



Quabbin Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter

Winter 2025
Vol.37 No. 4

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 Holiday Party

by Paul Godfrey, photos by Laurie and Paul Godfrey

It's the Cake!



Rob Lewis votes for the cake.

No, it's the opportunity to meet old friends and make new friends, all of whom share a common interest in Quabbin.



Dave Robison (l) and John Zebb (r).

For example, John Zebb met Dave Robison, a friend in high school whom he had not seen in many years, and Laurie Godfrey made a new Facebook friend of Karen Traub when they discovered a common interest the region

of the Indian Ocean with Madagascar and Mauritius, appreciation of archival research/local history and the combination of science and art. It's the magic of the Holiday Party. And it's the cake!

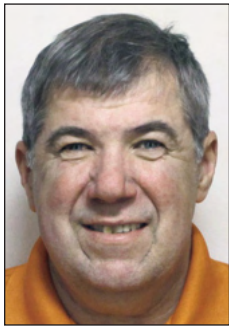
Rob Lewis ordered and picked up the cake, our usual that is a favorite of most Holiday Party attendees, a Fruit & Whip Cake from La Fiorentina Pastry Shop in Springfield and Longmeadow. They describe it as layers of Genoise Spongecake filled with layers of whipped cream, strawberries and peaches. Rob also served the cake to all who wanted and that gave him first taste rights. Anne Ely and I were deciding to cast our votes for the cake.



Paul Godfrey (l) and Anne Ely (r) compare cake tasting notes.

It wasn't a simple thing, this year's Holiday Party. We had to manage a glitch when the Administration Building, our usual venue at the Les & Terry Campbell Visitor Center, was closed for asbestos (continued p.4)





Gene Theroux

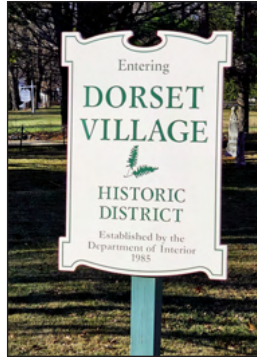
President's Message

Winter 2025

A Revisit of Dorset Village, Home of Many Quabbin Houses

In the winter 2019 issue of *Quabbin Voices*, I wrote about my visit to Dorset, Vermont. My interest in visiting Dorset was kindled by former Friends of Quabbin President Joseph William Russell's efforts with his book, *Vestiges of the Lost Valley: Buildings and Bells from the Quabbin*.

Joe Russell wrote that Charles A. Wade purchased a number of houses in the former Valley and relocated them elsewhere. One of those locations was Dorset, Vermont. The Dorset Historical Society identified fourteen buildings from the Quabbin Valley that were purchased, disassembled, and reassembled as documented in Terry Tyler's booklet, *Quabbin to Dorset*. That booklet is about the saving of some of the houses from four Massachusetts towns which would have been forever lost to history in order to furnish a water supply for the Boston area in the



Charles Wade with his ever-present cigar

1930s by an enterprising contractor, Charles Wade, and his hard-working neighbors moving and reconstructing those houses in the small town of Dorset, Vermont.

Those two books and my 2019 visit prompted me to revisit Dorset, on November 20, 2024. I began with a nice visit with Dorset Historical



Jon Mathewson (l), Dorset Historical Society curator, and Gene Theroux (r)



Robert Field House 2024

Society curator Jon Mathewson who I had met on my first visit to the Dorset Historical Society.

Among the houses taken down by Charley Wade from the four towns and reassembled in Dorset include the Robert Field house (Enfield); the Smith Village School, parcel number 289-15; the Congregational Church Chapel, parcel number 269-21 (Enfield); Willie Tourtellott house, parcel number 428-17 (Prescott); Oscar Stone house, parcel number 412-1 (Dana); Harry Hanks house, parcel number 249-4 (Enfield); Julia Thresher house, parcel number 409-11 (Prescott); Jesse



Enfield Congregational Church Chapel

(Enfield); Arthur Gross house, parcel number 388-10 (Prescott); Daniel B. Gillett house, (Enfield); and the C.A. Commerford house (New

Salem). Three houses (Charles Smith, Arthur Gross, and C.A. Commerford houses) that were purchased and used to assemble one large house on Route 30 in Dorset which was later moved to West Union Street in Manchester, Vermont.

