Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter

Summer 2024
Vol.37 No. 2

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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Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery

by Paul Godfrey

Photo by Mark Lindhult

Attendees at the 2024 Memorial Day Ceremony

The 2024 Memorial Day Ceremony was unique in many ways. First, it was the unveiling of a new monument to join the Civil War Monument, the monuments to the lost towns and the Eleanor Schmidt bench. It was the Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial that the Friends of Quabbin has been laboring for nearly a year to make possible. The fact that it got done on time for Memorial Day made the victory even sweeter. It would not have been possible without the help of many others: The Department of Conservation and Recreation, an anonymous Daughters of the American Revolution donor, the New Salem Academy Trustees with help from State Senator Jake Oliviera and Massachusetts Sons of the American Revolution. As they say, it takes teamwork. The many convolutions in the process are too complicated to repeat here. Needless to say, we went from surprise to diminished hope to no hope to total elation when it all came together in April.

Second, the unveiling of the memorial also represented the kickoff of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in Massachusetts. While the actual anniversary is two years away, Groups across the U.S. have been ramping up for the big year. For Quabbin, that means that Quabbin Park Cemetery has become a focal spot for America 250, a partnership between the Daughters of the American Revolution and U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission. In the days preceding the Memorial Day Services, DAR volunteers had placed numerous America 250 markers on the gravesites of Revolutionary War Patriots interred at Quabbin Park Cemetery.

DAR marker

Photo by Paul Godfrey

Prior to the start of the ceremony, refreshments were available to all, even the littlest, courtesy of the Friends of Quabbin with help from Visitor Center staff. *(continued p.4)*

Just a small bite of the refreshments, please.

Gene Theroux

President's Message

Summer 2024

While the 2024 Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery was well attended by its usual participants from the Friends of Quabbin, Swift River Valley Historical Society and the historical societies from the surrounding watershed communities, there was a new infusion of members of the Daughters of the American Revolutions (DAR), Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), and others to provide an early start to the Revolution 250 process that would culminate nationally in 2026. They were there to honor the 41 patriots of the American Revolutionary War who answered their final muster and are at rest in beautiful and historic Quabbin Park Cemetery.

In that company were three chapters of the DAR: the Betty Allen Chapter from Northampton; the Duxbury Chapter and the Mercy Warren Chapter from Springfield. From the SAR was the Seth Pomeroy Chapter from Northampton and Colonel Henry Knox Regimental Honor Guard. They marched in the ceremonial parade holding their banners. There were also multiple veterans' organizations and officers from the American Legion Department of Massachusetts. One DAR member who is a descendant of Patriot John Hoar travelled from North Carolina to attend the event. Other VIPs from the DAR included Massachusetts State Regent Beatrice Carolyn Nutt, a member of the Colonel Thomas Lathrop Old Colony Chapter of Hingham, MA and Paula Renkas, National Society of the DAR Vice Chair for Veterans Services.

The mission of "Revolution 250" is to explore the history of the American Revolution and the ways it's story still resonates in today's society. During the period from now to 2026, 250 years after the American colonies declared independence from the British Empire, Revolution 250 will pull together residents, visitors, planners, educators, artists, students and the business community to recognize the importance of the Revolution to our culture and values. We were honored to have Jonathan Lane of Revolution 250 attending. He is a historian and author of The Road to Revolution Timeline (1761–1774) that is available at the Revolution 250 Education Timeline website (www.revolution250.org/education/road-to-revolution-timeline/). Many other education resources are available at that site. The SAR website also has many education resources including 1900+ lessons, 150+ videos and links to 175+ websites relevant to the Revolutionary War. The DAR library has grown into a specialized collection of American genealogical and historical manuscripts and publications and powerful on-site databases. It contains over 225,000 books, 10,000 research files, thousands of manuscript items, and special collections of history, genealogy and culture for African Americans, Native Americans, and women. Nearly 40,000 family histories and genealogies comprise a major portion of the book collection, many unique or available only in a few libraries in the country. The library is free and open at www.dar.org/library.

R.J. Tucker and Gene Theroux

Preservation and education are also key elements in the Friends of Quabbin mission. We supported an Eagle Scout project to clean the veteran's gravestones from the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish American War and World War I at the Quabbin Park Cemetery. That scout, Richard J. "R.J." Tucker received his Eagle Scout award at the Barre Sportsmen's Club on June 2, 2024 and I attended (see the article page 6).

