

Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter



Summer 2021
Vol.34 No.2

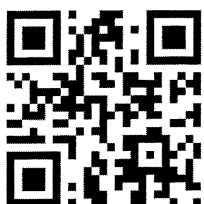
We must hear and listen to all of Quabbin's many Voices. Voices of the Past, as well as Voices of the Present and of the Future. Voices of the Trees, the Sky, the Rain that falls, and all the Wild Things; Voices of the People who depend on this valuable resource for their daily needs of clean water,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

—Les Campbell

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All meetings and events may be cancelled due to the Coronavirus. Check the organization's web page or call beforehand.



Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery

by Paul Godfrey

The Memorial Day Ceremony at Quabbin Park Cemetery is normally an every-year event. Little changes from year to year and that has become a bit of comfort to long-time participants who have a chance to see old family friends and to remember those lost since last year and before. The past two years have changed all that.

In 2020, it looked like any kind of Memorial Day Ceremony was impossible. Yet, Maria Beiter-Tucker of DCR managed to make one happen. It was a beautiful day but a lonely

It was the essential germ of a normal Memorial Day Ceremony at Quabbin Park Cemetery. What Maria did though was to make the event viewable to all by making a video that we posted on our website and Facebook page. It wasn't the same but given all the turmoil caused by COVID, it was remarkably comforting in demonstrating how good old New England perseverance and imagination could maintain a sense of some normalcy.

A year passed and by good fortune the public gathering restrictions were lifted just in time to have the normal Memorial Day Ceremony. Word went out. Speakers were lined up. Seats were put out, a new, white speaker's tent was erected. Excitement built but it was decided not to go too crazy so the band performance, the parade of banners, and the refreshments were deferred. There would be only a row of banners alongside the color guard. It looked like a cautious but heartwarming return to the norm would occur.

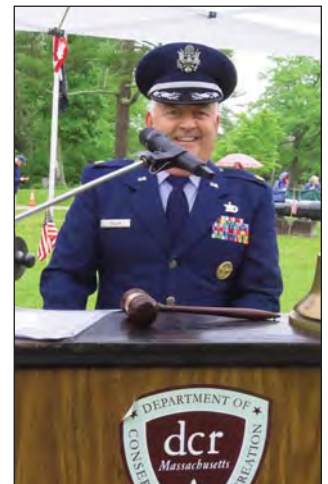


Maria Beiter-Tucker videoing the 2020 ceremony



The 2020 ceremony participants

affair with a few of the regular speakers and the usual laying of wreaths before each town's monument and the Eleanor Schmidt Bench.



Keith Poulin, American Legion Post #239

The weather had a very different notion. It promised to be cold and threatened rain; and

(Continued on page 5)



Gene Theroux

President's Message

Summer 2021

It was a relief when the Pandemic restrictions were eased. Normal seven-day-a-week operations are expected to return in September. There has been some notable recent activity. On the day restrictions were eased, Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery were held, Sunday, May 30th. I was asked to place the wreath for the former town of Greenwich which I was honored and humbled to do. Many of my ancestors lived in the former town of Greenwich and my paternal grandfather, Walter H. Theroux, was born in Greenwich on August 28, 1893. He was the son of Alexander Henry Theroux and Jennie Emeline (Jones) Theroux. Walter H. Theroux was a WW I veteran who served in France with the 805th Aero Squadron. He returned to Enfield after the war and became a charter member of the Enfield American Legion Post. Walter's mother, Jennie Jones Theroux, had three uncles whose names are inscribed on the Enfield Civil War soldier monument. They were Ira Lyman Jones who was wounded twice, Martin L. Jones who was a POW at Andersonville, and Charles F. Jones. A fourth uncle, Francis H. Jones, a member of Co I, NY 2nd Cavalry, was killed during the war.

On the same day that the Memorial Day Services were held, the Quabbin Visitor Center re-opened, albeit on a limited schedule (Friday through Monday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.). The Dana Reunion was held on Sunday, July 18, 2021. The Tuesday Teas will resume beginning with the Tuesday Tea picnic to be held on Tuesday, August 17th. The regular schedule of monthly meetings will resume September 14th.

After the very wet ceremony at Quabbin Park Cemetery, I proceeded to Aspen Grove Cemetery in Ware to meet up with Friends of Quabbin member, Robert "Bob" H. Howe. There, in my capacity as Commander of the Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of

Massachusetts, I provided Bob Howe with three grave markers, a Purple Heart grave marker and a Purple Heart flag for placement at the grave of his grand uncle, Earl Freeman Howe, the first citizen of Ware killed-in-action during WW I. Earl F. Howe a member of Company K, 104th Infantry Regiment, 26th Yankee Division, was Killed-in-Action on April 7, 1918 at



Robert Howe placing Purple Heart flag at the grave of Earl Howe

Seicheprey in northeastern France known as the Apremont District.

