Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter

Fall 2024
Vol.37 No. 3

We must hear and listen to all of Quabbin's many Voices. Voices of the Past, as well as Voices of the Present and of the Future. Voices of the Trees, the Sky, the Rain that falls, and all the Wild Things; Voices of the People who depend on this valuable resource for their daily needs of clean water, and Voices of those who draw upon it for deeper needs of the Soul.

—Les Campbell

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The Ongoing Saga of Keystone Bridge 2024

by Paul Godfrey

In the summer of 2021, damage to the Keystone Bridge of New Salem was first noticed by Janice and Randy Stone. They were out looking for unusual ferns along the trail that uses the Keystone Bridge to span the middle branch of the Swift River. And they noticed that the portion of the bridge leading to the actual arch had collapsed with several large boulders rolling down toward the stream. With some help from the Friends of Quabbin, the Department of Conservation (DCR) Quabbin was notified. Soon an assessment was being done for DCR by their contract engineering firm out of Boston. Their assessment gave three alternatives: 1) Do nothing, not recommended out of concern for public safety and damage to river; 2) close and try to find an expert in free stone masonry to rebuild entire bridge but cost expected to be large; and 3) demolish and remove the bridge.

DCR-Quabbin went looking for an expert that could implement option 2 but quickly ran into the roadblock that there were none on the state list of vendors. Not restricted by such red tape, the Friends of Quabbin, working with DCR, found an appropriate expert in Vermont and arranged for him to conduct an assessment of the bridge's condition. That assessment was conducted in June 2021. That assessment by Michael Weitzner, a Professional member of the Dry Stone Walling Association of Great Britain and leading expert in the Northeast U.S. was described in detail in the Summer 2021 Newsletter. He presented his results to DCR and the Board in the fall of 2021 (preliminary results were in the Summer 2021 FOQ Newsletter). Since then, the Friends has been trying to get an approximate estimate of the cost of repair and seek funding to cover the cost.

South Elevation, looking north 2019

Spring 2021

Everything speeded up when a visit to the bridge in 2023 by DCR-Quabbin engineers revealed serious deterioration in the east side spandrel in the form of a gaping hole.

In the spring of 2024, DCR removed the trees that were thought to be a contributing to the bridge's deteriorating condition which by now was dire. Michael Weitzner revisited the site after the tree removal and brought along his excavator to assess the situation. The two of them came up with a cost estimate of $60,000 to stabilize the bridge by repairing the spandrel. The Friends of Quabbin Board *(continued p.4)*

Gene Theroux

President's Message

Fall 2024

Kaylee Clark with Gene Theroux

Fall has arrived and the foliage has begun It had been a busy summer and there have been a lot of happenings around the valley and with the Friends of Quabbin. Since the last newsletter, the friends of Quabbin Board of Directors held an emergency meeting to discuss the Keystone Bridge and the bronze artifacts at Quabbin Park Cemetery on July 25, 2024, in response to some key deadlines and new information.

The Dana Reunion was held on Sunday, July 21, 2024, on Dana Common. The Dana Reunion was well attended, and it was a pleasant surprise to see Kaylee Clark (granddaughter of Earl and Lois Cooley) at the event. Kaylee was visiting from Sweden where she has been living for the last few years and teaching school.

In 2013, Kaylee completed a Girls Scout Gold Award project to place memorial photos around Dana Common; they were mounted in front of locations that were once buildings and homes (see the summer 2013 *Quabbin Voices*). The year 2013 was also memorable year because in March of 2013, Dana Common was added to the list of National Historic Places. But since then, the photos at Dana Common have faded and one of the kiosks has been vandalized.

Vandalized mounted photo of the Dana Common

During the business meeting of the Dana Reunion, it was decided to continue the annual Dana Reunions on Dana Common and election of officers was conducted.

At the September Friends of Quabbin Board of Directors meeting held on September 12, 2024, the coordinating committee introduced the need to accomplish a refresh of the photos at the Dana Common as well as producing a video describing these structures. The video will be linked off the Friends of Quabbin webpage and a QR code will be placed at Dana Common. So that visitors could scan the QR code and will launch the video of the narrated tour of Dana Common Quabbin historian and Friends of Quabbin Chairman of the Board, J.R. Greene has given permission to use text from his book, *Historic Quabbin Hikes* to be used as part of the narration in the movie.

