



Waltham Land Trust

is a non-profit corporation dedicated to creating a legacy of land conservation in Waltham by promoting, protecting, restoring, and acquiring open space.

JOURNAL FALL 2017

MCRT Gains Momentum in Waltham

Laurel Carpenter, WLT member, a lead WLT Steward, and WLT representative to Waltham Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Historical Background

The original Massachusetts Central Railroad opened in 1881 and ran almost 100 miles from Cambridge to the Connecticut River in Northampton. In Waltham, former train stations were Clematis Brook and Beaver Brook (on the Fitchburg line), and Waltham North and Waltham Highlands (on the MCR). The Brook stations closed in 1978 and the Central Mass Branch, which shared trackage with the Fitchburg line, was cut on November 26, 1971. The MBTA still owns the corridor occupied by the former Mass Central Railroad.

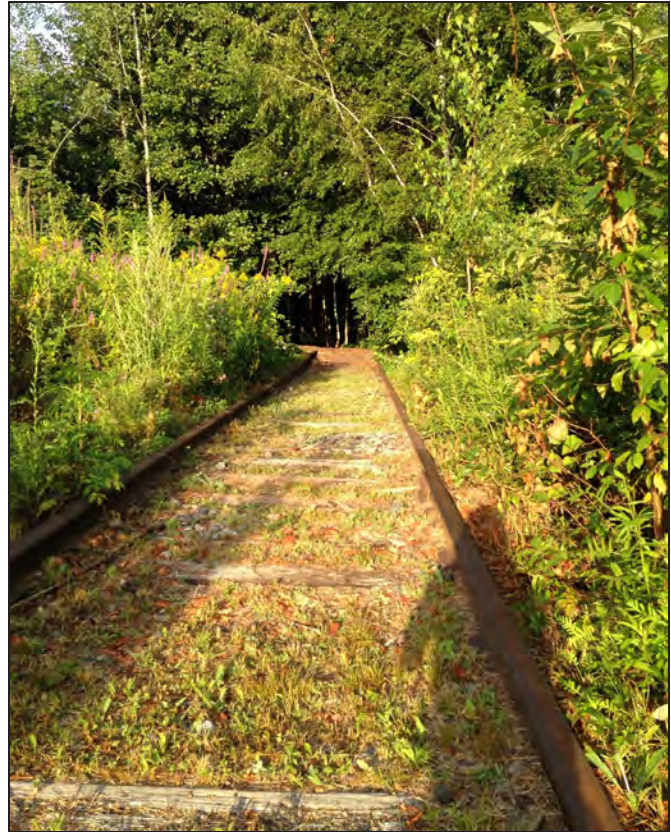
Rail Trail Development Efforts

Efforts to develop a multi-use path along the former Mass Central railroad corridor in Waltham have spanned decades, and progress is slow and often not visible. A giant leap forward occurred in 2011, when the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) signed a lease with the MBTA for 23 miles of former railroad corridor spanning from Waltham to Berlin for the purpose of developing a multi-use rail trail in partnership with the local municipalities.

The Waltham Land Trust has been an active advocate for development of the rail trail, along with other organizations and elected officials. A short section of the trail was paved in 2014 in conjunction with the development project at 1265 Main Street.

Benefits

While people often focus on the recreational or environmental aspects of trails and greenways, that is only part of total package of benefits that a trail can provide to communities, including public health, economic and transportation benefits, and the effect on community pride and identity. In Waltham, our section of the Wayside corridor is about 3 miles long, and runs roughly parallel to often-congested Main Street.



LAUREL CARPENTER

The author takes a photo along the MCRT

WLT/DCR Partnership

Since 2014, the Waltham Land Trust has worked in partnership with DCR to provide trail stewardship along the corridor, and has led numerous public walks along sections of the corridor.