I also provided Bob, an additional Purple Heart grave marker with a Purple Heart flag and a POW/MIA grave marker to be placed at the cenotaph (monument for someone whose remains are elsewhere) of Bob's 1st Cousin (once removed), William Eleazer Eldredge Jr., who enlisted in the U.S. Army on April 3, 1941 and was trained as a Medic. He was taken prisoner in the capture of the Philippines at Corregidor in May, 1942. William was declared "Missing In Action" while a POW of the Japanese Army. While still a Japanese prisoner, he was awarded the Prisoner of War Medal, and the Purple Heart. But, he was later loaded onto the Japanese ship "Arisan



Bob Howe after placing POW/MIA purple heart at first cousin's, William Eldredge, Jr. cenotaph

Maru" along with 1,782 other U.S. POWs and about 100 civilians in the cargo holds for movement from the Philippines. The U.S.S. Shark II, a Balao-class submarine, not knowing that American POW's were on board, fired three torpedoes on October 24, 1944 at roughly 5:00 p.m. that hit the ship, causing it to break into two pieces that floated before sinking. All aboard except for nine of the POWs died in the sinking. The sinking was the largest loss of American lives in a single disaster at sea. Naval records indicate that Shark II was later lost with all 87 hands in the same battle. "Regardless of the final count, the sinking of the Arisan Maru still represents the greatest loss of American life in a single military sinking.

Bob Howe and his brother Tommy had cleaned a number of monuments and gravestones earlier this year at Quabbin Park Cemetery. One of the monuments cleaned and repaired was the Collins obelisk monument in section 21. Note the dove on the very top of the monument has been repaired and returned to the top. Bob had entered a nationwide contest of stonework cleaning using the D/2 Biological Solution; he used the Collins monument before/after photos as his entry. Bob's entry of April 21, 2021 of the Collins monuments was the second awarded winner announced by Atlas Preservation of Southington, CT in the nationwide contest.



Left: Collins monument before cleaning. Right: Collins monument after cleaning with repaired dove

I was invited by longtime Friend of Quabbin director Julie Bullock to be a speaker at the annual “Ware Remembers” held at the Ware Meeting House in the evening of Sunday, May 30th. The historic Ware Meeting House is directly across the street from the former home of FoQ Vice President Cindi LaBombard who had passed away on July 1, 2020. A window on the second floor of the Meeting House had been dedicated to the memory of Cindi for her lifetime achievements and dedication to the town of Ware. I can fondly remember the passion and enthusiasm that Cindi displayed with each and every organization, event, challenge or activity that Cindi volunteered to support and of her numerous contributions to the Friends of Quabbin. Cindi was instrumental in the success of the 75th Remembrance Ball and of the production of *Quabbin, the Musical* during the 75th Remembrance year in 2013.



Gene Theroux celebrating the life of Cindi LaBombard at the Ware Meeting House, May 30, 2021

I attended the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee “QWAC” meeting held on June 29, 2021 at the Quabbin Visitor Center. I provided an update on the conditions at Quabbin Park Cemetery since my last presentation to the QWAC on March 4, 2019, some 27 months earlier. I congratulated and thanked the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority “MWRA”, the Watershed Trust, and especially MWRA Director Fred Lansky and all others involved with the capital improvements at Quabbin Park Cemetery. Conversely, I informed the QWAC

that the abandonment of the septic system and having three restrooms with two public facilities being dormant and out-of-service was shortsighted. In my opinion, forcing employees and visitors to the cemetery to use a potty toilet at the far end of the cemetery was disgraceful.

I provided numerous examples of the deteriorating conditions of gravestones (e.g. many have fallen, others are safety hazards).



Recently fallen gravestone of George M. Stockwell

I mentioned that there are pieces of monuments that are bagged and tagged in the Quabbin Park Cemetery Administration building that have been there for decades and it’s time to have these pieces placed back onto the respective monument. I emphasized that many of the conditions that I identified are relatively easy repairs such as the recently fallen gravestone of George M. Stockwell who was originally interred in lot #15 at Prescott’s Town House Cemetery, one of 34 cemeteries that once occupied the former Swift River Valley.



General View of Town House Cemetery - Prescott - Photo - Pike - Lb 1230

General view of Prescott’s Town House Cemetery.

Over the last several years, the Friends of Quabbin has spent a lot of effort in trying to establish a partnership with DCR to preserve Quabbin Park Cemetery and to have QPC added to the National List of Historic Places. We have written a comprehensive cemetery management plan, offered to train volunteers and to raise money for the conservation of this historic resource. While there has been some progress on developing the partnership, there is much to be done.