Most recently, I attended the New Salem Academy Trustees meeting held on Saturday, September 28, 2024. The New Salem Academy has a rich history dating back to 1795 when Governor Samuel Adams signed its original charter. Academy students came from the Quabbin towns as well as surrounding towns, some riding the Rabbit Run to and from school. The Old Academy Building has stood on the New Salem Common since 1838. It is the oldest stacked plank building in the Commonwealth. Moisture in the basement has caused rapid deterioration in recent years of the joists and sills to the point where the Town closed the building two years ago. The Academy Trustees and the New Salem Historical Commission have jointly funded the cost of an architect to study how best to preserve this historic building. Now the Academy Trustees are discussing ways to use Trustee resources to repair the moisture problems in the basement and to reopen the building for art programs and performances. Once this is accomplished, people in the surrounding area may enjoy an interesting day trip to visit the Old Academy Building with its Academy Museum, participate in an arts class, or enjoy a performance.

Old Academy Building, New Salem Academy —photo from University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries

I'm honored to serve as a Trustee with the New Salem Academy Trustees. The New Salem Academy Trustees have been a good partner with the Friends of Quabbin and have been supportive of mutual interest projects throughout the years. The New Salem Academy Trustees have supported the initiative to preserve the gravestones/monuments at Quabbin Park Cemetery and had donated one thousand dollars towards QPC preservation. In the spring of 2024, the NSA Trustees contributed two thousand dollars for the Revolutionary War Monument that was unveiled at the 2024 Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery.

After the conclusion of the New Salem Academy Trustees meeting, I traveled north to the Keystone Bridge to witness the current conditions at the bridge and the developing cavity in the south face of the spandrel. After placing my eyes on the current conditions of the bridge, I can only applaud the Friends of Quabbin Board of Directors decision made at the emergency meeting held on July 25, 2024 to approve the expenditure of $60,000 for hiring a specialized contractor to

President's Message

Continued from page 2

stabilize the Keystone Bridge. The Keystone Arch Bridge in New Salem, Massachusetts, stands as a testament to both engineering ingenuity and historical significance. It just amazes me that Civil War veteran Adolphus Porter, the builder of the bridge, was able to accomplish the building of this bridge without the use of modern equipment and tools. The history of Adolphus Porter is poorly documented and contradictory (see "The Man Behind the Keystone Bridge," in this issue).

It is important to remember that the Friends of Quabbin mission focuses on preservation and education. The Friends of Quabbin has been consistent in upholding this mission since its founding in 1984. In my view, the Friends of Quabbin clearly upheld its mission at its emergency meeting held on July 25, 2024 by voting to stabilize the Keystone Bridge, and for the conservation of the bronze artifacts at Quabbin Park Cemetery. To have done nothing to save the Keystone Bridge would be shameful.

Enfield, a Town

by Anne Ely

It was a town like any other;
It had its downside and it had its charm.
Many folks there knew one another
And of course, all children knew the schoolmarm.

There were factories and a hotel;
Some people had small business in town,
But the hardest of jobs I've heard tell
Were those of the farmers who worked the ground.

Twenty-four seven is what they knew;
They were up at dawn and worked until dark.
Even the youngest had chores to do.
Yes, farming life was no walk in the park.

Clearing the rocky fields was a chore;
There was more than one sore back at day's end
From digging up rocks, but there was more
For all those rocks had to be moved again.

But it seemed to be that they knew how
And so, in a most ingenious way,
Not only were fields cleared for the plow,
They built miles of stone walls still seen today.

Photo by Burt Brooks

Photo courtesy of Jenny Kirley

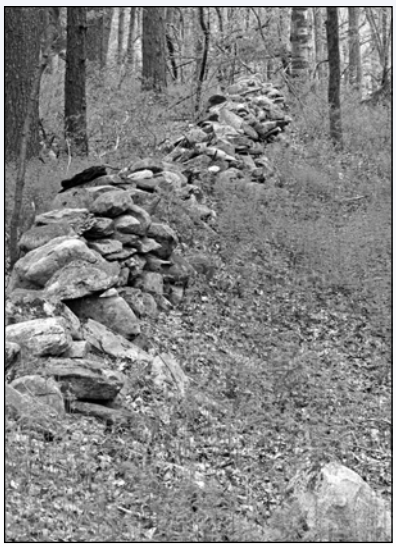


Photo by Anne Ely

The walls weren't meant to be works of art,
Although many folks think they are today,
They were fences to keep crops apart
From any livestock deciding to stray.

Some rocks never made it to a wall,
They were just right for a home's foundation
And, where once stood a home, they are all
That we see of a past generation.

So, what once was a town is now gone
Along with everyone who once lived there,
But we have photos to gaze upon
And family stories we treasure with care.

Keystone Bridge

Continued from page 1

September 2023

met in an emergency session on July 25th to approve an expenditure of $60,000 to cover the cost of the Keystone Bridge stabilization.