In most places along the corridor in Waltham, the railroad tracks and ties are present. In some sections, there is a parallel walking path alongside the rails. During the growing season, volunteer stewards from the Waltham Land Trust clear weeds and other plant growth along the corridor. Volunteer stewards also remove trash year-round. Because the rail corridor in Waltham is centrally located and adjacent to businesses, schools, and residences, many sections are currently regularly used by pedestrians.

This summer, Waltham Land Trust trail stewards organized a project to clean up an abandoned structure
continued on page 4

Take to the Woods for the WG5K!

Anna Richardson, WLT Board member and participant in the RAW Series

Come kick off fall with this year's Western Greenway 5K (WG5K), a family fun run/walk to benefit the Waltham Land Trust. Once again, the Land Trust is teaming up with the Race Around Waltham (RAW) Series to promote physical fitness and raise funds to protect community greenspace. As one of the only trail runs in the RAW Series, the WG5K (3.2 miles) is a wonderful opportunity to support the WLT and enjoy some of the most interesting parts of the Western Greenway, one of the largest conservation areas in our community. The Greenway includes amazing natural habitats including cattail marshes, mature oak-hickory forests, brooks, vernal pools, and open meadows. Run by the plots in the community garden and take in the beautiful views while the race course takes you through the largest contiguous wooded area in Waltham. Best of all, the WG5K comes right at the start of autumn when temperatures are a little cooler and the foliage has begun to change. More forgiving than running on pavement, this trail run is a great first race for those



who have never run a 5K before, or avid runners looking for a lighter recovery run.

If you haven't had a chance take in the wonderful wildlife the Western Greenway has to offer, come join us for the race and you may see everything from red-tailed hawks to foxes and various migratory birds while the race route takes you through some of the best parts of the Beaver Brook North Reservation and Rock Meadow Trails. Not a runner? Not to worry. Walkers are welcome and volunteers are always needed to hand out water and help clean up. Prizes will be offered for the top finishers overall, and by age and gender, along with a range of extra prizes so everyone who registers has a chance to win. Registration in advance is preferred (additional \$5 fee after September 29th). Starting at noon on Sunday, October 1, the course begins and ends at Elsie Turner Field on Trapelo Road. Waltham's Winter Street Bertucci's has once again generously agreed to donate pizzas and rolls for all who participate! Proceeds of the WG5K will benefit the RAW series and the Waltham Land Trust, helping the WLT to protect and preserve community green space throughout the City. For more information, and to register or sign-up to volunteer, visit <http://www.walthamlandtrust.org> or contact Sonja at swadman@walthamlandtrust.org today!

Native Moths in Massachusetts

L	E	X	B	E	G	U	F	O	C	U	E	K	R	S	G	G	I	A	N	T	L	E	O	P	A	R	D	G	C
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Achemon Sphinx
Eastern Tent
Great Tiger
Imperial
Lunate Zale
Pink Underwing
Regal
Vine Sphinx

American Dagger
Evergreen Bagworm
Hag
Io
Nessus Sphinx
Plume
Rosy Maple
Walnut Sphinx

Banded Tussock
Forage Looper
Harnessed Tiger
Large Tolyte
Painted Lichen
Polyphemus
Snowberry Clearwing
Wasp

Dingy Cutworm
Giant Leopard
Hummingbird
Luna
Pandorus Sphinx
Promethea
Spiny Oak Slug
Wood Leopard

Member Spotlight

In each Fall Journal, we highlight a member of the Waltham Land Trust who goes above and beyond the call of duty with volunteering their time to further our mission. Betty MacKenzie and her husband, Jim Lockett, moved to Waltham in 2015, intentionally relocating to a community with a pond. They quickly became involved with WLT and its Hardy Pond Association Coordinating Committee. We asked Betty to take a break from stewarding our city's only Great Pond (she knows everything about plants!) and writing grant applications to answer a few of our questions.