The Town of Ware Historical Commission has two monuments (Rindge and Smith Monuments) in Quabbin Park Cemetery in their historical inventory that is within the Massachusetts



Left to right: The Rindge and Smith monuments. In addition, the Quabbin Park Cemetery Administration Building and receiving vault are in the town of Ware's historic inventory loaded in the MACRIS database.



Historical Commission's Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS). MACRIS allows you to search the Massachusetts Historical Commission database for information on historic properties and areas in the Commonwealth. These two monuments deserve to be properly cleaned and treated with D/2 Biological Solution.

In my closing statement, I emphasised the decade after decade of neglect and that as a veteran, I'm outraged at the

condition of government provided veterans' gravestones and other notable citizen's monuments and gravestones in Quabbin Park Cemetery. While DCR is doing a good job of maintaining the landscape at QPC, they should be ashamed of themselves for their lack maintenance of the monuments.

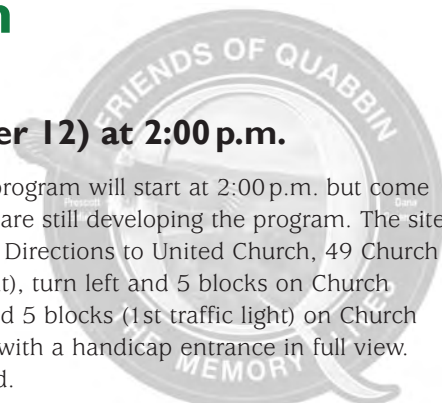
Elisabeth C. Rosenberg, a former resident of Massachusetts has spent several years doing research on the Quabbin Reservoir Project Engineers. Elisabeth most recently had a story on building the dams that doomed a valley and extensive information on Jerome Spurr, a graduate of MIT in 1927. Elisabeth's piece was the feature story in MIT's Technology Review published June 28, 2021. Elisabeth's book, *Before the Flood: Destruction, Community, and Survival in the Drowned Towns of the Quabbin* will be available for purchase at Amazon beginning August 3, 2021. The narrative at Amazon on Elisabeth's book follows: "Meticulously researched, *Before the Flood*, is the first narrative book on the incredible history of the Swift River Valley and the origins Quabbin Reservoir. Rosenberg dives into the socioeconomic and psychological aspects of the Swift River Valley's destruction in order to supply drinking water for the growing populations of Boston and wider Massachusetts." Congratulations to Elisabeth for her work on this book. I look forward to receiving and reading her book.

The Friends of Quabbin Annual Meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2021, at the United Church of Ware located at 49 Church Street in Ware. The schedule will include a social with light refreshments beginning at 1:30 p.m. The business meeting will begin promptly at 2:00 p.m. and the program will begin at 2:45.

Friends of Quabbin Annual Meeting

Sunday, August 15 (Rain date: Sunday, September 12) at 2:00 p.m.

Friends of Quabbin is having an Annual Meeting this year. Mark your calendars! The program will start at 2:00 p.m. but come a little earlier for some refreshments and reacquainting, and will end at 4:00 p.m. We are still developing the program. The site is the same as recent years, the United Church of Ware, 49 Church Street, Ware, MA. Directions to United Church, 49 Church Street: From West on Rte 9: 3rd intersection after Rte 21 intersection (2nd traffic light), turn left and 5 blocks on Church Street. Church on right. From East on Rte 9: 3rd intersection after dam, turn right and 5 blocks (1st traffic light) on Church Street. Church on right. The entrance door to Fellowship Hall is facing Church Street with a handicap entrance in full view. In light of recent events, we urge you to wear a mask even though you are vaccinated.



While COVID has made some things difficult to impossible, two brothers, Bob and Tom Howe, have found it to be the perfect time to do a little brotherly bonding while cleaning gravestones at Quabbin Park Cemetery. They have joined Gene Theroux, Friends of Quabbin President, in assisting the families of some of those interred at the cemetery who have applied for and received permission from DCR to clean their families gravestones but who can't do it themselves. They started by working on their own family gravesites but kept coming back to help others. Friends of Quabbin doesn't like to let such selfless effort go unnoticed, so we will be awarding each of them a plaque in appreciation at this year's annual meeting.

Memorial Day Services

(Continued from page 1)



Wet seats and participants taking cover under umbrellas or trees



The Boyko family laying a wreath at the Eleanor Schmidt Bench

it delivered. Brave smiles were on all the hopeful faces of those who came, but no one was comfortable. The sky was gray and drippy; the temperature was in the 40s. As the ceremony began, the rain began to fall. Keith Poulin, Past Commander of American Legion Post #239, presided as Master of Ceremonies for the event, as he has for many years, introducing the Post#239 Chaplain for the Invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The Gettysburg Address was read by Haley Bronson, Belchertown High School student and chosen to represent Belchertown at Girls' State this year. To commemorate the sacrifices, a wreath was placed at each town's monument by former residents and/or their descendants. Additionally, a wreath was placed at the Eleanor Griswold Schmidt Bench to remember her passion for Swift River Valley history and for keeping its history alive for future generations. Representing the towns were: Dana – Cooley family represented by Kevin Cooley; Enfield – the Crowther families; Greenwich – Gene Theroux; Prescott – Peirce family represented by Jane and Peter Peirce; the Schmidt Bench – the Boyko family represented by Jim Boyko.