Shippee house, parcel number 451-4 (North Dana); Guy Stevens house, parcel number 492-4 (Dana); Charles Smith house, parcel number 289-7



Flower Brook Pottery Shop, formerly the Enfield Congregational Chapel

Pictures of the original houses may be found in the Mass. Digital Collection (*Massachusetts Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission, Quabbin Reservoir, Photographs of Real Estate in the Swift River Valley, and of General Engineering of Quabbin Reservoir, 1927-1950 - Digital Commonwealth*) by searching on the parcel number.

Two of the former Quabbin Houses are not far from the location of Dorset Historical Society. They are the former Enfield Congregational Church Chapel and the former Robert Field house. An interesting fact is that the former town of Enfield, MA was named in honor of Robert Field who was one of the early settlers. Robert Field opened the first clothing shop in Enfield and operated one of the first inns in the Field house.



Janna Gay, proprietor of Flower Brook Pottery since 1997

Field was a patriot who served in the American Revolutionary War and his name is one of forty-three names on the Revolutionary War monument that was unveiled during the 2024 Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery.

I visited with Janna Gay, the proprietor of Flower Brook Pottery that is the relocated Enfield Congregational Chapel building. Janna allowed me to make a video recording of her describing the history of the building and how it has been used since 1997 as the place of her business.

Previously, the former chapel had served the town as the Dorset Post Office (1938-1966), as a real estate office, and as an antique bookstore.

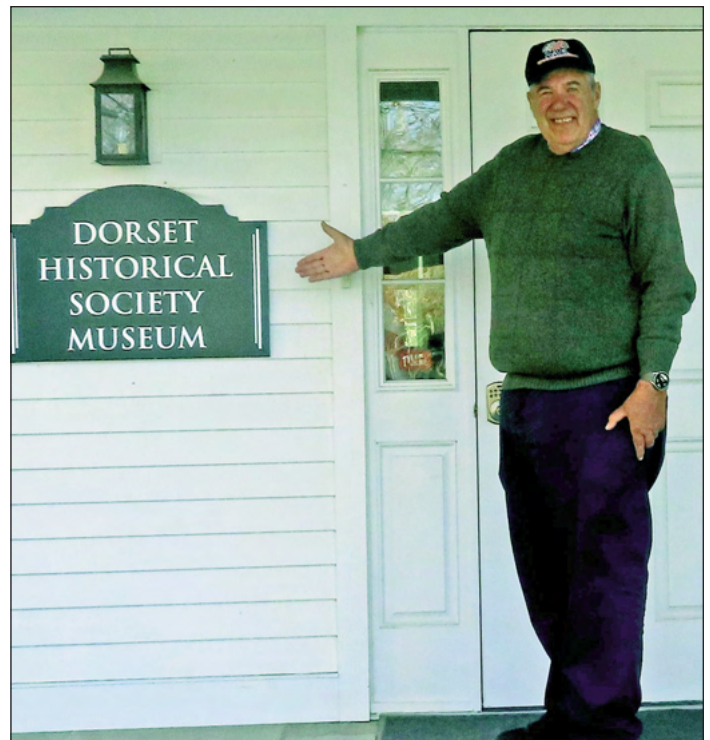
Terry Tyler's booklet *From Quabbin to Dorset* is a "story," as he calls it, written for an exhibit at the Vermont Historical Society's 2001 Vermont History Expo at Tunbridge, Vermont. In the introduction, Tyler describes the story as the work of Charles A. Wade and his crew of 30 to 35 men, and of his wife who cooked for the crew while they were away from Dorset. Charles Wade's enterprise and opportunities taken helped many of Dorset's artisans to survive and support their families during the years of the Great Depression. It was quite clear that Mr. Tyler had spent a great deal of time researching and completing this fine historical document and documenting the work of Charles A. Wade and his crew.