As mentioned in the article on Memorial Day, we had the unveiling of the Revolutionary War Memorial at Quabbin Park Cemetery. Friends of Quabbin took the lead in developing the necessary support for the memorial but many contributed.

Photo by Mark Lindhult

The back of the Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial

I want to thank those who helped. Determining the names to go on the bronze plaque was a team effort that included the DAR, the SAR, DCR and me. Financial help came from FOQ, DCR, an anonymous DAR donor, New Salem Academy Trustees. Key help was provided by State Senator Jake Oliveira and the Massachusetts SAR.

The 2024 Memorial Day event was truly a once in a lifetime experience. Special thanks to all who participated.

2024 Annual Meeting

by Paul Godfrey

The Friends of Quabbin Annual Meeting was held from 1:30 to 3:30pm on April 7th at the Fellowship Hall at the Belchertown United Church of Christ (BUCC), Park Street, Belchertown, MA. The agenda included a beautiful slide presentation assembled by Mark Lindhult from photos in the FOQ collection and from the Quabbin Photo Group. The highlight of the meeting was a talk by Representative Aaron Saunders (Belchertown) about a bill currently in the Legislature, Bill H.897/S.447, to acknowledge the efforts of Quabbin watershed communities by providing reasonable payments for local municipal needs (like water infrastructure). The bill also provides for more representation of Connecticut River Valley interests on a governing board. And it creates a community fund to support non-profit efforts in the Quabbin watershed. It will be a difficult task to convince the Boston-leaning legislature of the merits of the bill and a strong show of support is needed. Refreshments were provided through the help of Anne Ely.

Representative Aaron Saunders talks about H.897/S.447

Also presented at the Annual Meeting was the Treasurer's Annual Report for 2023 and the first part of 2024 and the results of the mail-in ballot for the election of Board Members whose terms were expiring. Of the 264 members, 155 voted. Those Board members were Gene Theroux, Paul Godfrey, Mark Lindhult and John Zebb. All were overwhelmingly re-elected. At the next Board meeting, June 13th, the Board re-elected Gene Theroux as President, Mark Lindhult as Vice-President, Paul Godfrey as Treasurer and J.R Greene as Chairman. As an aside, we switched to mail-in voting during the pandemic and the Board voted to continue that method afterward.

Annual Meetings can be uplifting, fun and politically important. The disappointing part of this year's meeting was that only 9 of our 264 members attended. The Board thought that bringing in Representative Aaron Saunders to speak about current issues in the legislature important to the future of the Quabbin Reservoir and surrounding communities would be of great interest to the FOQ membership. Unfortunately, low attendance said otherwise. We look forward to your feedback about how we might better communicate these meetings to the membership in the future if the Friends of Quabbin is to fulfill its mission. There are several important projects that we hope to undertake in the coming year and we need our members' support.

Annual Meeting attendance

The Friends of Quabbin Needs Help

The Friends, for sometime now, has not had anyone who would either take or transcribe the minutes of the Board meetings held every other month at 7:00pm on the second Thursday and lasting about 1–1½ hours. A complete transcript is not needed, only a summary of each discussion and vote. Typically, the minutes range in length from 3–6 typed pages. Each Board meeting is recorded. If the minutes recorder is at the meeting, the recording can be helpful in clarifying details; if the recorder is not at the meeting, it provides the principal source of information. Which method is chosen is the recorder's option. Ideally, the minutes are then produced and distributed to the Board within a week or two of the meeting. Corrections may occur then or at the next meeting and then a final draft incorporating corrections is produced, redistributed and archived. Please contact Paul Godfrey if you are interested in this task: contact **godfrey@umass.edu** or 413-253-5686.

Memorial Day

Continued from page 1

Photo by Mark Lindhult

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Betty Allen, Duxbury Chapters, and Mercy Warren carrying banner

Photo by Paul Godfrey

Friends of Quabbin banner carried by Gene Theroux's nephews, Ellis and Gabriel

With that as background, the traditional march of banners from the Quabbin Park Cemetery Administration Building to the area around the Civil War and town monuments began, led by SAR re-enactors and followed by the DAR and the historical groups.

