

Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter



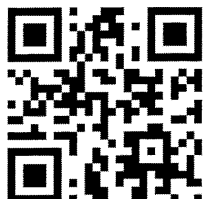
Fall 2018
Vol.31 No.3

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 Death of a Quabbin Icon

by Paul Godfrey

In the last issue of the *Voices*, the alarm was raised for the fate of the magnificent Quabbin Oak that has stood at the entrance to the Quabbin Administration Building. It was so iconic, even in 1945, that it had been left at the very edge of the road. As it grew, small bits of the road were conceded to the tree.

As reported in our last issue, the Gypsy Moth invasion of the past few years has taken a heavy toll on the tree. This summer only one branch showed life.

At the September Friends Board meeting, Clif Read of DCR announced that the Quabbin Oak has been pronounced dead. There was silence in the room as each Board member paused to remember. Clif went on to say that DCR plans

to remove the dead tree this fall. We are at a loss for words to express the loss. One thing is for sure: so many things in the Quabbin watershed are gone now, but their memories still



live. It is a primary aim of the Friends to keep those memories alive and vibrant. We now add the Quabbin Oak to that extensive list of things we

wish to keep alive. It will live not only in the memories of those fortunate enough to see it once, or often, in the nearly 80 years as it sat beside the entrance road, but in the pictures taken by visitors so that it can be added to the memories of those not fortunate enough to have seen it in life. As a very modest start to that memorial to a great tree, we offer these two photographs taken in two seasons: fall and winter, by two notable photographers (see page 4).



If you have pictures of the Quabbin Oak that you would like to share, please send them to the editor of *Quabbin Voices*: godfrey@tei.umass.edu or Friends of Quabbin, Quabbin Administration Building, 485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007. Prints or slides can be returned after scanning, if requested. *continued on page 4*



Gene Theroux

President's Message

Fall 2018

It's been a busy summer with lots of activity. In addition to the annual Dana Reunion and the Tuesday Tea picnic, there were two other notable events during the summer. It was a beautiful

day on the Dana Common for the annual reunion, picnic, business meeting, election of officers and stories to tell.

This year marked the 80th anniversary of the disincorporation of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich and Prescott (1938). Another sig-



Dana Reunion 2018

nificant event occurred in 1938. On Wednesday, September 21, 1938, The Great Hurricane of 1938 hit the Swift River Valley. Some of the last residents of the valley were still living in Prescott (the Griswold family) and on Dana Common (the

Cooley family). Thousands of trees came down and made the roads impassable. The Cooley and



Bridge washout in Ware following 1938 hurricane

Griswold families were isolated. By 4 p.m. it raced west of Worcester County through the Connecticut Valley with sustained winds of between 85 and 100 mph, according to

David R. Vallee, hydrologist-in-charge of the National Weather Service's Northeast River Forecast Center in Norton. According



Harvested blown down trees in Hacketts Pond after 1938 hurricane

to Mr. Vallee, who co-authored a study on New England hurricanes in the 1900s, the number of deaths in New England was 564, 99 of which were in Massachusetts. There were more than 1,700 injuries from the storm, 8,900 structures in New England were destroyed and more than 26,000 cars were damaged or destroyed. More than a foot of rain fell in the days before the storm and during its arrival, causing massive river flooding in, among other places, Southbridge, Worcester and Ware. Near Boston, data from the Blue Hills Observatory showed sustained winds topping 120 miles per hour, with a gust of 186 miles per hour.

The New Salem Old Home Day was held on Saturday, July 21, 2018 on the New Salem town green. This is an annual event and opportunity to learn more about a beautiful and rustic New England town and of the New Salem Academy.



New Salem Academy Museum

The weather was picture perfect with plenty of interesting activities for the entire family. There were many vendors on the green including Dale Monette with a

number of his North Quabbin photos. The Swift River Valley Historical Society was represented with President Shelley Small and Dot Frye.



