



SANCTUARY NEWS

Friends of Hall's Pond

Spring/Summer 2010

Celebrating 35 Years of Stewardship at Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary

Ellen Forrester and Betsy Shure Gross,
Friends Co-presidents

AT THE CLOSE of the 19th century, Frederick Law Olmsted spoke of the need for "an oasis in the city," of the salutary benefits of safe, accessible, well maintained spaces.

In a speech entitled *Public Parks and the Enlargement of Towns*, presented in Boston in 1870, he said:

"We want a ground to which people may easily go after their day's work is done, and where they may stroll for an hour, seeing, hearing and feeling nothing of the bustle and jar of the streets, where they shall, in effect, find the city put far away from them..."

At Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary, in the bustling core of the Town of Brookline's main shopping district, close to stops on the MBTA Green Line (B and C) adjacent to a recently renovated park and athletic field featuring well-used tennis and softball fields, loved by dog walkers and hosting Frisbee games, there is indeed a sanctuary, that "oasis in the city" envisioned by Olmsted. Here is a place for respite from the frenzy of everyday activities. A place to enjoy a visiting heron. A place to watch for turtles basking in the sunshine. A



DEBORAH RAPTOPOULOS

Sanctuary in 2006, after the 2001–02 renovation had grown in.

place to walk gently on a misty afternoon, on the boardwalk around the pond. A place to sit quietly in the formal garden. A place to take photographs of the trees and the gazebo in Amory Woods. A place to think. A place to dream.

The Board of Directors of the Friends of Hall's Pond, in partnership with the Town Of Brookline Conservation Commission, has, for thirty-five years, worked to preserve and protect this unique resource in our community. We urge you, our readers, to join us in our endeavors. We encourage you to visit. We hope that you will become involved. There is a lot to explore.

There can be a lot to learn. Hall's Pond serves as a four season outdoor educational opportunity and hosts the Brookline Green Space Alliance Learning Project for Brookline students. Come early for bird watching, come often for Community Work Days, come for the Formal Garden and the wood wetland, come for the Upland and Amory Woods, come for gentle walks and quiet times. Come refresh your spirit. Come join us at Hall's Pond.



In 1948, long before there was a Sanctuary.



"We must develop new instruments of foresight and protection and nurture in order to recover the relationship between man and nature and to make sure that the national estate we pass on to our multiplying descendants is green and flourishing"

— John F. Kennedy

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COME JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, June 16, 2010, 6 pm
1443 Beacon St. (Green Line 'C' at Summit/Brandon)

Friends of Hall's Pond Service Awards and A Presentation by Priscilla Geigis

Assistant Commissioner and Director of the Division of State Parks and Recreation at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

"It's Our Nature. It's Our Legacy!"

EVERY AUGUST during her childhood, Priscilla hiked and camped with her family in state and national parks across the country establishing her love for the outdoors and our shared public resources. Now as the Assistant Commissioner and Director of the Division of State Parks and Recreation at the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), she oversees the management of DCR properties spanning over 300,000 acres of land statewide from Cape Cod to the Berkshires. DCR properties encompass forests, parks, beaches, campgrounds and day use areas and afford visitors a variety of recreational opportunities. Priscilla has focused her efforts on promoting our natural resources and fostering stewardship through innovative programming, especially aimed at connecting kids to the great outdoors. She also serves on the Executive Board of the National Association of State Park Directors and works with other state park directors, the National Park Service and the National



Betsy Shure Gross (right), Tupper Thomas, and Ralph P. Engle, Jr.

Bravo Betsy!

Hall's Ponds' own co-president Betsy Shure Gross was the recent recipient of the prestigious Boston Bowl from the Garden Club of America's Boston Committee. This award recognizes civic achievement in the environment and horticulture by presenting awards for design, restoration of public areas or related achievements.

Betsy and her dear friend, the late Corliss Knapp Engle, were co-recipients. The two neighbors were instrumental in saving Fairsted, now a National Historic Site preserving Frederick Law Olmsted's Brookline home, office and archives. Corliss' husband Ralph accepted in her honor.

Among Olmsted's many wonderful accomplishments in Boston and Brookline are "The Emerald Necklace" and Franklin Park. Guest speaker for the award event was Tupper Thomas, president of the Prospect Park Alliance, a public-private partnership with the City of New York.

Kids that care about parks and other natural places grow up to be adults who care about these places. Priscilla will remind us of our role in fostering the next generation of environmental stewards and highlight some of DCR's programs designed to connect kids to the natural world

Recreation and Park Association to promote parks as critical to addressing childhood obesity.