Photo by Mark Lindhult

Athol Historical Commission banner.

Photo by Mark Lindhult

Sons of the American Revolution Colonel Henry Knox Regimental Honor Guard

Photo by Mark Lindhult

Keith Poulin, American Legion Post #239

Photo by Paul Godfrey

Charly Oliva, Director of Veterans' Services for Belchertown

were played by the Belchertown Community Band.

The unique ceremony of Memorial Day at Quabbin Park Cemetery is followed with wreaths being laid at the monuments to each lost town by descendants from those towns: Dana–the Cooley family; Enfield–the Crowther family; Greenwich–the Hall family; and Prescott–the Wendemuth family. Members of the Eleanor Griswold Schmidt family laid a wreath before the Schmidt bench.

Photo by Mark Lindhult

SAR Re-enactors and a 5-musket salute

Photo by Paul Godfrey

Nathaniel Knight, L.A. Tifft Camp 15

Keith Poulin, Past Commander of American Legion Post #239, presided as Master of Ceremonies for the event, as he has for many years. The Invocation was read by Charley Oliva, Belchertown Veteran's Agent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by Ware Cub Scout Troop 281 and the Gettysburg Address by Nathaniel Knight of L.A. Tifft Camp 15. Musical Interludes

Following a 5-musket salute, "Taps" was played with its eerie playing close in and far away that never fails to evoke deep feelings. Charly Oliva, Director of Veterans Services for Belchertown read "In Flanders Field."

Taps played by buglers Carter Massey and Jackson Hennessy

Photo by Paul Godfrey

Photo by Paul Godfrey

Quabbin families led by Quabbin Regional High School NJROTC Cadets; Wendemuth Family shown

The event was well represented by the area's state delegation with Senators Jake Oliviera, Jo Comerford and Peter Durant and Representatives Aaron Saunders and Todd Smola each expressing their feelings about Memorial Day

Representing the DAR Betty Allen and Duxbury chapters, Denise Kindschi Gosselin and Terah Allen Harootunian and Jim Holmes, representing the Massachusetts SAR, spoke about America 250.

Photos by Mark Lindhult

Senator Peter Durant

Senator Jake Oliveira

Senator Jo Comerford

Representative Todd Smola (l)

Representative Aaron Saunders (r)

Last, but not least, the new Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial was unveiled.

Ken Poulin declared the ceremony over and the Belchertown Community Band played a selection of patriotic music while people mingled and chatted.

Denise Kindschi Gosselin Betty Allen Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

Photos by Mark Lindhult

Chris Tourtellot Massachusetts Sons of the American Revolution

Photo by Paul Godfrey

The unveiling of the Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial

Photo by Mark Lindhult

Chris Tourtellot, Phil Johnson, SAR; Jonathan Lane, Revolution 250, and Gene Theroux, Friends of Quabbin

R.J. Tucker Becomes an Eagle Scout

Last summer we reported on the Eagle Scout project of R.J. Tucker that the Friends of Quabbin supported by buying the necessary materials for the Quabbin High School NJROTC recruited by R.J. to clean 30 veterans' cemetery headstones at Quabbin Park Cemetery as part of his efforts to earn the Eagle Scout badge. On June 2, 2024, R.J. was awarded his Eagle Scout badge by Troop 144 Scoutmaster Glenn Carter. Chris Tourtellot, Commander of the Colonel Henry Knox Regimental Honor Guard, and Gene Theroux presented certificates from The American Legion and from the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and lauded the importance of R.J.'s work in the Quabbin Park Cemetery.

R. Chris Tourtellot, SAR; R.J. Tucker; Gene Theroux, FOQ; Glen Carter, Troop 144 Scoutmaster and Scott Tourtellot, SAR

The Kenneth K. Iwasinski Bridge Naming Ceremony

A few hours after the Memorial Day Ceremony ended, many of the speakers were at a grassy area next to the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center to honor Kenneth K. Iwasinski by renaming the Route 9 bridge below Winsor Dam.

Senator Jake Oliveira, Tracy Taylor Kenneth Iwasinski's mother, Senator John Velis, and Representative Aaron Saunders. —Photo courtesy of Aaron Saunders' staff

Quoting an article in the *Belchertown Sentinel:*

The Route 9 bridge that connects Belchertown and Ware was officially renamed the Kenneth K. Iwasinski Memorial Bridge on Sunday.

