

Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter



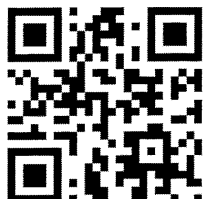
Fall 2014
Vol.27 No.3

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

CONTENTS

Centennial Reflections . . .	1
President's Message	2
Interpretive Services	4
Oral History Project	7
Poet's Corner	8
Meetings and Events . . .10	
Vistor Center Store11	



Centennial Reflections on Two Swift River Valley Natives

By Marty Howe

Last year we remembered the centennial birth of Eleanor Griswold Schmidt, a native of Prescott who was instrumental in so much of what is known and preserved about the history of the Swift River Valley. This year marks the centennial births of two other valley residents: Walter King and Harrison "Harry" Thresher. With Eleanor and Lois Doubleday Barnes, Walter and Harry were important people to me in my younger days because they shared so much of their time and knowledge of the valley with me. There are times when I so wish I could roll back the clock to ask them more.

Walter King was born in Greenwich Village in 1914 in a home that sat across from the old toll house on the 6th Massachusetts

Turnpike, not far from the Hardwick line. Walter, in his retirement years, was often found stopping by the Visitor Center, the Enfield Lookout in Quabbin Park, the Greenwich Room at the Swift River Valley Historical Society (SRVHS) and other Quabbin-related places and functions. He was always willing to share stories and memories with those willing to listen. Those who knew Walter found him to be a quiet, unassuming character with a droll Yankee humor. He would explain things in such a matter-of-fact fashion but finish with a wry smile, leaving one to wonder how much of what he had just said was embellished a bit beyond the facts. Many of Walter's stories were true, or at least based in truth, but then would come a remark and a chuckle.

Continued page 6



The "Greenwich boys," about 1988. Left to right: Walter King (1914–1991), Harry Thresher (1914–2003), and Norman Thresher (1917–2004) in front of the Dana fire truck at SRVHS.



President's Message

Fall 2014

The summer has come to an end and the foliage season is upon us. This is the perfect time of the year to take a hike or two in the Quabbin Reservation to enjoy the colors and the vistas. While you're

enjoying the beauty of the present Quabbin watershed, take a moment to think about the way it was. We hope over the past issues of the Voices, we have given you a flavor of the past, but there is nothing quite so meaningful as actually seeing the remnants of that past.

We continue to work on saving as much of that record of the past as we can. Progress continues to be made with the photo scanning, restoration and preservation project. But our ideas are more expansive than simply accumulating images in a safe place; we want to make them easily available to anyone, in hopes that interest will be constantly recreated rather than wither with the age of those who lived then. To that effect, the Friends of Quabbin recently donated ninety-nine negatives, most of them on 5x7 inch glass plates, from Burt Brooks' collection. These were a gift to the Friends from Les Campbell. After scanning them, we donated them to the DuBois Library, Special Collections & Archives at the University of Massachusetts where the facilities and expertise to correctly curate them exist. Critical for us was that the Friends of Quabbin could freely use the images from the negatives and that the public would also have access to them. These photos were taken at the turn of the twentieth century in Greenwich, Massachusetts using one of the large format cameras of the type mounted on a substantial tripod and having the back of the camera covered by a large black cloth. The camera was loaded for each picture by sliding in a film or plate holder, removing the light shields and exposing the film. Snapshots, as we know them, were truly impossible. It was important to the Friends that the public would have access to the works of former Greenwich resident Burt Brooks on the internet. You can see the images and get more information on Burt V. Brooks by visiting the UMass Special Collections webpage:



<http://scua.library.umass.edu/ead/muph060.html> or click on this QR code with your smartphone.

I had the honor and privilege to attend a surprise birthday party for former Dana Common resident Earl L. Cooley, Sr.



Debi Sanders brings cake to her Dad.

well over a hundred guests, and there was plenty of good conversation and great food. Earl showed his sense of humor by wearing a yellow button that read, "I've Survived. Damn Everything!" Earl's daughter Debi Sanders managed most of the logistics for the surprise party. She asked attendees to write a personal memory and bring a photo or anecdote about Earl. Mine was an easy choice. I had scanned a black and white photograph of U.S. Army Air Corp Private Earl L. Cooley that was taken in 1943. I choose to colorize this image of Earl using what I've been learning about Photoshop this semester. In addition, writing a couple of anecdotes about Earl wasn't difficult because he and I have a few things in common, particularly military service in the Air Force.



Earl L. Cooley 1943 photo for 90th birthday party.