On September 11th, Weitzner, the excavator, Scott Campbell of DCR, two Board members from the Friends, Paul Godfrey and Mark Lindhult and other DCR engineers had a virtual meeting to flesh out the details for quickly beginning work. These included getting necessary permits, determining the safest and most efficient means of work and a starting and ending date. But behind all the details was an abiding concern that can't be erased: what if the bridge collapses during the work to save it? And what if it collapses anyway in the next few years? All that money will have been wasted.

July 2024

The first of these concerns was considerably eased during the meeting. If the Bridge collapsed during stabilization, the excavator's bill would be adjusted to reflect only the work done. Even more importantly, Dan Clark, DCR regional Quabbin director, said that cleanup for a collapse would be DCR's responsibility, as it would have been the same result if no attempt to save the bridge had been made. The second concern has no easy answer; we simply can't read the near future of the bridge except to note that the bridge survived the 1938 hurricane and other major storms, possibly because upstream a short distance away is a large wetland area that serves to reduce the velocity of storm water moving down the Middle Branch of the Swift River, Michael Weitzner noted that repairs had been made to the spandrel on the opposite side of the bridge and those have held up for the past 80 years. If we can keep all the forces from above and to the side of the bridge balanced as required for mortarless stone construction and make the necessary repairs the bridge will keep standing. We asked about how the construction will proceed: will there be large stone removal and then replacement by large machinery that might disrupt that balance of forces even for a short time. The answer was that the excavator expects to move the stone close to the bridge by machine but do most of the actual placement by hand with careful concern for leaving no large spaces by mixing large rocks and smaller stones and working from inside the cavity outward rather than from the top.

DCR was also quite concerned that the environment in the work area be disrupted as little as possible. Discussion of sediment barriers, matting and other means to minimize this satisfied DCR.

DCR estimated that it would take as much as 1½ months to obtain necessary permits and that the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program did not allow construction until late October or early November. This was actually the preferred time for the excavator and that only deep snow would prevent work this winter. And if that all works, it would mean that work would be completed before the spring rains brought the most danger to the bridge.

On September 12th, the next day, the Friends of Quabbin had its normal September Board meeting. Although the Board had approved the expenditure of $60,000 on top of the already expended $14,300 for the assessment in July's emergency meeting, there was still a lot of concern about the amount of money committed and the risk of failure. While everything was being done to allay the risk and FOQ had the money, this was the majority of FOQ's total assets. The simple truth is that FOQ needs help in the longer term to cover the cost. The FOQ commitment should be seen as what's needed to start the wheels moving but that other resources, i.e. donations, are needed over the next months and years to repay a significant part of our initial outlay.

Also discussed at the September 11th meeting was re-establishing foot and bicycle travel across the Middle Branch of the Swift River that had been provided by Keystone. A new footbridge upstream was discussed but deemed expensive. An alternative is to lay long beams across the Keystone bridge that are supported beyond the arch so as not to put any weight on the bridge. Decking could then support foot and bicycle traffic. Neither alternative is part of the current effort.

One thing is clear at this time, the bridge is in a precarious state. The Friends of Quabbin are committed to preserving the cultural and natural history of the Quabbin and the Keystone Bridge is one piece that is currently under threat. We hope to save this historic bridge for future generations to appreciate. Please assist us in this effort.

Can You Help Us Save the Keystone Bridge?

All donations are greatly appreciated. Large donations will be credited on a sign at the site at a future date, if desired. Please make check out to Friends of Quabbin, Inc. and send to Friends of Quabbin, Quabbin Administration Building, 485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

The Friends of Quabbin is a 501c3 corporation and your donation is tax-deductible, EIN: 22-2695864.

Do you bank at Florence Bank?
Vote for Friends of Quabbin in their Community Grants Program.
Community Grants Program | Western MA Bank | Florence Bank

The Man Behind the Keystone Bridge

by Paul Godfrey and Gene Theroux

Photo Swift River Valley Historical Society

A few details about the constructor of Keystone Bridge are fairly certain and most of the rest are clouded by different records, incomplete details or, simply, no information. It is certain that the bridge was built by Adolphus Porter of New Salem, Mass. in 1866. It is also pretty certain that Porter enlisted in the Union Army twice, 1861 and 1865. It is not certain how long it took him, whether he had help and where he learned this rather specialized ability. What follows is our best to detail his history from a variety of records, many conflicting.

Adolphus' father was Asa Porter, who was born in Lyme, New Hampshire in 1783. Asa (age 17) married Martha Williams in December, 1800 in Huntington, MA. Asa and Martha had three children: Asa, Jr. (born 1801), Nelson (born 1803) and Freeman (born 1806). Martha died on April 14, 1808.