A formal dedication ceremony was held to honor the Army specialist's ultimate sacrifice. Iwasinski was killed in action in Iraq on October 14, 2007.

State Senator Jacob Oliveira spoke on the importance of the bridge and how it's the perfect way to honor Iwasinski's memory.

"This bridge, where this honor is being located to honor Kenneth's memory, is actually a very important bridge. It's not a bridge that people pass by every once in a while because they're driving through it. It's a bridge that's used by fisherman constantly. It's a bridge that's used by community members and they will pass by the marker and the plaque that will bear Kenneth's name and show them the sacrifice that he made for this country," Oliveira explained. State Senator John Velis, a U.S. Army veteran, said that Memorial Day is the most sacred day of the year. Velis said he lost many of his fellow service members on April 6, 2013, in Afghanistan, when a vehicle borne IED detonated, and he understands the loss felt by Iwasinski's family. "We move on…life moves on—it's natural," Velis said. "But not for the families of the dead."

State Representative Aaron Saunders, as well as State Senator Peter Durant, State Representative Todd Smola, and Belchertown's Veterans Agent Charly Oliva, were also a part of Sunday's ceremony.

On the Edge of Time

by Anne Ely

I've been walking a while so it feels good to sit even though my "chair" is a large rock. It does, however, have a well-placed hollow which fits me perfectly. It's solidly set in the sand on the edge of the shore with just enough room for me to walk around it without getting my feet wet in the waters of the Quabbin Reservoir. Off to my left, a pair of red-breasted mergansers are busy diving for lunch. In the clear, shallow water at the base of the rock tiny minnows dart here and there, sometimes in precise formations, other times every which way at once.

A slight breeze ripples the water, moving it with soft lap, lap sounds against the shore at my feet. As my eyes follow the vast expanse of water toward a distant island, the water color changes to a dark blue and, although I know they are there, I cannot detect any of the ripples previously so prominent near me here at the shore.

I don't know how long I've been sitting here, but I've suddenly become aware of a quiet peace flowing over me, filling every crevice and empty space in my mind and body. The mergansers, too, appear at peace and have now decided to take an after-lunch nap. With their bills tucked under their wings, they're mirror images of each other as, side by side, they contentedly drift slowly along in whichever direction the movement of the water takes them. They do however, open one eye occasionally to check on me… just to be sure.

Red-breasted mergansers sleeping

That island out there. It was once one of several small mountains bordering a populated valley. Was this rock I'm sitting on here then? Did someone once sit where I'm now sitting? Perhaps it might have been on the edge of a field, or among the trees in the forest. Maybe it wasn't even originally here at all, but just landed here during construction, a sad bit of collateral from the whole valley's upheaval. I wonder what was once at this spot. Have I walked in the very steps of someone from 100 years ago?

My mind again takes off on a journey into the past of its own in which I find myself walking down along a road, taking in the everyday life around me. To my right a woman pulls weeds from among neat rows of vegetables and from the looks of it, her larder will be full at harvest time. On the edge of the plot a toddler digs in the dirt… a future gardener perhaps.

Further on at a nearby barn, a couple of men are looking over a horse; quite a nice one. The peaceful setting is suddenly interrupted by joyful shrieks and laughter as children of various ages burst forth out the door of a small white building. Ah! School's out. The building empties in a matter of minutes and a young woman appears in the doorway—the teacher. The happy smile on her face gives me the feeling that she just might be a favorite.

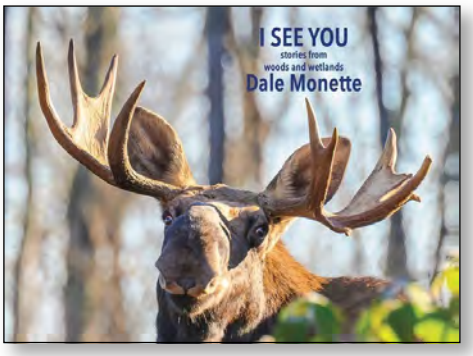
The younger children soon gather into groups and, with a couple of neighborhood dogs happily joining in, begin to celebrate their freedom. The game of Tag seems to be their favorite. The few older children don't join in, but walk slowly off in different directions. Most likely they have chores to do. Two girls, one with one pigtail bow missing, are probably headed to the chicken coop to feed the hens and collect the eggs. The older boy pauses long enough to whistle for the dog then heads down a lane. His chore must be to bring the cows up to the barn for milking. That brings a smile to my face as I remember doing that same chore, the one difference being my dog. Although she loved the excursion, she was far from helpful. Always barking at the wrong end of the cows, sending them in the opposite direction thereby doubling the time it took to accomplish the task.

