



Friends of Hall's Pond

Fall/Winter 2009

A Message from *The Friends Of Hall's Pond* Co-Presidents

Ellen Forrester and
Betsy Shure Gross

ON BEHALF of The Board of Directors of The Friends of Hall's Pond, we want to welcome all who use Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary, to thank our wonderful very special Volunteers, and note our appreciation to the Brookline Conservation Commission Commissioners and to their staff, Tom Brady and Heather Charles for their untiring efforts on behalf of this unique Brookline resource. We are proud to be your partners in the protection and preservation of Hall's Pond.

In the heart of Coolidge Corner, steps from the activity of a vibrant residential and commercial neighborhood, hides an urban treasure. As the Hall's Pond Brochure advises users, Hall's Pond contains a mix of landscaped and more natural elements. Due to its varied plant communities and the fact that it includes one of the few wooded ponds in our area, a surprisingly diverse population of plants and animals exist on this five acre conservation land. And, of course, this makes Hall's Pond a four season "oasis in the city," a place which hosts the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance Learning Project with Conservation Commissioner and well known naturalist Gail



Past and current Presidents Janice Provencher, Ellen Forrester, Betsy Shure Gross, and Barbara Mackey.

Fenton; a destination for bird watchers; those seeking solitude for renewal and contemplation; using the accessible Wetland Bridge and Pond Overlook board walk; for photographing trees, native and wetland plants, the

Formal Garden, wildlife, the Wooded Wetland, the Upland and Amory Woods with its gazebo and small woodland and spectacular Northern Red Oak tree.

The Friends of Hall's Pond ask you to join us as we work in partnership with the Brookline Conservation Commission to plan for and protect this special urban nature sanctuary. We welcome you to our Community Work Days and to our educational and fund-raising initiatives. We encourage your participation in this public private partnership and hope that you will visit the sanctuary often and become interested in the role that you can play as a steward of this special site. We would welcome your gift of time and love to see your photographs of gentle activity at Hall's Pond.

For further information, please contact Betsy Shure Gross, Co-President, at betsyshuregross@gmail.com or call 617-731-1448.

The Learning Project

By Arlene Mattison, President, BGSA

We spent 1 1/2 hours exploring, digging for insects, observing turtles, seeing a rare heron, climbing on logs, smelling wonderful smells, observing the snails on the reeds... I could go on and on. This service that you all provide makes it possible for all schools to have powerful nature experiences...

E-mail from Mary McConnell, Driscoll School in 2007

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance adopted the Hall's Pond Learning Project in 2004 from The Friends of Hall's Pond with the goals of maintaining the already high level of program

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Arlene Mattison, BGSA President, converses with Ellen Forrester, FOHP Co-President, at Hall's Pond.