Porter (age 27) married Eunice (also known as Anna) Dimock on May 24, 1810 in Huntington, MA. They had seven children: Dexter (born 1/19/1810), Leartes F. (born 11/23/1811), Sereno Lyman (born 1812), Calvin (born 1814), Adolphus (born 1820), Eunice and Cynthia, twins (born 1821). Asa's wife, Eunice, died "sometime after the birth of the twins and before Asa's marriage to Polly Gates" (Family Search Family Tree).

Asa (now age 39) then married Polly Gates about 1822 and moved to Orange, MA. There, they had two children: Mary Brigham (born 1825) and Jonathan G. (born about 1826). They moved to a farm in Wendell, MA around 1845. Polly died in 1848 in Wendell at about the age of 58. Overall, Asa had 12 children. Asa died in 1858 (age 75).

Adolphus (some records have him as Adolphous) was the 5th son of Asa Porter and Eunice Eunice Anna (Dimock) Porter. He was born in 1820, either in Huntington, MA or Chesterfield, MA, not New Hampshire as sometimes reported. He married Mary Young Clark in New Salem, MA on July 2, 1840. Presumably, she died before 1856, because he married Nancy Lodema Gay on May 19, 1856. All told, Adolphus had six children: Martha S., Julia Abigail, Charles Ferdinand with Mary, Mary Elizabeth, Lodenia Maria, and Edith Lucy with Nancy.

On April 12, 1861, the Civil War started with the bombardment of Fort Sumter by the Confederacy. On September 15, 1861, at the age of 40 and five years after his marriage to Nancy, Adolphus enlisted in the Union Army, "B" Company, MA 27th Infantry. He was paid a bounty of $33.33 at the time and promised $66.66. Lest $33.33 look trivial, in today's dollars, it is approximately $1,179.52 with $2,359.04 promised later. For further reference, the weekly pay for masons in Massachusetts in 1860 was $11.45 ($409.59 in today's dollars), about the same for machinists and less than half for laborers. At that time, he was generally described as a laborer and a mechanic. Adolphus was described on his enlistment papers as a laborer. He had blue eyes, sandy hair and complexion and was 5'6¼" tall.

Once outfitted at Annapolis, Maryland, they were assigned to Foster's (1st) Brigade and shipped to North Carolina. The regiment's first battles were fought at Roanoke Island and New Bern. On March 13th, 1862, 11,000 Union troops led by General Ambrose Burnside (of the noted side burns) with the objective of capturing the town of New Bern because of its strategic position. Awaiting the Union forces of 11,000 was a Confederate force of 4,500 inexperienced and ill-equipped Confederate troops. The battle raged for nearly six hours, finally forcing the retreat of the Confederate troops. Estimated casualties for the battle was 1080. Adolphus was wounded on March 14, 1862 in New Bern, NC. His injuries are not described but resulted in his discharge from the army on September 11, 1862. He went home to New Salem. It is not known if all his children were born before this enlistment or some were born after.

The Soldier's Record for the town of Chicopee states that Adolphus Porter mustered when he was 20 years old, born in Canada and his father was Jeremiah. Then he was "attacked by Typhoid Fever and mustered out in March 1862 by reason of rheumatism and general disability. This Adolphus would

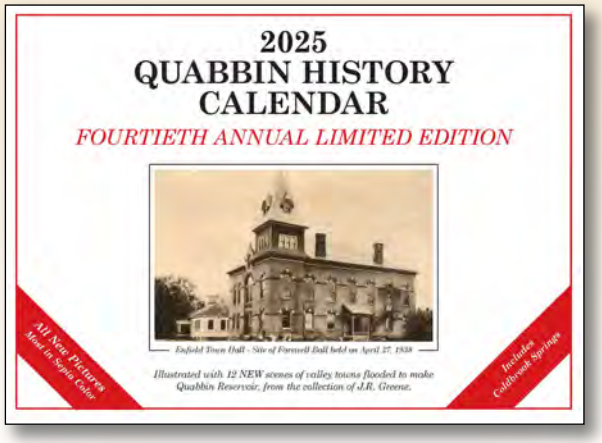
appear to be a different one than the New Salem one. One report stated that Adophus lost a leg in one of his enlistments in the siege of Petersburg. The siege of Petersburg occurred from April through June of 1864; Adolphus was not in the army at the time. No other evidence of his having an amputation can be found and in the picture of him (shown above), he appears to have both legs and feet. He does have a cane.