Laundry drying on a back yard clothesline flaps in the breeze. A breeze which has now turned cool, causing a shiver to run down my spine. My travel back in time has ended with a jolt. I am still here on the rock and there is a definite chill to the air now. The sun has disappeared behind a widespread dark gray cloud cover. I think it's time I headed back, but I will come again. I love sitting quietly at Quabbin, especially close to the water.

As I wend my way along, I reflect on what used to be. What must it have been like to know your whole world was about to be turned upside down. What did the future hold. Would that woman weeding have a place for a garden? Children who were best friends… would they ever see each other again? Those must have been trying times. How would I have dealt with something like that? I wonder.

Friends of Quabbin Bookstore

We have recently added new books at the bookstore available for purchase.



The first is the fourth book by Quabbin nature photographer, Dale Monette. His previous three books are available at the bookstore: *Secret Lives of the Quabbin Watershed; Visitors, Voyagers, and Home;* and *Genius of the Swamp*. His fourth book is *I See You*. In Dale's words, "Throughout my travels doing programs, meeting people, and selling prints and books over the last 10 years, people always comment on how they enjoy the stories that go with the images I show during my presentations. I decided to take some of my favorite unpublished images that have some interesting stories behind them and put them together as my fourth book and entitle it ***I See You.***" **Price: $22.95.**

Our other new addition represents a new direction for us. It is a set of three books by Sonja F. Blanco. In her words, "*The Witch of Ware Woods* fantasy series is for readers who enjoy fierce yet flawed main characters, fast pacing and an immersive setting that work together to feel like a movie, a diverse cast of family and found family, all the feels including wonder, doubt, humor, love, determination, enlightenment, and belonging. The running theme is the tension/connection between light and dark and the fact that we cannot have one without the other. The series story is centered on Sara and her journey as she discovers a magical world and her role in it. It is primarily a "hero's journey" about self-discovery. The main setting is Ware Woods, a fictional forest with a lush landscape and thorny secrets. There is romance in the story. It is nongraphic and is intended as an example of a healthy relationship between older teens. The series is Upper Young Adult and intended for ages fifteen and up."

Witch of Ware Woods (book 1) is about Sara finding herself and who she really is. It is about CHOICE.

Death & Dragons (book 2) is about Sara coming into her role. It is about TRUST in yourself and others.

Spells & Shadows (book 3) is about Sara embracing what she is capable of. It is about BELIEVING in yourself.

Each is signed by the author. **Price $16.95 each.**

And what does this have to do with Quabbin? This series is strongly influenced by the author's Quabbin-area family history and childhood explorations of the surrounding landscape.

At the end of *Spells & Shadows*, the final book in the series, Sonja includes an Author's Note which highlights these two influences:[In her own words]

1) Witchy History

In 1720 central Massachusetts—almost thirty years after the infamous Salem witch trials—a young woman named Mary was hung as a witch. She was my ancestor. Needless to say, her family—my family—was devastated, her father in particular. From that day forward, as a means to protect his heart and to honor his beloved daughter, he asked that no one else in the family be named Mary.

When my grandmother informed me of this bittersweet ancestry, I was stunned. Still am. You'd think people would have learned a lesson from the Salem trials. Some did. Some didn't. Sadly, persecution in many forms continues to exist the world over.

Since I couldn't go back in time, change certain events, and roll more than a few heads, I did what I could. I imagined a different outcome for Mary: What if she and others allegedly like her found refuge in the woods?

2) The Quabbin

Less than a hundred years ago (from the time of this publication), the Swift River was dammed and four towns in central Massachusetts were intentionally flooded to create a reservoir, now known as the Quabbin Reservoir, providing drinkable water for the growing population of Boston. Many families were forced from their homes and farmlands, historic churches and buildings were moved by flatbed trucks, and thousands of graves were dug up and the dead reburied above the new waterline. My grandfather, a teen at the time, helped relocate many of the dead.