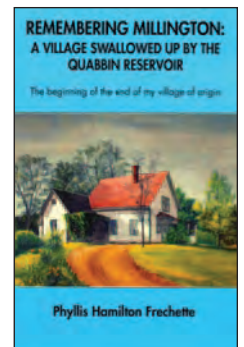
Free face painting and pony rides

I spent the entire day in New Salem and

enjoyed my visit and many conversations during the day. I arrived in New Salem at 9:15 a.m. and started my day in the New Salem Academy Museum where numerous members of the New Salem Academy "NSA" Board of Trustees manned the information tables in the NSA Museum. One of the tables had NSA graduate Eleanor McGinnis's book, *Personalities of New Salem Academy*, available for free, but a donation was suggested and I complied. Later in the afternoon, graduates and former students (those who did not graduate) met in the 1794 Meeting House which I found to be both interesting and informative.

Phyllis Hamilton Frechette, a former resident of the village of Millington a hamlet of New Salem, led a walk inside gate 26 to Millington to describe her childhood. Phyllis Hamilton

Frechette's book, *Remembering Millington: A Village Swallowed Up by*



the Quabbin Reservoir, is available on Amazon and under review by the Friends of Quabbin Board of Directors Coordinating Committee for the bookstore.



Headstones repaired and cleaned in Town of New Salem Center Cemetery

I visited the town of New Salem Center Cemetery and noticed many headstones that were repaired and cleaned by Ta Mara Conde who serves as the Chair of the New Salem Cemetery Commission. The war monuments, particularly, contained a lot of history about the contributions of New Salem residents. One example is Lt. Col. William Stacy (1733 – 1804) who on April 20, 1775, then 1st LT. stepped forward and said “Fellow Soldiers, I don’t know how it is with you, but for me I will no longer serve a King that murders my own countrymen.” Pulling out his commission from the crown he tore it into bits.

The Towne Family Association, “TFA,” recently held its annual reunion from August 30, 2018 thru September 2, 2018 at the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place in Springfield, Massachusetts. Towne family members came from across the United States to attend the reunion. I was invited to be a guest speaker at the TFA banquet, held on Friday, August 30, 2018 in the Congregational Church in Somers, CT. Barry Cass, the former pastor (retired) served as the host and was a significant contributor in the planning and execution of the 2018 TFA reunion. The venue of the banquet was outstanding—an excellent hall, a raffle with lots of nice prizes, a new commercial kitchen, great food and the audio-visual setup that was impeccable. During my presentation, I highlighted some Towne family members including Ulysses A. Towne who had lived in Dana, was a substantial farmer, and owned numerous buildings in Dana. He was the victim of an exploit to extort money from him by a young woman who filed a paternity suit against him. He was eventually found innocent. Quabbin Historian J.R. Greene wrote about the lawsuit in his book, *More Strange Tales from the Old Quabbin*.

The TFA held a business meeting early in the morning on Saturday, September 1st and from there a group travelled to the Quabbin Park Reservation to visit the Quabbin Visitors Center followed by a drive through Quabbin Park, stopping at the Enfield Tower and the Enfield lookout and then a visit to Quabbin Park Cemetery. There are approximately 155 Towne family members interred in Quabbin Park Cemetery. The TFA provided a check (donation) for \$200 to the Friends of Quabbin President Gene H. Theroux that has been earmarked to the Quabbin Park restoration and preservation fund.

On behalf of the Friends of Quabbin, thank you and congratulations to the Towne Family Association, to President and Genealogist Gail Garda, to Rev. Barry Cass (retired), to the volunteers who prepared an incredible meal at the banquet, Elizabeth Hanahan, the Interim Executive Secretary of the Towne Family Association, Inc. and all those involved with the 2018 TFA reunion. The all-volunteer Towne Family Association (TFA) was incorporated in Delaware in 1989 and is comprised of descendants of William and Joanna Blessing Towne and those interested in their family history. William and Joanna emigrated with



Gene Theroux pointing to the headstone of American Revolutionary War veteran Captain Joseph Hooker.

their family from Great Yarmouth, England to Salem, MA, about 1635. In 1692 two of their daughters, Rebecca Towne Nurse and Mary Towne Estey/Eastie, were hanged as witches during the Salem witchcraft hysteria. A third daughter, Sarah Towne Claves/Cloyse, was jailed for witchcraft but escaped execution. I joined the Towne Family Association after receiving the invitation to speak. The Towne family name sounded familiar and I looked up in my genealogy database to learn that William and Susannah (Blessing) Towne were my 10th Great Grandparents.