Charles Wade (seated) Agnes Wade (wife and crew cook) and John Parks (boss carpenter)

Contained in Tyler's *From Quabbin to Dorset* are photographs of Charles A. Wade, photographs of the work crew disassembling a house in Belchertown, photographs of Agnes Wade (Charley's wife and crew cook at Quabbin), photos of the houses in Quabbin and the reassembled houses in Dorset. There is a list of the known houses dismantled and reconstructed by Wade that included the town of origin, family name, date, purchaser, location in Dorset and subsequent owners to date. For those who have an interest in the Quabbin story, this is a great resource to own. *From Quabbin to Dorset* is available for purchase at the Dorset Historical Society and Museum. To learn more about Charley Wade, his workers, and Quabbin's history, the Dorset Historical Society has a few inexpensive, well-illustrated booklets that portray that era and the owners, past and present, of the few homes that survived in their new locations.

The United States' entry into World War II brought an end to Charley Wade's house-moving ventures. His crew of workmen left for military service, defense work, and other jobs related to the war effort. But Charles A. Wade (1878-1949) has many monuments. They are the houses that were moved to Dorset and elsewhere in the Northeast. Charley no doubt would be



Gene Theroux at Dorset Historical Society Museum

gratified to know that the houses he and his hard-working crew rescued and rebuilt have been well cared for by their subsequent owners. Today, they are an integral part of the architecture of their adopted communities. Charley Wade is at rest in Dorset's Maple Hill Cemetery.

Dorset is simply a stunning beautiful and historic town. There is a lot of history there including some of America's earliest marble quarries. The Dorset Historical Society and Museum has a full exhibit on Dorset's marble quarries.

The Holiday Party

Continued from page 1



Karen Traub (l) and Leslie Bracebridge (r)



Stephen and Frances Noyes



Lisa Ouimette, Nate and Wendy Queiros



Mark Shea (l) and Mark Lindhult (r)



Barb MacCumber (l) and Wendy Rogers (r)



Scott and Karen Tetrault (r)

removal and new windows on short notice. We had already announced the Visitor Center as the location of the party in the newsletter and had to correct that. We quickly sent emails to those who have given us email addresses and postcards to those who haven't or don't have email. That latter process took two days and \$33.00 for stamps. But the Belchertown United Church of Christ was very accommodating and the event had plenty of appropriate space.



Dale Monette

Similarly, our principal speaker, Dale Monette was most generous with his time and showed us many awesome photos. If you have looked at any of Dale's books, you know what I mean but there were so many more combined with a clever mixture of stills and video. Dale described how he didn't lure or stalk the animals but waited for them to come by his viewing spot in a place where he had indications that the animals frequented. He didn't mention how many hundreds of hours he must have sat silent and motionless, waiting for a photo opportunity of a few seconds. Most of us couldn't be that patient and those who've tried know the difficulty. If you want to see Dale's photos, go to www.northquabbinphotography.com.



One of Dale's photos - Bald Eagle

In what has become a tradition at Holiday Parties, Michelle Tandy Ryan read "Here Was Home." The words written by her father, former resident of North Dana, Swift River Valley, Massachusetts, Norman "Pete" Tandy in a letter in 1995 to the former Metropolitan District Commission sharing his hopes for Quabbin's future. She first read his moving words at the 2023 Holiday Party.



Michelle Tandy Ryan reading "Here Was Home"

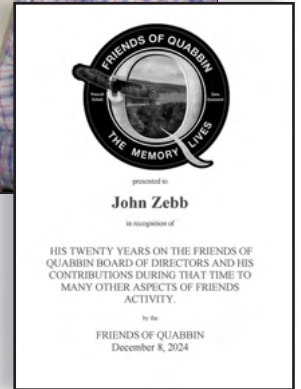
Here Was Home

by Norman "Pete" Tandy 1995

At least painful as it was, our banishment has served to keep our memories inviolate, preserved as flies in amber. However, it was this is how it will unchangeable and forever be. That at least major portions of the Quabbin watershed have been allowed to flourish as a great reservoir, not just of water, but of a complex interrelationship of undisturbed ecosystems, is a healing epitaph for the wrenching dislocations of the past. I am content with the bargain. The ultimate insult, the final irony would be if this magnificent preserve should ever fall prey to pressure groups or political expediency and be opened up to any use inconsistent with its continuing existence as a place of sanctuary against turmoil and the pollution of the outside world. In such continuance is the only real and fitting memorial for all the rude uprootings of the past. I find after all these years, there lives within me still some special sense that here, in this sweetwater valley, here was home.