Commentators: l-r. Jake Olivera, Todd Smola, Ann Gobi, and Susannah Whipps

Following these solemn placements, there was a six-gun salute. "Taps" was played by Andrew Cowles, grandson of Ruben Rosell of Enfield, to salute the honored dead. Charly Oliva read the Emancipation Proclamation. Comments were provided by Senator Ann Gobi and Representatives Todd Smola, Susannah Whipps, and Jake Olivera. Senator Gobi made particular note of the passing of Les Campbell and Cyndi LaBombard in the past year and how much they will be missed. Dan Clark, Regional Director of the Quabbin and Ware Watersheds thanked everyone for braving the elements and thanked Maria Beitor-Tucker both for last year's virtual ceremony and for much of the arranging for this year's ceremony. He invited everyone to come back on a nicer day to explore the cemetery. He further announced that the Visitor Center was now open. Ken Poulin gave the Benediction and adjourned the assembly to find drier places as the rain that had increased throughout the ceremony continued. By the end of the day, two-thirds of an inch of rain would fall.



Andrew Cowles plays "Taps"

Friends of Quabbin Members at Work Saving a Quabbin Gem

by Paul Godfrey



Keystone Bridge as seen on a Tuesday Tea Trek in November 2016

Janice Stone and her husband, Randy, were out walking the paths of Quabbin enjoying nature and looking for interesting ferns when they got to the “Keystone Bridge” in New Salem. Randy, a retired DCR forester at Quabbin knew the site well.

The Keystone Bridge is not only a memorable sight that causes one to ponder how it was that the builder moved all those huge stones without modern equipment, got it all in place so that the arch holds itself up and how it has stood there all these years without any cement holding it together. According to Allen Young’s *North of Quabbin* book, Adolphus Porter (1841–’79) built this bridge over the Middle Branch of the Swift River in 1866, on the main road from Orange to Millington. Porter lived near the site, and was a veteran of the Civil War.

But Janice and Randy didn’t see a bridge that looked like the one above. Instead, they saw this! The whole right side of the bridge was collapsing. Given the delicate balance of forces that keep the arch intact, it seemed like the bridge could totally collapse at any time.

Janice tried to reach DCR to tell them. Failing that, she reached out to the Friends of Quabbin. We passed word along to DCR and within a few days, Dan Clark, Regional Director, Quabbin/Ware District and a DCR engineer were examining the bridge. They agreed that “things don’t look very good.” Repair was beyond the expertise of Quabbin engineers. Dan immediately closed the road to minimize further stress on the bridge and planned to install a sandbag wall to hold off further deterioration while a specialist in stone bridges was located.

While most would have thought they’d done their good turn for the day, Janice began a search for engineers with that sort of expertise and passed the names along to Dan. All that in 7 days.

If we step back for a minute and compare what happened against what might not have happened, we take away a lesson for us all. The chances of DCR discovering the damage to the

Sometimes we might feel powerless to do anything in this complex world, but it is surprisingly easier than you think to make a significant change. As a case in point,



Keystone Bridge June 27, 2021 with right side partially collapsed

bridge in time to save it were not good. Quabbin has miles of roads and trails to cover, and it’s not clear that the damage could be noticed by simply driving down the road. Janice spotted the problem and, with the Friends of Quabbin help, quickly got the attention of DCR and they responded right away. Even though the bridge is not yet fixed, a lot of help is on the way. A Quabbin icon has probably been saved. And what was demonstrated was the power of cooperation: individual, Friends, and DCR all working together to save a valuable piece of the Quabbin. Next time you’re out walking in the Quabbin and see something significantly wrong, don’t feel helpless. Feel empowered by the cooperators who are waiting to help.

And if you happen to see the sign on top of this post anywhere in your wanderings, let us know. It used to be on a concrete pole on North Prescott Road in New Salem right at gate 20. For years that sign has been right at the sharp corner across from the Mountain View Cemetery before gate 20 at the Quabbin Watershed. It is a three-bladed sign. One says TOWN LINE; one says NEW SALEM; and the third one says PRESCOTT. We suspect the sign had been there since the 1920s or earlier. It was still very readable. We want it back in its place.