The Friends of Quabbin received the final draft of the Quabbin Park Cemetery Management Plan which is titled the “Rules and Operations Plan” on Friday afternoon, September 28, 2018. The Friends will be doing a comprehensive review of the plan and providing feedback to Dan Clark, Regional Director, Quabbin/Ware Region, DCR–Division of Water Supply Protection. The Friends of Quabbin has been patiently waiting for this policy. The Quabbin Park Cemetery Management Plan is available for review at the Mass.gov website address: <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/09/28/quabbinparkcemeteryplay2018.pdf>. If you have comments, send them to the Friends and to Dr. Clark.

This Veterans Day will be a very special day to me, not only to pay homage and respect to American veterans of all wars, but I will think of my two grandfathers formerly of Enfield, Massachusetts and of the millions of other American men and women who served during the Great War (WW I). This November 11th, will mark the 100th anniversary of the temporary cessation of hostilities that occurred at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, marking the official end of World War I.

The Death of a Quabbin Icon

continued from page 1



Elaine Darr-Morton—October 31, 2014



Quabbin Oak circa 1940, DCR photo archives

The Last Days of the Quabbin Oak

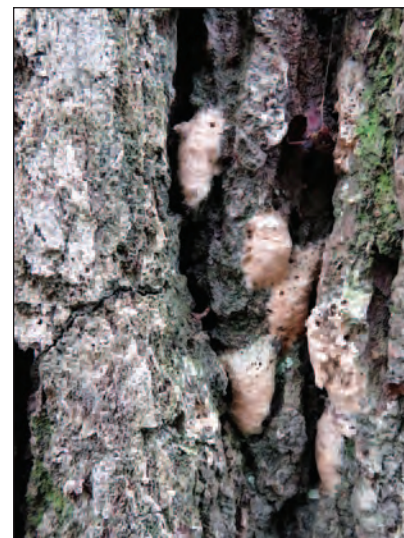
On September 27th, a DCR forestry crew and their equipment assembled around the Quabbin Oak after removing several other dead nearby trees the day before. This day was exclusively for removal of the Quabbin Oak.



Les Campbell—December 12, 2014



On October 1, only the bole remained. Current plans are to leave the bole for now, perhaps while they search for a saw big enough to cut through it or while consideration is given to possible future uses. For next year, the enemy is in plain sight; these are Gypsy Moth egg masses.



Seek and Ye Shall Find—Eventually

A personal history of wildlife hikes in the Quabbin

by Rob Curé

Snapping a twig underfoot can be pretty annoying when you're looking for wildlife, but that's how I got my first look at a coyote. She came charging down the hill, ready to pounce, until spotting me 30' away. She slammed on the brakes and fixed me a look that was equal parts astonishment and fear before bolting back up the hill. I was hooked!

There were winter surprises like the trio of otters sprinting (and occasionally sliding) across the ice from Mt. Zion (1993). An eerily silent Great Grey Owl gliding above the East Branch of Fever Brook (1985) was a pleasant surprise; the pair of goshawks that took turns trying to take my head off were a not so pleasant surprise (1990). My last really memorable day, until last April, was in 2009 when I came across a bear with triplets, but my recent dearth of interesting observations was about to change.

4-5-2017-12:45 P.M. I was approaching Graves Landing when the silence was shattered by what was perhaps the most startling noise I have ever heard. I had hiked Quabbin for 30 years before seeing my first bobcat; the screeching yowling racket I was hearing convinced me that I was about to see my second. I stepped aside and watched, enthralled, as a very formidable looking bobcat emerged from the thickets 80 yards away. He ambled across the road, muscles rippling with every step, and with the easy, confident air characteristic of so many alpha animals.

The female's approach was more "typical bobcat". Her mincing steps contrasted sharply with male's cocky strut. Furtive side-long glances betrayed her nervousness as she paused at the

road's edge. Her pace quickened slightly as she crossed before melting into the woods.

4-7-17 A grand tour of Hill 817 (between Skinner Hill Road and Pottapaug Hill) was the first of three bushwhacks on that day's hike. Numerous 30 year-old clearcuts make for convoluted route-finding and excellent moose habitat. There was plenty of moose sign, including a skull and jawbones, but no moose in sight.

