

An alert user might see tell tale signs such as tracks, scat and territorial markings as evidence of animals using the forest. If we use common sense and avoid confrontation, wildlife and people can share the forest without incident. Leashing dogs prevents encounters with animals that are protecting their territory and young.

The forest is a fragile place easily damaged by over use and erosion. It is the duty of users to be caretakers of our natural resources.

Beaver Update by Chris Scott

When winter arrives the resident beavers at Upton State Forest drastically reduce their activities. When the air temperature reaches a frigid -10C, all above ice activities cease. Before the wetlands freeze over, the beavers drag sticks and branches below the water for their winter food source. Nature's refrigerator is the area under the ice opposite the lodge entrance. They also eat the roots of some aquatic plants below the ice. The interior of their lodge can stay at 55F during the winter months, heated by their body heat.

The latest survey of the area shows two active beaver lodges and one abandoned lodge. The beaver deceivers on both sides of Southborough Road are currently functioning to keep the water levels from rising in the spring. Re-evaluation of their positioning is planned for July, with possible additional decreases in the water levels.

Nominating Committee

Due to unforeseen circumstances our Treasurer, Betty Roche had to step down. As stipulated by our by-laws the Board of Directors appointed Joan Shanahan as interim Treasurer. Since Betty and Joan were nominees for 2007 the membership voted at the annual meeting to postpone election of officers until our March meeting.

The slate of officers proposed by the Nominating Committee is:

President: Ellen Arnold
Vice President: Joan Shanahan
Treasurer: Chris Scott
Recording Secretary: John Fahy
Corr. Secretary: Agnita Knott
Member at Large: David Kennedy
Member at Large: To be announced

If you wish to propose an alternate for any position please contact Ellen at fusf@charter.net or 508-529-6610. Thank you to Barbara Burke, Lou Despres and Bob Ethier for their work on the Nominating Committee.

Web Site on Line!

We are excited to announce that our web site is on line. There is still some content to be added but it will be updated as we go along.

Thank you to Nick Lux, Mike Penko and Ken Crater for technical assistance. Ellen Arnold, Mike Penko, Karen Ober and Rufin VanBossuyt worked on content. Photos were provided by: Ellen & Russ Arnold, Betty Bates, John Fahy, Bill Johnston, Lurissa Marston, Jane Milligan, Ellen Onorato, Betty Roche, Upton Historical Society and Beatrice Wood as well as the Department of Conservation and Recreation Civilian Conservation Corps Archives.

To view the site type the address into your browser bar.
<http://www.friendsofuptonstateforest.org>

Membership

Our membership has grown to 138 members from three states. This is an amazing fact considering that in September 2005 we began with 38 members.

If your membership card says 2006 it is time to renew. Dues can be mailed to: PO Box 258, Upton, MA 01568-0258. If you need a form or have questions you can also reach us at fusf@charter.net.

Trails Committee

The next meeting of the Trails Committee is Monday, March 12, 7PM at the Upton Senior Center.

Everyone is welcome. We will be discussing schedules for work parties, trail walks, sign placement and the Be Safe Be Seen campaign.

At our last meeting there was a discussion about a schedule of informal group days at Upton State Forest. The idea is to schedule a specific day each month for a different activity. Such as hikers meet to do a group walk one Sunday, or equestrians come for a ride on a different Sunday, trail bikers take another day etc: If you have an activity that you would like to lead please contact Karen Ober at 509-529-9029 or fusf@charter.net.

Bake Sales

Thank you to everyone that made our bake sales a success either by making a financial donation, baking or manning the booth. There are too many of you to list your names in this space but you can take satisfaction in knowing that the money raised will be used for the benefit of trails at Upton State Forest.

We are also grateful to the youth and parents of the Upton Youth Club for purchasing our goodies.

Joseph Petrowski -1938



(photo courtesy of DCR CCC Archives)

Interview with Joseph Petrowski By Ellen Arnold

Joe came to Upton in 1938 from a camp in the Springfield area that was closing. At 20 years of age he became the project leader overseeing the crew that built Dean Pond Dam. Twice a week he would go to the Administration Building to meet with P. J. O'Malley, Camp Superintendent, to review the plans and get his instructions. Alan Frost was the Project Supervisor.

Twenty seven men worked on the crew building the dam except for the days when the cement was poured and then additional men were used.

The dam was constructed in four separate pourings. The cement was mixed on site and poured into the forms from wheelbarrows pushed by the men. The two spillways were constructed of field stone collected from the area around the dam and Joe placed each one by hand. As a third overflow precaution an outlet valve was placed near the center of the dam. When the dam was

finished the cement core was covered with earth giving it the natural appearance we see today.

At one point while the dam was being built the crew unearthed works of a mill that had been on the site in the 1800's. This was the Gore mill that had been in operation over 100 years when the earlier dam washed out in 1882.

Inspector's reports from 1938 showed the total cost to impound Dean Pond Dam as \$2,164.00.

During the hurricane of 1938 Joe had been visiting his parents in Maynard for the weekend. His mother didn't want him to leave during the storm but Joe insisted he had to get back to camp so he would not be AWOL! He was able to get rides as far as Northborough and then had to walk the rest of the way due to the trees that were down. When he got back to the camp the first building of Camp SP25 to be lost was one of the garages that had blown down.

Some of Joe's other memories of Upton included walking to Pratt Pond by way of Park Rd. to go skating with a young lady from East Upton. I asked him about "Painted Valley" and he said that in the fall when you stood on the high point of Park Rd and looked east it looked as if an artist had painted the color. It was so beautiful that the men named it "Painted Valley". Joe described the lands of Upton State Forest as a great funnel with streams and wetlands all draining toward Dean Pond.