SANCTUARY NEWS

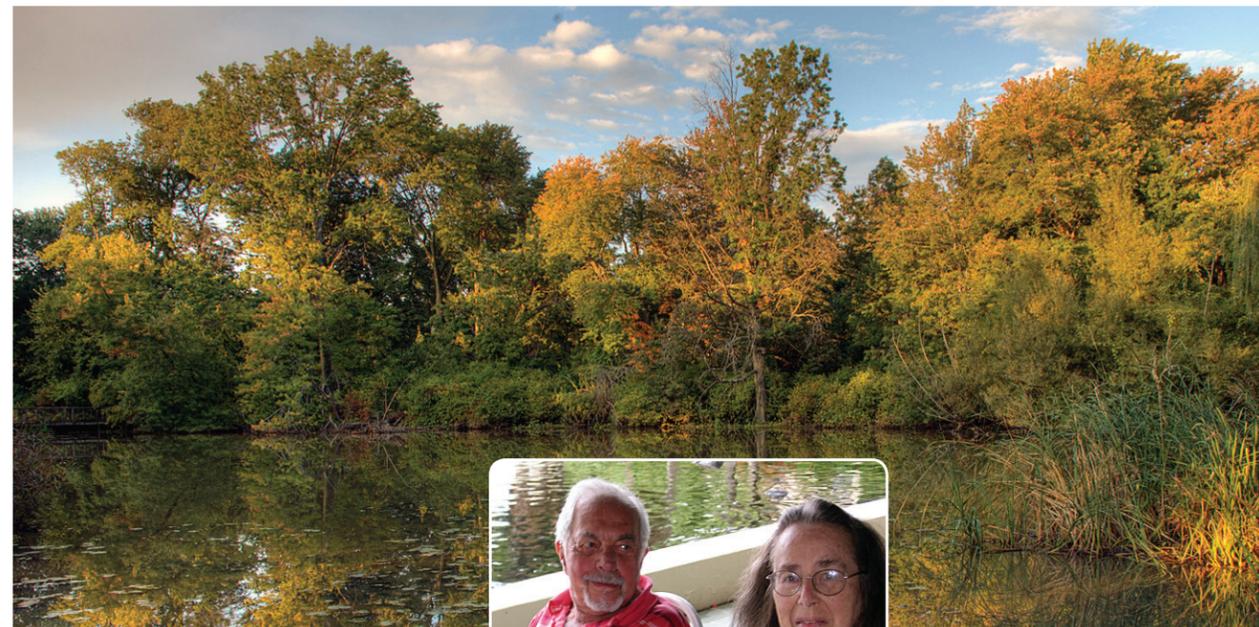


"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks."

— John Muir

"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world."

— Margaret Mead



MICHAEL SANDMAN



FRIED FAMILY PHOTO

Marc and Jackie Fried

By Ferris Hall and Betsy Shure Gross

EARLY IN THE 1970's when it appeared that Hall's Pond might be lost to development, a small band of energetic conservationists and environmental leaders led by Jackie Zilbach Fried, who was on the Brookline Conservation Commission, a Town Meeting Member, as well as an abutter to Amory Park and the Pond, convinced the Town of Brookline to purchase the site. Through her work, and that of fellow Conservation Commission Members Lee Albright and later Betsy Shure Gross, and fellow Town Meeting member and abutter Ferris Hall, Hall's Pond eventually became the Town's first wild life sanctuary, and the adjacent parcel of land, Amory Woods, would be acquired a decade later.

Jackie made the protection and preservation of these sanctuaries one of the major causes of her active political and environmental life. She was a founding member and fervent supporter of The Friends of Hall's Pond, helping to guide its partnership with the Brookline

Conservation Commission. Meanwhile, Marc Fried established and nourished the Friends of Amory Woods. These two adjacent parcels were combined into the present Hall's Pond Sanctuary in 2001.

On May 11, 2009, a beautiful Sugar Maple tree was planted on the Southwest entrance to the sanctuary (adjacent to the tennis courts) in honor and memory of Marc. The tree is a generous gift of the Fried children, Susana, Diana, Lise and Alan who, with their mother, Jackie, attended the dedication. Marc, a psychology professor at Boston College best known for his research into the adverse effects of urban renewal in Boston's West End, and Jackie, a psychiatrist, lived at 36 Amory Street. There, for almost 50 years, they overlooked the grounds of the Sanctuary they helped to create.

Left: Marc and Jackie Fried, Sanctuary Heroes both.

Below: The Sugar maple, *Acer saccharum*, planted in Marc's memory.



MICHAEL SANDMAN

Board Profile and Appreciation Nan St. Goar

By Betsy Shure Gross

The success of The Friends of Hall's Pond depends upon the informed devotion and commitment of its Board of Directors and Volunteers. Beginning with this Fall edition of the Newsletter, we will highlight the talented, generous work of some of our longest serving members.

In this issue, we salute Nan St. Goar who has been working in the Formal Garden at Hall's Pond Sanctuary as long as anyone can remember. Tending the flower gardens and for many years caring for the ever-changing center urn, Nan has long been part of the Spring and Fall Community Work Days, often going to church in her garden clothes so that she can run right over to the Sanctuary afterwards and get to work with Volunteers in the garden.

Most who meet her in the Sanctuary do not know that Nan, graduated from Vassar College in 1944, then studied



DEBORAH RAFTOPOULOS

pre-med at Boston University, and in 1948 was graduated from the Yale University School of Medicine. Quite a feat for a woman in those days!

Nan grew up in a household of avid readers and plant lovers and has traveled the world for pleasure and education. Long an avid gardener and artist, when Nan retired from the practice of medicine, she devoted her time to numerous organizations including the Chestnut Hill Garden Club and the New England Wildflower Society. Her

love of plants is especially in evidence in her home garden filled with native plant materials. Nan is a fabulous hostess, often opening her home and garden for tours for non-profit organizations including her marvelous offer to be the Host for the 35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF HALL'S POND SANCTUARY on October 17, 2010.