To me, there are so many pleasant memories of Earl who, on many occasions, proudly wears a baseball cap that reads, "Dana is My Hometown." What I admire most about Earl is

his long-time effort to keep the memory of Dana alive so that others will know the beauty, the history, and the people who sacrificed their homes and their way of life to make way for Quabbin Reservoir. Earl has not forgotten where he came from. His efforts



L to R: Earl Jr., Mark, Kevin and Ann Marie (back row), Suzanne, Earl Sr., Lois, Debi (front row).

to pass on those experiences through his unselfish sharing of the story of his childhood home in Dana are well documented. Earl's untiring efforts, his many contributions to the Dana Reunion Committee, to the Friends of Quabbin and to the other historical societies surrounding the former Swift River Valley made it possible for Dana Common to be added to the National Register of Historic Places on March 4, 2013.

Earl enlisted in the United States Army Air Corp in 1943. Through his service to our country as a member of America's Greatest Generation, he contributed to defeating the European Axis powers in World War II. Earl served in a number of assignments overseas such as North Africa and South West Asia (Iran). Another attribute that I admire about Earl is his commitment to give back. Earl continued his service to his community, state and country after his return from overseas through his stewardship with the American Legion and with the Boy Scouts

of America. Earl has been a Legionnaire for more than 71 consecutive years and with Scouting for more than 50 years. He was presented a certificate of appreciation from the Wachusett District of the Nashua Valley B.S.A. for his many years of service to Troop #26 of Barre. Earl has never shied away from volunteerism and leading by example. That is an attribute that he has passed onto his children and you'll find that each of them is active in their community. Debi Sanders, Earl and Lois' daughter, did a superb job on the surprise party for her dad Earl (she calls him Bumba, but I think that name is reserved for family use only). Debi follows in her father's footsteps and is active in Girl Scouts and youth baseball in her hometown of Westbrook, Maine.

You may wish to attend a forthcoming Tuesday Tea to both congratulate Earl on his 90th birthday and ask him questions of life in the former Swift River Valley.



Envisioning the Valley

By Jon Melick

I was born and raised in eastern Massachusetts, and am not from a family with any significant ties to the Swift River Valley. But over the last 40 years, I have acquired the ability to envision the Valley as if I came from such a family. In certain areas, I know them almost as well as I would know them if I had lived there myself. Here's how it all happened.

The first steps came in the early 1970s, when I discovered some old maps of the Swift River Valley and was able to photocopy them. Then, I was able to buy what were then the only two books concerning the Quabbin Valley: *The Lost Valley* and *Ghost Towns Neath Quabbin Reservoir*. A post-graduation relocation slowed up the learning process, but in 1976 I joined the Swift River Valley Historical Society and began going on their hikes and bus trips.

The next step came as I listened to the stories of the people who had lived in the Valley (most, as adults) and I was able to hear quite a few of them. With their help, the Swift River Valley began to feel like a place where I could walk the roads of "today" and imagine what life was like "yesterday," before Quabbin was built. Perhaps the biggest step came when I acquired a SLR camera with close-up lenses at Christmas of 1979. These things allowed me to take photographs of photographs in the SRVHS and MDC collections

(both now prohibited) and in private collections. Within a short period of time, I had acquired a nice, if basic, collection of Quabbin photographs; and since I was now leading the SRVHS's "pilgrimage hikes," my growing collection of photos and maps allowed me to describe neighborhoods and sights which I had never personally known.

Family responsibilities required me to cut radically back on my "Quabbin time" as the 1990s began, but around 2010 I began taking out my old collections and taking a renewed interest in my maps and photos. I asked Clif Read if I could take more "copy photos" from the DCR archive. This was no longer possible, but over the next few years he very generously gave me access to the lists of photos in the DCR collection and provided me with digital scans of the images I requested. They were far better than most of my photographs. I now have complete collections of photos of the buildings in certain areas, as well as a complete set of available photos of the buildings of Prescott. Since I long ago had picked out a house on Doubleday Road as "my Quabbin house," I even know which houses were in my neighborhood. I can even take "mental tours" through the Valley and know roughly what I would have been able to see along this or that road.

The people who knew the Valley firsthand have mostly "gone home." But they have left their legacy behind in maps, books, oral and written histories, photographs, artifacts and more. As even those who heard Valley stories firsthand grow old and gray, it is more important than ever that the people of today—especially the younger ones—pick up the torch, as it were, and keep the story alive. Look at the maps, and learn your way around the Valley. Read the books and histories. Listen to the oral histories. Look at the artifacts. Look at the photographs. Build your own collection of Quabbin memorabilia, just as I have done. The Swift River Valley may be gone; but it can live on if we accept the challenge to keep its memory alive.



Interpretive Services Report Fall 2014

By Clif Read

As the Quabbin landscape begins the transformation from its verdant summer backdrop to the blaze of red, yellow and golden brown hues of fall, there is a similar transition of activity for the Quabbin Interpretive Services program. From late September through the end of October the Visitor Center receives its greatest number of people as visitors travel from far and wide to observe the spectacular display of fall foliage. While Columbus Day weekend tends to be the busiest of any weekend through the year, there are often large crowds throughout this month and a half long time. During this busy visitation time the staff operates a smaller information center at the base of the Quabbin Lookout Tower. This is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the area and draws folks who don't necessarily stop at the Visitor Center for information or an orientation. Having staff and materials available to visitors is an effective way of reaching more visitors to the watershed.