A surprised John Zebb receiving a certificate for his 20 years of service on the Board of Directors from President Gene Theroux



The last item on the agenda was to present John Zebb with a Certificate of Appreciation for his 20 years on the Friends Board of Directors. John retired from the Board last month. He was surprised by the award and told Gene afterward that he had never gotten anything like that before.

John Holmes Newcomb (1838–1883) of Enfield

by Robert Howe



John Holmes Newcomb in his late 20s

One of the names on the Enfield Solders monument in Quabbin Park Cemetery is John Holmes Newcomb. He was born October 28, 1838 and was the 7th child of Foster Newcomb and Fanny Collins. The Newcombs were a long line of farmers and carpenters that lived in the south-east corner of Enfield. John's grandfather, Nehemiah, bought the property in 1786. John attended the Newcomb

School House #8 that was located on his father's property. His future wife Alice Powell also attended this school.

John was a 22-year-old, working on his father's farm when he volunteered for the Union Army. On May 25, 1861, John mustered into "E" Co. MA 2nd, infantry as a corporal. In February 1862, John wrote a letter home to his brother, Leander. This letter and its transcription were recently discovered on the civil war letters website: *Spared & Shared*

Dear Brother,

As I want to send you a picture of our camp, I will write you a few lines. I am tough and rugged. The regiment is very healthy now considering the wet damp weather which we are having. This is a very good picture of our camp. You will see the band tent and also the band. On the left you will see the Colonel and Lieut. Colonel on their horses and the guard marching off to fire off their guns. The long tent on the left is the officers' mess tent. This picture was taken from the road so you can't see the colonel's tent very plain but, however, it shows some. The picture will do enough to look at but come to be here in reality, it ain't quite so funny. Mud is two feet deep without any exceptions.

I heard that Put was at home. I saw in newspaper the account of David's death. I was surprised to hear that he had gone up.

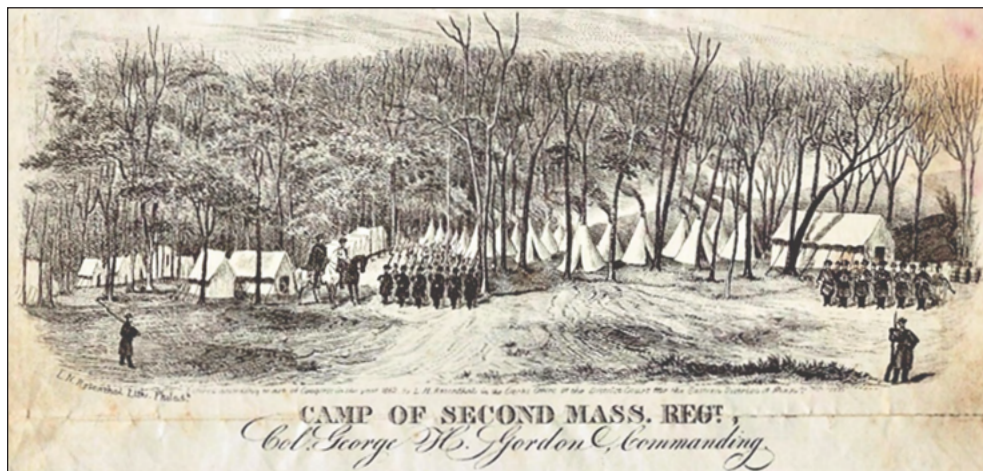
I see that old Burnside is doing considerable business down in Dixie. I suppose we shall stop here until spring owing to the mud. We have fine weather over head. The blue birds and robins are as lively as they be in spring. It seems like spring.