Before he left that day he told me that we (Friends of Upton State Forest) were living his dream "To come back and help take care of Upton State Forest."

(Joe passed away December 26, 2007)

Civilian Conservation Corps Day

March 30, 2007, 11:00am

Massachusetts State House Grand Staircase

Join us to celebrate the past and the present as we honor the accomplishments of the 100,000 men enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in Massachusetts from 1933-1941.

The CCC was a unique federal works program that touched the lives of the crew members and their families in a time of great need. Their work has had a lasting legacy of forest improvements and recreational resources that became a cornerstone of today's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Massachusetts State Park system, a heritage in sweat and stone for which we are gaining new appreciation and a renewed spirit of stewardship for public lands.

A reception to follow in Room B2 (the Adams Room).

Please RSVP by Friday, March 23, or for additional information contact Donna or Alec at Mount Greylock State Reservation: 413-499-4262.

Generous support for this event provided by State Senators Michael W. Morrissey (Norfolk and Plymouth), Edward M. Augustus, Jr. (2nd Worcester) and State Representative George N. Peterson, Jr. (9th Worcester).

Statehouse directions:

The Massachusetts State House does not have public parking facilities. Using nearby MBTA public transportation via the Green, Red and Orange lines to Park Street Station, or Blue Line to Government Center Station, is more convenient and less expensive.

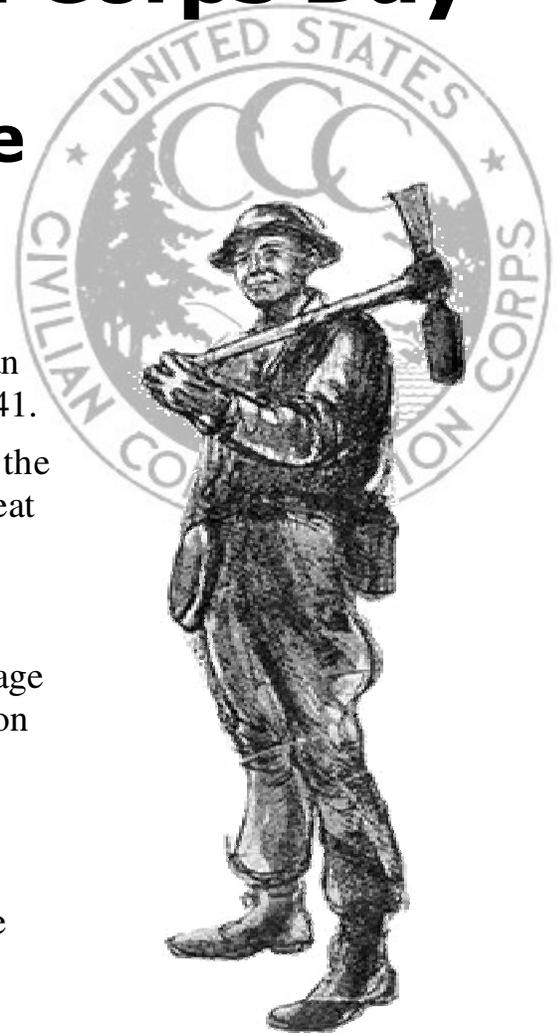
For detailed directions please visit:

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/trs/trsdir/diridx.htm>.

The nearest parking facility to the State House is the **Boston Common Garage**. Information can be obtained by calling them at 617-954-2096 or visiting their website at

http://www.mccahome.com/bcg_con.html.

Should you require universally accessible **Handicapped Parking** please contact Senator Michael Morrissey's office by March 23 for arrangements: 617-722-1494.



CCC75
2008
MASSACHUSETTS STATE PARKS

dcr
Massachusetts



It's Your Nature

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friends of Upton State Forest

- March 12 Trails Committee Meeting, 7 PM
Upton Senior Center
- March 15 Historic Resources Committee Meeting
7PM-Upton Police Station Meeting Room
- March 19 Members Meeting and Program 7PM
Upton Senior Center
“Birds and Wildlife of Central Massachusetts”
By Rich Johnson
Public welcome
- March 26 FUSF Board Meeting
7 PM, place to be announced
- May 26 CCC Day at Upton and Combined picnic FUSF & Upton Historical Society-Save the Date
Details in May newsletter

Friends Yard Sale

September 8 (rain date Sept. 15) has been set as the date for our yard sale. It will be held at a member’s home on Hartford Av. in Upton so there will be plenty of traffic to stop and shop.

Please keep us in mind if you are 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. We will not be accepting appliances or computers.

There is limited space to store small items so if you have something please contact a member of the committee. If you have large items we hope that you will be able to store them until a day or two before the sale. Just let us know what you have. Pick up can be arranged for large items if you don’t have a truck.

The committee is John Fahy, Norm Fahy, Mary Fedorczuk and Ellen Arnold. You can contact them directly or leave a message at fusf@charter.net.

Other Events

- Civilian Conservation Corps Committee
Of the Department of Conservation and Recreation
- March 30 CCC Day at State House
See flyer on reverse for details. RSVP to Ellen
508-529-6610 or
fusf@charter.net by
March 19-car pool or train

Wish List

Have you had a party and got left over paper goods? We can use them for refreshments at meetings, work parties and events.

Quote of the Month

“Never doubt that a group of thoughtful committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”
Margaret Mead