WLT: *What is your first memory of enjoying open space and nature?*

BM: My family was always outside. Like a lot of families when I grew up, the rule was that the kids played outside and could come in when the street lights went on. My earliest memories are of fun in the backyards, meadows and woods of our neighborhood with my friends. As small children, we created many little homes and forts. One was the Rock House, located on part of a very large old stone wall with a wide, tall red oak in the middle. Our beds were, of course, rocks. The leaves from small trees there were our childhood currency; years later I realized they were the leaves of choke or black cherry trees. So, my love of the out-of-doors began very early. Several tree houses, and lots of camping, (including weekends with the Girl Scouts at Cedar Hill) came later.

WLT: *We know you are a steward around Hardy Pond and at near-by playgrounds. Thanks! What is the oddest and/or most beautiful thing you've encountered while being a steward?*

BM: On a WLT walk, I was delighted to discover several American chestnut saplings near the border of Berry Park and Prospect Hill Park. These were the first ones that I have seen in Waltham. This once majestic tree was common in our forests, and was wiped out in this area around 100 years ago by a blight. The trees' roots don't always die, however, and can send sprouts up that live for several years. If a such a sprout grows large enough, and gets enough sun to produce nuts, it is called a Mother Tree and its nuts are important. They can be crossed with Chinese or Japanese chestnuts to create hybrid American Chestnut trees - with resistance to the blight, but with the American chestnuts' rapid growth, and huge, straight trunks, and rot resistance. I love talking about American Chestnuts, so watch out if you get me started. For more info, see the American Chestnut Foundation: TACF.org

Jim Lockett: During the drought last year, quite a bit of shoreline was exposed all around Hardy Pond.



JIM LUCKETT

Betty with her free library box

There were many broken bottles and pieces of wood, and other trash, as well as some treasures. One item that I found was an old wooden paddle. The blade is an angular, squared-diamond sort of shape. It could be a homemade paddle for a canoe or other boat. Or, someone also suggested (Marc Rudnick) that it could be a paddle from the leather tanning operations that were located on Hardy Pond many, many years ago.

WLT: *What advice do you have for those looking to experience Waltham's trails and open spaces?*

BM: I suggest going for an early morning or early evening walk. These times are when my husband, Jim, and I, most enjoy walking around Hardy Pond and its parks and neighborhoods. First, you don't have to worry about the sun. Birds and other animals tend to be out and about; you can see a lot that you wouldn't otherwise see. The light can make things beautiful and sometimes magical. And, lastly, the air is often humid, bringing out the sweet or spicy smells of whatever is in bloom, or the smell of a pine tree or rich swamp.

Likely, readers are experienced hikers, but here are my tips: wear long pants (socks over pants), good hiking shoes, quick dry clothes and a hat with a visor. Bring a quick dry fleece or wool sweater you can tie around your waist. With these things, I don't worry

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MCRT *continued from page 1*

on the corridor. The Consolidated Public Works Department arranged for a dumpster, and volunteers filled it with debris.

The Next Leap Forward

In June 2017, Mayor McCarthy requested and received CPA funds for trail design documents, and a contract was awarded to Pare Corporation. The Mayor designated a Rail Trail Advisory Committee which includes a representative from the Waltham Land Trust.

Pare Corporation's contract includes the tasks of land surveying, public engagement and preliminary design. Engineers from Pare Corporation will then develop construction plans and pursue regulatory permits leading up to construction bidding process. Construction funding for rail trail has not yet been identified but may include partnerships between the city and state, including DCR and Mass DOT.

How You Can Help

The Waltham Land Trust is seeking volunteers interested taking an active role along the railroad corridor. In addition to removing trash and weeds, volunteers serve as 'the eyes and ears' monitoring activity along the corridor. WLT stewards submit reports to WLT's Executive Director, Sonja Wadman, who coordinates with the City of Waltham or DCR as needed.

If you are interested in becoming a steward along the MCRT, or at any other green space in Waltham, please contact Sonja at swadman@walthamlandtrust.org.