On August 25, 1864 in Greenfield, MA, Adolphis Porter, at the age of 44, enlisted again for one year. He was assigned to the 4th Massachusetts Heavy Artillery Regiment. The 4th Massachusetts Volunteer Heavy Artillery Regiment served in the latter part of the Civil War. The regiment was created to provide coastal defense to the state and were to serve one year. They encamped on Gallops Island in Boston Harbor in August and September, 1864, after which they were ordered to Washington, D.C. for garrison duty in the forts surrounding the capital under the command of Colonel William Sterling King. The company muster roll shows Adolphus as present in October, 1864 but absent in November and December because he was hospitalized. In January and February, 1865, he is listed on the muster roll as sick at the Carver Hospital, Washington, D.C. By the time of the March/April muster roll, he was deemed unfit for service and discharged on April 13, 1865. The records only indicate that this was because of a physical disability. The entire regiment was mustered out on June 16, 1865.

Adolphus went back to his farm in north New Salem to recover. After his recovery in 1866, the town of New Salem hired him to build the Keystone Bridge connecting the village of Millington, New Salem with Orange, MA and points north via the Orange-Millington Road. He was paid a total of $37.50 ($901.25 today). It bridges the Middle Branch of the Swift River, one of three branches of the Swift River that feed Quabbin Reservoir. The road became a recreational trail when Quabbin Reservoir was created.

Adolphus died on June 12, 1899, age 79, in New Salem, MA and is buried in Orange, MA.

Carver Hospital, Washington, D.C.



Quabbin historian J.R. Greene has issued the fortieth annual edition of his annual Quabbin History Calendar. It contains views of a mill, a school, a roadside stand, summer camp, and winter scenes from the four towns destroyed to build Quabbin Reservoir. Also included are views from parts of Pelham and Belchertown taken for the project, and one from Coldbrook Springs in Oakham, taken for the sister Ware River diversion project.

Views from the author's collection are in sepia tone, while ones from the old MDWSC appraisal files are in black and white. The calendar is spiral-bound, and hole-punched, and sells for **$16.95**. It is on sale at the Quabbin Visitor Center, and selected outlets in Western Central Massachusetts.

Quabbin Interpretive Services Report

Fall 2024

by Maria Beiter-Tucker

September through November are traditionally a very busy time for Quabbin Park and the DCR Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center. Visitors travel from all over New England (and farther!) to see the beauty of Quabbin Reservoir in the fall.

For those that visit us in person, we encourage everyone to stop first at the Visitor Center at 100 Winsor Dam Road in Belchertown. Staff are available six days a week (the Center is closed on Wednesdays) to help orient visitors to Quabbin Park and Reservation and to provide guidance whether people are planning to hike, bike or drive through Quabbin Park while they are here. Visitor Center staff are always happy to chat for a few minutes to recommend what areas visitors may be most interested in exploring.

From the Visitor Center, visitors can choose to take an easy walk or bike ride across Winsor Dam and enjoy the views of the reservoir's west arm. Bald Eagles and common loons are frequently sighted from the Dam and very occasionally river otter may be glimpsed frolicking in the water.

For visitors interested in exploring a little further in the area near the Visitor Center, staff will generally suggest the two-mile Visitor Center Loop Trail. This trail travels below the dam and along the channel where water is released into the Swift River. After crossing a picturesque bridge, the trail takes visitors along the Swift River and the Y-Pool area that is a popular spot for fly fishermen throughout the year. The trail then heads up through the woods along a ridge trail and back down to the Visitor Center area.

But the Visitor Center doesn't just offer information about hikes but also provides context to the history and the management of the Reservoir. Many visitors come here with no knowledge about the area or perhaps some longstanding rumors related to church steeples being under the water. In the Visitor Center, there are a variety of displays that discuss the history of the construction of the reservoir, the towns that were removed and also about how the land is managed today to protect the drinking water of over three million people in Massachusetts.

Recognizing that today many people may look first at the internet for information about a place they want to visit, Visitor Center staff have been working to develop more online resources. With that in mind we have been working to create a series of storymaps for the Quabbin Park trails. These storymaps will include a map as well as descriptions and photos. Current storymaps can be found here **https://www.mass.gov/info-details/quabbin-reservoir-and-ware-river-watersheds-education-programs#self-guided-tours,-interactive-trail-map,-and-other-activities-to-do-on-your-own-** and offer more in-depth information about the Quabbin Park Cemetery and the Webster Road Trail. As well, many of the displays from the Visitor Center are available on the website, offering virtual visitors the opportunity to peruse them from home. Many of our presentations are recorded and available on MASSDCR YouTube site along with short videos focused on watershed management and history **https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list = PL2yN9X7t6shr1ASUNCA2B8Gk0EHa7sDWH** Over the next few months and years we hope to have much more interactive materials available for visitors both local and far away.

As always, please email **QuabbinVisitor.Center@mass.gov** with any questions.

