Uniquely Quabbin magazine serving
THE NORTH QUABBIN: Athol•Erving•New Salem•Orange•Petersham•Phillipston•Royalston•Templeton•Warwick•Wendell
THE SOUTH QUABBIN: Barre•Belchertown•the Brookfields•Hardwick (Gilbertville)•Hubbardston•Leverett•New Braintree•Oakham•Pelham•Rutland•Shutesbury•Ware

Winter surrounds Tully Mountain in the Tully village of Orange.
photo by Amber Robidoux

ON THE FRONT COVER
Gully near Quabbin Reservoir Visitor Center, Belchertown
photo by Mitchell R. Grosky

FIND CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 66.
FIND TOWN MEETINGS AND INFO ABOUT TOWN BOARDS AT WEBSITES FOR *UNIQUELY QUABBIN* TOWNS ON PAGE 66.

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volume 10, number 3 • January-April 2026
This issue features photos and art, nature, personalities, history, event listings, and sights to see in the uniquely Quabbin heart of Massachusetts.

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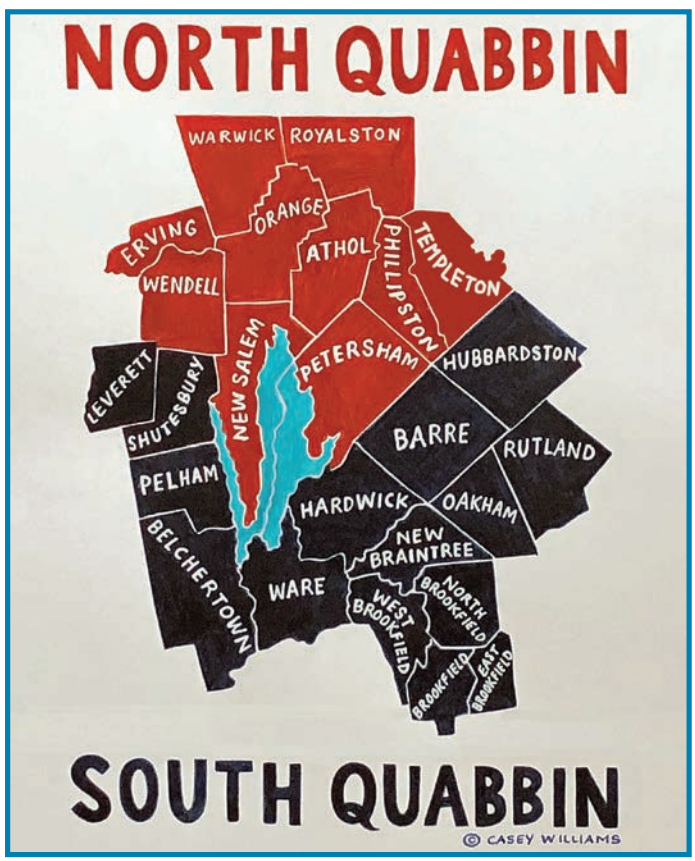

Quabbin towns past and present • maps © Casey Williams

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about *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine

Quabbin region, Massachusetts—*Uniquely Quabbin* serves the twenty-five Quabbin region towns. Athol Historical Society, Haley's Publishing, and North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau collaborate to produce *Uniquely Quabbin* in cooperation with writers, photographers, and artists from the greater Quabbin area.

Advertisers support *Uniquely Quabbin* along with earmarked donations made to Athol Historical Society, which will send a letter acknowledging a tax deductible gift. The International Music and Art Foundation provided a seed grant to support the magazine and evolving consortium of Quabbin region museums, historical societies, and arts centers.

a note from Athol Historical Society

Thank you, thank you . . .

On behalf of the Athol Historical Society, I want to thank the cultural councils of Athol, Barre, Brookfield, Erving, Hardwick-New Braintree, Hubbardston, New Salem, North Brookfield, Oakham, Orange, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Ware, Warwick, Wendell, and West Brookfield for supporting *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine with local cultural grants for 2025. The generous support from these councils is so important to the continued life of our magazine.

Grants, advertisers, and donations keep the magazine going. Donations are always appreciated and can be made by mailing a check to Debra Ellis, 1390 Chestnut Hill Avenue, Athol, MA 01331, going to uniquelyquabbin.com and choosing the donate button or scanning the QR code you will find in this magazine.

Thank you to our readers who so generously support us with their donations. Not only do you tell us how much you enjoy the magazine, but after reading it cover to cover, you share your enthusiasm by taking the time to send us your donations. They are so important in keeping the magazines coming.

I want to thank our advertisers who play such a big role in the success of this magazine. An ever-growing list of businesses and organizations continuously support *Uniquely Quabbin.* Please get out there and support them as they support us.

It appears that winter has arrived with a vengeance. The cold! The snow! The ice! If, as for me, winter is not your favorite time of year and you prefer to stay in, you will love this issue. You can get the true sense of winter by turning the pages and enjoying the beautiful photos and artwork from our photographers and artists sharing what a beautiful season winter can be. All while staying snug, warm and comfortable in front of the fire or enjoying a nice warm beverage.

Enjoy!

Debra Ellis

Athol Historical Society

Please consider donating to
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c/o Debra Ellis, business manager
1390 Chestnut Hill Avenue • Athol, MA 01331

a note from the publisher of *Uniquely Quabbin*

With gratitude for writers, artists, photographers, and other contributors to *Uniquely Quabbin,* we bring you the third issue of our tenth publication year.

Winter brings with it colorful contrasts and activities especially noticeable in our New England setting.

The Quabbin region offers so many potentially appealing topics, sights, phenomena, and much more waiting for attention in these pages. As always, it's a joyful task to communicate with the many talented contributors who bring words and pictures to the pages of *Uniquely Quabbin*.

We're grateful, as always, to advertisers and donors who make the magazine possible, and encouragement from readers keeps us going, that's for sure.

We always look forward to bringing a fresh issue of *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine. We hope you enjoy it.

Sincerely,

Marcia Gagliardi, publisher

Haley's

Uniquely Quabbin magazine

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We invite contributions to *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine. Contact Marcia Gagliardi at marcia2gagliardi@gmail.com or 488 South Main Street, Athol 01331 with proposals to contribute to *UQ* or for letters to the editor.

Uniquely Quabbin magazine serves the twenty-five communities of the North Quabbin and South Quabbin.

Quiet Places • Quiet Thoughts
looking to trees for guidance as seasons change

by Sally Howe

How to experience the transition of seasons—spring to summer then to fall and winter? The change to winter is hardest for me, a creaky transition. I look to trees to guide me.

Sally Howe

Trees present unique beauty for each season. They change leaf by leaf from colorful to the starkness of winter. We have

- pastel budding in spring, the awakening of the sap
- full green shade in summer
- vibrant red, yellow, and orange colors in fall

Winter reveals the trunks and branches of trees, their anatomy. Bare branches allow much-needed sunlight through. We see into the woods. Features become visible that leaves had concealed.

I have always enjoyed nature. However, in the past years I have come to appreciate trees more and more. It started in 2018 when I read *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohllben, a German scientist who named the ways trees communicate to each other as the "wood wide web."

I used to think trees just grew while absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. Now I understand there is more to it. Trees communicate to other trees through fungi that live on their roots, a phenomenon called the fungal communication highway. Sugar flows down the trunk of a tree and into roots where it feeds mycelium, the fungi, living on the roots.

Mycelium become interconnected from tree to tree through the web. One tree can, for example, feed

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making art with broken glass, old jewelry

a collage by Donna Horn

Yurt Sculpture

mixed media including broken glass, old jewelry, and paint

I made the collage *Yurt Sculpture* from broken glass, old jewelry, and paint. *Yurt Sculpture* depicts my yurt studio in the woods of Wendell along with an embellished out building, a sculpture made from an old culvert, and a bladder tank.

Years ago, I inherited some art supplies, and among them was a gallon of pouring medium. Not knowing how it was supposed to be used, I just made something up.

Since the word pouring was in the name, I began assembling collages out of broken glass and other random items and pouring the acrylic medium over it. I liked the result and still make such abstract collages. At the same time, I also began painting a series of landscapes of my favorite places in my home town of Wendell. I wanted to see if I could marry the realism of the landscape with the technique of the glass-and-pouring-medium collage. *Yurt Sculpture* honors my little backyard scene on a sparkling winter day after a snowstorm. I exhibit *Yurt Sculpture* with all of my other collages, landscapes, monsters, and mystical paintings at the Wendell Country Store, 57 Lockes Village Road, Wendell. Stop in!

Donna Horn has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the University of Massachusetts and has lived and worked for thirty-three years in Wendell.

abundant local wood provides essential

text and photos by Ken Levine

Every person looks at their woodpile with a sort of affection.

—Henry David Thoreau updated

A Finnish masonry stove efficiently burns wood at high temperature to heat a regional residence.

As the temperature dropped toward freezing, ancient humans moved closer to their fire. "Throw on another log," surely said one as their cave or rock shelter slowly warmed.

Fast forward to today. How we manage to stay warm and cozy in January New England and other wintry places concerns us for a good part of our year.

As a saying goes, "We have seven months of winter and five months of poor sledding."

It's essential to be warm, and some in the Quabbin region choose to use an abundant local source to heat their homes. Fire harnessed by our ancestors receives credit as the first discovery by humans. Staying warm and cooking food made a hard life bearable.

Though controversial in terms of smoke and pollution, many have access to firewood and prefer it to burning fossil fuels for heat. Using a wood stove or fireplace insert to supplement oil, gas, or electricity also makes a good choice, and during power outages, it fills a basic need to stay warm until power returns.

I've heated with wood (and oil sometimes) for more than fifty-five years, at first with inefficient fireplaces then with better wood stoves and now an outdoor wood boiler. A three-hundred-gallon water jacket surrounding

warmth in many homes of region

Solar panels shielding neatly stacked wood can together support complete self sufficiency with heat and power.

the firebox stores heated water that flows into our house to keep it at seventy-two degrees all winter.

Well-seasoned hardwood produces little smoke and ash. Filling the wood boiler twice a day with two-foot and sometimes three-foot logs keeps our house warm and cozy.

Other heating devices that work well are metal and soapstone stoves and Russian and Finnish masonry stoves that use internal baffles in a chimney. Fireplace inserts with fans efficiently circulate heat.

Catalytic and secondary combustion systems similar to automobile catalytic exhaust mufflers are hybrid devices that offer high efficiency and low toxic emissions. They also offer a longer burn time. Their drawback involves their maintenance and preference for well-seasoned wood, although all wood burning appliances deliver many more British thermal units, BTUs, of heat if the wood is well dried. Drier wood creates less creosote, and of course chimneys need to be cleaned regularly to lessen the possibility of a chimney fire.