SONJA WADMAN

Before: Abandoned shack along MCRT



SONJA WADMAN

After: site after volunteers removed shack



LAUREL CARPENTER

Beaver activity along the rail trail



LAUREL CARPENTER

Raccoon prints on the rails

The Tale of Tell Tales

Paul Penfield, WLT member and member of the Weston Rail Trail Advisory Committee

Walk along the Mass Central Rail Trail by the Linden Street bridge and you might notice two tell-tales, metal structures used in the 1920s to warn folks riding on top of boxcars of upcoming reasons to duck. WLT member Paul Penfield and Phyllis Halpern (of the Weston Historical Commission) walked the MCRT at the end of August and discovered two tell-tales about 100' away from each end of the Linden Street bridge.

Tell-tales had a post, typically metal, typically anchored in concrete, with a cross-arm from which dangled a series of straps or short lengths of rope or baling wire (not electrical wire). They were placed so the dangling straps were directly over the tracks, and hung within a few feet of the top of boxcars. They were placed about a hundred feet from any overhead obstruction the train may encounter, including the 'ceiling' of a through truss bridge. In Waltham, there was one over Linden Street. In Weston, there was one over the Fitchburg Rail line. Tell-tales were also used where the railroad went through a tunnel, and on bridges that carried roads over the railroad. There were no such structures in Waltham, but in Weston they were present at Church Street, Conant Road, and Concord Road.



VALERIE MERTZ

Trestle bridge and tell-tale in Weston, 2016

If the railroad brakeman was on top of a boxcar (as they were required to be to operate the brakes, even when the train was in motion) and the hanging straps or wires hit him, he knew he had to duck, quickly, to avoid getting hit.



Political cartoon with President Taft entitled: The Unheeded Tell-Tale

When a group of railroad historians hiked from Jones Road in Waltham to Plain Road in Wayland a while ago, they commented that standing tell-tales are rare, and were delighted to see one. Tell-tales were used until the railroads eliminated roofwalks on the top of railroad freight cars in the late 1960s. This was long after air brakes were established that eliminated the need for brakemen to turn brake wheels on top of railroad cars.

HELP WLT GO PAPERLESS!

Join the 100 Land Trust members who have their *Journals* sent to them electronically. By opting out of the mailed hard copy, these supporters are helping WLT reduce our carbon footprint and save on costs associated with printing, postage, and transportation. Interested? Send an email with your name to swadman@walthamlandtrust.org with the subject header "Electronic *Journal*." Be sure you are up-to-date with your dues so you don't miss the Spring 2018 *Journal*!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT *continued from page 3*

about encountering poison ivy, ticks or other bugs, rain or mud.

WLT: *Do you have a favorite natural place in Waltham that you can share with our readers?*

BM: I love a hike on a woody trail under tall trees, or through marshes and meadows. A hike on a part of the Western Greenway Trail includes all of these, and more. I hike a 4 mile circuit, but one can hike as little or as much as desired. One can start at several places, such as the Elsie Turner playground on Trapelo Road, or at the dog park on the Metropolitan Parkway. I often start at the Rock Meadow Conservation Area on Mill St in Belmont, traveling past the community gardens, and around a large meadow before arriving at, and crossing Beaver Brook. At this point, in Waltham, the Western Greenway becomes a wooded trail, eventually crossing a large marsh by boardwalk. One can walk a little further to Woburn/Walnut Street, and then turn back. I return

on a different route through the marsh, past the dog park, down the Metropolitan Parkway (a marsh there is different through the seasons and quite beautiful), and along the bottom of the north side of Mackerel Hill, past an old cemetery, and back to Rock Meadow in Belmont.

WLT: *Why do you support the Waltham Land Trust?*

BM: Open space and the natural world are essential to life on the planet and WLT is leading the charge on this important work in Waltham! The WLT has so many and varied efforts, that any work with them, or any contribution, goes a long way. From land protection and public education, to the stewards program (Jim and I joined the stewards program this year), every day we see the great work that the WLT is doing. It's particularly satisfying to be able to jump in and do work that is needed, alongside a lot of other like-minded folks. The Waltham Land Trust and its work is kind of the urban equivalent of a barn raising.