As a child, during summer visits with my grandparents, we'd hike and fish in the Quabbin. I have fond memories of sucking on starlight mints while searching for orange newts. As an adult, I can't help but stare at the reservoir and envision the imprints of past lives at the bottom of the water.

Though the tragedy of this landscape transformation will never be forgotten, the Quabbin Reservoir is now a protected and thriving habitat. If you are ever in central Massachusetts, I encourage you to visit the Quabbin. Drop by the Les & Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center, take a scenic hike, and wander the cemetery. Perhaps you'll find a ghost. Or a newt.

Sonja is thrilled to have her series available at the Visitor Center and to have proceeds benefit the Friends of Quabbin. She hopes the book series brings a positive awareness to the central Massachusetts landscape and its unique history.

New Book Display at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center

The old wooden display next to the office window at the Visitor Center was overflowing with books, so the Friends of Quabbin added a new rotary display holding 32 books. Most of the books fit in the new display and the bigger ones will be in the old display. This will make it easier to peruse without disrupting anything and we now have room to add more.

Interpretive Services Report

Summer 2024

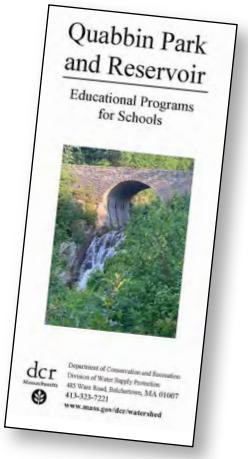
by Maria Beiter-Tucker

Spring ushered in a very busy season for the Quabbin Interpretive Services staff. Throughout the months of April, May, and June we offered educational programs to over a dozen schools focusing on the history of the Quabbin Valley as well as about watershed protection and wildlife. As we work to expand our educational programing for schools, we have begun offering pre-visit programs on site at the schools with follow up programming at the Visitor Center and outdoors, primarily in Quabbin Park.

An example of a pre-visit program that we have offered was with the Fisher Hill School in Orange. A staff member visited the 3rd grade there with a fun activity called "Branching Out." This introduces the students to the concept of watersheds by having them build a model watershed with newspaper, plastic globs and a wash basin and test how rainstorms (created with a spray bottle filled with water), vegetation (paper towels) and pollution (red food coloring) may affect the health of their watershed. We then connect that back to Quabbin Reservoir by looking at the map of the area and talking about how the many acres of forested area protect the drinking water. A few weeks later, a staff person returned and presented a short slide show focused on the "Lost Towns of the Valley" comparing life in the valley towns with children's lives today and discussing why the towns were removed. Finally, the 3rd graders visited Quabbin Park and took a hike along the Webster Road trail to look for signs of the past before hiking down to the reservoir shoreline. At that point, staff returned to the concept of watersheds to help tie it all together. Best of all of course is a wonderful day in the fresh air and beautiful surroundings of Quabbin Reservoir. This has become a very popular program with 3rd grade, in particular, as they focus on the water cycle and local history in their studies. Also popular is the Wildlife Artifacts Exploration program which gives students the opportunity to examine a variety of animal bones, feathers, and pelts to better understand animal adaptations.

Moose skull for Wildlife Artifacts Exploration program

Beside 3rd grade, the IS staff have developed programs for 7th grade which focus on the whole history of the Quabbin and Ware Valleys as well as diving more deeply into the idea of watershed protection and what that means for public access on DCR-DWSP lands. As many of the students we work with live in the surrounding towns, this can be very helpful in helping students better understand the restrictions placed on recreation at Quabbin and Ware River Watersheds. This year, staff worked with an 8th grade Civics teacher to focus on the impact the project had on the town residents and how they related back to what they had studied regarding the U.S. Constitution. We have also been fortunate to make connections with a few local high school teachers that teach environmental studies and have offered programs for students who are interested in possibly pursuing careers in environmental fields.



If you are interested in learning more about what educational programs Quabbin Interpretive Services staff offer, please visit **www.mass.gov/dcr/quabbineducation** for more details and a copy of our brochure. Give a copy to your local elementary/middle school.