Former Dana residents Beryl (Stone) Buchard, Earl Cooley, Deanna Krusiewicz, Dwight Cooley and Sally (Cooley) Norcross gather at the monument on Dana Common at the Reunion.

There were a number of larger events which the staff participated in or helped to promote. The annual Dana Reunion takes place the third Sunday of July on the Town Common, when former residents, descendants and interested members of the public gather on the site of the former town for a picnic, business meeting, reminiscences and camaraderie. The event had wonderful weather and a great turnout including Sally Norcross, a former resident who now lives in New York state and had not returned to her childhood home of Dana since

she left 76 years ago. One of ten siblings in the Cooley family, they were the last family to move from the Center. Her brother Earl is President Emeritus of the Dana Reunion Committee and has been a major force in placing Dana Center on the National Register of Historic Places and for the annual reunions. If you have a 2015 calendar handy, you may want to mark Sunday, July 19th as the date for the next Dana Reunion.

In late August the traditional Tuesday Tea Picnic was held at the Hanks Picnic area. Like the Dana event, this gathering had beautiful weather and a large turnout. For more than 20 years the DCR has been offering boat rides for former residents and their descendants on this day, always a popular activity. FOO Board Member Marty Howe, whose family lived in Enfield, has been a fixture on these trips and often comes armed with an assortment of photographs of the pre-Quabbin Swift River



Marty Howe shares some Swift River valley images with Nancy Huntington who came dressed in a 1920's era outfit.

Valley. Marty, who also coordinates bus and hiking trips for the Swift River Valley Historical Society (SRVHS), is a wealth of information about valley history, sites and geography. If you



Deanna Krusiewicz, (second from the right), the last person born in the Swift River valley towns, enjoys the Tuesday Tea Picnic before heading out on a boat ride on Quabbin.



SRVHS Reception: Cliff McCarthy, Gail Gramarossa, Clif Read, Celia Slozak, Nancy Huntington, Sheila Damkoehler, Les Campbell, Catherine Hilton, and Judy Eismann

have never had the opportunity to participate in one of Marty's field trip, it is a wonderfully rich and rewarding experience that you should consider in the future. His keen interest in history makes him a invaluable member of the Friends and of SRVHS.

It was also an active summer for SRVHS which offered an array of programs in New Salem. On August 10th a special Quabbin Day was offered at the museum featuring music, traditional valley craft demonstrations and a celebration of community. Participants were able to participate in a wide variety of activities as well as take tours of the Whitaker-Clary House, the Prescott Museum and the Peirce Memorial Carriage Shed. Over the past couple of years members of the Friends Board and staff from the Department of Conservation and Recreation have been networking with SRVHS, the UMASS Special Collections and University Archives and local historical organizations to collaborate on projects, assist with programming and share resources and ideas on Quabbin related materials. By working together on projects, we can help tell the story of the Swift River Valley through different media. The Visitor Center looks forward to its continued association with all of these groups in the future.

After a long and distinguished career in the Massachusetts Legislature both as a Senator and a Representative, Senator Brewer will be retiring at the end of this legislative term. To honor his work on behalf of his constituents in central Massachusetts and for his continued passion for Quabbin, Boat Launch Area #3 is officially being named the Stephen M. Brewer Fishing Area. A mid-October Dedication Ceremony in will be held to honor Senator Brewer and to unveil the sign. More details and photographs will follow in the next issue of Quabbin Voices.

Looking ahead, I hope to see you at the Friends Holiday Party on December 7th or at one of our winter programs after the New Year. A complete list of Sunday afternoon programs will be listed on the Friends' web site.

Volunteer!

Activity

- Photo
- History
- Volunteer

You've all seen them. They are always in the same place. I'm talking about those three little boxes on your membership renewal or the new

membership form asking if you are interested in the activities of volunteering, photography, and/or history. Many of you are and have checked those boxes, or at least you used to. Because you never heard anything from us, many of you have given up hope. But with our considerable chagrin and hope for forgiveness, this time we mean it. We want to know if you are interested in these topics or others that we might not have thought of but are related to our efforts to highlight the history and environment of the Quabbin valley. This time we have Board members identified who will follow up, and we want your ideas of what you might do to help our efforts.