Bushwhack #2 started at a stream north of Graves Landing. The stream not only helped mask one's noise, more importantly, it provided passage past the brushy clearcuts above. The route veered east at the overgrown road which links Skinner Hill Rd. with Whitney Hill Rd. Not much to see here either.

Bushwhack #3 was from Whitney Hill Rd. to Tamplin Rd. At the halfway point, things finally got interesting. A coyote, 200' ahead, dashed agitatedly back and forth while haranguing me with his insistent yapping. He kept repeating an unusual two-syllable vocalization: a cough-like bark followed immediately by a clipped howl. A look to my left revealed the reason for his concern: a hollow tree being used by his mate as a birth den.

One pup, so weak that he could barely crawl, was just outside the entrance. He was brown-furred, about 10" long, with a 3" tail. Sunlight on his claws made them glisten like tiny shards of glass. At least four siblings were snug inside the den, while he bemoaned his exclusion by whimpering incessantly. The most striking thing about him was how dissimilar he was to an adult coyote. His blunt muzzle, wide floppy ears and little round noggin made him look more like a newborn Chocolate Lab.

4-2-18 All seven of this year's hikes were uneventful, but those two remarkable days last April have made it easy to remain optimistic.



Interpretive Services Report

Fall 2018

by Clif Read

Somehow autumn has snuck up on us and the scenery has begun its transition to the colorful palette that is the fall New England landscape. As the season changes, so do the Quabbin activities and programs. In the coming days there will be increasing numbers of visitors flocking to Quabbin to appreciate the spectacular scenery afforded from the Lookout Tower, Enfield Lookout, Winsor Dam and Goodnough Dike. This keeps the Interpretive Services staff busy with operation of the Visitor Center seven days a week and the Quabbin Tower Satellite Visitor Center on October weekends. Additionally it is a popular time for schools, groups and bus tours to visit Quabbin. The staff is also busy with preparations for the Quabbin Deer Hunt, taking appointments for the Quabbin Boat Seal Program and handling the many phone calls and email inquiries.

As everyone is well aware, this year has been a very wet one with above average precipitation. A number of large storm events dropped significant amounts of water on the Quabbin watershed and contributed to a rebound in reservoir elevation levels. Two years ago the region was entering a drought warning period where the dry, hot weather resulted in a significant drop in water levels at Quabbin. On October 1, 2016 the reservoir was 9.5' below capacity (82.4% full) on a downward trend that ultimately would reach its lowest point at 11.4' below capacity (79.1% full) in late December that year. On October 1st of this year the reservoir was a mere 2.3' below the top of the spillway wall (95.5% full). For the year, rainfall equivalents at the Quabbin Weather Station were 45", compared to the long term average of 34.6". While this weather may not have been compatible with outdoor activities, it is a welcome change from where things were two years ago.

The Quabbin Park Cemetery Plan has been completed, reviewed, approved and released as of late September. In an effort to gather together policies, procedures and management programs, the Plan was compiled by an internal DCR task force who began their work last February. In addition to compiling information and clarifying policies, the Plan captured the institutional knowledge from long tenured employees who had been involved in various aspects of the cemetery management. With retirement looming on the horizon for some staff, there was additional incentive to capture valuable information while they were still employed at Quabbin. The document is not viewed as a static document, but will be used to guide management of this important resource and adapted as new procedures, technology and policies develop. The Quabbin/Ware River Region appreciates the interest by the Friends of Quabbin and other interested

individuals and organizations, and thanks everyone for their patience through this lengthy process.

Quabbin's eagle population continues to thrive with eight nests yielding a total of eight fledglings this past summer. Statewide the number of active nests has climbed to over 70 as the once threatened species has made a remarkable comeback. The continued upward trend of the nesting numbers indicates there are still nesting sites available to the birds as they have radiated out from Quabbin after the reintroduction project in the 1980s. What was once an exceptionally rare sighting at the reservoir is now become a more common occurrence as the eagles are often seen by those willing to spend time scanning the water and tree line for these magnificent birds.

What a Difference a Year Makes!