Priscilla began her career in state government in 1992 as the Assistant General Counsel for the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Environmental Law Enforcement. She later served as the Director for the state's nationally recognized Community Preservation Initiative at the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. Priscilla holds a law degree from the Northeastern School of Law, a master's degree in government administration from the Fels Center of Government from the University of Pennsylvania and a bachelor's degree from Connecticut College.



Priscilla Geigis and her nephew Grant pictured in front of their tree fort.

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"Gardening imports an organic perspective on the passage of time"

— William Cowper



Picture Hall's Pond in — A Photo Contest!

The Friends of Hall's Pond is celebrating its 35th anniversary by holding a year-long photo contest. Send us your favorite photographs of Hall's Pond in all seasons, mist or sunshine. Winners will have their photographs showcased in a Brookline Booksman window display and on a bulletin board at the sanctuary entrance. Submissions should be sent in a medium resolution jpeg file to friends of hall's pond@gmail.com. Up to 3 submissions per person. Contest is open from April 1, 2010 through April 1, 2011.

in Amory Woods. This native ground cover is *Chrysogonium virginianum* (goldenstar or green-and-gold). This is a good name for it as it is a carpet of green with profuse yellow blooms in spring and some throughout the summer. A great native plant for a shady place!



You can also see the profuse yellow blooms of *Caltha palustris* (kingcup or marsh marigold) brightening semi-shady area around the pond. A delight to behold!



yard, you may wonder what happened to it because it is one of the last trees or shrubs to leaf out in the spring. It is fabulous when it does because you also get the splendor of its' profusion of fleecy white flowers. Its beauty in the spring is equal to its great yellow fall color. Look for it next time you are in the garden.

On a smaller scale, but in eye-popping splendor, look at the yellow carpet forming



Hopefully everyone is aware of the effort the community, the town and our dedicated volunteers have put in to the ongoing maintenance of the sanctuary and garden. Your generous and continued support of the Friends of Hall's Pond gives us the opportunity to fund work in this special oasis. Part of this public/private partnership we have allows us to work closely and manage the sanctuary. Your funding has allowed us to identify needs and purchase trees and shrubs for the garden and sanctuary. These purchases and installations can be for general garden needs, replacement of important trees, aesthetics or memorials. Most recently, notice the trees purchased and installed as memorials to Brookline citizens at the gates to the sanctuary. These two trees, *Acer saccharum* (Sugar Maple) and *Ulmus americana* (American Elm), were installed as a memorial to Marc Fried, and honoring Nancy and Ferris Hall.

"In all things of nature there is something marvelous"

— Aristotle

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Hall's Pond Sanctuary Work Plan Complete

By Randolph Meiklejohn,
Chair, Brookline Conservation Commission

The new Hall's Pond Sanctuary Work Plan, whose initial preparation was described in the Fall/Winter 2009 issue of this newsletter, is now complete. By this current issue's publication in spring 2010, it is expected to have been formally accepted by the Conservation Commission and put to use for the spring community Work Day and other collaborative maintenance projects at the Sanctuary.

The authors of the plan include Friends co-presidents Ellen Forrester and Betsy Shure Gross, Conservation Commissioners Gail Fenton and Randolph Meiklejohn (both also Friends board members), and Conservation Administrator Tom Brady. Tom, with Conservation Assistant Heather Charles Lis, ably coordinated the series of working meetings and supervised the graphic and technical production of the final plan document.

The working group began with a clear goal: to create a practical guide for all seasonal maintenance and volunteer work at the Sanctuary, incorporating the perspectives of the Friends, the Commission and of Town staff. Soon enough, however, the editing challenges became apparent: how to write a plan detailed enough to describe the needs of the Sanctuary's different natural areas, yet short and simple enough to be used in the field? At Tom's suggestion the group decided to address each sanctuary area separately, with the idea that maintenance work customized to the characteristics of each area had the potential to best preserve the environmental diversity that is especially valuable at Hall's Pond.

The plan, therefore, consists of a sanctuary map divided into nearly twenty zones, and an accompanying chart indicating for each zone a shorthand



Trillium in
the Sanctuary,
April 7 and 8
of this year.



name, a brief description, a long-term vision, and a few priority tasks. For example, the seasonally inundated areas in the Amory Woods section are called the "Amory Woods Wetlands," described as "small, wet depressed areas with hydric soils, regular flooding," and the vision is to "support wetland microhabitats." Following from this current description and vision, specific tasks recommended include minimizing soil and plant disturbance, monitoring of invasive or escaped ornamental plants, planting with native plant species, and maintenance of the accessible paths and boardwalks. Note that for this area, as for several others, the first task noted is to minimize disturbance. While fences, paths and boardwalks must be safely maintained for visitors, the natural character and wildlife-habitat value of most of the sanctuary are often better preserved through restraint.

