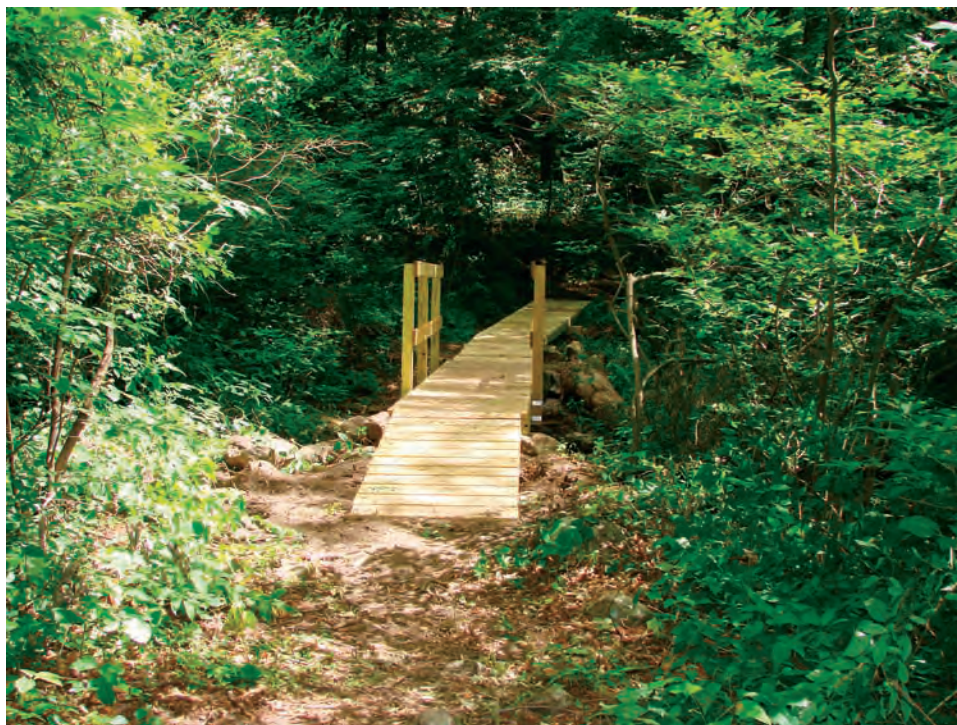


Waltham Land Trust

is a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving our community's natural resources for the future through education, open space acquisition and protection.

JOURNAL FALL 2010



SUSANNE WHAYNE

Bridge crossing a stream in the Shady's Pond Conservation Area built by volunteers from the Friends of the Western Greenway during July 2010.

HAPPY TRAILS

Susanne Whayne

How do you turn a tangle of briars and brush and a pile of heavy beams and planks into a vital link in the Western Greenway? Here's how.

They worked through some of the summer's most delightful days as well as some of its most oppressively hot ones. A dedicated and determined group of volunteers tackled trail-making in the Shady's Pond Conservation Area, and the results are impressive: in just five work days the group constructed a total of four bridges and completed a mile and a half of trails!

The project, funded by a grant from the Foundation for MetroWest, features marked trails that cross stream beds and wetlands and are suitable for walkers as well as mountain bikers. The bridges were designed by Mike Tabaczynski, a software engineer and mountain biker who also oversaw the work. "It wasn't just work," he told us. "It was fun!"

The Shady's Pond area, acquired by the City of Waltham in 2005, is one of the most scenic along the Western Greenway. Known in the 19th century as Sam Stearns' woodlot, the area was never clear-cut. As a

result, its ancient pines and oaks continue to provide a majestic canopy over fern-carpeted forest floors.

The Trail Ahead

Over the last three years, four and a half miles of Greenway trails have been completed. Although remarkable work has been done, there are still challenges ahead.

Plans are in place to connect the Shady's Pond trail to the Lot 1 parcel across Trapelo Road. Then, working with the other organizations that comprise the Friends of the Western Greenway, the Land Trust looks to complete the Chester Brook Corridor, the north-south trail at the western edge of the Western Greenway. To accomplish the latter, trail easements will need to be negotiated with private land owners.