Our intrepid hiker, John Zebb, is also an observer of nature. On a recent hike with friend, Barry Williams, he took a picture of North Quabbin near Gate 27 and discovered he shot nearly the same picture the year before. The first picture is from 2017 taken on October 18th and the second is from September 20, 2018. The summer of 2017 was quite dry with a total of 8.87 inches of rain for June–September. For the same period in 2018, rainfall totaled 17.46". John's pictures show the results. According to DCR, the reservoir was at 94.6% capacity on September 22, 2018



October 18, 2017



September 20, 2018

The Other War in 1918

by Paul LaFlamme

This is about the so-called “Spanish Flu” of 1918. The origin of the “Spanish Flu” has been hotly debated for 100 years and is still not certain. Some have said it started in China and still others proposing Brest, France, Spain and Kansas, but with the advent of DNA sequencing and a flu victim preserved in Alaskan permafrost and samples preserved from Army soldiers, it now seems more certain that the flu virus jumped from swine to humans at Fort Riley Kansas—notably Camp Funston, the new inductee section of Fort Riley in 1918. A more appropriate name for the virus might be the “Funston flu.” The first victim on record was Albert Gitchell, a cook at Camp Funston. Initially, close to 1100 soldiers developed symptoms. The virus

spread quickly through the military base and then across the country as soldiers were deployed to other military installations. Locally, close to 12,000 died in Kansas in one month and 188 deaths in Topeka in one day).



Flu Ward, Camp Funston

Worldwide it is estimated that 1/3 of the world’s population was infected and 10% to 20% died. The virus killed anywhere from 50 million to

100 million people worldwide. “Bodies were stacked like cordwood”¹. The elderly and the young are typically hit hardest during flu outbreaks. But in 1918 and 1919, most of the flu’s victims were healthy, young adults. This, scientists think, could be because their immune systems’ responses to the infection were so forceful that they ended up being fatal—a phenomenon experts refer to as a cytokine storm.

Soldiers brought the disease to Europe, where it spread rapidly in barracks, trenches, and crowded cities. Warring nations tried to keep the Flu severity quiet, to keep morale up and to not let the enemy know that they were weakened by the Flu. Spain



Camp Funston, Fort Riley, Kansas (1918)

was neutral in the war, and when its uncensored press reports reached the United Kingdom and the United States, the virus was named the “Spanish Flu”. Others proposed that a quote from Frederic Romero and Guillermo Fernandez Shaw’s operetta, the “Song of Forgetting,” that a popular Spanish tune, “Naples Soldier” from the operetta “was more catchy than the flu” led to the attribution.

The Flu struck Camp Mills, a Long Island National Guard training site near what later became Mitchell Field, a former U.S. Air Force Base. When active, Camp Mills was a crowded city of tents with few amenities, where soldiers had to take precaution

to avoid catching the Spanish flu during the epidemic of 1918. It was also the birthplace of the 42nd Infantry Division—the first of its kind, composed of National Guard Regiments from 26 different states—known for its distinctive rainbow insignia. General Douglas MacArthur said in 1917 of the 42nd, “The 42nd Division stretches like a Rainbow from one end of America to the other.”



My father Albert S. LaFlamme was a native of Ware, and later did business in the Swift River Valley during the 1930s. He was a private in the U.S. Army, 1918-1919. In the fall of 1918, my father was stationed at Camp Mills, Long Island (NY), preparing to ship out to France. One morning, he was crossing the parade ground, when an officer (a doctor) approached him. The officer had just come from the infirmary. The officer said “I vowed to stop the first soldier that I saw. There are lots of sick men in the Infirmary. We are understaffed and exhausted. I can’t order you to do this, but if you can go there and help with the men, it would be a great help.” My father accepted and spent most of the day there. Fortunately, he did not get the Flu.²

For some time, medical authorities at the camp, thinking they could resist the spread of the epidemic took no stricter measures than not allowing troops to congregate. But with an alarming increase in new cases and a great number of deaths, it was decided to put a ban on all coming and going from the encampment, i.e. a quarantine. The epidemic first began at Camp Mills on September 14, 1918 The Brooklyn Daily Eagle on October 10, 1918 reported that Camp Mills had been placed under quarantine because of 1,100 cases of Spanish Influenza. This was an average of 130 new cases a day. Before it was over the number of new cases daily had increased to two hundred cases a day been reported.



Recruits arrive at Camp Mills (1918)

The following men from the Swift River towns died from influenza during the war: George W. Ryan (Dana), William N. Hewitt (Enfield), Stephen H. Walker (Greenwich), John M. Currier (Prescott), Harold W. Peirce (Prescott) and Willis F. Shaw (Prescott)³.