We have some ideas, too. For example, we do have a few regular events each year such as the Holiday Party, the Annual Meeting, the Tuesday Teas, particularly the annual picnic and could use help. But we also have a variety of other efforts either underway or planned, if we get some help. These projects blur the boundaries between the three items, but we see that as a positive. Some of these are described in this newsletter. The indexing project is one where a volunteer could greatly speed the effort. Plus, it is our idea to combine these oral narratives with our developing photo image collection and create videos that speak to the ear and eye of those interested. Another is the planned Wildflower Guide where your knowledge and photographs could greatly enhance this effort. Yet another is our effort to make our growing collection of photos easily searchable on the web. This requires a major effort to develop key words for each image because we often don't have the specifics of names and places. Many of our members are accomplished photographers with substantial collections of beautiful photos of the Quabbin; they might like a broader viewership for these, but a searchable database is needed.

As you can see the list can grow around not only our interests but your interests and expertise: history, photography, computers, social networks, etc. We are open to your ideas. Here's what we'd like from you now. If the above interests you, let us know. Start by dropping us a line (mail or email) giving us your name, address, email address (if available) and phone number and interest or ideas at whatever level of detail you'd like to provide. We will promptly get back to you. If you respond by mail, send your note to: Volunteer, The Friends of Quabbin, 485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007. If by email, send to godfrey@tei.umass.edu.

Centennial Reflections

continued from page 1

He once told me that my great uncle's book, "Quabbin, The Lost Valley," by Donald Howe was a compilation from various contributors. It seems that Donald also ran WARE radio, and had an employee "who used to like to drink." Apparently, Donald would have this employee sift through contributions to be selected for the book. As Walter said, "pretty soon Quabbin Lake became Lake Corbin." As soon as he said that, I related to him that I had seen that in the book (see page 347), and had always wondered where Lake Corbin was.

The "drink of the evening" for the 1988 50th anniversary remembrance ball was "dead dog's brew," which was another of Walter's true/half-true stories about some bootleggers, believe in Greenwich. I hope someone will eventually verify the existence of Greenwich bootleggers.

Walter made a photo album of Greenwich pictures, on the back of which he wrote many anecdotes that are so valuable today. It can be found in the Greenwich Room at SRVHS. Walter passed away in July of 1991 and is buried in Quabbin Park Cemetery.

Harrison Thresher Jr. was born in 1914, as he told me, "above Hall's store in Greenwich Village." Harry also lived on the Smith-Cutler farm on West St., and on what he called "the Doubleday place," both in Greenwich. Anyone who knew Harry, knew that he was like a grown-up kid. He loved parties, photo



Harry Thresher with his Jeep and Marty Howe

ops, was full of energy, and never lost his child-like wonder of things, particularly things in nature. Many times in the late 1980s and early '90s, he would get a pass for either the Prescott Peninsula or Dana area. He would load his jeep with a chainsaw and lunch (prepared lovingly by his wife, "Lucy" (Lucille Webster Thresher). Lucy was born in Enfield, and she and Harry were the last couple married in Enfield in 1938. They would often drive all the passable back roads. Along for several of those trips were Lois Barnes, Harry's brother Norman, and various others over the years, including me.

Harry was proudest of how many miles we covered, so he was never too pleased when I would want to poke around cellar holes for very long. He was always on the move; "34 miles on the peninsula today" he would say with pride.

He would say things like "Sons a bunches" and "Gee whiskers," which always amused me. He related memories of the "old yellow tavern" (I'm still not sure where that was), and his grandfather's house at the foot of Egypt Hill, that was struck by lightning that did damage. I wonder if that was the same storm that struck Lois Doubleday's Prescott home in 1920 when Lois was a baby? Her home was just up the hill from the Thresher farm.

Harry was apparently a friend of my family, mostly before my time. He would often mention my grandfather's camp in southern Vermont, and "Uncle Ned" (last postmaster in Enfield). Harry loved to travel, and was a school bus driver for many years. He passed away in October of 2003, and also is buried in Quabbin Park Cemetery.



Harrison Thresher Jr. as a child on a horse in Greenwich.

Oral History Indexing Project

By Nancy Huntington



“Here Was Home” is an audio CD that provides a unique history of the Swift River Valley and the Quabbin Reservoir. The narrated story is interspersed with segments of oral histories taken from some of the hundreds of hours of interviews conducted with former residents of the Swift River Valley. Originally produced by the Friends of Quabbin as a cassette tape in 1995, the hour-long CD was converted to digital format in 2005 and is still available through the Quabbin Visitor Center. \$11.00.

The Oral History Indexing Project is a decades-long labor of love, begun in the mid-1980s. The goal of the project is to capture and preserve the history of the Swift River Valley, as remembered and told by the people who lived and worked here, and to make that history accessible for research and study for generations to come. The first phase of the project was the audio taping of interviews. That phase was led predominantly by the incomparable Lois Barnes, herself a former resident of the Valley and instrumental in preserving its history. She and others recorded interviews of people who had connections to the Valley, either as former residents, relatives of former residents who had stories and memories to share, or people who had worked for the MDC (now DCR) in some capacity. Hundreds of hours of memories were recorded onto cassette tapes.