People can harvest their own fuel if they possess forest property. They can also buy it in log length or get it cut, split, and delivered to their specifications. Prices for green or seasoned wood vary, and loggers and firewood dealers sell and deliver quality hardwood at competitive prices in our area. A cord of wood measuring four feet by four feet by eight feet is a standard measure, and by autumn of the year, trucks haul their cordwood cargoes throughout the region.

People stack cordwood in many ways. Standard stacking in rectangular piles—sometimes under cover or in purpose-built sheds—is common. I've unfortunately discovered if a cord remains uncovered and it rains and then freezes, there's a problem separating pieces of wood.

A circular method of stacking is called Holz Hausen, German for woodhouse. It allows air to circulate and vent upwards, thus speeding the drying process.

Ah, the smell of woodsmoke! Something evocative from our past. Apple and other fruitwoods provide such enjoyable smells and can conjure memories of campfires of long ago. Several types of wood like apple, hickory, and others in the form of chips also get used in smoking meat and fish and impart subtle flavors.

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deep history of planet earth shaped

text and photos by Sue Cloutier

The deep history of our planet shaped Quabbin region topography. Earth's crust in the region has cracked, shifted, buckled, and split over eons of time.

Occasional exposed folds of crushed and bended rock underlying the surface of the region hint of pressures endured. Such bedrock supports our hills and valleys.

Sometimes exposed but often not visible on the surface, bedrock supports regional hills and valleys

The chemical composition of bedrock influences soils and plants found here. Plants then influence animals that can survive here.

Smooth-topped hills, flat sandplains, and rocks scattered over the land comprise a more recent geologic history. Water played a critical part shaping recent landscape.

Finally receding eleven thousand years ago, the Laurentide Glacier covered New England and changed land surface. Massive round-edged boulders got plucked from their original ledges and carried, rolled, and scraped as the glacier—a mile-thick layer of ice— moved south over New England. Continual addition of new snow in the north pushed the glacier south with added ice pressure.

As the climate warmed, meltwater streams in and under the glacier moved rock fragments. Glacier ice and melt water slowed heavier boulders and deposited them first and then smaller rocks. Finally, at its retreating edges, the melting glacier dropped

Called erratics, stones dropped by melting glaciers appear in regional forests.

sands into newly formed lakes. Thus, the Quabbin region has sandplains, remnants of rocky soils, and huge boulders dropped on ridges. All such bedrock serves as reminder of the glacier's power.

Water continues to alter exposed ledges. Some minerals in rocks dissolve with rain, and if water intrudes in cracks and freezes, it can push ledge rock into slabs. At the

topography of Quabbin region

bottom of such ledges, tumbled down evidence of the power of water could crack exposed bedrock.

Hikers may venture to the top of a nearby hill and get a view of the region from above. They may scan the horizon and imagine how a mile-thick glacier could have sat over the flattened line of hilltops and hidden valleys.

People also change landscapes. A walk along dirt roads into Quabbin most likely goes beside stone walls, past rocky ledges, and even near places where people quarried rocks for foundations for their homes and for retaining walls for their wells.

Farmers clearing fields found a gift of rocks to clear and use for defining edges of gardens, agricultural fields, roads, and property bounds. Glaciers left rocks of many types mixed with soil. When original rock was layered, glaciers left rectangular forms almost easy to use in building walls. Rounded rocks present more challenge.

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Farmers clearing fields found frounded stones used, for example, in the structure above right, and the winding stone wall, top. They also found flat stones used, for example, in foundations like the one above left.

photographer chases winter's beauty

text and photos by Mitchell R. Grosky

Near the beginning of Mitch Grosky's tour of Quabbin's Golden Triangle, Mark Johnson volunteers to clear ice for skating and hockey at Lake Ellis in Athol.

On a sunny but bitterly cold January morning just an hour after a storm blanketed the area with up to six inches of fresh snow, the view from my sunroom was dazzling. Once again I felt that familiar pull—the photographer's urge to chase winter's beauty across the Quabbin region.

I decided to spend the day touring from my home in Athol to Quabbin Reservoir and back. Studying a map, I noticed that my path—Route 32 to Route 32A to Route 9 and then back from Route 202 onto Route 2—traced a long and narrow triangle. I dubbed it Quabbin's Golden Triangle. It became one of the most breathtaking winter days I've ever experienced.

The tour of Quabbin's Golden Triangle goes through an absolutely beautiful area of Massachusetts that begins in Athol in Worcester County, then passes through the Pioneer Valley and Franklin and Hampshire counties. The day filled with the beauty and excitement of nature as well as glimpses into classic New England towns combining a window into the past with a view of contemporary life in our small but ever-changing vibrant communities.

From Athol, I headed to Petersham and passed through towns in succession: the Nichewaug district of Petersham,

through Quabbin's Golden Triangle

Hardwick and its district of Gilbertville, West Brookfield, New Braintree, Ware, Belchertown, Pelham, Shutesbury, New Salem, Orange, and then back to Athol.

The day trip takes anywhere from two to six or seven hours, depending on how often and how long one stops to view some of the most spectacular scenery in New England. The trip may prompt someone to make a full day of it, especially with a choice to venture into several small towns to

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Paige Memorial Library serves the town of Hardwick and its villages Gilbertville, Old Furnace and Wheelwright. With funds from the Paige family, the town built the library on the former site of the high school.

many enthusiasts learned how to ski

by John Burk

The last active ski area of the Quabbin region, Pine Ridge in Barre hosted events including races and an annual winter carnival.
photo by Laurie Puliafico, courtesy of New England Lost Ski Areas Project

Local downhill ski areas thrived throughout central Massachusetts and New England during the mid twentieth century, although they no longer function. At least twelve ski facilities existed in towns of the Quabbin region, according to records of the New England Lost Ski Areas Project, NELSAP.

Founded in 1998 by ski historian and author Jeremy Davis, NELSAP documents nearly seven hundred abandoned sites in New England and other regions, including 172 in Massachusetts. Many small family-owned businesses utilized rope tows—lifts comprised of ropes and pulleys with old automobile or tractor motors—and other makeshift equipment. "These ski areas were low frills, but many skiers learned the sport on their slopes, developing a lifelong passion for it," said Davis.

The last active ski area of the Quabbin region, Pine Ridge in Barre hosted events including races and an annual winter carnival. Established in the 1950s by Bob Anderson, the facility grew during the 1960s and 1970s with installation of lights and two new lifts.

at region's twentieth-century ski areas

Templeton's Ladder Hill had a rope tow powered by an old tractor motor, lower right.
photo by Bart McLean, courtesy of New England Lost Ski Areas Project

Plans for a large expansion and addition of a chairlift fell through when the town declined to relocate the road that is now Route 32.

After temporarily closing during the 1980s, Pine Ridge operated from the 1990s to 2001 under management of the O'Connor family, who added trails for snowboarders. Rebranded as a snow park, it reopened again in 2003, but mild winters, expenses, and a fire caused permanent closure four years later. Kearsarge Energy operates a large solar farm on the former ski slope.

On Ladder Hill in East Templeton, a ski slope encompassed a farm field that extended to what is now the eastbound lane of Route 2. Owned by George Smith, the property included a rope tow powered by an

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on heels of hiking entire Appalachian Trail

Phillipston's Craig Twohey climbs to Nepal's

by Chris Coyle

Craig Twohey celebrates his arrival at Everest Base Camp in Nepal.

photo courtesy of Craig Twohey

Outdoor enthusiast and retired restaurateur Craig Twohey returned in November from a Mount Everest base camp on the heels of his twenty-two-hundred-mile trek on the Appalachian Trail finished in June, 2025.

Mount Everest, lying in the Mahalangur Himal sub-range of the Himalaya mountains, is the highest mountain on earth at 29,032 feet. Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary made the first documented ascent of Mount Everest in 1953.

Twohey left his home in Phillipston and arrived two days later at Kathmandu, capital and largest city in Nepal. His destination, Everest Base Camp in Nepal, the South Base Camp, is the more popular of two base camps with the other, the North Base Camp in Tibet.

Due to challenging ascents and descents, the iconic multi-day trek to the base camp requires good physical fitness.

A helicopter ride brought Twohey to the traditional starting point for many Everest Base Camp treks, Lukla Airport—considered the world's most dangerous airport. One of two confirmed first ascenders of Mount Everest, Edmund Hillary of New Zealand built the airport perched on the side of a mountain in 1964. A very short, steep uphill runway quickly slows landing planes.

There were no vehicles along the next step of Twohey's trip—just mules, yaks, and horses. In typical practice, porters moved cargo by carrying hundred-pound parcels balanced on their heads and strapped to their foreheads. Yaks carried gas canisters emptied from cooking food over propane, two at a time, back to civilization.

On the hike from the airport to the base camp, one Sherpa guide, member of an ethnic group living in the Himalayan Khumbu region, might have half a dozen yaks loaded with empty propane cylinders or other items. Temperatures ranged from about 35 degrees Fahrenheit near the airport to 0 degrees Fahrenheit near the base camp.

Everest Base Camp

Twohey saw suspension bridges including many measuring between 150 and 200 feet in length and several hundred feet high. Twohey said 400-hundred-foot high Hillary Bridge offered the "real spectacle."

The Hillary Suspension Bridge in Nepal is an iconic landmark on the trek to Everest Base Camp, named in honor of Sir Edmund Hillary. Located between Phakding and Namche Bazaar, this bridge crosses the Dudh Kosi River and is the final suspension bridge before reaching Namche Bazaar. It is known for its impressive height, colorful prayer flags, and views of the valley below.

Twohey's companions were sixty-three-year-old Sean from Ireland, Sean's twenty-eight-year-old daughter Eva from Australia, and thirty-five-year-old Sergio, a native of Mexico who lives in Spain. Along the way, Twohey roomed with Sergio at overnight teahouses resembling US hostels.

Their guide Dafuri hiked with them. When a strong, devastating earthquake struck Nepal in 2015 triggering an avalanche on Everest, Dafuri ducked behind a rock at the base camp and survived. Guided by Dafuri, Twohey toured some affected areas with Sergio and viewed rebuilt temples and other historic buildings, many constructed with original materials.

The first hike brought them from Lukla to Phakding at the elevation of 8,563 feet. Next came Namche Bazaar at 11,290 feet. Short elevation hikes helped with altitude preparation. Hikers take the possibility of altitude sickness seriously.

The group hiked slowly to avoid dangers of overexertion. Hiking started daily at 8:30 a.m. and concluded by 3:30 p.m. following an hourlong lunch.

A day hike to Mount Everest Hotel in Nagarkot offered breathtaking views of the majestic mountain. The next hike

Craig Twohey observes that the Hillary Bridge offers "the real spectacle."

photo courtesy of Craig Twohey

ended at 12,687-foot Tengboche where a Buddhist temple and its centuries-old religious rituals captivated Twohey.

Twohey and his companions slept overnight in another teahouse as nights became colder. He found his twenty-degree sleeping bag most useful at the unheated teahouses. Pot-bellied stoves in common areas provided a little morning heat.