The ultimate goal is a nine-mile trail forming a complete loop around the Western Greenway's thousand acres of open space. Imagine yourself on a future hike, perhaps on a beautiful New England fall day. Begin your walk at Trapelo Road, then pass through the Shady's Pond area with its streams and cat-tailed marshes, and continue alongside Chester Brook.

continued on page 3

A POND BY ANY OTHER NAME

Marie Daly

The changing uses and names of Waltham's natural landmarks have generated controversy in years past, and none more so than Hardy Pond. Originally named the "Great Pond in the Woods," this pond has changed names (and abutters) over the centuries from the Great Pond to Mr. Samuel's [Saltonstall] Pond, to Fiske's, Sherman's, Mead's and Hardy Pond. Each of the later names was derived from the lands of the abutters.

Surrounded by wetlands, and adjacent to Stearns Hill, the pond we know as Hardy Pond had been much deeper in the past. Native American families regularly camped along the western shore prior to European settlement, and their descendants continued to return there well into the 19th century. Picnickers enjoyed a lovely pine grove on the northern shore,



Great Pond in 1854

called Wellington's Grove. In the mid-19th century city officials also considered tapping the pond waters as a reservoir for drinking water. In the 20th century, families flocked to a beach on the south shore to escape the heat of the city.

In 1858, Phineas Lawrence described watching fireworks on the Fourth of July. "Wellington's Grove, in which the united districts of Trapelo, Pond End and Kite End...have, for several anniversaries of the day of American independence, held patriotic celebrations, is situated upon the estate of Mr. Wellington. It is a pleasant spot, and its natural beauty is much increased from its close proximity to the large pond of water upon its boundary. Its dense shade, and the cool, refreshing breezes from the lake render it an attractive resort upon a summer's day."¹

But the name changes for the pond generated controversy among 19th century Walthamites, and

Lawrence commented on the history of the name, and suggested changing it to Lake Saltonstall.

"Lake _____ [sic], whose northern boundary is on the estates of Mrs. Stearns and Mr. Wellington, but which lies principally in Pond End district, is situated in this immediate vicinity. In the early records it is sometimes mentioned as the Great Pond, but of late years it has received a variety of cognomens, among which is Sherman's Pond, Fiske's Pond, Mead's Pond, and still later, it has been sought to perpetuate the memory of one of Waltham's distinguished citizens, by applying to it the name of Lake Hardy. As it is within the range of possibilities that, at some future day, not very remote, this pond is destined to act an important part among the inhabitants of Main street and vicinity, (that of supplying them with water,) it is not only highly proper, but exceedingly important that some appropriate and lasting name should be applied to it. Watertown, it will be remembered, was settled in 1630, and for upwards of a century after that date, the principal portion of what is now Waltham was included within its limits. Sir Richard Saltonstall was the leading spirit in this enterprise, and indeed, the settlement instead of being called Watertown, was first named Sir Richard Saltonstall's Plantation. It was soon afterwards, however, changed by the court to Watertown. Would not Lake Saltonstall be an appropriate name for this sheet of water? This would *not* be going abroad for a name, but would be properly commemorating the name of the leader in our town's first settlement."

Lawrence sought to elicit comments in his 1858 article in the Waltham Sentinel newspaper, and his article did generate a letter to the editor. An old-timer griped about the name changes as well as the recent arrival of Irish immigrants to the city.

"We were glad to see in the notice of Trapelo No. 2 in the Sentinel, the protest of "Record" against the name of North street being applied to a road so long known by another appellation. When he gets to the Great Pond, I hope he will record his protest against the Meads, the Fiskes, the Shermans, the Hardys, and everybody else, if they claim to give their own names to that sheet of water. If its ancient name of Saltonstall is to give place to every new squatter who settles within gunshot, it is time to alter the names of other natural objects in the town. Prospect Hill must give way to McCracken Hill in justice to the worthy people who live nearest to the summit, unless our chief magistrate, who resides within its shadow, by virtue of his high office, has a prior claim. If we are not cured of this love of change, Beaver Brook, in time, may be called Clematis, (accenting the first syllable), and Chester Brook take the name of Beaver. By what titles Charles River, Bear Hill, Owl Hill, Mackerel Hill, Pigeon Hill, and other objects will then

be known, may depend on the passenger list of some emigrant ship just arrived.”²

The anti-immigrant bias of the letter writer notwithstanding, the writer does make a case for retaining the original names of natural landmarks in the city. Referring to the legal definition of a great pond as a state-owned body-of-water exceeding 10 acres in size, the appellation, “Great Pond in the Woods,” dates to the earliest days of Watertown. Now that the Hardys are no longer abutters, perhaps this pond should revert to its original name of the Great Pond.