Entering Prescott, MA at 124 North Prescott Road, New Salem MA

Aunt Lottie, Geraldine the Pig and Wit

by Barbara Baines

My dad, Gil Baines (known to many as “Wit”), grew up in Springfield but spent summers, holidays and every other possible moment at the farm owned by his Aunt Lottie (Chapman) in Greenwich Village. Wit’s dad died when he was thirteen, leaving behind my Gram and three other children, the youngest of whom was only three. Wit quit school at that time to help the family financially (we’re talking 1923 now) but continued self-educating for the rest of his life. He was so smart about a wide range of topics and had such a quick sense of humor—hence his nickname. Lordy, how I do miss him still....



Gilbert “Wit” Baines

Wit’s Aunt Lottie lived on a farm in Greenwich Village with her brother Fred (a former circus roustabout) and managed 107 acres up on a hill.



Aunt Charlotta “Lottie” Chapman (front, left) with Aunt Mildred “Midge” Chapman Libby (front row, right) and (back row, l-r) Aunt Josephine “Jo” Chapman Peirce, Aunt Katherine “Kate” Chapman Fortney, and Gram Elva Maude Chapman Baines.

To hear Wit talk about it, I truly believe he knew every inch of that farm. In addition to running the farm, Aunt Lottie was a practical nurse as well as a Trustee to the Town of Greenwich. Wit’s connection to Lottie’s farm and Greenwich remained extremely strong for his whole life. Even at the end, he could recite—in exact order—the train stops between Springfield and

Greenwich that he’d had to memorize as a young boy traveling alone between his two “homes.” His time there, his connections, and (for us) his “wonder-ful,” fond memories shaped him to be our Wit, who was loved by so many. His life experiences were broad and varied (including an exciting career in World War II), but it was his recollections of Aunt Lottie’s farm in Greenwich Village that would bring “that” look to his face and “that” tone in his voice.

Not much remains in our family from Aunt Lottie’s house, barn, outbuildings and farm. But before she left the farm for good the plants in the flower gardens were dug up and distributed among siblings and other family members including her sister, my beloved Gram, and then were passed on to my folks. My mom and dad (Wit) planted them at our house. After Wit died and my mom was going to have to give up her home, I actually bought a house and transferred those plants originally from Lottie’s farm to my house so I could maintain this living legacy of flowers. Thus began my main hobby of gardening, which feeds my soul and enriches my life. My daughters will inherit these plants and I have planned accordingly. They already have some of them.



Aunt Lottie’s farm in Greenwich Village

This spring, before I could get out in the gardens, I’d been sliding at a terrific pace down the rabbit hole (more a rabbit warren!) of genealogy research, including learning all I could about Greenwich and Quabbin. I had so many questions! How did an unmarried woman come to own a fairly large and apparently prosperous farm? Was it an inheritance? How long did my family own this property? Is Chapman Island part of our family as well? Oh-so-many questions, each of which seems to raise a few more of its own.

So, while I researched and wondered about facts, I thought about the stories. My sister and I were raised on stories of Aunt Lottie’s farm and Wit’s youth there. One of those stories was about the pig named Geraldine who liked her back scratched with a hoe. To this day—now down four generations—in my family we have only to say “Geraldine” to get a back scratch. Geraldine was, happily, exempt from slaughter, but Wit said of the other pigs, “They used every part of the pig but the oink.”

Wit told of Aunt Lottie making doughnuts and putting them to cool on the window ledge. He’d take the sharpened end of a rake handle, run it through the holes in the doughnuts, and take off across the field while she hollered “Gilbert! You get back here!” Years later, well after I was grown, I revisited this story with my dad and remarked—without thinking—that she must’ve known he was going to do that, and she probably just let him snatch the hot doughnuts. I am still sorry I said it,



Lottie Chapman's house and barn

because the look on his face changed from a young boy's delight in getting away with mischief to his revelation that she indeed must've allowed his theft. I tried to mitigate his disappointment by saying it was a sign of affection, but I could tell that for him it was, in a way, revisionist history.

My clearest memory came on a Sunday when I was 16 and after Quabbin had covered Lottie's farm with water. This one's my story, too, not only Wit's. Wit and my mom's cousin Roland used to fish at Quabbin every single Sunday in all kinds of weather. Hardly ever missed! Wit had figured out which end of Quabbin would be over the old farm and that's where they'd fish.

One Sunday in the summer of 1967 (and some of you will know what's coming), during a terrible drought in New England, Wit and Roland pulled the boat up on a small island to answer a "call of nature." It turned into much more than that. Turns out that new island was Aunt Lottie's farm on the hill. Wit spent the rest of the day roaming around and telling Roland, "The ice house was here," and there was the hole and foundation; or "There was a huge tree over here," and there was the stump, or "The stone wall ran along here and around this corner," and there it was. All of it! He found the cellar and foundations for the house and the barn as well as many other landmarks so familiar to him.