As we enter the first season of the work plan's use, we can all consider what its authors found during their fall and winter meetings: renewed common purpose among the Friends, the Commission and Town Staff about the needs of the Sanctuary, and readiness to re-think "maintenance" at a place where wild nature and city people come so close together. For the lawn, maintenance means mowing, but for that standing dead tree, rotting log or drift of fallen leaves, maintenance means letting it be. Every seasonal Work Day is an opportunity to remind ourselves what our work at the sanctuary is for and to teach a new person about it, through shared hands-on—and hands-off—experience.



BRUCE WOLFF



Randolph Meiklejohn

BRUCE WOLFF

"Spring — an experience in immortality"

— Henry D. Thoreau

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A History of Hall's Pond

By Ferris M. Hall (no relation to Minna Hall)

A MAP DATED 1746 shows Cedar Pond to be owned by Henry Sewell, a descendant of Samuel Sewall who was the judge who presided over the 1692 Salem Witch trials. David Sears II from 1818–1920 purchased 200 acres, including the Pond, and built homes for his six children (with such familiar names as Anna Powell Amory, Crownshield, Winthrop, Knyvet and Mason). Sears also built the Sears Chapel and developed the Longwood Mall. The Amory home, lying on what is now 20 Amory St. extended west to Powell St. and east to included what is now Amory Park and a portion of Hall's Pond (at that time the pond extended farther into the Park).



Congressman Father Drinan, State Environmental Secretary Evelyn Murphy, Chair of the Conservation Commission, Mary Nelson.

In 1850 Amos Lawrence (son of the textile merchant for whom Lawrence, Massachusetts is named) purchased the pond and much of what is now the Cottage Farm neighborhood from Sears. Amos was an abolitionist and Lawrence, Kentucky, Lawrence University, and our own K-8 Lawrence school are named for him. He sold the lot that includes the Pond (then called Swallow Pond) to George Dexter in 1850 and Dexter, who was the architect for the Boston Athenaeum and superintendent of Trinity Church during its construction, built the home at 156 Ivy St. in 1851. The home was given to his daughter as a wedding gift and subsequently to his grand-daughter, Minna Hall, for whom the Hall's Pond was named in the late 1800s.



Directors of Friends of Hall's Pond at Beacon St. apartment of Jo Albrecht, 1984. Front: Elizabeth Liddle, Jo Albrecht (president), Nancy Hall, Joan Fried, Barbara Whiting (Conservation Commission). Back: Helen Strider, Ferris Hall, Paul Willis (DPW Parks Conservation) Dorothy Arvidson.



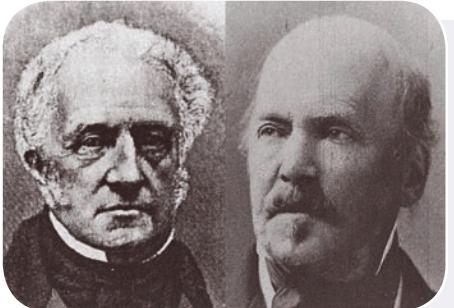
Hall's Pond Sanctuary, celebrating Town purchase in January 1975. From left: Conservation Committee Director Hooper Brooks, Sara Wallace, Senator Jack Backman, Merrill Diamond, Environmental Secretary Evelyn Murphy, Representative John Businger, and Conservation Committee Chairman Mary Nelson.

Hemenway, granddaughter of Amos Lawrence, undoubtedly spent time bird watching in their backyard pond. These two women formed a bird protection society which in 1897 had 900 members and lobbied the Massachusetts legislature for a law against "possessing or wearing the bodies or plumage of any Massachusetts song bird." Of course, this political endeavor had a bit of help from their influential husbands and families. Their society became the Massachusetts Audubon Society, forerunner of other state Audubon chapters and the National Audubon Society.