They reached Pangbhoche at 13,074 feet followed by Dingboche at 14,470 feet and Laboche at 16,210 feet on succeeding days. Finally, they achieved the south Everest base camp at a towering 17,598 feet.

Twohey mentioned the importance of staying hydrated—not just with water but with soda and other drinks with calories, including Gatorade with its electrolytes.

Advisers strongly suggested that hikers eat vegetarian for the week. Without refrigeration even in cold surroundings, vegetarian options were much safer. Twohey said hikers enjoyed Sherpa stew containing lots of vegetables. They often ate eggs along with a couple pieces of toast in the morning.

Twohey brought protein and candy bars along with dried fruit. Hikers typically experience a lowered appetite at high altitudes, he

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transform winter blues into spring renewal,

by Amber Robidoux

As winter loosens its grip and the first hints of spring settle over the area, moods begin to shift. Days stretch a little longer, sidewalks thaw in uneven patches, and people tilt their faces toward any glimpse of sun.

Despite early spring signs, late winter often proves the most difficult stretch of season—motivation dips, and routines feel heavier than usual. But some embrace the transition with small, intentional habits that help turn winter fatigue into spring energy.

One of the simplest and most effective changes to implement involves making the effort to step outside earlier in the day. Even brief exposure to morning light helps regulate sleep cycles, boosts energy, and improves overall mood.

Brisk morning walks appeal, but simply pausing on the way out the door or lingering in the driveway for a few deep breaths to begin the day has benefits. Such tiny acts help adjustment to the seasonal shift even if the temperature hasn't fully caught up.

People may not be ready for ambitious spring fitness goals, but a craving for movement fulfilled can break winter stagnation. Fitness studios may start seeing an increase in attendance, particularly for short, gentle strength- and restorative-type classes. As the seasons evolve from winter to spring, people often gravitate toward momentum and consistency. It's less about performance and more about waking the body back up after months of hibernation.

Like their fitness counterparts, wellness practitioners see an uptick in seasonal tune-ups. Massage appointments, acupuncture sessions, and yoga and pilates classes become part of the transitional routine, helping people relieve tension and prepare for more active months ahead.

As temperatures begin to rise, foot traffic through state parks and outdoor spaces also begin to rise. Trails may show patches of snow and mud, but they inevitably also show boot and paw prints. Small sensory details signal change

reenergize

presenting itself in the return of birdsong, softened air, and the faint scent of thawing earth.

Local coffee shops and eating spots also lean into the in-between season. Winter menus gently transition into lighter fare with fresh touches: lemon-ginger broth bowls, herb sauces, brightened soups, and warm drinks infused with citrus or honey. Those dishes offer comfort while hinting at the lighter season to come.

Communities reconnect socially in small ways after the quiet break following the holidays. Low-commitment activities like quick coffee meetups, craft workshops, and weekend markets helping Quabbin region residents shake off winter isolation. Such micro-interactions lift energy and ease people back into community happenings. Within the home, people adopt simple rituals that brighten the in-between season like switching winter candles

Winter Blues
painting in soft pastels by Monica Winters

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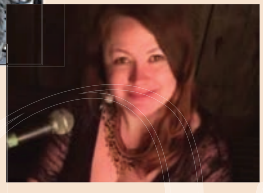

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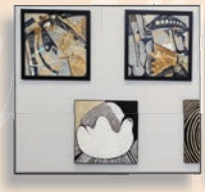


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animals and people emerge from imagination and bits of cloth

text and photos by Charlotte Westhead

Amazing animals and people emerge from someone's imagination and bits of yarn, fabric, and odd socks. From very early days, people throughout the Quabbin region have created homemade dolls and toys for comfort, play, and instruction from scraps left over from bigger projects. Stereotypically often dismissed as worth little, women made them and rarely signed them.

Perhaps at the end of her busy day, a woman took time to sit down and plan a surprise for a special child or friend. She may have had an idea, some fabric, needles and thread, and anticipation of the pleasure her creation would bring as she went to work to create a unique work of art.

More common into the mid twentieth century, fabric and yarn dolls aren't much made these days. A smiling, very cheerful, homemade nurse doll has wide open, outstretched welcoming arms. Perhaps she materialized at twelve inches tall and eight inches wide from bits of yarn or an unraveled sweater. Despite her youthful looks, she may be about sixty years old.

Her white, long-sleeved, skirted uniform and white cap with the black stripe indicate that someone made her likely in the 1960s when nurses typically wore uniforms. The stripe identifies her as a registered nurse. White shoes and probably white nylon stockings aid in guessing her age. She has blue eyes and curly hair, perhaps the result of a home perm.

Handmade early/mid twentieth-century dolls from the Quabbin region include, clockwise from left, top, a nurse, Uncle Sam, a cow, and an elephant.

Created from bits and pieces of cotton fabric, Uncle Sam (or is it Humpty Dumpty?), sits on a stone wall in Barre. His body measures twenty-eight inches high and twelve inches wide. The solid, stuffed, egg-shaped body recalls Humpty Dumpty.

Long red-and-white-striped trousers, tie, and hat with faded dark blue shirt with white stars depict Uncle Sam. Like Uncle Sam, the doll evokes the American flag. A simple black line on his face does for a smile, and he has solid, painted black eyes. One eye has shed a tear with another tear about to fall. What did that single tear mean to the maker, and what does it mean to the viewer? The doll offers no clue to date and place of origin.

Bought at a local country fair in the fall of 2022, the cow, twelve inches wide and eight inches high, won a blue ribbon. A dairy farmer looked at the animal identified as a heifer and called it simply a cow! Udderly shocking!! Today, one rarely sees toys with amusing details such as pendulous udders.

A vivid imagination and skill turned two socks into an appealing twelve-by-eight-inch elephant. The maker took care to drape the elephant with a gold-trimmed red blanket identifying it as a circus performer.

Simple skillful stitching around the eyes and mouth subtly indicate the elephant's friendly smile. Big ears suggest its African lineage. Created with care, carefully stitched, and kept out of the sun, the elephant has extensive damage on one ear. While no one witnessed the actual attack, the elephant's custodians suggest it may have resulted from a traditional enemy of cloth animals—moths.

Charlotte Westhead, retired registered nurse, spends time at Quabbin Region libraries poring through demographic records of the colonial era. She lives in Amherst.

Knight/Doubleday/Coolidge family gave dolls to Swift River Valley Historical Society

family identifies donors of historical society dolls

by Edward T. Knight of Belchertown from his email to *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine

Candy Lily doll in the center of three dolls, it would seem, belonged to my Great Grandmother Edna Doubleday Knight, daughter of Rollin Doubleday and Anna Jenkinson Coolidge. The doll to the left of Candy Lily belonged to Edna's daughter Rachel, the sister of my grandfather, Howard Knight, and of my great aunt. It seems Rachel's sister, my Great Aunt Gertrude, brought the dolls to the museum. My guess is that Rachel visited the museum from her residence at Applewood Retirement Community in Amherst. The color photo of Rachel and Gertrude was taken in 2001 at a celebration of Rachel's ninety-fifth birthday. I would not be surprised if Gertrude also donated the third doll, which likely also has a connection to the Knight/Doubleday/Coolidge family.

On May 1, 1924, the Doubleday family gathered on Rollin Doubleday's North Dana front porch for a photo. Herman Knight, third from left in the back row of the photo, served as the last superintendent of Enfield, Massachusetts public schools.

The September 2025 edition of *Uniquely Quabbin* pictures three homemade dolls at New Salem's Swift River Valley Historical Society. The Knight/Doubleday/Coolidge family donated the dolls, according to Edward T. Knight of Belchertown, who submitted photos on these pages.

Gertrude Knight Cleverdon, left, likely donated the dolls to the historical society. In the 2001 photo, above, she sits with her sister Rachel Knight Meade, who the family remembers owned the doll at left.

Gathered on the North Dana front porch of Rollin Doubleday on May 1, 1924 for a family photo, members of the Knight/Doubleday/Coolidge family include, from left, front, Ken Berry, Geneva Barrows, Howard Knight, Helena Doubleday, Warren Doubleday, Rachel Knight, Gertrude Knight, and Margaret Doubleday; from left, middle, Mrs. Brown (first name unknown), Emma Doubleday, Rollin Doubleday, Aunt Della (last name unknown), Uncle Ed Goodman, Aunt Abby Goodman, Mrs. Dr Stone (first name unknown), and Ora Berry; back row, Myron Doubleday, Elvie May Paige Doubleday, Herman C. Knight, Edna G. Knight, Bertha Sloan, Edith E Barrows, Arthur O. Barrows, Nettie Upton, Mattie Brown, and, Mrs. Field, (first name unknown).

town of Dana thrived before creation of Quabbin

by John Burk

Dana Town Hall stood at the eastern end of Dana Common.

Renowned for its well-preserved town common, Dana was a picturesque rural community before creation of Quabbin Reservoir with several villages and a variety of small industries.

Situated in northwestern Worcester County, Dana's landscape comprised hills, ridges, and wetlands in the eastern watershed of Swift River. Prominent eminences included Rattlesnake Hill on the east branch of Fever Brook, Soapstone Hill at the Petersham town line, Pottapaug Hill in the southeast part of town, and Whitney and Skinner hills in uplands near Dana Center.

A crucial resource for industries, Swift River Middle Branch flowed through the northwestern part of Dana. Before inundation by Quabbin Reservoir, Neeseponsett Pond was a scenic landmark of North Dana. Swift River East Branch meandered along boundaries with Petersham and Hardwick. Construction of a dam at the Quabbin Reservoir fishing area in Hardwick substantially enlarged Pottapaug Pond. Other significant Dana waterways included the west and east branches of Fever Brook.

Small groups of Nipmuc Native Americans utilized sites such as Pottapaug Pond, Soapstone Hill, and Swift River seasonally for fishing and hunting. Travel corridors connected Pottapaug Pond to the valleys of Millers River in Athol and Muddy Brook in Hardwick.

European settlement of land in Dana began in 1734. During the 1750s, a small settler community with homes, a tavern, and several businesses formed at the locale that became Dana Center. Dana was established

photos courtesy of
Petersham Historical Society

The Johnson family home, left, and F. D. Stevens General Store, right, faced Dana Common near Eagle Hotel, not pictured.

in 1801 from portions of Petersham, Hardwick, and Greenwich. Judge Frances Dana, for whom the town was named, provided legal assistance for incorporation.

Dana's early economy focused around agricultural commodities such as rye, livestock, dairy products, fruit, timber, potash, and flax grown for production of cloth. Related industries included sawmills and gristmills, a tannery, and a distillery that made cider.