As well, visit the Quabbin events page at **https://www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events?_page = 1** after mid-July to register for our late summer and fall public programs. We also have an active mailing list which you can join by emailing QuabbinVisitor.Center@mass.gov. Stop in the Visitor Center during upcoming weekends this summer and you may have the opportunity to take part in one of our informal "Pop-Up" programs focused on wildlife, dam construction or pollinator plants and rain gardens!

Meetings & Events

DCR Interpretive Services

Thursday, August 1, 2024, 10am–1:30pm

Barrens Restoration Habitat Site Walk

1.5 miles, moderate—footing will be uneven

Meet at Gate 29 and we will caravan over to the hike location **https://goo.gl/maps/fnAvob41qLygZUcS8** Gays Hill Barrens is a habitat restoration project underway at DCR-DWSP Quabbin Reservoir. Barrens habitats are globally rare, supporting many rare and endangered species. Explore how DCR-DWSP is creating a network of "refugia" for these specialized species to flourish and expand their populations.

Sunday, August 18, 10am–1pm

Exploring the Road to Dana Common

The old foundations, stone walls, and shade trees of Dana Common will transport you to the past as you explore Quabbin's unique history. This 3.6 mile round-trip hike will introduce you to some of the notable residents of Dana as you discover what life was like in the Swift River Valley over a hundred years ago. Photos illustrating Quabbin's past will bring Dana to life before your eyes.

Meet at Gate 40 on Rt. 32A in Petersham. Please bring water and dress appropriately for the weather. Relatively flat terrain, 3.6 miles round trip. All ages welcome. Dogs are not allowed.

Sunday, September 1, 10am–12pm

Hidden History: Webster Road

Quabbin's ghost towns are hiding in plain sight—if you know where to look. This two-hour guided interpretive walk will teach you how to read the natural landscape as you uncover clues that reveal the hidden history of Webster Road. Explore old cellar holes and historic stone walls, get to know some native and invasive plants, and learn more about the families who lived in the town of Enfield a hundred years ago.

Meet at the Hank's Meadow parking lot. Please bring water and dress appropriately for the weather. Relatively flat terrain, approximately 2.5 miles round-trip. All ages welcome. Dogs are not allowed.

Thursday, September 5, 2024, 10am–11:30pm

Late Summer Meadow Visit

Approx. 1 mile, easy
Middle Entrance Parking Lot
https://goo.gl/maps/2xFhXUWcU7H8fmae8
Quabbin Park

This hike will meet at the parking area at the Middle Entrance and walk along the Spillway Road to a small meadow across from the Boat Cove. The walk is easy, but the road along the Spillway is heavily trafficked, so caution is advised.

Saturday, September 14, 11am–1:30pm

Exploring the West Side of the Quabbin Watershed via Gate 11

3.4 miles, intermediate

Join us for a 3.4-mile out/back hike on Quabbin's west side of the watershed. We will be walking down to the water on a dirt road through the forest. Walking to the water, the hike covers 1.7-miles and drops 600 ft. in elevation. We will then backtrack and head uphill the way we came in.

The parking area is located on the east side of Rt. 202 (Daniel Shays Highway) in Pelham.

Saturday, September 21, 10am–1pm

Exploring the Road to Dana Common

The old foundations, stone walls, and shade trees of Dana Common will transport you to the past as you explore Quabbin's unique history. This 3.6 mile round-trip hike will introduce you to some of the notable residents of Dana as you discover what life was like in the Swift River Valley over a hundred years ago. Photos illustrating Quabbin's past will bring Dana to life before your eyes.

Meet at Gate 40 on Rt. 32A in Petersham.

Saturday, October 5, 1pm–3pm

Hidden History: Webster Road

Quabbin's ghost towns are hiding in plain sight—if you know where to look. This two-hour guided interpretive walk will teach you how to read the natural landscape as you uncover clues that reveal the hidden history of Webster Road. Explore old cellar holes and historic stone walls, get to know some native and invasive plants, and learn more about the families who lived in the town of Enfield a hundred years ago.

Meet at the Hank's Meadow parking lot.

Sunday, October 6, 2024, 11am–1pm

Soapstone Mountain Hike

2.7 miles, difficult
Quabbin Reservoir Gate 37 – From Rt. 122 in New Salem take Monson Turnpike Road and follow to Gate 37
https://goo.gl/maps/ddrjNHaAL8cXi5sC7

This scenic hike will begin at Gate 37 and follow an easy woodland road before branching off to a short but very steep hike up the mountain. Hike is challenging and has points which require climbing over large rocks, however the summit is one of the best views of Quabbin Reservoir.