The first phase took place over nearly two decades. When it was completed, the information was there, but there was no real good way to access it for research, short of listening to each and every tape. Then, surprise! Technology changed. The widespread use of CDs allowed for a second phase of the project—transferring the audio tapes to CDs, so that they could be used on computers and be better preserved. Phase two of this work has been done under the supervision of FOQ and Cliff Read, Director of Interpretive Services, DCR. Justin Gonsor and Lisa Yeisley did the bulk of the transferring. A master file list of CDs was created and stored on both the FOQ laptop hard drive and the DCR main drive; each CD having its own folder, with

and Excel file indexing the topics discussed during the interview.

Which brings us to phase three; my job on the project—the further detailing of each interview into individual topics and their location on the CD. This information is critical to making the oral histories computer searchable.

It works like this: I put a CD into an audio device, either a CD player or a computer, which has a digital counter to mark the hour/minute/second. I open up the corresponding folder from the computer and begin the excel spreadsheet. I record how long the CD runs, then listen to the CD while keeping track of the digital counter. When there is a notable change of topic—for example, the interviewer says, “Talk about what it was like going to school in the Valley”—I pause the audio and record the time from the counter, then the topic (ex.04:39 School). This means that, 4 minutes and 39 seconds into the CD, there is information about schools. When the project is complete, someone looking to do research on schools will be able to put “Schools” into the search format, and every instance that that topic comes up will be listed. Then they’ll pull that CD, skip to that time stamp and listen to the info.

There’s still a lot of work to do—I’m only about one-third of the way through the CDs. But as a historian, and someone with a personal interest in the Valley, it has been fascinating. Hearing stories about the same people and places over and over but from different people’s point of view has really made me feel like I know them. I want to call Dr. Segur if I get sick, get an ice delivery from Greenwich Lake, hop on the Rabbit to go north. When I look at the old pictures, I get excited and think, “Ooh, I know where that is!” and I remember the stories as if they were my own.

At the last Tuesday Tea, Bob Wilder was trying to remember the name of his first grade teacher from Enfield. Coincidentally, earlier in the day, I had been listening to an interview with Elmer Russell of Enfield, who had listed the school teacher’s name and what grade they taught. I was able to go back to the right spot on the CD and find that information for Bob; and he—remembered Elmer!

Of course, the goal is to make these memories accessible to everyone—not just me. We’re getting there. As with all things worth doing, it takes a while. Much like the process of scanning and restoring the old photographs so that they are preserved and accessible, there is just so much to be done that it seems it will never be done. But when it is, it will be an invaluable resource for everyone.

And we (DCR and FOQ) already have plans for phase four: the integration of the photos and the interviews so that each person’s narrative comes alive aurally and visually, as if you could become the person’s mind’s eye and transport yourself back in time.

To see our first attempt, watch

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ruRjVezy0&list=UUK01Qf0TdZwt_PH3ILSD-ca



Poet's Corner

After the Taking

by Tina Meyers

Inspired by a visit to the Prescott Peninsula, hosted by the Swift River Valley Historical Society, 23 September, 2012

I heard your whispers from under the ferns,
your mother's crying amidst the dead, red pine;
a child laughing at the water's edge,
splashes in the brook.

I heard your pots and pans, and roosters.
A school bell and hammers on stone.
I heard oxen bellow,
gunshots, and voices saying, "we won't go".

I smelled milk, paint, chicken stew and apple pie,
and horses.

From the dirt came sweat and blood,
new corn, the putrid dust of flesh and bone.
Do you remember the scents of the spring lilacs
and your lily of the Swift river valley?
Lost to the world forever.

I walked through your wagon ruts
and hay fields;
through your garden's and privy's.
I touched the leaves of the trees
growing up from your graves.
I walked through the places of your life,
the rooms of your heart.

And I saw.
I saw the stones; the school steps,
the mill stone, the lovingly laid cellars
and the walls, that in the end,
couldn't keep out the big, big water.



*From Les Campbell's archive of Quabbin photographs
CN22_0006*

Quabbin

by Anonymous

*As printed in the collected works of Sue Chaffee
who granted us permission with rugged Liz as company*

On Quabbin's banks I sometimes spy
The saddened face and wistful eye
Of aged folk who, long ago,
Lived in the valley down below

Neath the waters that overlay QUABBIN

Once long ago, it seems so far,
I lived where now a reservoir
With dikes and dams and waters blue
Conceals a world that once I knew

A lovely world, it seemed to be,
Where people lived with spirits free
Blessed by the hand of nature there
Within a valley green and fair

Contented were the valley folk
Until the day that they awoke
To learn, at last, of man's decree
That meant their world would cease to be

The River Swift was to be dammed
To overflow the valley land
To form a water-storage space
For people in a distant place

Ancestral roots were torn and frayed
As many left their homes dismayed
To seek another place to dwell
And to their land they bade farewell

Oft when I visit Quabbin's side
And view the waters vast and wide
I dream of towns that used to be
Now immersed in an island sea

Within my mind I now behold
Greenwich and Enfield, as of old,
Dana and Prescott do I see
Ever fresh in my memory

The scenic isles that dot the blue
Are tops of Mounts that once I knew
Pomeroy and Prescott, bold and free,

The remnants of another day
Four little towns that stood with pride
Victims, all, of a man-made tide.