1. Wellington’s Grove was located along the northwest shore of Hardy Pond, at Grove Road and Hardy Pond Road. It was located on the farm of Benjamin Wellington, who lived in the house now located at 56 Whittier Road.
2. Waltham Sentinel, III: 44, p. 2, October 29, 1858

DON’T FEED THE WEEDS

Hardy Pond Association

Excessive phosphorus loading is a fundamental cause of Hardy Pond’s explosive aquatic weed growth in recent years. Phosphorus is found in rocks and soil, as well as in plants and animals. However, human activities and development can increase phosphorus in storm water run-off to ten times its natural concentrations.

In a body of water such as Hardy Pond, phosphorus feeds microscopic algae and other aquatic plants. When they die, they fall to the bottom and decompose. This depletes oxygen levels in the water which can free phosphorus that was trapped in the sediment.

This cycle accelerates excessive plant growth and the filling-in of the pond, a process known as eutrophication. A lack of dissolved oxygen can kill fish in the pond. It also results in the foul stench that residents have experienced during the late summer months around Hardy Pond.

It is important for everyone to reduce phosphorus loading of the pond. A typical 50 lb. bag of lawn fertilizer contains 5 pounds of phosphorus; that’s enough to result in 50,000 pounds of aquatic weed growth in Hardy Pond!

Steps you can take to prevent excessive phosphorus from entering the pond:

- set up a vegetated buffer zone (VBZ).
- follow recommended lawn and yard care practice.
- garden with a “less is more” approach.
- avoid the outdoor use of harmful detergents and household chemicals.



ARTHUR UHLIR

Kayakers return to shore after enjoying the cool breezes on Hardy Pond during the picnic on August 29.

ON HARDY POND

Inge Uhlir

A colorful flotilla of kayaks and canoes assembled on the shore of Hardy Pond as good friends gathered for a picnic event that included both boating and lots of good food on August 29. There was no doubt that the activities were popular with young and old.

Weather was much improved on this “rain date” since it was dry and sunny. The mature trees and breezes cooled across the pond added to our comfort. We were delighted that several of the guests had come to Hardy Pond for the first time.

Look for two other articles in this issue of the WLT Journal that will tell you more about Hardy Pond.

Happy Trails *from page 1*

Climbing through the woods surrounding Waltham High School and traversing the Storer Conservation Area, you might stop and admire the historic Paine and Lyman Estates before heading east along Beaver Brook. Your trail would turn north then, following the route of the future Wayside rail trail into Belmont, crossing the butterfly-dotted Rock Meadow and into the Beaver Brook Reservation. You’d arrive back at Lot 1, tired perhaps, but heartened by having seen some of the most beautiful environs of the Western Greenway.

To learn more about this unique area, go to the WLT website:

walthamlandtrust.org/open-space/the-western-greenway/

VOLUNTEERS EXTEND THE WESTERN GREENWAY

Over 50 volunteers from the Waltham Land Trust, Citizens for Lexington Conservation, Habitat in Belmont, New England Mountain Bike Association, and Friends of Beaverbrook North worked diligently throughout this hot, humid summer to extend the Western Greenway through the Shady's Pond Conservation area in Waltham. Read on as a few of these volunteers share just why they devoted so many Saturdays to this trail!

CINDY HUTCHISON



SUSANNE WHAYNE



I've been working on the Western Greenway building projects for three years. It is a great group of people creating something worthwhile that will hopefully last a long time and will give many people pleasure. Watching the trails, boardwalk and bridges coming to life is very satisfying. Walking on those same trails and structures afterward and showing them to others is outstanding. There is the goal of completing the entire Western Greenway trail, which seemed a dream only a few years ago and is coming closer to reality each year. Sweet!