Fall birches on a Quabbin road

John H. Howe Family of Enfield

by Robert Howe and Diane Palmer

The Howe family came to Enfield when Solomon Howe bought a farm in the south east corner in 1791. His son John Howe (1783-1845) took over the farm and was also a printer in Enfield. John's son Henry C.M. Howe became a farmer and moved to south-central Enfield; his family is well documented in *Quabbin, The Lost Valley.* Another son, John Holmes Howe took over the original Howe farm. He had seven daughters and two sons. John H. Howe's first wife died while some of the children were young and his second wife, Bersha Ann Spooner Howe, raised the children. After John H. Howe's death, the farm passed to his son Samuel.

Eighteen members of the families of John (1783-1845) and John H. (1816-1880) were originally buried in the Howe Family Cemetery on the farm. Only five people had marble gravestones; the rest had field stones to mark their graves. The last person buried there was Dr. Harriet A Howe in 1926. Her grave was marked only with a field stone. The eighteen souls were removed from the Howe Family Cemetery and moved to Quabbin Park cemetery in 1938 to make way for the Quabbin reservoir. Only the original marble gravestones were moved; the other graves are unmarked.

1926 aerial photo of Howe property (from Sean Fisher –DCR archives)

I received a message on FindaGrave from Diane Palmer because I had cleaned and photographed some of the Howe Cemetery Stones in Quabbin Park Cemetery. Diane told me she was related to the Howes, and she wanted to share the Howe family history that she had. Over the next several days Diane emailed some photos of the Howe house and barn, stories, documentation, and photos from the Holmes Spooner Howe family. Her ancestor, Holmes Spooner Howe, was the last Howe to live on the farm in Enfield before it was taken for Quabbin. I had previously created an Enfield Howe family tree on Ancestry to see if there was a connection with my Howe line (there wasn't). I shared the family tree and told Diane that the Howes had lived next door to my Newcomb ancestors, and that I had explored the Howe and Newcomb's farmland. The properties were easily accessible within Quabbin. I had copies of the property maps, and a 1926 aerial survey photograph that I received from Sean Fisher (DCR archives).

Holmes S. Howe in the wagon, Samuel Howe (father) beside the wagon and Bersha Ann Spooner Howe (mother), far right, and Bersha Ann Spooner, John H. Howe's 2nd wife, at the new house (photo from Diane Palmer)

The "original" John H. Howe house around 1870 (from Marty Howe)

Diane had a couple unidentified house pictures of a newer house, one of which included Holmes Howe and his father Samuel and two women.

"Replacement house" built by Samuel Howe on old foundation, about 1920 (photo from Diane Palmer)

The Howe family tree determined the identities of the two women as Bersha Ann Spooner Howe, wife of Samuel Howe and Bersha Ann Spooner Howe, John H. Howe's 2nd wife. By looking at the Howe farm property map, specifically the locations of the barn and outbuildings, and the unusual bump out additions on the house, we were able to determine that the house was the replacement Howe house in Enfield that was built in 1904 and used on Thanksgiving Day of that year. The Howe property is one of the farms that is in the missing Quabbin photo book #6.

"Original" John Holmes house opposite side (photo from Diane Palmer)

Robert Howe and Diane Palmer at John H. Howe house (second house) foundation

The original house burned down on December 5,1897. This first house, first built on "the hill" was moved down to the later location due to lack of water on the hill. The house was originally a salt box and the roof was raised by John H. Howe. This information is based on Holmes S. Howe's written notes. By coincidence, about a month earlier, Marty Howe had given me a photo of the original house with the John Holmes Howe family and horse. This photo must have been taken before John Holmes Howe death in 1880. Diane had a picture of the same original house, photographed from the opposite side, with different family members and outbuilding.

On a cool but sunny day, Diane and her friend Michelle met up with me and we spent several hours hiking the Howe and Newcomb properties inside gate 49. At the Howe farm site, we located the house foundation and a well hole that appeared to have been inside the bump out addition of the house. We also located the stone wall and foundation that corresponded with the wonderful sketch of the barn that Dr. Harriet A. Howe did in 1885 (Holmes Howe's aunt). Lastly, we located the site of the former Howe family cemetery.

Sketch of barn on Howe site by Dr. Harriet A. Howe

We also went to the site of the Newcomb School house #8, about a mile north, and visited a beaver pond near by. If anybody has a photo of the Newcomb school house #8, we would love to see it.

Howe family plot in Quabbin Park Cemetery

We have lost most of the people that were the "last generation to be born in the Quabbin towns," but with the digitizing of records that are found on FindaGrave, Ancestry, Massachusetts Digital Commonwealth, and many other organizations, there is a whole new frontier of Quabbin valley history that is being discovered and preserved. Diane is planning to share copies of her photos and documents with the the Friends of Quabbin and Swift River Historical Society.