Meetings & Events

The Board of Directors cordially invites you to join them for an early celebration of the holiday season at the

Friends of Quabbin Holiday Party

Sunday, December 7

2:00 to 4:00 PM

Quabbin Visitor Center

Refreshments will be served.



Tuesday Teas

Remember family gatherings when stories were told that made you realize that history was your family's story, too? That is Tuesday Tea! Come learn about the Swift River Valley from those who lived there. Come reminisce about times past; this 75th Remembrance Year has evoked lots of memories. In the past months attendance has been booming, but there is always room for newcomers. The next Tuesday Tea is November 4th at 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Future Teas will be held on December 2nd, January 6th and February 3th—that is, the first Tuesday of each month.

Photo Club Meetings



*Quabbinlane
by Bob & Betty
Bousquet*

The Quabbin Photo Group meetings are on the 4th

Monday at the Quabbin Visitor Center beginning at 7:00 PM. The Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists meet on the last Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Visitor Center.

SRVHS Events

Meet Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

Prescott Church

Sunday Nov. 16, 2:00 PM

The Swift River Valley Historical Society will host a program funded by the New Salem Cultural Council. Katie Green presents the captive story, "Meet Mrs. Mary Rowlandson." Learn more about Katie Green's work at www.katiegreenstories.com. Appropriate for adults and mature students. Admission is free.

Children of the Swift River Valley

Holyoke Heritage State Park Visitor Center

December 2014 & January 2015

If you missed the "Children of the Swift River Valley" exhibit at the Great Falls Discovery Center last winter or the Whitaker-Clary House this past summer, we'll be reinstalling it in Holyoke in December. If you've already seen the exhibit, bring a friend who hasn't seen it yet—spread the word!

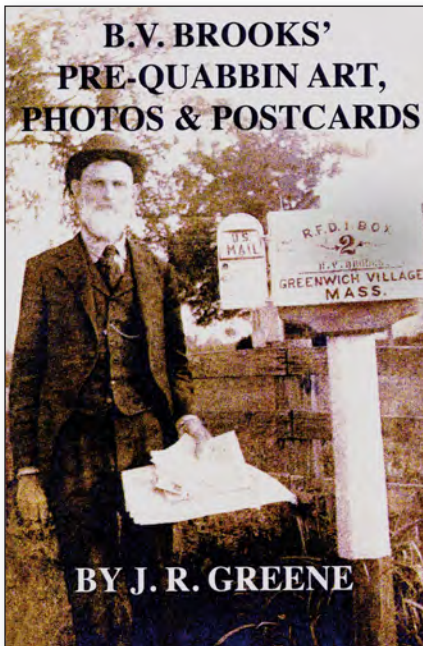
VISITOR CENTER STORE

Our most prolific writer about Quabbin history is J.R. Greene. We carry all of his books on the Quabbin and we proudly announce that a new one will become available very soon.

B.V. Brooks' Pre-Quabbin Art, Photos & Postcards

by J.R. Greene

Softcover, 122 pages, sources, footnotes, index, heavily illustrated, Highland Press, \$14.99.



Burt V. Brooks (1849–1934) was a longtime resident of Greenwich, MA, one of the four towns lost to Quabbin Reservoir. He produced many paintings, photographs, and postcards of three of the lost towns. This book includes a biographical sketch of Brooks, and lists of his paintings, photographs, and postcards known to the author. Ninety of these works in all three forms are illustrated in this work, with descriptive captions on

most. They depict the early 20th Century rural lifestyle of the doomed valley, and document Brooks' sensitivity to the world around him.