A classic New England village, Dana Center was home to the town's civic institutions and a small

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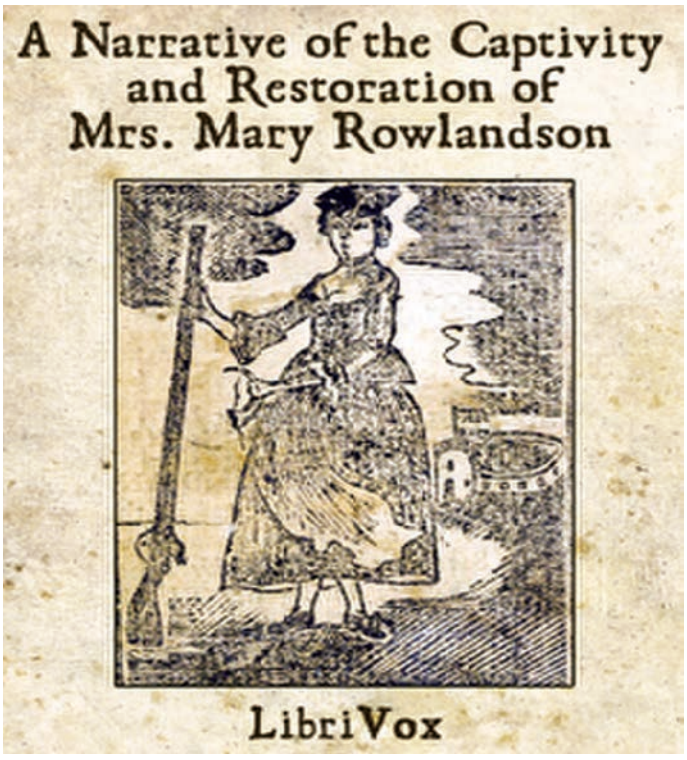

Mary Rowlandson's account of her captivity by Native Americans became an eighteenth-century best seller.
photo courtesy of Internet Archive

impact of King Philip's War in Quabbin region

captive Mary Rowlandson

by David Gordon

While King Philip's War raged during the winter and spring of 1676, captive Mary Rowlandson twice crossed the Quabbin region mostly on foot.

First, during late winter, Rowlandson passed through the area en route from her capture in Lancaster to the Connecticut River Valley near Northfield where Native Americans massed forces.

Then, during springtime and still in captivity, she traveled back across the area to near Mount Wachusett, where she was ransomed and freed. Six years following the war, Rowlandson published a variously named best-selling narrative about her experience.

On February 10 at daybreak, an estimated combined force of approximately four hundred Nipmuc, Wampanoag, and Narragansett warriors had attacked and largely destroyed the colonial settlement at Lancaster, Massachusetts. Native Americans set

crosses mostly on foot through eventual Quabbin areas

Rowlandson's garrison house ablaze during the attack. As Mary and her three children sought to escape the burning garrison, they fell captive to a Nipmuc sachem named Monoco.

Both Mary and her six-year-old daughter, Sarah, suffered abdominal wounds during the attack. Upon capturing them, Monoco immediately sold Mary and Sarah to a Narragansett sachem named Quannopin when Mary and Sarah became separated from Mary's two other children. Pastor of the Lancaster church, Rowlandson's husband, Joseph Rowlandson, was away during the attack and remained free. In care of the woman sachem Weetamoo, Mary accompanied Quannopin during his travels for the remainder of her captivity.

Two months before the attack at Lancaster, Quannopin's powerful Narragansett people, located in Rhode Island, maintained a policy of neutrality in matters of Native American warfare with English settlers. Though the Narragansetts had not been party to conflict, English colonists grew fearful of them and decided on a preemptive strike.

On December 19, 1675, a large colonial force attacked the Narragansetts in their winter quarters at Great Swamp near present day Kingston, Rhode Island. Colonists torched the Narragansett compound, and hundreds of Narragansett women, children, elderly, and infirm died along with targeted warriors.

Nipmucs of central Massachusetts had participated actively in warfare against settlers. They established a wartime stronghold at a cluster of three villages collectively known as Wenimisset located within boundaries of present-day towns of New Braintree and Barre.

After the colonists' preemptive attack at Great Swamp, Narragansett survivors became refugees and sought asylum with Nipmucs in Wenimisset. Narragansetts became willing participants in the war,

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Pelham hosts oldest United States town hall

text and photo by Chris Coyle

For centuries, Pelham Town Hall at the corner of Route 202 and Amherst Road, has been used for town business.

Located midway between North Quabbin and South Quabbin regions, Pelham hosts the oldest town hall in continuous use in the United States.

In 1738, a group of thirty-four settlers led by two men from Worcester—Robert Peebles and James Thornton—purchased the land that would become Pelham from Colonel John Stoddard of Northampton. At the crest of a hill and the geographic center of town at that time, settlers constructed the meetinghouse around 1743. It may have been used for church services as early as 1741, although not all work finished until 1746.

The Town of Pelham incorporated in January 1743. On April 19, the first town meeting took place in the meetinghouse, a place of worship also used for public discourse. Attendees selected town officials, including five selectmen, a town clerk, and a treasurer along with other officers, including two fence viewers, two hog reeves, and two "Officers to Prosecute ye Law Respecting Killing Deer," likely the game wardens of the time.

Once town government was established, the town turned its attention to church affairs. For the first few years, short-term itinerant pastors supplied the pulpit. The town selected three residents in May of 1743 to consult with local clergymen to choose the town's first full-time pastor. The committee subsequently recommended Robert Abercrombie, a native of Scotland and a Presbyterian minister who had arrived in the American colonies in 1740. He was endorsed by four

continuously used since its building

pastors, including Jonathan Edwards, the prominent theologian and pastor of the church in Northampton. Following his approval by the town, Abercrombie was ordained pastor on August 30, 1744.

In his 1963 book, *Meetinghouse & Church in Early New England,* Edmund W. Sinnott describes the Pelham edifice as a Type II meetinghouse—an oblong, barnlike structure built in the period between 1710 and 1800 with the main entrance on one side and the pulpit opposite the entrance on the other side.

The two-story building measures forty-six by thirty-six feet. It has a gabled roof and white wood clapboard siding. Initially, the building had doors on the south, east, and west sides with second-story galleries above each. A pulpit window was installed in 1794 and the first stove added in 1831, making winter worship and town assemblies considerably more comfortable. The town and congregation added the projecting front porch and stairway around 1818.

Presbyterians settled Pelham, but the meetinghouse has at different times served both Methodist and Calvinist congregations. It remains the only still-in-use Connecticut River Valley meetinghouse built between 1725 and 1750.

Daniel Shays, Revolutionary War captain and Pelham citizen, held several town offices and worshiped in the building. He led Shays's Rebellion against a repressive tax system and government which disadvantaged small Massachusetts communities in the winter of 1786-87. Part of his 1100-man army camped around the meetinghouse one cold week in early 1787.

Shays's Rebellion brought attention to inadequacies of the Articles of Confederation that first governed the United States. The Philadelphia Constitutional Convention that drafted the United States Constitution followed.

The Pelham meetinghouse is one of only a few surviving buildings connected to Daniel Shays.

Following state-mandated separation of church and state, congregants constructed a new church building next door in 1839. The meetinghouse building originally stood close to what is today called Amherst Road. After construction of the new church building, townspeople

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ROBERT G. OSBORNE
aluminum bar, glass rods
23" high x 23" wide

region's writers' groups provide

by Diane Kane

Writers have a number of opportunities to meet other writers in the Quabbin Area.

Quaboag Writers Collaborative began meeting at the Brookfield Historical Society building, 18 Common Street, several years ago.

"We usually get together every three weeks, although it may vary depending on our schedules and holidays," said author Ed Londergan, group coordinator. "There are eight of us currently. We all write different genres ranging through historical, literary, contemporary, and commercial fiction, and memoir."

Members either write a short story or submit a chapter of a longer piece they are working on. They occasionally use a writing prompt for fun.

"We all write because we enjoy it and want to become better writers," Ed explained. "Four of us have had books published, five have had stories in this year's Quabbin Quills anthology, and a couple have had stories and articles in local and regional publications. Two of us are currently working on new books."

The Quaboag Writers Collaborative includes, from left, front, Mary Anne Slack, Jim Metcalf, and Michelle Elliot; Amy Paul and Chantal de Grace, back.
photo by Ed Londergan

Quaboag Writers Collaborative will consider new members but want to keep the group small. Those interested in learning more about the group will contact them at or 508-864-8685.

Clapp Writing Group, based in Clapp Memorial Library in Belchertown, began three years ago and meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

"We have nearly twenty registered members and typically get from five to ten people each meeting," coordinator Ann Macon said.

Members of Clapp Writing Group primarily write as a hobby, although some have published works. They write in different genres ranging from poetry to fiction.

"I like our very supportive members who all have a variety of writing experiences and are more than willing to listen and share their thoughts. The library atmosphere is also quite nice!" Macon explained. "Half of our meeting is free writing, but we also have prompts available. The other half is used to discuss what we've been working on and any writing-related questions or topics our members might want to bring up."

Those interested can register by emailing macona@cwmars.org.

opportunities to meet other writers

Write from the Heart Central Massachusetts group has been meeting for about forty years. Many members have changed, but a few seasoned writers remain deeply involved.

"We meet once a month for ten months, keeping a few months free in the winter," said original member Sharon Harmon of Royalston. "We have twelve members. We have had guests as young as sixteen, and one of our members is in her nineties.

"Members take turns hosting at their houses or sometimes at a library or other public place," Harmon continued. "We always have light refreshments. We are not currently accepting new members. However, we occasionally have a guest writer join us."

Each member brings copies of a piece for everyone to read and give constructive suggestions for the writer to consider.

"Members celebrate each other's accomplishments and share ideas as well as discuss writing-related events," Harmon said. "We are all published authors and have 'ink in our blood!'"

Write from the Heart authors include, from left, Sharon Harmon, Diane Kane, Kathy Chencharik, Ruth McCarty, Barbara Foster, Judy McIntosh, Annette Ermini, and Amber Johns.
photo by Clare Green

New Dawn Writers' Group in Ashburnham welcomes writers from all over central Massachusetts. Melissa Hunt, Kevin Scott Hall, and Fred Gerhard started the group.

"In October of 2022, Abigail Abbott, director of New Dawn Arts Center, 84 Main Street, Ashburnham, invited us to hold our meetings there," Gerhard said. "Except for snow cancellations, we've been running strong since we started." They have a full schedule of events for every type of writer.

"We meet every Tuesday from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. The first Tuesday of each month is our fiction workshop with Melissa. The second Tuesday is our non-fiction and memoir workshop with Kevin. The third Tuesday is our poetry workshop with Fred. The fourth Tuesday is the Authors' Voices event with a visiting author for the first hour, followed by our open mic," Gerhard explained. "Everyone is welcome, from adults to teens. To join, just show up on any of the first Tuesdays of the month at 7:00 p.m."

Check out the New Dawn website at newdawnarts.org.