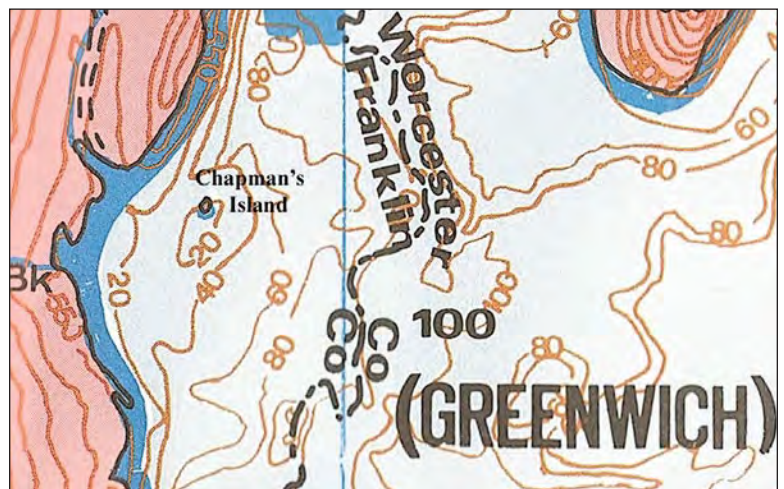
What a gift this was! I so clearly remember Wit's excitement and the look on his face when he came home and told us about it. He wasn't usually an effusive guy, but he spoke of this for years afterwards. He also wasn't someone impressed with material possessions, but he cherished for the rest of his life that opportunity to travel back in time. It'll stay with me, too, since even before then I'd felt a strong connection to Greenwich and Quabbin, and seeing Wit's joy was, for me, profound.

Several years ago, I visited the Quabbin Visitor Center and told this story. One of the employees there tactfully told me that this was impossible, since the farm was well under water.

When I gave him the year, he pulled photographs of the drought and maps of the area and confirmed that yes, indeed, the new, temporary island was the Chapman farm. After I got back to Maryland, I FedEx'd some of Aunt Lottie's plants to the Visitor Center. I hope to visit this year to see if they "took" and are happy to again be close to home.

And one more thing, if I may: In my journey of researching my family's connection with Quabbin, I am inordinately grateful for the assistance and materials available to me. I would like to acknowledge and thank John Zebb, Gene Theroux and Justin Gonsor, as well as the authors of books and research materials (especially those listed on the Friends of Quabbin website) who are helping me with this journey through the past. To all the people who scanned documents and made them available online: someone in Maryland conducting research remotely is very grateful for your hard work!

Okay, there are two things: What is it about Quabbin and the four towns that continue to have such a strong pull? Is it genetic? The poignant stories? Imagining what it must have been like for these folks and their families? Everyone had a story, and I wish I could hear them all. I especially wish I could go back and talk to Wit again, to hear once more these and other stories.



The presumed Chapman's Island

All right, all right, there are three things: One of my grandsons is called Wit, after my dad. My daughters know the Greenwich Village stories, and their children will know them, too. Isn't that all we can do at this stage?

I'll travel home to Massachusetts (I grew up in Springfield) as soon as this pandemic eases and things open up, and I can't wait to get back up to Quabbin. I have a list of places to go for both research and personal edification. I've joined Friends of Quabbin and have made connections up there that I never expected. I believe the taking of those towns was a tragedy in many ways, but it led me to a community of folks with whom I already feel a connection and to whom I already am grateful. And I thank you for allowing me to share some of my stories with you.

Buzzing of the Bees: Pollinator Gardens at Quabbin Park

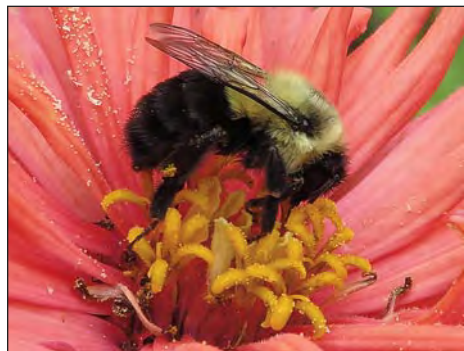
by Maria Beiter-Tucker

As part of a state-wide initiative, the Department of Conservation and Education is developing pollinator gardens, supporting native plant diversity and converting lawns to “low mow” zones throughout state managed lands. At Quabbin Park, those changes will soon be visible to visitors.

Pollinators (mostly insects like bees, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, and wasps) play a vital role in the pollination of close to ninety percent of flowering plants worldwide. They play an enormous role in agricultural production, boosting production of a variety of grains and fruits such as coffee, tea, cranberries, blueberries and alfalfa. Here in Massachusetts, over forty-five percent of agricultural products rely on both managed and wild pollinators for pollination. In the natural ecosystem, wild pollinators are central to

maintaining native plant and wildlife diversity.