I have had a sore throat. I began to look wild for one of them fellows which takes a fellow's pelt but I have come out so I guess I shall escape it. I have not much news to write. I should not have wrote this but I thought you would like to see the location of the camp. If I can get one, I will send you a painted one. They have them but they was all gone before I could get a chance to get one. So I will close.

From your brother, — John Newcomb

Notes about people in letter: David (David Collins Newcomb) was John's uncle who was a farmer and blacksmith who lived on a nearby farm; he had been killed by a steer. "Put" may have been his brother, William Porter Newcomb, who was 11 years older and living in Philadelphia, PA.

On August 9, 1862, John was wounded at the battle of Cedar Mountain, VA. He spent many months in a hospital recovering and was discharged due to disability on March 29, 1863. His



Camp of the 2nd Massachusetts Regiment [February 1862] from the letterhead of John's letter. Band and band tent to the right.

injury was from a one oz. bullet (about ½ inch diameter ball) in his right thigh that was not removed, resulting in muscular adhesion that prevented him from stepping properly resulting in one-fourth disability. This wound was ultimately the cause of his death about 20 years later at age 45. When discharged from service on March 9, 1863, he held the rank of sergeant, but through an error, the discharge papers read "private."

After discharge he married Alice Powell in October of 1863, and they moved to Gilbertville, MA, where he worked as a wool sorter. They had four children: William, Edward, Arthur, and Lina. Around 1879, the family moved to San Antonio, Texas where he worked as a miller in a grain mill. His daughter Lina remembered being bathed in the San Antonio river by a Mexican woman who helped her mother when she was a little girl. John's wife Alice did not like living in the hot dusty area of Texas, so the family moved back to Gilbertville around 1880. Back in Gilbertville, John was the "overseer of the wool room" at Gilbert Manufacturing Company. In 1882 he was appointed a police officer and was authorized to carry a night stick and revolver.



John H. Newcomb and Alice E. Powell soon after their marriage about 1863.

John's war wound continued to bother him, and on September 20, 1883, he had the rifle ball removed from his thigh. The town newspaper reported that he was recovering finely from the surgery and that he was enjoying the elegant reclining chair that his many friends had given him. Shortly after surgery, John wrote a letter to his former doctor in San Antonio in which he complained of continued sickness from asthma and requested some of the medication that had helped him back in Texas. He also stated that he didn't think he could stand another northern winter and asked the doctor if moving back to San Antonio or Florida would improve his health. John died a few months later on December 9, 1883. His son said his death was attributed to his wound during the war. He was 45 years old and he left his wife and 4 children ages 8, 11, 16, and 18. John, his wife

Alice, daughter Lina Collins, and son William are buried at Aspen Grove cemetery in Ware.

William Nelson Newcomb was the paymaster at Ware Woolen Mill and served a term in the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Edward Holmes Newcomb became a Congregational minister. Arthur Eugene Newcomb, auditor for Ware, served a term in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, was the main genealogist of the family, and had a keen sense of humor.

Lina Mabel Newcomb married Daniel Collins of Hardwick and they had 3 children. During WWII, she was a volunteer aircraft spotter stationed in the Quabbin tower. She had a set of cards with 3 views of each aircraft for identifying each type of WWII aircraft. Lina later inherited the homestead in Ware Center on Rte. 9 that her first cousin, Fred Newcomb (Leander's son), bought after the Newcomb homestead in Enfield was taken for the creation of Quabbin Reservoir. As a young boy, I spent many school vacations visiting my grandparents that inherited this Ware Center farm from Lina and visiting Quabbin.

Quabbin Interpretive Services Report

Winter 2025

by Maria Beiter-Tucker

Quabbin Park and Reservoir are wonderful places to visit throughout the year, including in the winter months. The quiet of the season is especially noticeable while exploring the many roads and trails on our properties.

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

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

For visitors interested in exploring a little further in the area near the Visitor Center, staff will generally suggest the 2-mile Visitor Center Loop Trail. This trail travels below the dam and along the channel where water is released into the Swift River. After crossing a picturesque bridge, the trail takes visitors along the Swift River and the Y-Pool area that is a popular spot for fly fishermen throughout the year. The trail then heads up through the woods along a ridge trail and back down to the Visitor Center area.