Views from a Waltham Window

Elsa Lichman, Nature in the City contributor to the Waltham News Tribune

Raptor

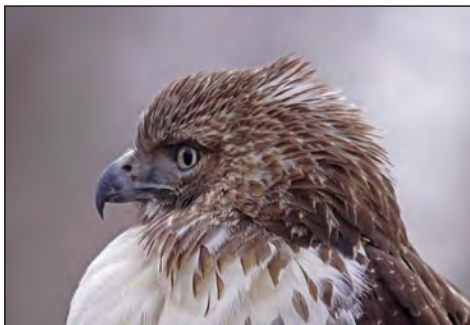
*My dove, perched on a curtain rod,
looks out longingly.*

*As I kiss her creamy softness,
the window darkens.*

*Hawk underfeathers fill the frame,
each delineated,*

wingspan wider than the panes.

*Foiled by glass, it shoots up,
just barely grazing the roof.*



JOHN GARP

Red-tailed hawk

Dawn Moon

*Opening curtains to cool fresh air,
I see two moons, two lamps,
side by side in the west.*

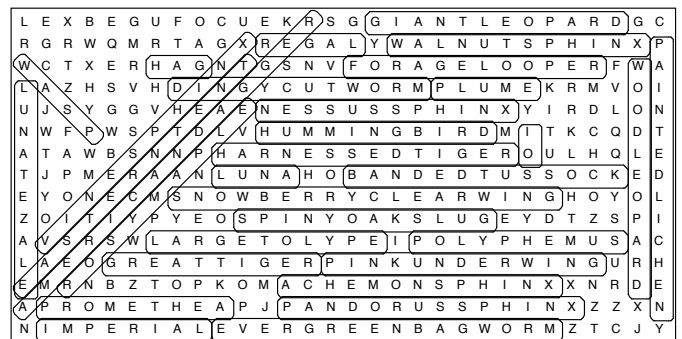
*One is round, perfect, eases down
to rest on treetops.*

The other is extinguished.



GARY MORRISON

*Partial eclipse of the sun, by the moon,
August 21, 2017*



UPCOMING EVENTS WITH THE WALTHAM LAND TRUST

WESTERN GREENWAY 5K RUN/WALK

Sunday, October 1, noon start time
Start/end at Elsie Turner Field, 385 Trapelo Road

Be a part of our fall *Race for Open Space* fundraiser as a walker, runner, or volunteer! Following the same course since 2013, the route travels through various habitats in Beaver Brook North Reservation and Rock Meadow along the Western Greenway trail. Registration fees (\$25 before September 30) and race sponsorships help raise money to keep building this community path. Walkers will begin shortly after the runners depart. Families welcome!

WALTHAM WALKS! SENIOR STROLL @ UMASS FIELD STATION

Wednesday, October 11, 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.
Meet at front steps, UMASS Field Station, 240 Beaver Street

For this event, the WLT joins forces with Healthy Waltham and Waltham Fields Community Farm (WFCF) for a special event just for older folks. After enjoying a healthy snack prepared with WFCF produce, we'll learn about all the great groups that rent space at 240 Beaver Street, which includes the WLT, WFCF, Green Rows of Waltham community gardens, Grow Native Massachusetts, and the Boston Area Gleaners. We'll take it all in as we carefully and slowly walk around the grounds of the property.

WALTHAM LAND TRUST 18TH ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, October 24, 7 - 9 p.m.
First Parish Church in Waltham, 50 Church Street

Attend our annual meeting to see a presentation about rail trails, receive updates on issues the Land Trust is tackling, celebrate our *Inge Uhlir Environmentalist of the Year*, vote on new and returning WLT Directors, and mingle with other open space supporters.