How very fortunate we are to have this talented Volunteer share her invaluable resources with Hall's Pond.

Thank You, Nan!

Honoring Nancy and Ferris Hall

By Ellen Forrester

Debbie Raptopoulos, a long term supporter and board member of The Friends of Hall's Pond Sanctuary, gave a memorable review honoring Nancy and Ferris Hall at the June Annual Meeting of The Friends of Hall's Pond. Debbie presented "a service award in the spirit of deep affection and gratitude for their devotion to the Town of Brookline and Hall's Pond Sanctuary. Civic minded and devoted residents, having lived across the street from



BRUCE WOLFF

Nancy and Ferris Hall (no relation to the Hall in Hall's Pond) at the 2009 Annual Meeting.

this jewel in our towns' necklace, Nancy and Ferris were among the original founders of The Friends of Hall's Pond when it assisted the conservation commission in the pond's

management in 1976. Twice a year, Ferris can be seen pulling the wagon made by his father-in-law across the street for the clean up days, gloves and clippers at the ready. He was a Town Meeting member for decades and can still be seen sitting at many a town meeting with his trusty PDA, so old that they no longer sell parts for it. Ferris took

part in advocating for the Hall's Pond rehabilitation in 2001-2002. He is happy and helpful, smart and interesting, and a funny human being. They are responsible for many people's involvement on this board and many others. Ferris is a historian, deeply engaged in being a witness to events in this town and spreading the knowledge of how this area began and how, over time, it developed into what it is now. He now has a traveling PowerPoint presentation about the history of the Cottage Farm neighborhood and Hall's Pond Sanctuary. He has been seen in living rooms and hotel spaces across the area with his slide show and talk. To Nancy and Ferris, in his own words: 'you are the best!'

An American Elm tree was planted near the gates to the Hall's Pond Sanctuary this year in recognition of their past, present and future support.



BRUCE WOLFF

Ferris at the Spring '09 Workday.

"Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher."

— William Wordsworth

Red-winged Blackbirds

By Edward Hsieh

A dozen years ago, Barbara Mackey, then president of The Friends of Hall's Pond and a driving force in the planned restorations, stood watching a Red-winged Blackbird at the pond. She said that Red-winged Blackbirds sometimes visited the pond, but never seemed to nest there. Wouldn't it be great, she added, if they begin nesting here after the restoration? And once we get the Hall's Pond Learning Program up and running, she added, we can bring school children to see them, right in our own backyard.

This spring, school groups watched in delight as the nesting Red-winged Blackbirds swooped at the great blue herons each time the much larger birds got too close to the blackbird's nests. The children heard Baltimore Oriole chicks squawking for food from their nests and pointed out the three cormorants and two black-crowned night herons that often visited the pond.

Even school children get interested in the native plants, most of which were added as part of the restoration, that have developed into a functioning wildlife habitat. They learn about the native jewel weed, whose seed pods spring open at a touch to fling its seeds into the future, about the cattails, that look like corndogs at a carnival, and about the blue-flowered pickerel weed, where snails crawl in fascinating numbers.

Over the years, the Hall's Pond Learning Project has been expanded as the Brookline Environmental Learning Project, under the management of the Brookline Greenspace Alliance. Each school year, local school groups arrange for naturalist-led educational programs at Hall's Pond. The programs are free, and are designed to

complement the teachers' curriculum. Many classes are able to walk or take the trolley to this remarkable spot. Fall and winter programs can be reserved by contacting BGSA, at info@brooklinegreenspace.org.

In and Around the garden

By Ellen Forrester

Things are quieting down in the garden and sanctuary for the year. The bees are slow and the birds are heading south, but keep your eyes open during this migration season.

The big planting at the spring work day was a huge success. It couldn't have been done without your help.



We were able to put in: fifty 1-gallon Atlantic White Cedar *Chamaecyparis thyoides*, thirty two 4-inch seedling Atlantic White Cedar *Chamaecyparis thyoides*, thirty 1-gallon Highbush Blueberry *Vaccinium corybosum*, ten 1-gallon Inkberry *Ilex glabra*, ten 1-gallon Winterberry *Ilex verticillata* and five 1-gallon Spicebush *Lindera bezoin*. On a recent look around we had quite a success rate for these plants over the summer. Over time all this work in replanting the cedar swamp will have many great benefits to our visitors and wildlife.