Meetings & Events

Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center Events

Sunday, November 3, 2024, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Rutland Prison Camp

Easy, uneven ground
Rutland Prison Camp, main parking lot
299 Intervale Road, Rutland, MA 01543
https://maps.app.goo.gl/J1iuV7QGB3rEAbxJ9

Fresh air, three home-cooked meals a day, comfortable sleeping quarters and a private hospital — sounds like a delightful retreat for a prison? Indeed, it was! Join DCR staff as we explore the remains of this surprisingly successful social experiment. Ticks are still active so protection is advised, as is wearing orange during hunting season.

Saturday, November 9, 2024, 11a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Exploring the Ware River Watershed

Group hike via the Riis Farm trail
3.5 miles – Intermediate
Ware River Watershed, Parking Area outside Gate R-1,
Fisher Road-Rice Road, Barre, MA 01005

Join us for a 3.5-mile lollipop loop hike in the Ware River Watershed. The route climbs/descends roughly 400 ft. in elevation.

We will all meet at the parking area located on Fish Road-Rice Road outside gate R-1 in the town of Barre. The hike travels through the former Riis Farm property. If we have enough time we may also stop by the Barre Heath property on the south side of Rt. 62. Visit the following website for additional information on the route:

https://www.trailforks.com/route/riis-farm-3-miles/

Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring water and snacks.

Saturday, December 14, 2024, 11a.m. – 1:30 p.m

Exploring the North Side of the Quabbin Watershed via Gate 35

5-miles – Intermediate
Quabbin Reservoir Gate 35, Old North Dana Road
New Salem, MA 01072

Join us for a 5-mile out/back hike on Quabbin's north side of the watershed. We will be walking along the water on a dirt road through the forest. We will cover 5 miles and the slope remains relatively flat the entire time.

Hike begins at Quabbin Reservoir's Gate 35. The parking area for Gate 35 is located at the end of Old North Dana Road in the town of New Salem.

Dogs are not allowed.

School Programs Most Closely Aligning with 3rd, 5th and 7th Grade Curricula

Narrated PowerPoint Presentations Interactive Classroom Programs

Outdoor Programs 35–45 minutes, available year-round as remote programs via Zoom or on-site at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center. These programs are also available in-person for schools in the Quabbin and Ware River watershed region.

1. *Exploring the Quabbin Reservoir*
   Quabbin Reservoir is part of a water supply system that provides drinking water to 43% of Massachusetts. How much do you know about the reservoir, it's history, and how it is managed today?
2. *Lost Towns of the Quabbin Valley*
   What was it like growing up in Dana, Enfield, Prescott and Greenwich before the reservoir was built? Find out through historic photos and former resident's own words.
3. *Eagles, Loons, and Bears Oh My!*
   In the past 50 years our region has seen the return of many woodland animals in part because of the great habitat created by the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River watershed forests. Learn about the behavior and habitats of some local wildlife.

Interactive Classroom Programs

30–45-minute programs focused on watershed protection, building dams, and wildlife at Quabbin. These programs are available to schools in the Quabbin and Ware River watershed region.

1. *Branching Out —What Is a Watershed?*
   What role do they play in our environment? Students will build a model of a watershed and learn how they impact the world around us. (Project WET Activity)
2. *Build a Dam*
   Where did the water for Quabbin Reservoir come from? In this program students will experiment building a model dam to better understand how the reservoir was created.
3. *Wildlife Artifacts Exploration*
   How heavy is a moose skull? How soft is rabbit fur? How are turkey's tail feathers different from the wing feathers? This 30 minute program provides students the opportunity to touch and examine wildlife artifacts from bones to feathers to pelts of wildlife.

Outdoor Programs

Visitor Center staff are also available to offer guided outdoor programs to schools and groups on site at Quabbin Reservoir.

1. *History Detectives*
   Explore Webster Road Trail in Quabbin Park and discover signs of the past. Easy – 0.5 miles

2. *Habitat Investigations*
   Walk the Shoreline Trail and look for signs of wildlife. Easy, 1.0 miles.
3. *Dana Common Hike* (Available to 5th grade and older)
   Walk the road to Dana Common and find out what life was like in one of the disestablished towns and discover how the landscape has changed since the Reservoir was built. Moderate, 1.8 miles to Dana Common.

The Friends of Quabbin is exploring ways that it can provide some assistance with transportation costs to the Les and Terry Campbell Visitor Center for on site visits.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

Sunday, October 20, 2024
Fall Hike

Gate 37 North Dana. Meet at Petersham Common for possible carpooling to gate (limited parking).