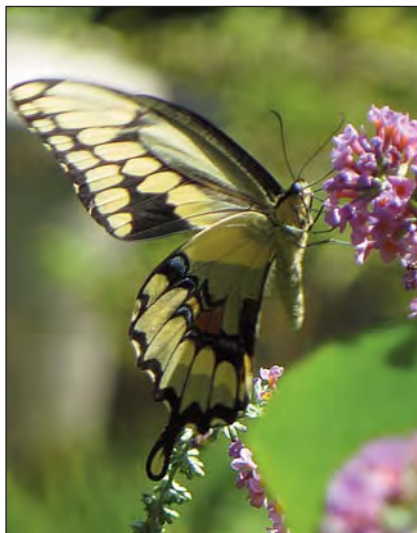
By changing how we manage our lawn areas here at Quabbin Park we will be improving habitat not just for pollinators but for a host of wildlife from birds to reptiles. It will also help us to reduce



Bumblebee (*Bombus*) surrounded by flower pollen (white specks)
-Photo by Paul Godfrey

fuel and gas consumption and provide another way to manage stormwater in the watershed lands.

Giant Swallowtail,
'Orange Dog'
(*Heraclides cressphonte*)
-Photo by Paul Godfrey



The aerial photo of the Quabbin Administration Building shows four different mowing plans for near the building. As the picture above shows the area to the west of the Visitor Parking lot is a beautiful area of Black-eyed Susans.



Black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*) in unmowed field next to the Administration Building -Photo by Paul Godfrey

Other areas that will have similar differential mowing plans are: along the west entrance road to the Administration Building, the Winsor Dam area, and around the Enfield Tower. Lawn areas that are in the higher visitor use areas will continue to be mowed regularly as well as the upstream sides of both the dam and the dike.

Hopefully, in the next few years these areas will bloom with a variety of native plants that support our native pollinators.

For more information visit:

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/growing-wild-massachusetts#-related->

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/massachusetts-pollinator-protection-plan/download>



Aerial photo showing mowing and planting plans for Administration Building area

Quabbin Eagles Still Going Strong

Text & photos by Anne Ely

In 2011 a lone eagle chick from a nest on the shores of Quabbin was banded with the MA state band no. 7/S (word is that it had jumped or fallen out of the nest). In 2018 a pair of eagles took over a hawk's nest in a tall pine in a yard near Lake Wickaboag in the nearby town of West Brookfield. It was noticed that one of the pair had leg bands, and a closeup photo of the orange MA state band showed that, yup, it was Quabbin Eagle no. 7/S. Believed to be a male, he was then (in 2018) 7 years old, and had found a mate (un-banded) and set up housekeeping not that far from where he was born.



I did not know of the nest in 2018, but was told by the homeowners, in whose yard the nest is, that the pair raised 3 chicks, all of which were successfully banded by Mass Wildlife. As do most eagle pairs (who mate for life), this pair returned to the same nest in 2019. Again, they raised 3 chicks, but bad weather prevented banding of the chicks that year.

2020 again brought Quabbin eagle no 7/S and his mate back to the same nest, and this time I was able to be there. It was the first time I had ever been that close to an eagle nest and its inhabitants. They helped to keep me sane during the first 3½ months of the Pandemic, as I spent many hours craning my neck and pointing my camera up at the tall pine tree nest. For the 3rd year they raised 3 chicks. But again there was no banding of the chicks, this time because of COVID. [See the story in the Summer 2020 issue of the *Quabbin Voices*].



Now, in 2021, for the 4th year, this jumped-out-of-the-nest Quabbin eagle chick is, at the age of 10, again raising a family at their old homestead in West Brookfield. This year there are only 2 chicks and, because of the less-than-ideal weather, I haven't been able to photograph the growing up of the chicks as well as last year.

The weather did, however, cooperate Monday, May 24th, the day Mass Wildlife came to band the 2 chicks. I had never watched an eagle chick banding and found it very interesting. A Mass Wildlife

biologist will climb the tree to bring down the chicks (Steve Wright got the fun job this time). The tree climbers are certified and well trained, but a lot of preparation specific to the nest is involved: what is the best, and safest route up the tree;

where to attach the ropes; who, on the ground, will be working the ropes for safety, and finally getting on all the gear and ropes the climber needs as he makes his way through the branches up to the nest. Finally, Steve is on his way.