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

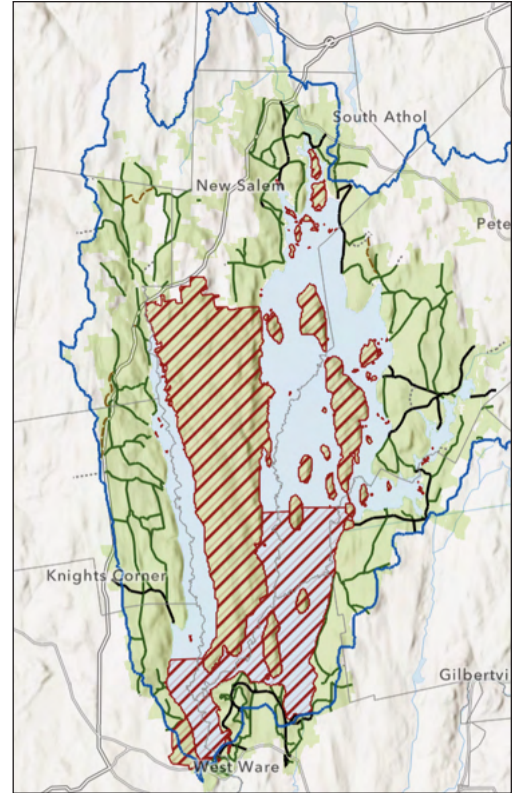
Recognizing that today many people may look first at the internet for information about a place they want to visit, Visitor Center staff have been working to develop more online resources. With that in mind we have been working to create a series of storymaps for the Quabbin Park trails. These storymaps will include a map as well as descriptions and photos. Current storymaps can be found here—

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/quabbin-reservoir-and-ware-river-watersheds-education-programs#self-guided-tours,-interactive-trail-map,-and-other-activities-to-do-on-your-own-> and

offer more in-depth information about the Quabbin Park Cemetery and the Webster Road Trail. As well, many of the displays from the Visitor Center are available on the website, offering virtual visitors the opportunity to peruse them from home. Many of our presentations are recorded and available on MASSDCR YouTube site along with short videos focused on watershed management and history—

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2yN9X7t6shr1ASUNCA2B8Gk0EHa7sDWH> Over the next few months and years we hope to have much more interactive materials available for visitors both local and far away.

We look forward to welcoming the public back to the Visitor Center in early 2025. We will be offering several presentations during January and February. The schedule is included in the Meeting and Events section of this newsletter.



Quabbin Trails Map

Ode to the Lost Towns

by Lorena (Joyal) Belhumeur

Quite a feat in its day
Uprooting four towns
Along its way to
Bring water to Boston!
Breaking hearts of citizens who'd
Invested their life-long dreams,
Never being properly redeemed.

Construction of the Quabbin Reservoir Administration Complex

by the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center Staff



View of the Administration Building today



View of hangar under construction, 5-12-1938

Currently, the building that houses the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center and the DCR Quabbin/Ware Region offices is undergoing a major renovation while new windows are installed. This project began in late November and will continue in stages through the first half of 2025. (The Visitor Center will be reopened in January of 2025.) With this in mind, the Quabbin Interpretive staff thought a review of the building's construction and design would be a timely addition to the newsletter. All photos are from the DCR Archives and can be found on the Digital Commonwealth here: <https://www.digital-commonwealth.org/collections/commonwealth:5999r8568>

In 1937, the Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission (MDWSC) built a complex of structures at the west end of the Winsor Dam. Along with police, engineers and administrators the building would also be home to the vital records of the four dis-established Quabbin Valley towns: Dana, Greenwich, Enfield, and Prescott. The new MDWSC building also included two annexes to house Quabbin Reservoir personnel. At the time of construction, it was expected for the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent to live on location at the Reservoir. Except for the boat ramp



Front view of completed main building, east annex and hanger - September 1939. All work on the complex was completed by the Rich Brothers Construction Company, Boston, Mass.