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR HIKES:

Light scattered showers do not cancel, steady rain does. Bring a lunch (optional) and prepare for insects/ticks. Follow all DCR rules. Dogs not allowed. All hikes meet for 11:00 a.m. departure. Hike lengths and times vary, due to either weather, "cellar hole poking," conversations, and terrain difficulty. The general window for most hikes is 4–6 hours.

Any necessary changes, cancellations or postponements in scheduling will be posted on our Facebook page.

Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

www.pvpotoartists.org
Hope United Methodist Church
31 Main Street, Belchertown, MA 01007

Meetings may be held via ZOOM.
Please visit website for more details.

Meeting Themes:

September 26	Contrasts
October 31	Stripes
November 28	Leaf
December 26	Negative Space

Quabbin Photo Group

On October 28th, the QPG will be meeting at the Hope United Methodist Church, 31 Main Street, Belchertown, MA 01007

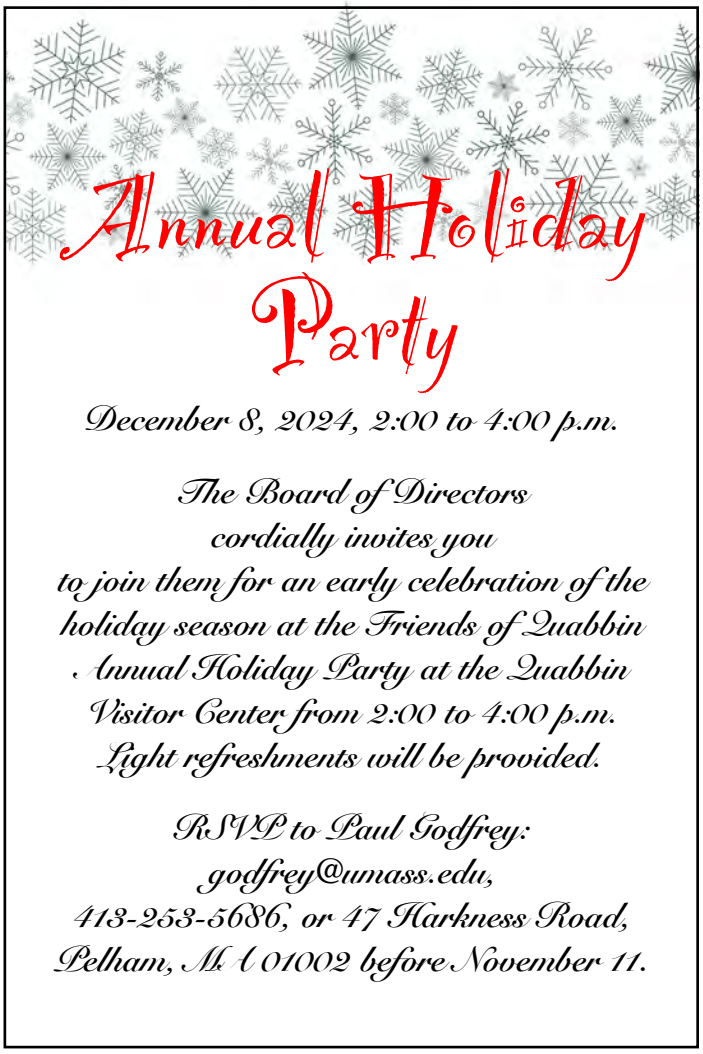
Time 7:00 p.m. for refreshments with meeting start at 7:30.

There will be a presentation by Ray Hubbe about his new book, *Feathered Friends of Nevis and Saint Kitts* and he will discuss his process for bird photography. The meeting will also be available on Zoom.

The November 25th, December 16th and January 27th meetings will be via Zoom. To get the zoom link for any meeting you can email Gail Platz at **gspltz@verizon.net**. For other questions, contact Mark Lindhult at mlindhult@gmail.com.

Tuesday Tea

Tuesday Teas are held at the Les & Terry Campbell Visitor Center on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. Attendance has been low lately but the discussions have been varied, ranging from geneaeology to photography to memories and more. All are welcome. Come share a couple hours with us.



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Call for Member Submissions

This is your newsletter. We invite members to submit stories, articles, or reminiscences about the human or natural history of the Swift River Valley and Quabbin Reservoir.

Please send e-mail to Paul Godfrey at godfrey@umass.edu, or mail items to:
The Friends of Quabbin
485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

Quabbin Voices

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of Friends of Quabbin, Inc.

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Quabbin Voices is the periodic newsletter of the Friends of Quabbin, Inc.

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