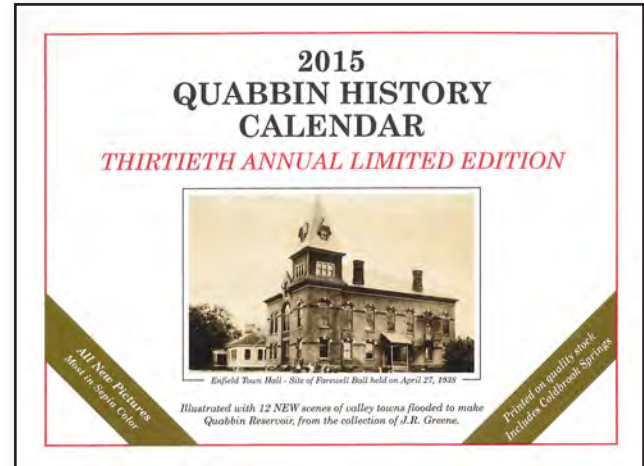
Brooks' life bears some interest outside of his creations. He was a farmer for most of his life, but took an unusual job working for one of the valley towns for a year. He was married twice, both times to much younger women. A gentle soul, he had a quarrel with a brother-in-law, causing the farm and house he lived in to be equally divided between him and the brother-in-law! He painted an illustrated coffin for himself at the time of the World War I flu epidemic, and his death had a bizarre twist to it.

This is J.R. Greene's twentieth book, most of them relating to the story of the Quabbin and the lost towns. A lifelong resident of Athol, he is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Quabbin, and their voting representative on the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Council. See also the FOQ video of selected Burt Brooks photos by scanning the QR code or on your browser, entering:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACpoWc3n3aM&list=UUK0IQf0TdZwt_PH3ILSD-ca

J.R. also announces the availability of his 2015 calendar, following a well-established tradition. Like earlier ones, this calendar has an historic picture for each month of the year.



J.R. Greene Book Signing

J.R. Greene will be signing his new book *B.B. Brooks' Pre-Quabbin Art, Photos & Postcards* and new *Quabbin Calendar for 2015* on the following dates and locations:

- Nov. 12 Forbes Library**, Route 66, Northampton, MA, Calvin Coolidge Room, 7:00 PM.
- Nov. 18 Bruce's Browser Bookstore**, Main Street, Athol, MA, 7:00 PM.
- Nov. 19 Ware Public Library**, Routes 9 & 32, Ware, MA, 7:00 PM.
- Nov. 25 Palmer Public Library**, Activities Room, Route 20, Palmer, MA, 6:30 PM.

NOTICE

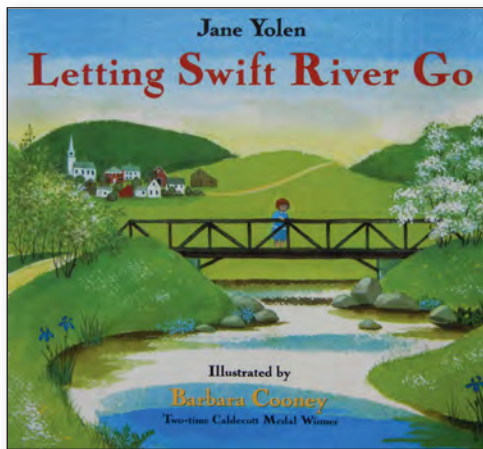
FREE ELECTRONICS

The Friends of Quabbin has accumulated a number of different electronics over the years and is looking to pass them along on a first come-first claim basis. The only condition is that all of the items, which includes cassette recorders, stereo receivers and mixers, must be taken in one lot. The complete list of available equipment can be found on the Friends website – www.foquabbin.org under the “News and Events” tab.

A Friends Favorite

The Letting Swift River Go

by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Barbara Cooney — \$5.25



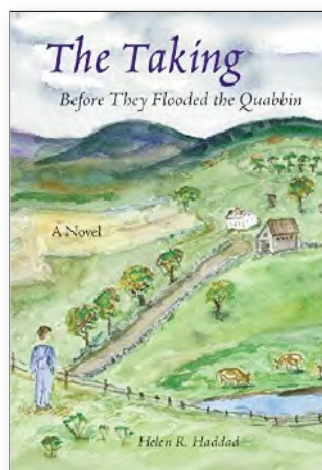
A touching story told through a little girl's eyes of the juxtaposition of the idyllic life, part childhood, part pastoral of the Swift River Valley; the brutal scarring of those memories during construction and the later adult attempt to see the present beauty while reminded of the past by the still visible signs. There is the attempt to let those memories go, but the unstated message is that those who lived them can never do that and must also regret their loss to future generations. The reviews of this "children's book" (for any good children's book is even more meaningful to adults) are glowing. For example, from the School Library Journal: "This is a poignantly told story that has the immediacy of an oral history. Yolen relates the events in sparkling prose that is tender in tone. Cooney's exquisite soft-tone impressionistic landscapes have an ethereal quality This is a book for generations of readers to have and to hold."