During the ground preparation, the male parent was sitting on a limb near the nest, and because he has been used to a lot of goings-on in the yard below the nest (lawnmowers, kids playing, tractors, etc.) he was content to just sit and watch. But the minute this helmeted, rope dangling intruder got a short way up the tree, the eagle knew something was different and up he flew, circling in large circles above the tree, and nervously calling out. The female parent soon joined him and they continued to circle overhead, but never coming close to the nest. It is said they won't attack the climber. I wondered if they remembered this procedure from 4 years ago.



At last, after a half hour climb, the nest is reached. One chick can be seen on the far side of the nest as the climber climbs into the nest. There are too many branches in the way to see the actual capture, which was accomplished with a

large, long handled hoop and a large bag, but soon the chick is secured in the bag and is lowered to the ground. Once the chick was on the ground, the parents flew off to a nearby tree and just watched and waited.

On the ground, the chick was released from the bag and weighed (10½ lbs.) and the first primary feather measured. The actual banding involved attaching 2 metal bands, one on each leg. The bird's right leg received a Silver-colored Federal band and the left leg, an orange MA State band with white numbers/letters, one above the other. Up until 2006, the MA bands were gold-colored.



While the first chick was being processed, the second one was being lowered from the nest. This second one weighed in at 13 lbs. and was believed to be a female, as females are larger.

After all the work had been done on the two chicks, they were allowed to sit on the tarp where we could see them up close

and personal. The first chick, the male, was content to just to sit and look around without being held. The female, however needed to be held, but she did stay still long enough for a brief photo op with her brother.



Soon it was obvious that the chicks needed to go back to the nest, so back in the bags they went and were pulled up by Steve who had remained up in the, most likely, stinky, fishy smelling nest... one climb up and down is enough!

As I was leaving, later in the afternoon, I saw one of the parents circling high overhead, and knew that before long they would come back to the nest. I can hear Junior saying now, "Look, Dad, I got bracelets just like you." and Sister asking "Mom, how come you don't have any jewelry?"

So, although survival rate for young eagles early in life is not the greatest, Quabbin eagle #7/S has sent 11 young off into the world. One of the ones banded 2018 was seen last year in the Hudson River Valley in New York. Way to go Quabbin eagle 7/S!

Interpretive Services Report

Summer 2021

by Maria Beiter-Tucker

I am happy to report that the DCR Quabbin Visitor Center has reopened to the public as of May 29. Currently we are open Friday through Monday 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. We hope to reopen fully sometime in the next few months.

Despite the fact it rained from start to finish, it was wonderful to welcome people back in person to the annual Quabbin Park Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony. Thank you to everyone who helped organize it and to all the stalwarts who attended on that cold, rainy morning.

As of right now, it is unclear when we will be able to offer programs inside the Visitor Center due to the limited space issues. However, we will be investigating the possibility of offering remote programs if we are unable to offer our usual January–March Sunday afternoon programming inside the building.

I am also very excited to announce that we also have completed the new orientation film for the Visitor Center I worked for the past year with Tara Haggett and Doug Wicks of The Rendon Group to create a video that introduces our visitors to the history, creation and management of the reservoir. It was a great experience working with many DCR Quabbin staff members to share their duties and their passion for their jobs here at Quabbin. We were fortunate that our former colleague Dale Monette allowed us to use some of his wonderful film and photos of Quabbin wildlife. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHiW6KX9-Gc>)

Updates

Renaming the Visitor Center to the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center

From the Office of Mindy Domb, Massachusetts House of Representatives and Co-Chair of Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Joint Committee

Please forgive the delay in my response. The Committee has not yet taken action on the bill, but we are reviewing it and continuing to do our due diligence. Please feel free to continue to check in, but I also want to make sure you know that you can track the progress of the legislation on the MA legislature website at www.malegislature.gov.

Tuesday Tea News

The Tuesday Tea Picnic is returning. It will be at Hanks's meadow on Aug. 17th with a rain date of Aug. 24th, at the usual time: Noon–3:00. Attendees should bring their own food and drink. You may bring something to share. Bring chairs if you don't wish to sit on the picnic table benches.

The first Tuesday Tea meeting at the Visitor Center will be on September 14th, 1:00–3:00 p.m. This is the second Tuesday rather than the usual 1st Tuesday as the 1st Tuesday is so close to the Labor Day Weekend. We don't have a program in mind for September in time for the newsletter, although that may change as the day approaches. It may be that people will simply want to reacquaint and share COVID tales.

The following Tuesday Teas will be back on the 1st Tuesday: October 5th and November 2nd. The next newsletter will have the Holiday Party schedule.

Friends of Quabbin Joins Amazon Smile Program: Donate as You Buy

If you make purchases from Amazon, please consider selecting us as a charity you would like to support through their Smile program. They say "Shop at smile.amazon.com and we'll donate 0.5% of eligible purchases to your favorite charitable organization—no fees, no extra cost."

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Call for Member Submissions

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

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



Quabbin Voices

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

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