There were many extra work days in the formal garden over the summer. Thanks go to Bruce Wolff for organizing the times to do some invasive removal and general garden maintenance. We hope that next year we can focus more time in planting and maintaining the formal garden. We of course can always use your help. Watch the bulletin Board for information.

A big thank you and congratulations go to all our dedicated volunteers.



BRUCE WOLFF

The Learning Project

Continued from page 1

quality established by the Friends and also of expanding the Learning Project to include the other two nature sanctuaries in Brookline. Since that transition, the Learning Project has grown into a multi-faceted program that continues the legacy of educational excellence established by the Friends.

When BGSA adopted the Learning Project from The Friends of Hall's Pond, it consisted primarily of field trips for public school students to the Hall's Pond Sanctuary. Over the next five years, BGSA expanded that to include trips into D. Blakely Hoar Sanctuary and Lost Pond Sanctuary. In addition, BGSA decided to re-brand and refine its other additional educational programming and the Learning Project under the auspices of one program: the GreenSpace Environmental Learning Project.



Students marvel at the Great Blue Heron.

Brookline's open spaces and to see them with environmentalists' eyes.

The public school portion of the Learning Project continues to center on field trips led by a classroom teacher and our trained naturalist into one of our wetland sanctuaries. Our naturalist tailors these place-based educational outings directly into MCAS-framework lessons. This gives a unique chance to many urban students to see firsthand nature that they would not have a chance to see otherwise. This in-person experience, which has in the past included such enthralling events as watching a Black-crowned Night Heron dive for its lunch and looking at

the eggs of an endangered Spotted Salamander, goes a lot farther to engender an environmental consciousness than reading about ecology in a book.

As commented on by teachers like Mary McConnell, the Learning Project is an undeniably powerful tool to teach a future generation of advocates and responsible environmentalists. The Brookline Public Schools K-8 Science Curriculum Coordinator agrees with this and is herself an advocate of place-based education. It is difficult for the public schools to provide such programming. BGSA is the only organization offering such programming free in our community, so it is vital to continue, and if possible expand, the Learning Project.

Despite the current economic challenges, BGSA is still excited about and dedicated to the Learning Project. We continue to seek new grant makers and funders. And we continue to reach out to new partners in town such as the Science Curriculum Coordinator and the PTO's in hopes of further improving the GreenSpace Environmental Learning Project.

Brookline GreenSpace Alliance (BGSA) is a 501(c)3 organization formed in 1987 to preserve, protect and enhance the parks and open spaces in our community. Since then it has grown to a network of over 39 member organizations and approximately 1000 members who strive to protect and enhance green space resources throughout Brookline, a town of 57,000 enclosed on three sides by Boston. BGSA is the only organization of its type in town advocating and educating on behalf of local land conservation and enhancement. We pride ourselves in being THE grassroots support for our green community.



HUGH MATTHEWSON

Residents brave a brisk morning to learn how to identify trees without leaves from Brookline Tree Warden, Tom Brady, on a GreenSpace Environmental Learning Project free-to-the-public field trip.

Currently, the GreenSpace Environmental Learning Project consists of a public school portion and a general public portion. The general public portion features free monthly field trips into our various parks and open spaces. Trips include our Annual Watershed Walk, led by a hydrologist focusing on storm water drainage patterns and their importance to Brookline; our 10 Hills of Brookline Bike Tour; Winter Tree Identification Walks, led in the past by members of the Tree Planting Committee or by the Brookline Tree Warden; bus tours; bird walks and more. These trips give residents of all ages a chance to visit

SAVE THE DATE
35th Anniversary Celebration for Hall's Pond Sanctuary
SUNDAY OCTOBER 17, 2010

There is much to **celebrate** about the 35th anniversary of the acquisition of our Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary. From 1975 to 2010, Hall's Pond has been a Sanctuary for birds, wildlife and people.



Please do join our **Celebrations Committee** and participate in this 35th anniversary year. We welcome your involvement and promise you a fun and rewarding experience.

For further information please contact: betsyshuregross@gmail.com or 617-731-1448



To **celebrate** its unique place in the environmental, historic and cultural life of our community, we are developing a year-long program of events: lectures, forums, bird watching and walking tours, an essay contest and photography contest culminating in a **celebration** on **October 17, 2010**.



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