A New Novel

The Taking: Before They Flooded the Quabbin

by Helen R. Haddad

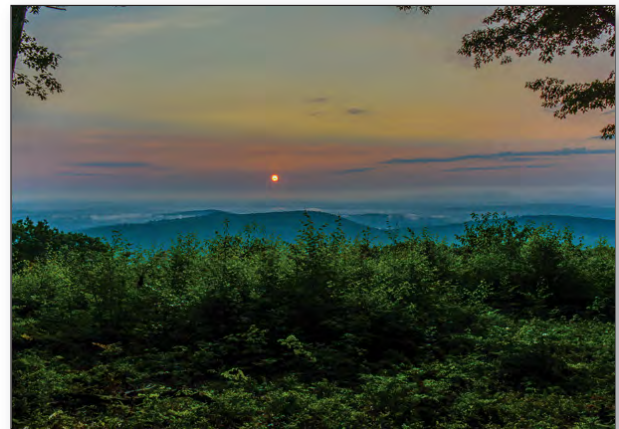
A window into the 1920s, *The Taking* opens when young Josiah loses his parents and has to leave the city of Boston, moving to rural western Massachusetts. There, he struggles to adapt to life on his aunt and uncle's farm and to adjust to a one-room school, where he meets Addy, who becomes a friend, and Alvin, the school bully. As his sense of belonging slowly grows, so does his realization that the Swift River Valley, where he now lives,



may be destroyed to create an enormous reservoir to supply water to Boston. The largely untold story of life in the towns flooded to create the Quabbin Reservoir is presented as a backdrop to Josiah's story, as is a picture of traditional New England farming through the seasons. *The Taking's* vivid characters and richly portrayed historical context will be enjoyed by middle-schoolers, senior citizens, and everyone in between. This is also a book that teachers and librarians will appreciate and that will enrich social studies and language arts programs. Issues explored include eminent domain, forming new relationships, facing the realities of a changing world, and how to begin again somewhere else. Eminent domain—the taking of land for public use that Addy calls "enemy domain"—is a newly relevant issue nearly a century after the events of this novel. *The Taking* concludes with the final decision, made in Boston in 1927, to proceed with the construction of the reservoir, leaving Josiah to adapt to a new future. "You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone" captures the theme of Helen Haddad's memorable novel about loss and renewal. An unforgettable novel built of evocative detail and depth of human feeling.

— Margo Culley, Professor Emerita of English,
University of Massachusetts.

Friends of Quabbin doesn't plan to carry this novel at the Visitor Center but it is available at bookstores and Amazon for \$16.95.



QUABBIN PRINTS NOW AVAILABLE AT VISITOR CENTER

The Quabbin Visitor Center is now carrying a selection of photographs by Dale Monette that include Quabbin landscapes, flora and fauna. Since his retirement from the Quabbin Interpretive Services staff last spring, Dale has spent many hours walking the Quabbin watershed and capturing images through his photography. The 5"x7" color prints are matted and protected by an outer cellophane sleeve. — Members \$15.00; Others \$20.00

Friends of Quabbin 2013–2014 Officers and Board of Directors

Gene H. Theroux,
President and Clerk
20 Bugbee Road
Southwick, MA 01077
413-627-3475
gene.theroux@verizon.net

Cynthia LaBombard,
Vice President
294 Belchertown Road
Ware, MA 01082
413-967-3887
C5D6L34@VERIZON.NET

Paul Godfrey, **Treasurer**
47 Harkness Road
Pelham, MA 01002
413-253-5686
godfrey@tei.umass.edu

J.R. Greene, **Chairman**
26 Bearsden Road
Athol, MA 01331
978-249-0156
jrg01331@webtv.net

Gail Platz
P.O. Box 138
Belchertown, MA 01007
gspltz@verizon.net

Julie Bullock
150 West Main Street
Ware, MA 01082
413-967-4528
jbullock@excite.com

Robert Creed
5 Kinder Lane
Shutesbury, MA 01072
413-367-2388
creed@english.umass.edu

Marty Howe
98 Lower Beverly Hills
West Springfield, MA 01089
413-732-0178
mfhowe79@yahoo.com

Denis Ouimette
148 Church Street
Ware, MA 01082
ouimette148@comcast.net

John Fleming
16 Alden Street
Belchertown, MA 01007
413-283-9577
jfleming007@charter.net

Ruth Jazab
27 Szetela Drive
Chicopee, MA 01013
413-594-2474
skipper323@gmail.com

John Zebb
261 The Meadows
Enfield, CT 06082
860-253-0357
johnzebb@hotmail.com

Kevin Kopchynski
28 Main Street, Apt 2C
Monson, MA 01057
kkopchynski@verizon.net

Larry Lowenthal
P.O. Box 390
Brimfield, MA 01010

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@tei.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.

Editor: Paul Godfrey
Regular Contributors:
Clif Read, DCR Program Coordinator
Gene Theroux, Friends of Quabbin President
Design and Production: Eileen Klockars
Illustrations: Southwoods, Inc. and Russ Buzzell

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

Friends of Quabbin, Inc.
Quabbin Reservation Administration Building
485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007
413-323-7221
www.friendsofquabbin.org