Roger Wrubel, Director, Habitat Sanctuary, Belmont MA

My reason for volunteering is simple. Shady's Pond is such a special and unique place that I want it to be totally accessible which it was not before this summer. From vernal pools, streams, rocky outcroppings and marshlands — this relatively small piece of land has it all. I am looking forward to familiarizing others with this jewel in our back yard.

Betsy Lewenberg, Waltham Land Trust, Member



CINDY HUTCHISON (AND TWO ABOVE)

Being new to Waltham and living near to the planned Greenway Trail, we were enthused about helping to build the trail. And in spite of the bugs, heat, and poison ivy, we thoroughly enjoyed our trail work. It was gratifying to see the speedy progress that results when you have a good-sized work crew. The organizational effort was impressive; a sign-in tent, tools, bug spray, water, snacks, and even pizza for lunch was provided for us. Also evident was the pre-workday planning and the expert supervision that contributed to a smoothly operating work day. Best of all we enjoyed the camaraderie of working alongside like-minded outdoor types of all ages and skill level, some of whom we discovered are neighbors!

Jackie and Jim Fesler, Waltham Land Trust, Members

I think the number one reason why I enjoy doing this stuff after simply enjoying being outdoors are the people. I just finished a half day trail work up here in Maine under the auspices of the local conservancy group. The people up here are basically the same as down home. Just good, down to earth people who are fun to be with and want to do the right thing for their local conserved area(s). I do find the work and the experience of working with others very satisfying and am thrilled that I have the time to do it. I also very much appreciate the opportunity to care for these wonderful properties that others have had the foresight and resources to set aside for the enjoyment of future generations.

Keith Ohmart, Citizens for Lexington Conservation



CINDY HUTCHISON (THIS PAGE)

WALTHAM WALKS AT STONEHURST!

Inge Uhlir

Can a house, vintage 1880s, satisfy the latest priorities for healthful living at the forefront today? If it was built on a choice site in Waltham and modified and expanded by the most talented architect of his day, Henry Hobson Richardson, for a family that made outdoor activity a part of their lives, it can do all that and more.

The Robert Treat Paine Estate in Waltham is a joyful example of a summer home that invites active uses inside and out. It remains so for the benefit of those lucky enough to visit this unique property owned by the City of Waltham. The Waltham Land Trust together

with Healthy Waltham, City of Waltham, and Friends of Stonehurst invited visitors to learn about and enjoy this gracious home in July.

The 138.5 acres of grounds surrounding Stonehurst, known as the Storer Conservation Land and Chesterbrook Woods comprise a key component of the Western Greenway. David Kehs of the Waltham Land Trust led two dozen adventuresome visitors along a portion of the Western Greenway trail. In the Storer Conservation Land, the Western Greenway Trail follows the existing Hemlock trail beginning at the Stonehurst mansion and passing an extensive vernal pool. From there, the Greenway trail follows established trails through Chesterbrook Woods and soon reaches the access road for Waltham High School. At this

Ann Clifford, Curator of Stonehurst, guiding the group to the remaining foundation of the former Storer house presents a view of the Storer house prior to its burning in 1974.

point, some hikers opted to return to the starting point, while a few of the hardier souls forged ahead and hiked through the school property, making use of the new trail and two sturdy wooden bridges that were constructed by volunteers in the fall of 2009. This group made it back to the mansion just in time for the next event on the schedule.

A stately grove of Hemlock near the mansion appears to be under attack by the woolly adelgid. Vast stands of white pine and oak shade most of the trails. Massive specimens of bedrock emerge from the areas of soil like beached whales. They tell the story about a land that resisted the glaciation.

Ann Clifford, Curator of the Robert Treat Paine Historic Trust, described some of the changes to the estate over the years. The original house, a wedding gift to Lydia Lyman Paine from her father, was moved to a spot suggested by Frederic Law Olmsted for its views and breezes. Another large house on the property given to another daughter unfortunately burnt to the ground. Stables and other outbuildings have also succumbed to aging and disintegration. But the gardener's cottage still stands along Beaver Street.

Healthful snacks were provided by Hannaford thanks to the initiative of Healthy Waltham.



CINDY HUTCHISON



DAVID KRICKER

WLT Board member Maureen Fowler serves from Gracies' Kitchen selections and her husband Bill Fowler offers the Taqueria Mexico entrée.