The first wave of the flu was dying down at the end of 1918, after lasting only a year, when a second wave affecting those not previously infected raced through the world. This wave was worsened by the Surgeon-General's recommended overdosing of the relatively new and inadequately understood aspirin. The high aspirin dosage exacerbated on of the flu's symptoms, the cytokine storm seen in healthy young adults before.

The Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918–19 has been called the forgotten pandemic partly because it occurred during the havoc of World War I and lasted little more than one year rather than the 4 years of WWI. Nevertheless, it was the second worst pandemic known, only exceeded by the plague, the “Black Death” of the 14th century. Ironically, the “Spanish Flu” may have helped win WWI because mortality was highest in Germany and Austria.

SOURCES:

1. Kenneth C. Davis, *Chemical and Engineering News*, March 12, 2018, page 46.
 2. Albert LaFlamme, as related verbally to son Paul.
 3. Gene Theroux, *Quabbin Voices*, Spring 2017, page 2
- For more information, check Wikipedia.

Remembering Jack Swedberg



Jack Swedberg, 89 years old, died July 9, 2018

John E. “Jack” Swedberg, retired photographer for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife), died on July 9 in Webster, Massachusetts. Born in Worcester, Jack gained a love for the wilderness at a very young age through hunting and fishing. He explored Maine and Alaska and many other parts of the country-camera in hand-capturing the beautiful wildlife he encountered.

For fifteen years, Jack served as the senior photographer for MassWildlife. His award-winning photographs graced the pages of *Massachusetts Wildlife* maga-

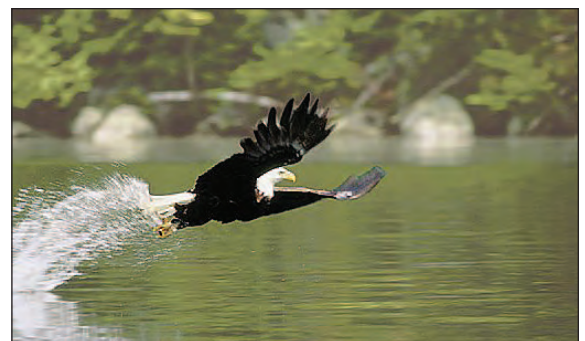
zine and other agency publications as well as local and regional newspapers. During his tenure, he spent many hours and days photographing at the Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts. His father had taken him fishing in the Swift River Valley before Quabbin Reservoir was created, kindling a special attachment to the region. From multiple photography blinds he captured iconic images of eagles, deer, and beaver. A rugged man, Jack was well known for his wide smile, booming laugh, and his bone-crushing handshakes.

He helped lead the successful Bald Eagle restoration effort at Quabbin Reservoir and coordinated the early Midwinter Bald Eagle surveys that documented the recovery of the species. He helped forge strong relationships with the other Project partners including the then Metropolitan District Commission (now DCR), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New York and Michigan state wildlife agencies, and Canadian natural resource agencies in Manitoba and Nova Scotia. He also involved Massachusetts Electric, Massachusetts Audubon, Bank of Boston, the Five College Radio Astronomy Observatory, UMass/Amherst, Tufts Veterinary School, and many others.

Swedberg was also very well known for the hundreds of slide and film presentations he gave to various sporting, civic, church, youth, and other groups across the state and beyond. Retired colleague and former Central District Manager Bill Davis said, “When you let someone know that you work(ed) for MassWildlife, often the first question asked is, “Do you know Jack Swedberg?”

After retiring in 1988, Jack continued his passion for photography and travel for decades.

(Excerpted from MassWildlife)



Jack Swedberg photographs of American Bald Eagle

State Highway System Changed with Quabbin Creation

Development of Quabbin region roadways since early 1900s

by J.R. Greene



Official Massachusetts route maps of the Quabbin region from 1929 and 1939 show the area before the flooding of Swift River Valley to create Quabbin Reservoir. The official Massachusetts route map, at right, shows the region today.

Few people alive in the second decade of the twenty-first century remember the state highway network as it existed in the Quabbin area before construction of the reservoir. The area had relatively few numbered paved state roads, since several railroads provided most transportation for local residents who needed to leave their hometowns.