A local non-profit organization, Quabbin Quills helps authors and students interested in writing. Unlike other groups, QQ doesn't meet regularly at a specific

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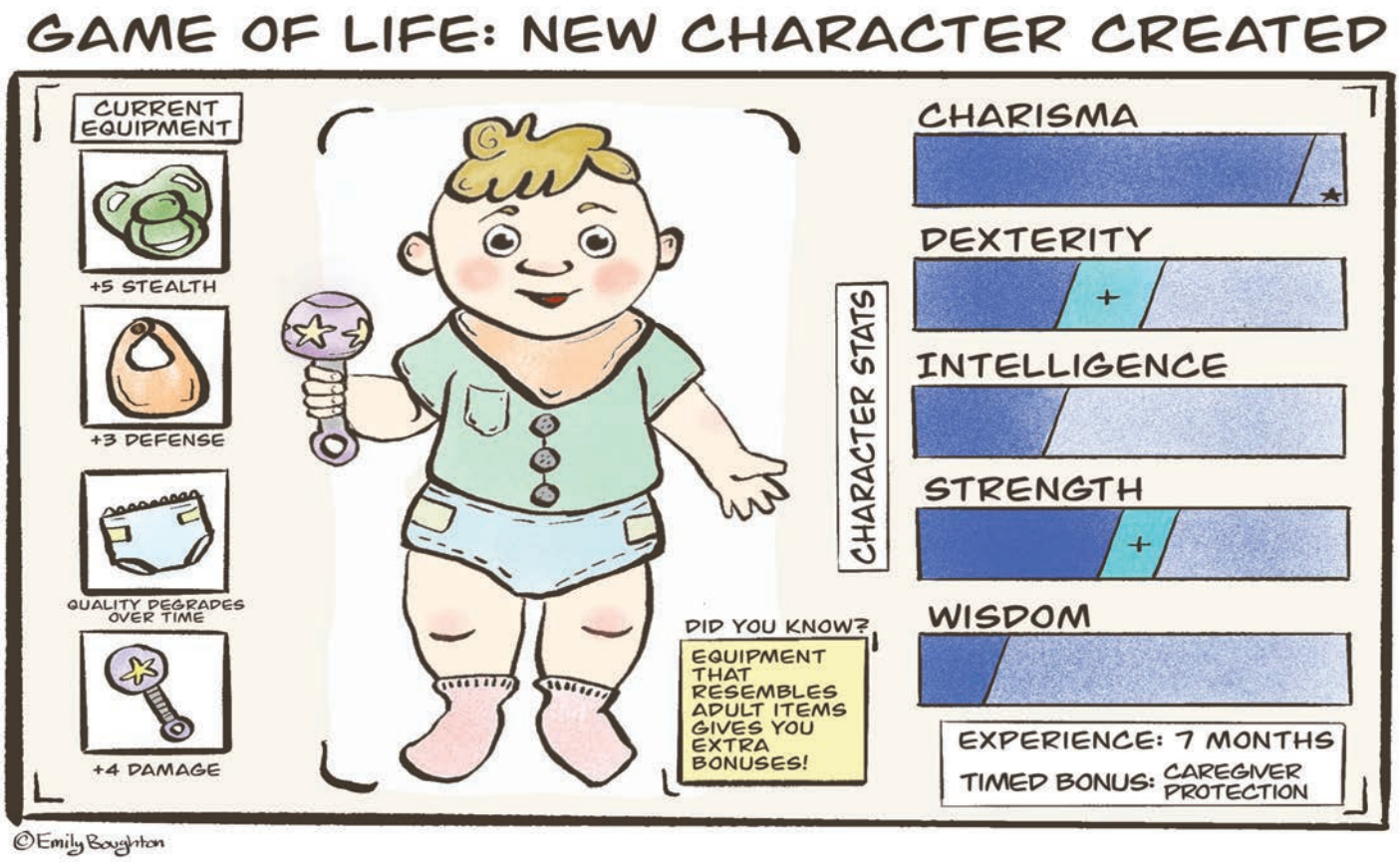


On a golden morning, mist highlights winter forest land near Gate 35, Quabbin.
photo by Rick Flematti

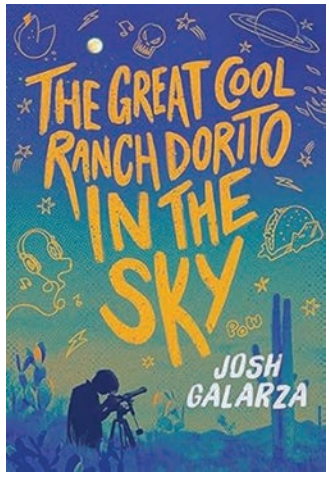
young adult book genre includes titles

by Emily Boughton

The young adult book genre has steadily expanded over the past few decades. While classics like *The Outsiders*, *The Giver*, and *Lord of the Flies* still catch readers' attention, newer titles also steal the hearts of teens and adult readers alike.

Each year, the selection of books marketed towards teens grows more diverse, reflecting the variety of interests and backgrounds of their audience. With topics ranging from mythology and romance to comical dystopias and murder mysteries, there is seemingly a book to match any teen's taste. Not only has that presented readers with many new worlds and stories to explore, but it has also created a platform for underrepresented voices and crafted a safe space for teens and authors to explore difficult topics. Here are some notable recent titles.

In Josh Galarza's *The Great Cool Ranch Dorito in the Sky,* comic book creator Brett struggles to find his way through grief,



The Great Cool Ranch Dorito in the Sky
Josh Galarza

anxiety, and the reality of having an eating disorder. The novel does not shy away from approaching those tough topics, and the novel leaves readers with a message of hope and great examples of healthy relationships to strive for.

Murder mysteries have been very popular among teen readers, so it is no surprise that Holly Jackson's *The Reappearance of Rachel Price* took home the 2025 Massachusetts Teen Choice Book Award

The Reappearance of Rachel Price
Holly Jackson

in October 2025. Teens from around the state vote from a curated list, and Jackson's true-crime-inspired murder mystery took home the top prize.

A Fate So Cold by Amanda Foody and C. L. Herman takes readers into a world where powerful wands pass down from

that steal the hearts of teens and adults

A Fate So Cold
Amanda Foody and
C. L. Herman

one magician to the next and the threat of a deadly winter looms large. Domenic discovers himself the next bearer of a wand fated to save everyone from winter's cataclysm, but that fate comes with a cost as he soon realizes that no other chosen one before him has survived. To make matters worse, for the first time there a second chosen one wields winter's magic, and he's slowly falling for her. The tale of magic and doomed love is sure to have readers anxiously awaiting the next installment in the duology.

S. F. Williamson's *A Language of Dragons* blends World War II era historical fiction with a

A Language of Dragons
S. F. Williamson

dragon-centered fantasy. Instead of breaking enemy codes at the typical Bletchley Park, heroine Vivien tries to decode dragon languages in a book filled with world building, political intrigue, mysteries, and a splash of romance.

Teens have long favored books of mythology. Told in lyrical verse, Nikita Gill's *Hekate-The Witch*

Hekate the Witch
Nikita Gill

WY pop.rocks.panorama—a visual haiku by Ami Fagin

crystalline snowscape;
this silent forest wonder
reveals the cosmos

ami fagin
ketubahindesign.com
beyondgenocide.net
visualhaiku.graphics

young adult books appeal to varying interests

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explores the aftermath of the battle between the Titans and Olympians. Instead of having Hades guide us through the underworld, the feminist tale centers around Hekate as she grapples with surviving the war and finds her place as goddess of witchcraft, magic, and crossroads.

Dystopian horror meets with humor in

Aisle Nine
Ian X. Cho

Ian X. Cho's *Aisle Nine.* Jasper works at Here For You, a general retail store with quirky customers, gimmicky sales, and unfortunately a portal to hell in Aisle Nine that periodically leaks demons. Jasper is relatively unfazed by the chaos around him until he starts seeing visions of the apocalypse and bands together with a group of misfits to try and save the world.

A tale of supernatural horror takes center stage in Taylor Robin's vibrant graphic novel *Hunger's Bite*. Neeta and Emery are normally at home on the luxury SS *Lark*. But their life upon the steamship and plans for the future abruptly get put on hold when Mr. Honeycutt purchases the ship. Under his leadership, high-class passengers grow more aggressive with the crew

Hunger's Bite
Taylor Robins

slowly worked to death—and not just figuratively. Eventually secret agent Neeta and vampire Warwick Farley lend a hand to uncover and ultimately try to escape Honeycutt's twisted plans. The story is not only spine tingling but also thought provoking.

One of the most popular choices for teen and young adult readers, manga offers the series *The Fragrant Flower Blooms with Dignity* by Saka Mikami. The graphic novel follows Rintaro, a rough looking boy who secretly works at his family's bakery, and

The Fragrant Flower Blooms with Dignity
Saka Mikami

Kaoruko, a scholarship student who loves cake. After an adorable chance meeting at the bakery, the two students find themselves falling in love despite being from rival schools. The story explores themes of prejudice, acceptance, forgiveness, and the value of friendship.

Lifelong North Quabbin resident Emily Boughton earned a Bachelor of Arts at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams. She serves as young adult specialist at the Athol Public Library. She draws inspiration from nature, books, and life's silly events.

Quabbin Reservoir Winter from Enfield Lookout, Ware

oil on canvas painting by Gillian Haven

Winter works its particular magic on Green Road, North Brookfield.

photo by Gary McComas

Snow takes over the landscape on North Main Street, Petersham.
photo by Nancy Lagimoniere

Sunrise lights the forest around Harvard Pond in Petersham on a winter morning..
photo by Rick Flematti

from the pens of

poem by
Mary Lou Conca

Sandy Scuffled Hair

for a second-grade student

Your sneakers are too small,
and your pants are too big.
Yet, they've dehumanized you
with their diplomas from the bigwig.
Your hair is all scuffled
falling from one side too short
while on a cold, sunny morning,
you're lucky if you're wearing
two or the same or socks
Your aggression is interrupted
as all part of your disabled tiny self,
and they rehumanize you
by claims of your brain's waves
being tapped, untapped, or
strange, much different from his or hers or mine
You're angry, and I would be
if I lived in such dire
p o v e r t y, but they've got your ticket
in their fat back pocket, and so you see
many dollars green and gained
from keeping little keen minds trained
to believe you're so different from him or her or me.
So today my work is handed to follow you around
without the threat of "hovering," lest your true ability
be found—
that you can soar above it all, if given proper care.
But—then again—their book taught, diploma sought,
ways of thinking, are speaking
LOUDER
than your shrinking shoes, oversized pants,
and scuffled sandy hair.

Poet and photographer Mary Lou Conca lives in Shutesbury.

poem by
Enid Vazquez Junker

The Potted Plant

watercolor on paper by Enid Vazquez Junker

The Potted Plant

How I would wish at times
To be the person as an Oak
With long, strong roots
Growing in one spot
Seeing seasons and souls come,
Grow, and sometimes go.
Being big, a constant, offering
Shade and
A higher view for the brave.
A place to rest or swing in the breeze.
Useful for warmth, or for a
Spot of reminiscing
When my days are done.