Saturday, October 12, 2024 11am–1pm

Exploring Quabbin Park via the Combination Shoreline/Enfield Lookout/Webster Road Loop

3.6 miles, intermediate
Quabbin Reservoir, Middle Gate entrance, Rt. 9
Belchertown, MA 01007

Join us for a 3.6-mile looped hike in Quabbin Park. We will begin at the Observation Tower parking area located at

Quabbin Hill. We will travel to Hank's Meadow and down to the water, dropping roughly 350 feet in elevation. The trail then travels along the water before we ascend uphill back to where we began. Along the way we'll stop at the Enfield Lookout which offers the best view of the reservoir in Quabbin Park. Hike begins at the Observation Tower parking area. This location can be accessed by either the Middle or East gates off Rt. 9. Follow signs for the Observation Tower from there.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

JULY

Sunday, July 21
Dana Reunion

Dana Common Gate 40 opens at 11:00am. Event concludes at 3:00pm. Free Admission

Sunday, July 28
Dana Vespers will be held in the Prescott Church on the grounds of SRVHS at 2:00pm. Cake and lemonade served after the concert. Free Admission

AUGUST

Sunday, August 4
Quabbin Reservoir and Watershed Protection with Maria Beiter-Tucker, Interpretive Services Supervisor, MA DCR Division of Water Supply and Protection – will be held in the Prescott Church on the grounds of SRVHS at 1:00pm. Free Admission

Sunday, August 11
Mysteries of the Swift River Valley, Solved and Unsolved with Peter Peirce, Professional Photographer – will be held in the Prescott Church on the grounds of SRVHS at 1:00pm. Free Admission

Sunday, August 18
The Mystery of the Prescott Quilt of Names with Karen Traub – will be held in the Prescott Church on the grounds of SRVHS at 1:00pm. Free Admission

Saturday, August 24
Snakes of the Swift River Valley with Michael Jones, Massachusetts State Herpetologist – on the grounds of SRVHS at 1:00pm. Free Admission

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 7
Annual Friends of SRVHS Meeting on the grounds of SRVHS at 2:00pm.

Saturday, September 14
Visit SRVHS's Booth at New Salem Old Home Day from 10:00am. to 4:00pm. on the Common in New Salem Center.

Wednesday, September 18
Museum Closing Date

Saturday, September 21
Birds of Prey with Tom Ricardi – on the grounds of SRVHS at 1:00pm. Free Admission

Sunday, September 22
Prescott-Greenwich Road Hike. Meet for 11:00am departure at Cooleyville Crossing (field at intersection of Gate 17 road and Route 202). Carpooling will be necessary as only a limited number of vehicles are allowed in the restricted area. All hikers must enter and leave together due to DCR restrictions. This hike is limited to 25 guests. You must pre-register by email to dotfryesrvhs@gmail.com or telephone 978-544-6882.

Wednesday, September 25 and Saturday, September 28, Programs in Conjunction with the Athol Library. Subject and times TBD.

OCTOBER

Sunday, October 20
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 are not allowed. All hikes meet for 11:00am 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. Donations to SRVHS for these hikes would be greatly appreciated.

Quabbin Photo Group

The Quabbin Photo Group will be meeting via Zoom during the summer months – July 22 and August 26. On September 30 and October 28, the QPG will return to the Hope United Methodist Church, 31 Main St. Belchertown, MA 01007, at 7:00pm. for refreshments with meeting start at 7:30. Contact Gail Platz at gspitz@verizon.net to get the Zoom link for the summer meetings. For other questions, contact Mark Lindhult at mlindhult@gmail.com.

Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

Location: Hope United Methodist Church, 31 Main St. Belchertown, MA 01007
Time: 7:00pm

Meeting Themes:
July 25 – Monument
August 29 – Backlit Subject
September 26 – Contrasts
October 31 – Stripes

Tuesday Tea

Tuesday Teas are held at the Les & Terry Campbell Visitor Center on the first Tuesday of each month at 1:00pm. Attendance has been low lately but the discussions have been varied, ranging from genealogy 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

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

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

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