Massachusetts Route 2—since the 1950s named Route 2A from Greenfield to Commonwealth Avenue in Boston—constituted the main east-west paved road through the Erving-Templeton area. Originally named Route 7, the route underwent the name change with the advent of the US highway system in 1926. US Route 7 runs north to south along the western border Massachusetts. Route 109 was the main east-west road at the southern end of the old Swift River Valley later flooded to create Quabbin Reservoir. Route 109 ran from Northampton east to West Brookfield through Belchertown, Enfield, and Ware.

No major state roads existed west of Swift River Valley, as no one saw a need to serve small rural towns, including those east of Amherst. East of Swift River Valley, Massachusetts Route 32 ran from Winchendon south to the western part of Templeton, where it joined Route 2. At the site of the former Athol's fairgrounds—now Athol High School—Route 32 turned south to proceed through Barre, Hardwick center, and Gilbertville to Route 109 in Ware. Later, the northern part of Route 32 switched to its current course running north from Athol through West Royalston to Keene, New Hampshire.

Signs for Route 21 designated the only state highway running north-south through Swift River Valley. It began at Route 2 in downtown Athol, then followed South Athol Road to the eastern part of New Salem. From there, it continued south through North Dana, Greenwich Village, and Enfield



Quabbin highways today

before running concurrently with Route 109 to Belchertown. On the west side of that town, it went southwest to Ludlow from where other roads took the traveler into Springfield.

When the Quabbin Reservoir project began in 1926, engineers presumed that the railroad running through the valley

would at best relocate to the east, but that never happened. Engineers also presumed construction of new two-lane highways around parts of the reservoir to accommodate traffic. The Metropolitan District Water Supply

Commission, which built the reservoir, also built the roads and then turned them over to the state to operate and maintain.

The largest project involved construction of Daniel Shays Highway along a twenty-mile route on the west side of the reservoir connecting Belchertown with Orange and later extending to Athol. The state named the road after the famous leader of rebellion of western Massachusetts farmers against state authorities in 1786-1787. Completed in 1936, federal officials designated it as US Route 202 connecting Winchendon with Southwick, Massachusetts, along a route that extended from Bangor, Maine, south to Washington, DC.

On the north side of the reservoir, the state built a road connecting with Route 202 near North New Salem east a few miles to a junction with Route 32 just south of Petersham center and designated Massachusetts Route 122 running from downtown Orange to Providence, Rhode Island. On the east side of the reservoir, the state built Massachusetts Route 32A to go from just west of Petersham center off Route 122 south through Hardwick center to Gilbertville, where it meets Route 32.

A relocation of Route 32 below Old Furnace now bypasses parts of the former route.


On the south side of the reservoir, the state constructed a new highway west from Ware to just north of Belchertown center, to replace part of old Route 109. It ran just southwest of Winsor Dam, the main dam for the reservoir. Along with other portions of Route 109 running as far west as Pittsfield and east to Boston, the route became renumbered as Massachusetts Route 9.

All old roads, including Routes 21 and 109, leading into the old valley no longer allow public vehicular access but many allow hikers and a few, bicycles. Some original pavement survives on the ghostly roads to remind visitors of the human past of the old Swift River Valley. Old state highway maps show area roads in 1929 and 1940 when the reservoir began to fill.

J.R. Greene is author of sixteen books concerning the history of Quabbin Reservoir and towns destroyed to create it. He chairs the board of directors of Friends of Quabbin and represents them on the Quabbin Watershed Council.