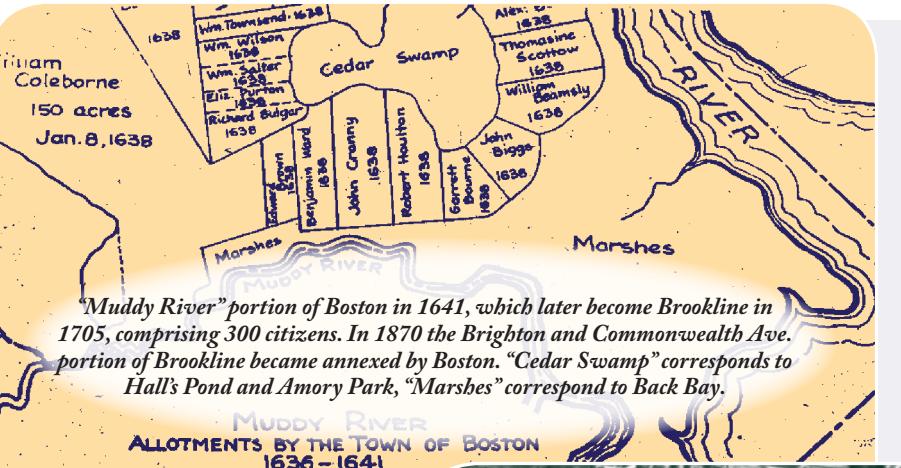
Meanwhile, Anna Powell Sears Amory died in 1895 and the Town purchased 8.2 acres from her Estate in 1903, including what is now Amory Playground. About this same time the owners of the Hall's Pond parcel offered it to the Town of Brookline if the latter would maintain it has a park/sanctuary. The town declined the offer.

Charles Newhall purchased the Pond and abutting land in 1910. Newhall had built the adjacent apartment houses on Beacon St. (as well as the 1200 Beacon Motel—now Holiday Inn) and he landscaped the formal gardens to the south of the pond. These were maintained by two full-time gardeners, with boating and picnicking for the exclusive use of his renters.

Continued on page 8



David Sears II (1816–1871) and Amos Adams Lawrence (1814–1886).



"Muddy River" portion of Boston in 1641, which later became Brookline in 1705, comprising 300 citizens. In 1870 the Brighton and Commonwealth Ave. portion of Brookline became annexed by Boston. "Cedar Swamp" corresponds to Hall's Pond and Amory Park, "Marshes" correspond to Back Bay.



Jo Albrecht, founder of Friends of Halls Pond, giving an interview in 1976.



Trash, 1975



1966



The Formal Garden was previously a Rose Garden for the exclusive use of residents of the Newhall apartments.



The Formal Garden was previously a Rose Garden for the exclusive use of residents of the Newhall apartments.



1927

Hall's Pond

Sewell > Sears > Lawrence > Dexter > Hall > Newhall > Town of Brookline

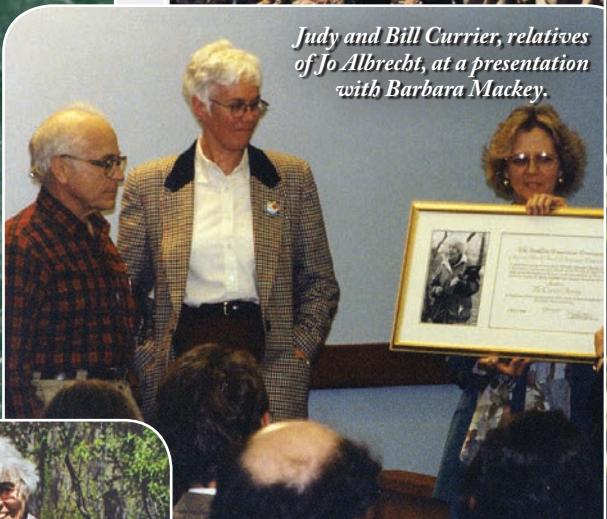
1600s–1975–2010



Betsy Shure Gross (left) and Lee Albright.



Ferris Hall and Jackie Fried, at the 1997 Work Day, at the same spot where Marc's tree was planted just last year.



Judy and Bill Currier, relatives of Jo Albrecht, at a presentation with Barbara Mackey.



Gail Fenton discusses pokeweed at the Hall's Pond Nature Walk in October 1998.



Lucia Drobny (left) and Nan St. Goar during a recent renovation of the Formal Garden.



Ronny Sydney and Dan Doherty at a Hall's Pond Work Day in April 1997.

"Nature holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive and even spiritual satisfaction"

— Edward O. Wilson

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For information about membership, volunteering, or to contact the Friends, Write:
Friends of Hall's Pond
P.O. Box 1844
Brookline, MA 02446
or Email:
betsyshuregross@gmail.com



ELLEN FORRESTER



BRUCE WOLFF

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Mission Statement

The Friends of Hall's Pond is dedicated to the preservation and protection of Hall's Pond Sanctuary in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Through the encouragement and coordination of volunteers in education, conservation and maintenance, the Friends seek to ensure a healthy future for this valuable urban resource.