A self-described woman of faith, Enid Vazquez Junker has lived in New Salem for thirteen years with her spouse, two dogs, many kids, oodles of grandchildren and great grandchildren, and a love of learning new things and seeing beautiful places. She says she has no time for boredom.

Uniquely Quabbin poets

poem by
Brian Fournier

Snow Cat

watercolor on paper by Brian Fournier

The Snow Cat

It's a lonely time, winter—
when wind and snow take
a world he once knew to be
a different place. No summer
sun to warm his flanks. Only
a fur collar turned in defense.
He's held up in some dark corner
like Stevens's snowman "having
a mind of winter" to ponder
those days of wandering much fairer
fields and peerless nights under
the stars—so dreamlike.

A slight shiver comes to say, "Not so.
Winter steals freedom's decision
with its new rules, cold dawn,
and choices for the snow cat."

Poet and artist Brian Fournier lives in Orange.

Submit poems for *Uniquely Quabbin*

to marcia2gagliardi@gmail.com

poem by
Gary Fellows

Random Thoughts

When winter's here
I look for deer
tracks in the snow
each time I go
out walking on
a trail at dawn
or afternoon.

Beneath the moon,
if there's a breeze
to move the trees,
the shadows I
like seeing. By
the lake I may
decide to stay
and sit a while
upon a pile
of snow and ponder
before I wander
off again.

It's only when
I'm back inside
my house beside
my woodstove that
I pet my cat
and feel quite glad
that I have had
a winter stroll
as one fine goal
to do today.

And, so, I say
a simple thing
can often bring
one joy that won't
be lost. I don't
expect too much,
but nature's touch
is ever new.
A lot or few
may be enough
if times are tough
or if they're not.
I'll share this thought:
no matter what
it is you've got
or haven't yet,
be sure you get
a daily chance
to do a dance
of gratitude
if in the mood
or just to say
in some small way
you're glad you're you.

Be sure to do
something nice—
that's my advice—
for someone near,
for someone dear,
or for another
sister or brother
you may not know.
Be sure to show
kindness ever,
meanness never.

If you pray
along the way,
be thankful for
it all before
each day is done.
The rising sun
tomorrow may
begin a day
with joy, I'm guessing,
and added blessing
that you may share
most anywhere.

Poet Gary Fellows grew up in New Salem.

after several months in captivity, Mary Rowlandson writes seventeenth-century best seller

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including the attack on Lancaster resulting in Mary Rowlandson's captivity.

After attacking Lancaster, war party and captives spent the night of February 10 in the open on George Hill about a mile west of town. The next morning, they began the two-day trek back to Wenimisset.

Rowlandson writes of the night of February 11, during a stop at an unrecorded place that some historians believe may have been in present-day Princeton,

"When night came on, they stopped, and now down I must sit in the snow, by a little fire, and a few boughs behind me, with my sick child in my lap."

Rowlandson refers to her wounded daughter, Sarah.

The following afternoon, the war party and captives arrived at Wenimisset. Mary Rowlandson's captivity in the Quabbin region as a captive began that day.

In her narrative, Rowlandson does not identify the three Wenimisset villages where she and Sarah were held. Later historians determined that all three villages lay along two and a half miles of the easterly bank of what would be known as Ware River.

While Mary's wound gradually healed, Sarah's did not. On the evening of February 18, six-year-old Sarah died. Mary's narrative states that Native Americans buried Sarah on a hill at Wenimisset. In her narrative, Rowlandson writes, "My sweet Babe, like a lambe departed this life, being about six yeares and five months old."

Unfamiliar with the terrain near Wenimisset, Mary had no way to identify Sarah's burial site, which remains unknown. A stone memorial marker dedicated to Sarah stands at the entrance to New Braintree's North Cemetery on Hardwick Road. A short distance beyond the back wall of the cemetery, a field occupies the location of the middle Wenimisset village.

Native American forces gathered at Wenimisset continued to participate in attacks against colonial settlements, including the February 21 attack at Medfield, Massachusetts.

Rowlandson's narrative grows vague about when certain events took place. Following their successful raid against Medfield, Native American forces at Wenimisset made the strategic decision to leave the area, likely around February 27. They took Rowlandson with them on their way to a Native American rallying site known as Squakheag on the banks of the Connecticut River at present-day Northfield.

Retired engineer David Gordon grew up in North Orange. His avocation involves researching local and regional history, including as volunteer researcher at local historical societies. He resides in Fitchburg with his wife, Carolyn, and cat, Hunter.

fun with the cold and snow

Pen and Ink and Colored Pencil on Bainbridge Board

by Elizabeth Callahan

Perhaps these little guys will warm and cheer you despite that they represent the coldest months of the year and the snowiest and coldest region of the country. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to create these little ones. Wrapped in their fuzzy fur coats, they exude the innocence of a babe yet have the resilience to live in the harshest of environments. They were drawn for one of the winter-born grandchildren. I call them "Snow Babies."

The colored balls offered an opportunity to introduce color and fun and highlight their age. Like our own babies, they are vulnerable, curious, and innocent. The tiny creatures invite us to slow down, observe, and admire the life that thrives on the ice and find something joyful in our own winter months.

Elizabeth Callahan creates art using oil, watercolor, pastels, pen and ink and colored pencil. She lives in Rutland.

Petersham Country Store, Long Long Noodle

text and photos by Chris Coyle

Across from Petersham Common for almost two hundred years, Petersham Country Store has taken its place as purveyor of food and sundries.

Breakfast or lunch at the Petersham Country Store on Petersham Common comprises more than just a meal—it is an experience. And a most pleasant one at that. Friendly staff, excellent food, and nice fellow diners and shoppers at the store make eating there a memorable experience.

Since first opening in September of 1840, the store has operated nearly continuously by different owners for 185 years. Area residents enjoy the wide selection of food and drink available for purchase, many from local producers.

Josi's Kitchen Café, part of the store, open seven days a week, serves breakfast from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. and lunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. The store itself is open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. six days a week and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

Featured breakfast items include the egg-cellent sandwich, breakfast burrito, and the bandstand, which pays tribute to the Petersham Brass Band and memorable summer concerts across the street on the Petersham Town Common.

Muffins, scones, and other such treats are available with each day's offerings, each a little different than the previous day. Customers may order vegetarian, and the kitchen staff will cater to anyone's food allergy. The staff pride itself on cooking with local eggs. Delicious coffee along with several flavor options and decaf are on hand as are tea and numerous cold drinks from the store.

The kitchen transitions to lunch at 11 a.m. with mouthwatering daily specials and hearty soups, their aroma percolating throughout the store. Signature sandwiches and wraps, a burrito bar, and salads round out the lunch menu with multiple breads, meats, cheeses, veggies, and sauce options available for a personal touch to one's entrée. I favor the Californian turkey and Cuban panini and a cup of the daily soup.

cater to diners with varying tastes

Sitting by the fire-burning stove in the back of the store with a meal while eyeing local and fair-trade artisan crafts and gifts makes for a real highlight in the day. Upon leaving Petersham Country Store, I always say to myself that I can't wait until my next visit.

All meals are available for takeout as well as dine-in.

Long Long Noodle Restaurant at 9 Central Street in the Baldwinville village of Templeton follows on the heels of another fine restaurant, Baldwinville Pizza Barn on the same location for years. Open daily at noon except Tuesday, Long Long Noodle offers meals in the renovated dining room, as takeout, or even delivered.

The menu includes a wide variety of carefully crafted foods. The friendly staff welcomes the hungry diner and serves freshly made foods in short order.

Popular items include Crab Rangoon, General Tso's Chicken, Peking ravioli, and one of the best wonton soups. The luncheon menu offers meal combinations such as pork lo mein, pork fried rice, chicken finger and boneless ribs, Crab Rangoon, and pork fried rice, to name a couple.

Teppanyaki offerings such as hibachi chicken and shrimp or hibachi New York steak especially appeal to the hungry palate. Many daily specials like moo goo gai pan, chicken wings, beef teriyaki, and pork fried rice won't leave anyone hungry.

Appetizers such as Buffalo wings, Chinese donuts, signature spicy wings, and golden chicken fingers just add to Long Long's exquisitely wide menu. An intriguing section of the menu is dim sum with Indian pancakes, snow mountain taro buns, and Chinese shumai beckoning.

Traditional pu pu platters for one, two, or three or house platters including various components, many types of fried rice, chow Mein, chop suey, moo shi, and egg foo young number among more of Long Long's

A fire-burning stove enhances cozy ambience in the back room of Petersham Country Store.

food choices. If that isn't enough, American appetizers and entrées offer lighter fare.

Long Long serves cocktails, non-alcoholic drinks, and many teas. No stranger to restaurants, the owner has also operated other area dining establishments.

Diners may park on-street near the front door as well as in a lot at the back of the building.

Railroad enthusiast, historian, and retired UMass research technician, Chris Coyle lives in Athol. He recently launched his memoir *We Lived in the Woods* about family summers in a Maine cabin. He's at work on a new book, *Trains and Me*.

Diners at Long Long will find cocktails, non-alcoholic drinks, and many teas.

since dawn of time, next new food craze

text and photos by Christine Noyes

Mexican street corn catches the eye and satisfies the palate.

SWEET ROASTED KERNELS, SPICES, HERBS, CREMA, BLEND OF CHEESES

I never understood the fusion food craze! Back in the 1980s and 1990s, restauranteurs hailed the idea of combining elements of different culinary cultures as if it were an unprecedented occurrence. I imagine they praised their forward thinking by creating Korean Tacos and Thai Pizza.

But in reality, we've been integrating flavors and techniques from different societies and ethnicities since nearly the dawn of time. Sometime before 500 BCE, the Silk Road, a trade route through China, India, Persia, and the Mediterranean had travelers bringing grains, spices, and cooking methods across the regions. Rice from Asia landed in Persia and became a popular ingredient in Middle Eastern cuisine. Arab traders introduced sugar, citrus, and seasonings to Europe.

I could go on and on, but the point I'm trying to make is that when it comes to cooking, most likely the next new food craze has its roots firmly planted in history, as with the accompanying recipe.

In mid 2025, I attended a southern barbecue with a large gathering of folks from different areas of the country. We were encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert to share. As I was down south, I didn't have my home kitchen to aid me, so I kept it simple. I brought a chili and cheese dip and served it with tortilla chips, my go-to dish when time and space are short.

I took one quick glance at the large buffet table filled with a wide variety of dishes that had me salivating. But the dish that really caught my eye was a colorful and fragrant pan of Mexican street corn. Not the traditional on-the-cob street corn, but sweet roasted corn kernels with mild and hot peppers, a blend of spices and herbs that danced on my tongue, a tasty crema, and a blend of cheeses.