View of landscaping and brick arches - September 1938



View of administration building, annexes and garages from the rear - July 1938

complex is modeled after the southern colonial buildings of the late 18th century. The grouping centers around a 2½ story, brick hipped roof square connected with enclosed brick walkways to two smaller square buildings. Behind these are two large rectangular garages which are opposite each other and perpendicular to the office/house complex, thus forming a courtyard.

Arthur Shurclif created the landscape plan consisting of driveways, oval planted areas, brick and gravel walks and evergreens. The brick wall and arched false gates of brick were designed by Frederick Kingsbury.

The buildings were situated on a high point of land and face north, giving an unparalleled view north at the former valley and the reservoir.

and some landscaping, the entire complex was completed in only one year (1937-1938) for a total of \$362,445.

The airplane hangar and boat ramp were constructed in 1938 so Quabbin Reservoir and the surrounding watershed could be patrolled by air and water, and that same year, three boats were constructed for that purpose. Water planes were never actually used in practice.

Inspired by the reconstruction of Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, the administration



Northerly view of filling reservoir from the 2nd floor of the administration building - August 1939

Meetings & Events

Tuesday Tea

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

Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

www.pvphotoartists.org

Hope United Methodist Church

31 Main Street, Belchertown, MA 01007

Meetings may be held via ZOOM. See website for more details.

Jan. 30 Negative Space

Feb. 27 Asymmetrical

Mar. 27 Long Exposure at Baystate Springfield
(see website for further details)

Quabbin Photo Group

The meetings for the QPG for January, February, and March will be via zoom. If people are interested in joining us, they can contact us for the Zoom Link at: gspqpg@gmail.com.

The April and May meetings will be back at the Hope United Methodist Church in Belchertown at 31 Main St. Members Nights are when members can share some of their images.

Jan. 27 Program by Mike Milicia: "What Makes a Great Bird Photograph?" via Zoom

Feb. 24 Members Night via Zoom

Mar. 24 Program by Tony Sweet:
"Atmospherics in Photography" via Zoom

April 28 Members Night at the Church

Les & Terry Campbell Visitor Center

Winter 2025

Presentation Schedule

All programs are scheduled for 2:00pm. In person seating is limited to 45 people. In case of bad weather we will convert to 100% virtual program. Follow link to register or visit <https://www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events>

Sunday, January 26, 2-3pm

Quabbin Reservoir Creel Survey: Understanding Fish Species at Quabbin Reservoir

Creel surveys are a common technique used by fisheries professionals to better understand waterbody specific catch and harvest trends. Creel data from Quabbin Reservoir were collected at each of the three boat launch areas during the 2024 fishing season. Join us for a presentation that will provide updates regarding participation, catch, harvest and species-

specific trends. These data will be compared to other statewide and waterbody specific creel data collected by MassWildlife and DCR.

Register here: **Sunday, January 26, 2-3pm**

Quabbin Reservoir Creel Survey:

Understanding Fish Species at Quabbin Reservoir

Sunday, February 2, 2-3pm

The Mystery of Prescott Quilt of Names

Step back in time and delve into the intriguing story behind a remarkable artifact that has woven together generations—a quilt embroidered with fifty signatures from 1895, hailing from Prescott, Massachusetts. Who created this piece of history, and why? How did it make its way to the Hitchcock Chair Museum in Riverton, Connecticut, and who played a crucial role in returning it to the Swift River Valley Historical Society? Join historical interpreter Karen Traub as she embarks on a fascinating journey to unravel the quilt's past.

Register here: **Sunday, February 2, 2-3pm**

The Mystery of Prescott Quilt of Names

Sunday, February 16, 2-3pm

History of Rutland Prison Camp

Fresh air, three home-cooked meals a day, comfortable sleeping quarters and a private hospital—sounds like a delightful retreat for a prison?? Indeed, it was! This presentation will tell the story of this surprisingly successful social experiment nestled within the Ware River Watershed.

Register here: **Sunday, February 16, 2-3pm**

History of Rutland Prison Camp

Monday, February 17, 10-11am

February Vacation Program! Tracks and Scat

Although we may not see them often, our native wildlife is all around us. Come learn to recognize some signs of wildlife through a fun and informative indoor activity. Meet at the Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center in Belchertown. Great for all ages, children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information, contact (413) 323-7221.