HARDY POND CLEANUP

Saturday, October 28, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Sign-in and get supplies by the shore at Lazzazero Park, corner of Princeton and Hiawatha streets one block off Lake Street

Help remove trash from the wetlands and shoreline of Waltham's only Great Pond (publicly-owned, greater than 10 acres in size). Be prepared to get wet and possibly dirty! Long pants and sleeves, plus boots or sturdy shoes that can get wet, are recommended. Tools, trash bags, gloves, and water will be provided. Bring an empty water bottle. All ages welcome (kids under 12 must be accompanied by an adult).

BONEFISH GRILL FUNDRAISER

Sunday, October 29, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.
99 Third Avenue, unit 3

Experience one of Waltham's newer, fancier restaurants, and help us earn a little cash. Bonefish Grill has a huge brunch menu, so come on over and get your fill before watching the Patriots game, or visit later for dinner. Save the certificate enclosed with this newsletter (or get another from our website) and give it to your server so the Waltham Land Trust gets 15% of the food and drink sale.

STORM ALONG CIDER TALK AND TASTING

Sunday, November 12, 2 - 3:30 p.m.
Location tbd

We're very excited to welcome Storm Along Cider, a small-batch, craft cider producer located in Sherborn, MA, to Waltham for an educational and fun presentation about the history of hard cider production in New England that includes tastings! Storm Along seeks out rare, heirloom cider apples and ferments them using traditional techniques. Check our website for updates about location.

WALTHAM WALKS! SENIOR STROLL ALONG THE CHARLES RIVER

Wednesday, November 15, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.
Meet in back corner of Stop N Shop parking lot, 700 Pleasant Street, Watertown, 02472

We again team up with Healthy Waltham for a walk especially designed for senior citizens. This time, we'll meet just over the border in Watertown and stroll along the paved pathway over the beautiful Blue Heron Bridge (a suspension bridge so it bounces slightly when one crosses it). We'll travel a bit into Newton, then reverse our direction, travel back over the bridge and head north into Waltham towards the Mary Early Footbridge upriver by Shaw's. The walk will end back at the Stop N Shop parking lot.

#GIVINGTUESDAY

Tuesday, November 28, all day
Online at www.walthamlandtrust.org

Reclaim the true meaning of "the giving season" by joining people worldwide donating online to local charities like the WLT on the Tuesday after Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Give through our website: www.walthamlandtrust.org.

WALTHAM



Waltham Land Trust
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Waltham MA 02454-1120
www.walthamlandtrust.org
*Protecting Waltham's land...
forever.*

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

Officers: Nadene Stein (President), Maureen Bagge Fowler
(Vice Pres.), David Kehs (Clerk), Marc Rudnick (Treasurer)

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Please renew or join

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

Waltham Land Trust
PO Box 541120
Waltham MA 02454-1120

Printed on recycled paper.

Waltham Land Trust's Mission

To create a legacy of land conservation in Waltham by
promoting, protecting, restoring, and acquiring open
space.

We envision growth in public appreciation of
natural resources, preservation and restoration of
native habitat, and increased biodiversity to foster a
healthier environment.

• SPECIAL GIFT MEMBERSHIP •

Have a friend, neighbor, or relative you think would
enjoy being part of the Waltham Land Trust? Why not
give them a gift membership? **We are offering a special
promotion for a limited time: 6 months for only \$10!** (The
normal price of an individual membership is 12 months
for \$25). **Support open space for a birthday, special occa-
sion, or the holidays!**

Like Waltham Land Trust on Facebook.
Follow us on Twitter @walthamlandtrst
See videos at youtube.walthamlandtrust.org
See photos at flickr.walthamlandtrust.org

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

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



Bonefish Grill Gives Back

When you present this flyer, 15% of what you spend (food and drinks) will be donated to the **Waltham Land Trust**.

Sunday, October 29, 2017. 10 am – 9 pm

Dine in only

Bonefish Grill, 99 Third Avenue, Unit 3, Waltham 02451
Phone 781-902-3121, <https://www.bonefishgrill.com/>



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