I failed to obtain the recipe for that wonderful concoction, but as it happens, I like to take my own approach to old and new favorites. Once back home in my Quabbin region kitchen, I created my own version of that wonderful dish to serve as a side or a meal by itself. I describe the dish as a party for the palate!

likely has its feet firmly planted in history

SWEET AND SPICY MEXICAN STREET CORN

portion suitable for a gathering

INGREDIENTS

1-pound bag frozen sweet yellow corn

1-pound bag frozen sweet white corn

2 small-to-medium-sized chili peppers, hot or mild, diced small

1/4 cup red bell pepper diced small

1 teaspoon sea salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1 1/2 teaspoons smoked paprika

1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder

4 ounces goat cheese

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1/4 cup sour cream

2-1/2 tablespoons bang bang sauce or similar

1 1/2 limes juiced

1 1/2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped

Chili-lime seasoning (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat a large pan on high. Add chili peppers, red bell peppers, and both bags of corn. Stir to mix. Add salt, pepper, paprika, and chili powder. Cook on high for approximately 8 minutes, stirring often until slightly charred. Remove from heat.

Crumble the goat cheese and stir it into the corn mixture. Allow cheese to thoroughly incorporate.

In a bowl, combine mayonnaise, sour cream, bang bang sauce, and lime juice. Add the combination and cilantro to the corn and stir.

Additional salt and pepper to taste.

Serve hot, warm, or cold!

Optional: For added crunch and flavor, top with finely crushed cheese puffs.

Accomplished chef Christine Noyes has led life as a sales representative, entrepreneur, writer and illustrator of the Bradley Whitman series of mysteries and of the romance novel, *Winter Meets Summer*. Rumor has it that she's at work on a screenplay.

Colorful ingredients transform through prep into sweet and spicy Mexican street corn.

families stay warm in cold weather with efficient use

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Ron Rich of Petersham stands with a pile of recently chopped firewood sourced from a variety of trees.

photo by Ken Levine

Hardwoods in our region and their relative heating ability according to their density, allowing longer burns and less loading, include hickory, hornbeam, ironwood, beech, black birch, black locust, apple, white oak, sugar maple, red oak, white ash, yellow birch, elm, tamarack, grey birch, black walnut, cherry, sycamore, and red maple.

A clever invention, a stovetop fan can direct heat effectively without electricity by using heat from the stove to drive a small motor and fan.

of local resources

Several Quabbin area towns have created community wood banks at their transfer stations. Using vouchers after applying to the town, a household is entitled to free seasoned wood on a first-come basis. Volunteers (yay!), town highway crews, and a commercial wood processor loaned free for a month or so by the State of Massachusetts cut down mature trees from roadsides because of old age, danger to power lines, or disease. The trees end up cut, split, and stacked, ready for people to take home and use as they wish.

Families can stay warm in cold weather by using plentiful local resources.

Throw another log on that fire and feel the glow. I sure do!

Ken Levine and his wife, Janet Palin, live surrounded by beautiful Petersham woodland that they steward. Artist and owner of Frames Ink for more than thirty years, Ken graduated from Rhode Island School of Design.

Sarah Aubuchon of Petersham has wood stacked and just waiting to burn.
photo by Ken Levine

River birch tree bark normally peels in a process allowing photosynthesis and growth.

photo courtesy of Sally Howe

area trees adjust to

continued from page 4

a weak sapling or neighboring tree through the web. Different chemicals in sap can warn other trees of pests or diseases. Such a web may encompass several square miles.

Recent decades have seen renewed research about trees. Harvard Forest in Petersham sponsors varied programs devoted to answering questions about trees and forests.

A movement called forest bathing involves walking in the woods, an activity said to calm human nervous systems and lower our blood pressure.

When early darkness and cold temperatures of winter keep me inside, warm and cozy at home, I still feel the presence of trees. The walls are built with two-foot-by-four-foot lumber or in the post-and-beam manner. Floors and cabinetry of the house come from trees, and we sit on furniture made of wood. We often burn wood for heat.

Trees live longer than we do. If only we could communicate with them about our history! We have

seasonal change

a few trees in the Quabbin area that date back to the seventeenth century. Their trunks can reveal important climate information. As their trunks expand in diameter, they create rings visible on a cross section.

Spacing of the rings of growth in cross sections of trunks can indicate a past event. Thinner rings can show a drought while thicker rings may signify a rainy year. Uneven rings can indicate forest fires or crowded growth conditions.

Tree rings not only indicate age when counted but also events like drought or sufficient rain.

photo courtesy of Sally Howe

Outside, winter starkness showcases the contour of branches and trunk. I find the varied shapes of trees magnificent. A snowfall highlights the shapes as a painter might with brush strokes. Looking at that "painting" provides one of the pleasures of winter. I planted river birch trees in my yard for the lacy elegance of their bark in winter.

In every season, trees can model how to transition to the next one. We are lucky to live in the Quabbin area with its bounty of forests and opportunities to appreciate them.

Actor, lover of language, retired teacher of French, and ardent traveler, Sally Howe resides in Orange.

writers groups bring authors together

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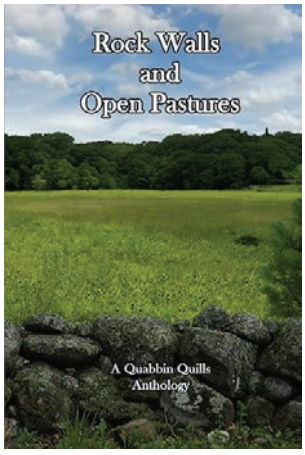
venue. In 2016, Steve Piscitello dreamed of bringing authors together to form a nonprofit that would help writers get their short stories and poetry published and provide scholarships for high school students looking to further their education in the literary field. He achieved all that and more.

Quabbin Quills is accepting submissions for the ninth anthology of stories and poetry by writers from across New England.

Find more information about Quabbin Quills and possibly contributing to the ninth anthology at QuabbinQuills.org.

Thanks to Danielle Kane for assistance with photos.

Author Diane Kane lives in Phillipston,.



The eighth Quabbin Quills anthology, *Rock Walls and Open Pastures,* is available at regional venues and online.

Founding members of Quabbin Quills are, from left, James Thibeault, Garrett Zecker, Diane Kane, Fred Gerhard, Michael Young, and Steve Piscitello.

photo by Clare Green

Pelham Town Hall oldest in continuous use in the United States

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moved the meetinghouse back a little for use exclusively as the town hall for civic functions. It was moved a second time in 1845 to its present location.

Ironically, although Shays and his fellow townsmen took up arms to prevent the loss of their farms, in the 1930s the state took the entire eastern section of Pelham, including what was Shays's farm for construction of the vast Quabbin Reservoir to provide water for Boston and surrounding municipalities. The state spared Pelham Town Hall and the church next door but saw to demolition of nearly all buildings to the east of Route 202.

Today, Pelham Town Hall, the 1839 church, and Pelham Hill Cemetery are part of a National Historic District. Externally, the town hall has not changed since 1743, although the interior altered with addition in 1845 of a second story for town functions. In recent decades, annual town meetings have been elsewhere with special town meetings in the old meetinghouse, thus preserving a single strand of participatory democracy since the building's creation in 1743.

Pelham Historical Society— pelhamhistory.org—has further information.

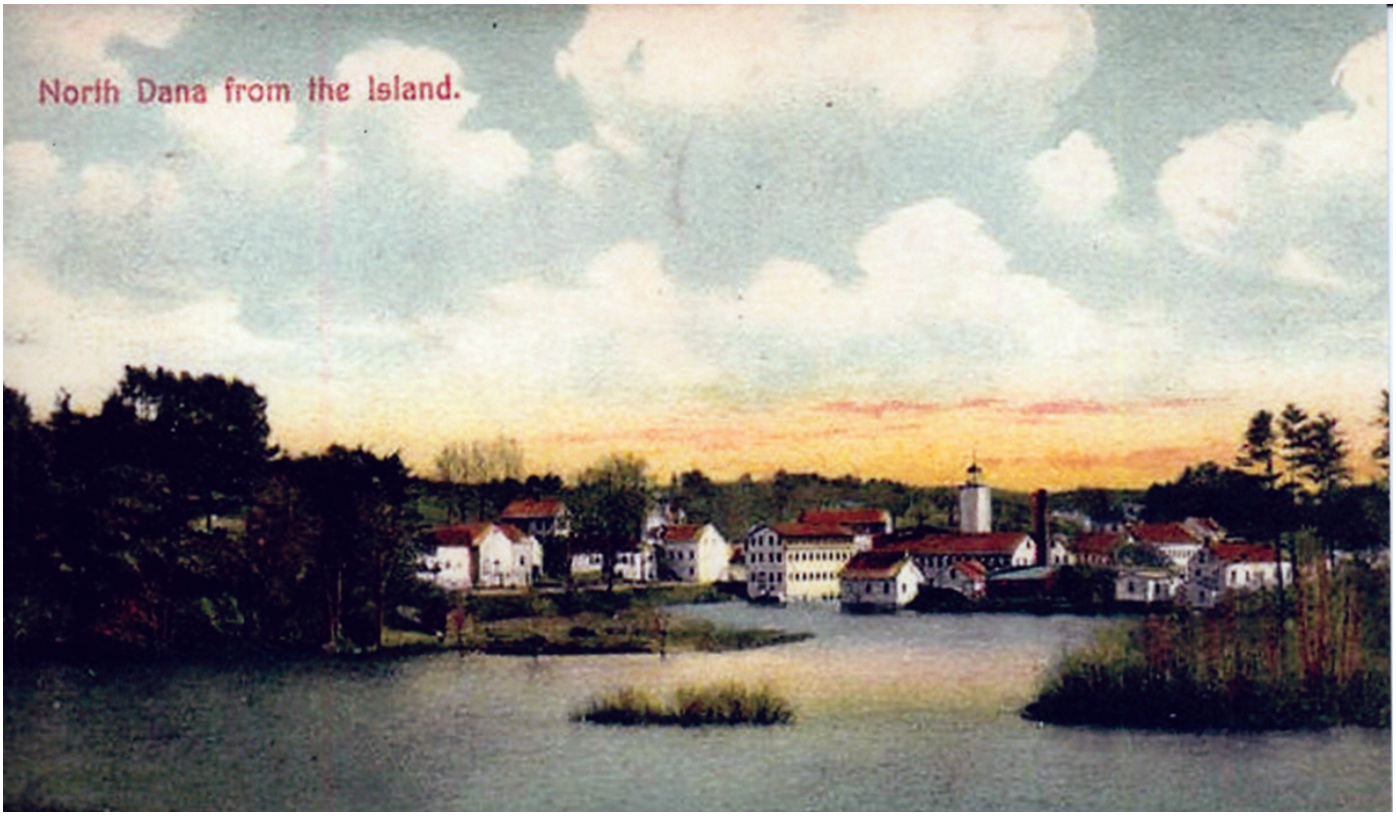
Railroad enthusiast, historian, and retired UMass research technician, Chris Coyle lives in Athol. He recently launched his memoir *We Lived in the Woods* about family summers in a Maine cabin. He's at work on a new book, *Trains and Me.*