Board Member Profile and Appreciation: Harry Breger

By Janice Provencher, Friends Board Member

It takes a discerning eye to capture a sighting of the elusive Lincoln's Sparrow at Hall's Pond Sanctuary. These are the same traits that Harry utilizes as the graphic designer of the Friends of Hall's Pond newsletter, *Sanctuary News*. Harry first became interested in bird watching—and nature observations in general—when he and his wife, Pat Roberts, traveled to East Africa in 1990. That experience led to their appreciation for the "wildlife" all around us right here at home.

"A little patience is about all that's needed to search out the scores of wonderful birds in our parks and yards at any time of year. Goldfinches, which are common year-round, are fun to watch flitting around. In spring the males change from the drab olive of winter to bright yellow. Also each spring the birding community itself comes alive with reports of the varied and colorful tropical warblers that migrate through New England.

"Many people learn to identify species just by the songs and calls. But binoculars add the visual treat of discovering the amazing colors and patterns we'd miss. Some of my favorites are Baltimore Orioles, Cedar Waxwings, and any of the woodpeckers. If you're lucky you might spot such tropical species as Indigo Buntings and Scarlet Tanagers as we get into summer.

"You can observe territory and mating behavior from even the most common birds such as the numerous Chickadees and Sparrows. Or notice Mockingbirds singing many loud calls from the rooftops and treetops as they develop their repertory. It's a hobby you can do at any level, from casually at no cost, to the 'extreme birders' who will go anywhere to see as many of the thousands of the world's birds as possible. Pat and I don't do anything like that, but birding always adds a dimension to our trips, and gets us to wonderful places we'd never think of otherwise."

The Friend's newsletter reaps the benefits of Harry's skills, and fellow board members award him the title, 'Unsung Hero,' each time a newsletter arrives in the mail. This is a just title for a volunteer who can be relied upon time and again. Unsung heroes are the ones who get the job done without receiving the fanfare. How wonderful that the Friends can remedy the situation and shine a light on Harry. Thank you Harry!

"In the Spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt"

— Margaret Atwood

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We're Hosting a Garden Party!

Funds raised will be dedicated to the Friends of Hall's Pond Horticulture Fund

Friends of Hall's Pond



35TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2010

Look to your mailbox for details

New date, too

Contribution Form

The Friends of Hall's Pond was founded in 1976 by Josephine Albrecht and others who established a public private partnership: making a commitment to partner with the Brookline Conservation Commission as stewards of the newly acquired Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary. The Friends are committed to the maintenance, preservation and protection of this unique urban resource. Our initiatives include Community Work Days, tending the Formal Garden, raising funds for horticultural investment, and supporting the successor program to The Hall's Pond Learning Project, the Environmental Learning Project at the Brookline Green Space Alliance.

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

Name (please print)

Address

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

ANNUAL DUES: \$15 INDIVIDUAL \$25 FAMILY

Additional Donation \$ _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

I am interested in:

- Community Work Days
- Working in the Formal Garden
- Joining the 35th Anniversary Celebration Committee
- The Environmental Learning Project

Please make checks payable to *The Friends of Hall's Pond, Inc.*

Send to:
The Friends of Hall's Pond
PO Box 1844
Brookline, MA 02446

We are grateful for your generous support.

For further information about membership, volunteering, or to contact the Friends, please write or call: betsyshuregross@gmail.com or 617-731-1448.

Our organization is interested in your communication and encourages your involvement.

The Friends of Hall's Pond is a 501(c)3 organization.

*Booksmith: Latitude, North 42° 20.557'
Longitude, West 71° 07.307'*

*Hall's Pond: Latitude, North, 42° 20.737'
Longitude, West 71° 06.739'*



Starting at the Booksmith, walk left...



... and the intersection of Harvard and Beacon is only 31 steps away, left again,



heading inbound, the corner of Beacon and St. Paul takes 227 steps,



to Powell Street is another 149,

**Walk this way
to
Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary**

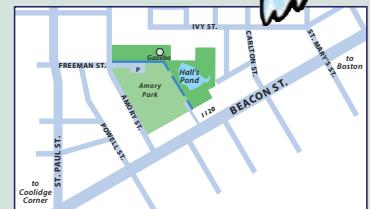
**How many steps are there
between Brookline Booksmith
and Hall's Pond**

???



and you're just
53 steps
from
Hall's Pond!
Bingo!

123 more to the alley before 1120 Beacon,



PHOTOS BY BRUCE WOLFF

Friends of Hall's Pond
P.O. Box 1844
Brookline MA 02446