Register: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/250b6dcbeefc4f30a4da5b0f86abc4f3>

Sunday, February 23, 2-3pm

What's in the water?

The microscopic world of the Quabbin Reservoir

Learn about the microorganisms that live in the water, and how they can impact water quality. This presentation will cover phytoplankton and zooplankton found in the Quabbin Reservoir with a live microscope demo.

Register here: **Sunday, February 23, 2-3pm**

What's in the water? The microscopic world of the Quabbin Reservoir

Sunday, March 2, 2–3pm
Quabbin Reservoir
and Watershed Protection

Engineering, forestry, wildlife and aquatic biology, carpentry, mowing and snowplowing... how do all of these things combine to protect the water supply of over three million people in

Massachusetts? How do they benefit the region around the reservoir? This presentation from the Visitor Center staff explores how the many different goals of DCR staff all support one goal, Quabbin watershed protection.

Register here: **Sunday, March 2, 2025 2pm–3pm**
Quabbin Reservoir and Watershed Protection

Its Time Has Come

Text and photos by Anne Ely

Hank's Meadow offers many things; a glimpse of the past—it was the location of the Harry Hanks farm, one of many sold and dismantled for the building of the Quabbin Reservoir. Picnic tables under the trees for one to relax and enjoy the view and also a large field, great for flying kites. Or a short hike will take one down to the water's edge to look for loons or great blue herons.

Today I've been sitting at a picnic table with my nose buried in a book (not an unusual pastime), but at the same time slowly becoming aware of a change in the air around me.

Its time has come. The soft, sweet-scented summer breeze that softly cooled sun-tanned faces is no more. It has been replaced by a brisk, sometimes noisy one, that I might even call a wind. Holding down the pages of my book, I lift my head and watch as the sudden wind snatches at leaves flinging them down and then, with huffs and puffs, blows them past me spreading them like red-brown blankets over the once green grass. This would be a great time for kites. In my mind I picture children laughing as they run to keep their kites in the air. My mind also goes to those same children who, much to parents' dismay erupt, giggling, from newly raked piles of leaves as they and the family dog engage in the age-old game of leaf-pile diving. But extra chores aside, just as summer's breeze delights, the fall winds also bring pleasure, even if I do have to reach for my sweater.

There are others, though, for which this time is not all fun and games. It's a time of hard work and survival. Chipmunks are most efficient as they gather seeds and nuts with which to fill their larders for the winter.

To reduce the number of trips needed they stuff their cheek pouches so full that to the untrained eye they appear to have some dreadful disease.

I've been quietly sitting here long enough so the wildlife is beginning to venture forth. I watch a couple of gray squirrels who, lacking those wonderful carry-all cheek pouches of the chipmunks, carry one nut at a time, heading out to find the



Hanks Meadow picnic table

best place to bury it. How they find them again is beyond me. Soon they will be scampering up and down trees as they embark on another vital chore. They are looking for the best forks in the branches in which to build their nests, or drays, as they are called. The fallen leaves are a blessing as they are an important component of a snug nest.

Parts of the field, once bright with wildflowers and, yes, also weeds, are now a study in tans and browns. To my eyes not the thing of beauty it once was, but to the various seed and berry eating birds it is a welcome smorgasbord as they feast away, storing up much needed fat and energy. Some will have long upcoming flights to warmer climes and others will need it for an added layer of protection against the upcoming temperature drops; and temperature drops there will be when fall has its fling. But its time has also come as lurking on the horizon is another change just waiting for its turn. It's not too fussy as to when it arrives, early or late, but all will know when it has arrived.

Winter. Sometimes it comes teasingly with nose-nipping gusts; other times it's a full-fledged skin-stinging, toe freezing gale, bringing with it its whole family of snow and ice just to let all know that it has arrived. Ah, but its time, too, will come when in a few months the warm spring sunshine will arrive and no one will even think of the winter winds for quite a while. But the inhabitants of Hank's Meadow will take it all in stride greeting as needed whatever each season brings... and I, too, will return... again and again.



Chipmunk with stuffed cheeks

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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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