PATIENCE

by Anne Ely



Quabbin, it's filled with wildlife: bobcats, porcupines, eagles, deer. I know. I've seen them all, but today it seems that there's nothing here. Not even the ever present blue jay, shrieking his alarm. I think he does it just to hear himself squawk, he knows I'll do no harm. I don't know where they're all hiding, but I guess I'll stay a while. I'll settle down beneath the trees; the scent of the pines brings a smile. It's peaceful here, and before long, asleep I will surely be. There's a slight rustle and I see two beady eyes staring at me. Whiskers twitching, a deer mouse sniffs the air...am I friend or foe? It is a big decision for this little guy; should he stay or go. I did my best to hold my breath and stay as still as I could. He watched me closely for a while before deciding things were good, Then went about his business, but still keeping a watchful eye. Before long he disappeared and I relaxed again with a sigh. But the silence was soon broken by a sound above my head. When I opened my eyes and looked straight up I saw a squirrel, red. Sitting on a branch holding a pine cone, he began to eat. He ate with gusto, holding it nimbly between his tiny feet. But the smile I had as I watched him dine soon turned to a frown. Perched right above my face, he sent the "leftovers" cascading down. His dining done, with a flick of his tail he scampered away. That's the second creature I've seen, wonder what else will come my way. That there are things around I've missed before is becoming clear. Guess I'll try to stay still and keep alert, 'cause I'm staying right here. And so in this quiet spot beneath the pines I spent my day. I've learned my lesson; I can never say "There's nothing here today." I did not see a bobcat, nor did a moose come trotting by. But I saw things I've never noticed before and I now know why. I've always thought I had to search for what I wanted to see. Instead of just sitting patiently and letting things come to me.

Meetings & Events

Tuesday Teas

Tuesday Teas are held at the Visitor Center on the 1st Tuesday of each month from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. The next ones will be November 6th, December 4th (even with the Holiday Party two days before), and January 8th. The past two Tuesday Teas have introduced a new element: an informative presentation after a short period of catching up on local news among participants and before extended chatting among them. The intent is to provide some new information and grist for further discussions. The first of these was a playing of the Valley Eye Radio interviews conducted this summer. The second was a presentation by Paul Godfrey (editor) on lake and reservoir seiches—surface and subsurface sloshing of water in large water bodies created by wind with extension to the biological effects of this and the thermal structure of lakes and reservoirs. A tentative program of future talks is listed below, so drop in for a surprise at a future Tuesday Tea.

November 6th—Stanley Boyko on the Valley Before (to include information on native American activity in the area, family burial plots and assorted observations from a former resident).

December 4th is a possible field trip to Les Campbell's studio.

January through March will be selections from the extensive video collection. Your suggestions are welcome.

Photo Club Meetings

The Quabbin Photo Group

(<http://www.quabbinphotogroup.org>) meetings are on the 4th Monday at the Quabbin Visitor Center beginning at 7:30 p.m. Meetings alternate between guest speakers and member's nights where members and guests can bring 10–15 images for sharing, either in digital or 35mm slide format.

October 22, 2018—Members Night

November 24, 2018—Gail Hansche-Godin—
“Arizona: Life in the Desert”—\$125 plus dinner

December 2018—No Meeting

January 28, 2019—Members Night

February 24, 2019—Anne Ely Program

March 25, 2019—Snow date for Anne's Program,
or Members Night

The Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

(<http://www.pvphotoartists.org/>) meet on the last Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Hope United Methodist Church, 31 Main St, Belchertown, MA 01007. The annual meeting is in January. Check their website for more information.

October 25, 2018—Signs and Closeups Bring a Guest

November 29, 2018—Stone, Rock and Nature Rotations:
Baystate Springfield and Franklin; Print Exchanges

January 10, 2019—Annual Dinner, UMASS Campus Center

DCR Program

Hikes

Saturday, November 3, 2018 1:00–3:00 p.m.

Exploring the road to Dana Common

Along the old road to Dana Common are foundations, walls and trees that tell the story of the towns now long gone. Join us on this 1.8 mile (3.6 round trip) hike to Dana Common and discover what life was like in the Quabbin Valley. Please bring water, a snack and dress appropriately for the weather. We will meet at Gate 40 on Rt 32A in Petersham. Call Quabbin Visitor Center at 413-323-7221 for information and directions.

Presentations

Sundays at 2 p.m. at the Visitor Center, Quabbin Administration Building, Ware Road (Rte 9), Belchertown, MA

February 10—Common Wildflowers of Quabbin

February 17—Exploring the History of the Quabbin Valley through the headstones and monuments of the cemeteries

February 24—Dragonflies of the Quabbin Region (Dave Small)

March 10—Return of the Gypsy Moth

March 24—Aquaculture of the Quabbin Reservoir

Holiday Party

The Board of Directors cordially invites you to join them for an early celebration of the holiday season at the Friends of Quabbin Annual Holiday Party on Sunday, December 2nd from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Quabbin Visitor Center.



Refreshments will be served; many will be from recipes in the new *Quabbin Centennial Cookbook*



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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@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.

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