GREEN SPACE BLUES JAM APRIL 29, 2011

Maureen Fowler

Waltham Land Trust's Blues Jam was once again a great success. We heard rave reviews this year about the band, the food, and the auction. Plans for next year's event are already underway. Don't be left out, mark your calendar now for April 29, 2011 so you won't miss the fun of the 7th Annual Blues Jam.

A fun night was had by all on April 30, 2010, as the Waltham Land Trust celebrated its 6th Annual Green Space Blues Jam. The event featured Mike Williams and his All Star Band, which included vocals by the fabulous Toni Lynn Washington. With matchless spring weather, the doors were pushed open allowing everyone to fully enjoy the historic grounds as well the beautiful summer home of Robert Treat Paine.

Festivities began at 7:30 PM with cheese and crackers and fruit from donors such as Edible Arrangements. John Neri served us well again as the bartender extraordinaire serving up Boston Beer and wines and soft drinks from Gordon's Liquors. Gracie's Kitchen and Taqueria Mexico prepared marvelous dishes such as stuffed mushrooms, zucchini quesadillas, meatballs and vegan vegetable stir-fry. Land Trust board members



DAVID KRICKER

Green Space Blues Jam attendees dance to the music of Mike Williams and his Green Space Blues Jam All Stars and the songs of Toni Lynn Washington.



DAVID KRICKER

Green Space Blues Jam attendees enjoy the spring evening on the terrace of the Robert Treat Paine Estate.

served this wonderfully prepared food to over 120 happy attendees. Lizzy's Ice Cream was next, offering a variety of ice cream flavors, and other desserts were donated from Doubletree Guest Suite Hotel.

The silent auction (and spur of the moment LIVE auction) provided lots of laughs and camaraderie to attendees. Items auctioned off were vacation rentals, quilts, beer, wine, jewelry, artwork, and local outdoor adventure options, as well as many, many local restaurant gift cards. A special thanks is offered to volunteer Sonja Wadman, who worked diligently on donations. It appears that Sonja enjoyed working with the Land Trust, because she has recently been hired as our new Program Director.

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An electronic file (pdf) of this newsletter is available on our web site, <www.walthamlandtrust.org>.

Officers: Nadene Stein (President), Diana Young (Vice Pres.), David Kehs (Clerk), Marc Rudnick (Treasurer)

Directors: Kate Buttolph, Marie Daly, George Darcy, Marjory Forbes, Maureen Fowler, Susannah King, Dee Kricker, Daniel Melnechuk, Stephen Rourke, Mike Squillante, Lesya Struz, Dan Taylor, Inge Uhler

Waltham Land Trust's Mission

We are a group of Waltham citizens who want to save open space in our city. Our mission is to acquire, preserve or restore land in a way that

- ♦ balances conservation and access,
- ♦ maximizes the natural value of land,
- ♦ reduces habitat fragmentation, and
- ♦ permanently protects and conserves natural resources;

So that

- ♦ public appreciation of natural resources grows,
- ♦ native habitat is preserved and restored, environmental quality of life is improved (air, water, noise and light pollution are reduced),
- ♦ biodiversity is increased, and
- ♦ a legacy of conservation is perpetuated in Waltham.

Please send any comments to the return address below, or email to <memberlink@walthamlandtrust.org>.

Waltham Land Trust
PO Box 541120
Waltham MA 02454-1120

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If you're not already a WLT member and have received this complimentary copy, please consider joining today!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Waltham Land Trust's 11th Annual Meeting

Tuesday, October 26 at 7:00 p.m.
First Parish in Waltham, 50 Church Street

Jimmy Tingle's Laughter Stimulus Plan: Waltham's Road to Recovery

Waltham Land Trust Fall Fundraiser, Friday, Nov. 5
American Legion Post 156, 215 Waverley Oaks Road
Doors open at 6 p.m., show starts promptly at 7. Free parking, free soft drinks, alcoholic beverages available for purchase. Open seating so come early! Buy tickets and preorder your pizza at walthamlandtrust.org or call 781.893.3355.

PLEASE RENEW OR JOIN

To renew or join please use the enclosed membership application and return to:

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