The Fox

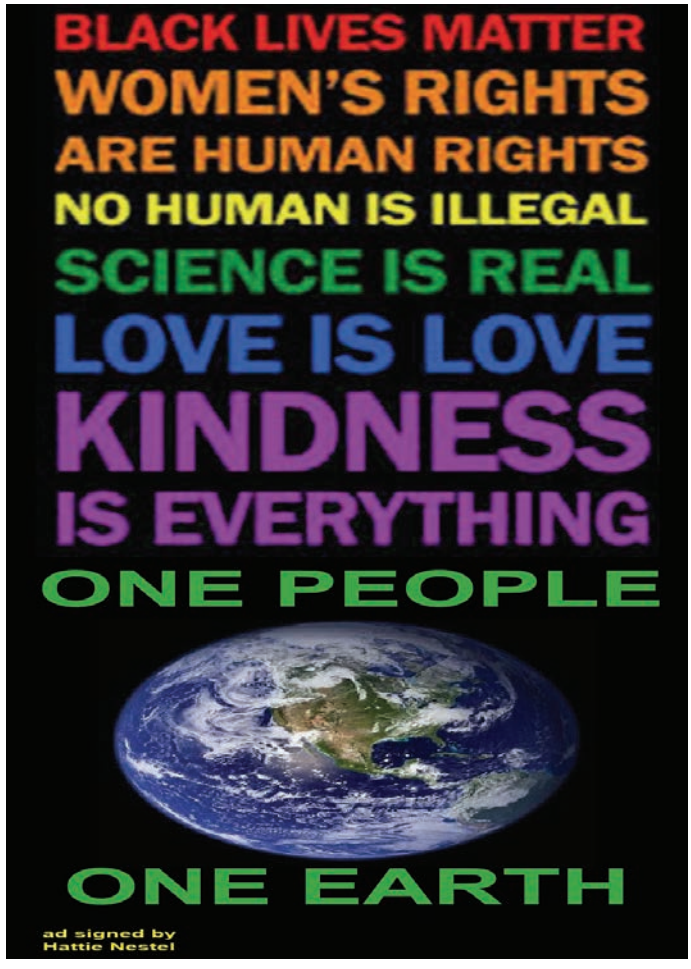
text and watercolor on paper by Brian Fournier

The forest rests quiet and calm today
colored gray, brown and white
with black boundaries sprinkled
upon an almost rust-tinged haze.
A crimson quickness appears silently,
the blood of the forest arriving
like a heart pulsing on winter snow
flowing quickly and surely over
hill and dale as other creatures
bow down to her majestic coat of arms.
Like a great artery, she winds through
the forest bringing life in red disguise.

Poet and artist Brian Fournier lives in Orange.



An old postcard shows a cluster of buildings, including factories, in early twentieth-century North Dana.



North Dana became Dana's largest village and commercial center

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residential area. Built originally as a Baptist church in Petersham, the structure that housed the town hall relocated to Dana in 1801. At the western end of the common, the Eagle Hotel provided fifteen rooms for guests. Other landmarks included a general store, schoolhouse, Congregational church, and roughly two dozen homes.

Dana Center Cemetery contained more than seven hundred graves relocated to Quabbin Park Cemetery in Ware during construction of Quabbin Reservoir.

Located on Swift River Middle Branch, North Dana became Dana's largest village and commercial center during the late nineteenth century. Industries included a hat company that exported palm-leaf hats to markets around the world. It also produced Shaker bonnets, straw hats, and top hats.

Erected in 1846 at the site of an early sawmill, a factory manufactured legs for pianos, organs, and billiard tables. Various owners rebuilt and expanded the facility after four fires. From 1880 to the 1930s, the mill subsequently housed the Crawford and Tyler Company that produced shoddy, recycled cloth utilized to make overcoats, blankets, and other garments.

After establishment of a quarry at Soapstone Hill in 1852, a nearby factory processed extracts of soapstone for manufacture of sinks, tabletops, tubs, cookers, bed warmers, and other products. Founded in 1890, Swift River Box Company made containers for apples, hardware, beverages, and other commodities. Other businesses included a grain company, cider mill, general store, charcoal kiln, and hotels.

Completed in 1873 along the corridor of Swift River, the Athol and Enfield Railroad or Rabbit Run included a depot near the Soapstone Hill quarry. Advent of the railroad prompted rapid growth in North Dana.

Situated between Dana Center and North Dana, Doubleday Village was a small community on the east branch of Fever Brook. Named for the Doubleday family that established a settlement there during the 1820s, it comprised several homes, sawmills, a box shop, and a brickyard.

At the present site of Quabbin Reservoir Gate 41 on Route 32A, the hamlet of Storrsville was annexed to Dana in 1842 from portions of Petersham and Hardwick. During the nineteenth century, Storrsville contained gristmills and sawmills, a shop that produced pocketbooks, a cheese factory, hotel, school, two cemeteries, and several homes.

Like other communities of the Quabbin region, Dana was a popular summer resort destination during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many camps and cottages were established at Pottapaug Pond, Neeseponsett Pond, and other waterways.

Upon disincorporation of Dana in April 1938, approximately ten thousand acres of the town's land was annexed to Petersham. Numerous buildings, including the North Dana railroad station, were rebuilt in other communities. Because of elevations above Quabbin Reservoir's waterline, the eastern portion of Dana, including sites of Dana Center, Doubleday Village, and Storrsville, was not flooded but has no commerce or inhabitants today.

In 2013, the National Park Service listed Dana Center on the National Register of Historic Places. Hikers visit Dana Common 1.7 miles down the road from Quabbin Reservation Gate 40 off Route 32A in Petersham.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

renewal builds slowly as moods shift from winter outlook

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for crisp spring scents, opening windows for brief bursts of fresh air, eating lighter foods, bringing home newly sprouted seedlings, or curating playlists that feel like sunshine.

While none of the listed activities qualifies as dramatic, together they create a gentle rise in energy—a reminder that renewal doesn't arrive all at once. It builds slowly, quietly, and almost invisibly. Quabbin region residents lean into and embrace the steady return to light.

Freelance writer Amber Robidoux lives in Orange.

QUABBIN CURRENTS:
Key Steps and Players in Formulation of Quabbin Reservoir

by J. R. Greene

Quabbin Reservoir is the largest and latest portion of metropolitan Boston's water supply system.

The concept for the reservoir and accompanying Ware River diversion was first broached in 1895 with a report issued by Massachusetts Board of Public Health. The report recommended construction of what became Wachusett Reservoir north of Worcester. The report mentioned both Ware and Swift rivers as future possible water sources for metro Boston as well as Millers, Deerfield, and Westfield rivers.

After construction of Wachusett Reservoir from 1895 to 1908, more communities joined the system of the Metropolitan Water Board. Water demand grew.

A display by the state of Massachusetts at the Jamestown, Virginia, Exposition of 1907 included a map showing Swift River as a future water source for metro Boston. The last great wave of immigration from Europe and industrialization spurred by the World War I caused the water board to seek expansion of the system.

In 1919, the Massachusetts legislature commissioned a study of new possible water supplies for places around the state. The Metropolitan District Commission, which took over duties of the water board that year, and the renamed state Department of Public Health undertook the study. The joint board had the chief sanitary engineer of the health department, X. H. Goodnough, as its chief engineer.

The joint board issued its 284-page report in January 1922 as House Document #1550. Twenty pages dealt with water needs of southeastern Massachusetts, while the rest concerned needs of metropolitan Boston. The water plan proposed to divert water from Ware River in Barre and Millers River above Athol to flood Swift River Valley to create a huge water supply reservoir. The proposal was nicknamed the Goodnough Plan, after the chief engineer.

Many interests quickly raised objections to the plan. Swift River Valley residents did not want to be forced out of their homes, and mill interests on Ware, Swift, and Millers rivers did not want to see water generating capacity reduced by proposed diversions. Some in metropolitan Boston objected to the estimated fifty-nine-million-dollar cost of the projects.

The legislature's water supply committee attempted several field trips to examine the proposed sources and held public hearings at some of them, including one in Enfield in May 1922. Selectmen of Swift River towns presented a petition asking for fair property compensation provisions for valley landowners. Others sought quick action on the proposal so they could begin to plan for their future. Roland Sawyer, state representative of Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott along with his hometown of Ware, strongly opposed the Goodnough Plan.

No water supply bill passed in 1922. The following year, the legislative water committee toured sites of proposed projects but was not supplied with a "disinterested engineer" to advise it. As one legislator noted, "Engineer Goodnough accompanied us on all of our field trips, endlessly explaining the beauties of his plan at the expense of all others."

After more wrangling, the 1924 session of the legislature passed a bill creating a three-man Metropolitan Water Supply Investigating Commission with funding for its own engineer. The governor appointed Charles Gow, a Boston engineer; George Booth, publisher of the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette*; and Elbert Lochridge, an engineer with the City of Springfield to serve on the commission with Allen Hazen, a distinguished New York water engineer, appointed as chief engineer.

The investigating commission issued its 177-page report in December 1925. The report recommended that metropolitan Boston share Ware River as a water source and that the Assabet River and later the Ipswich River be used for additional water for Boston. The report became known as the Gow Plan after the commission's chairman. When the legislative committee on water supply reviewed the report in early 1926, many opposed it. X. H. Goodnough vehemently opposed it because, as one western Massachusetts official testified at a hearing, Goodnough had "become obsessed with his plan, and desired that it be completed as a monument to him."

A dam named for X. H. Goodnow, grassy Goodnow Dike, above, operates on the southeastern end of the Quabbin Reservoir to impound the waters of Beaver Brook and therefore close that exit to the Chicopee River Watershed. Smaller than Winsor Dam, Goodnough Dike also traps waters of Quabbin Reservoir. X. H. Goodnow played prominently in engineering the reservoir.
photo by Dale Monette

Along with some metropolitan Boston Interests, others opposing the Gow Plan saw it as an inadequate solution. People from the Assabet and Ipswich river valleys opposed diversions from their streams, and Worcester felt its city left out of any use of water from Ware River.

After weeks of hearings, the legislative committee took another field trip to proposed water supply sources. No compromise bill emerged. Interested parties brought the problem before Governor Alvan Fuller, who met with legislators and engineers representing all sides of the issue. The governor decided to consult with a group of engineers including Goodnough, MDC Chairman David B. Keniston, Gow, and J. Waldo Smith, a friend of Goodnough. The group reported to the governor that they essentially supported the Goodnough Plan.

The legislature took several more weeks to finalize a bill for what became Ware River diversion. Worcester was placated by allowing them the right to draw water from the Wachusett Reservoir instead of from Ware River. Legislators heard testimony from the governor of Connecticut protesting withdrawal of water that would flow into Connecticut via the Connecticut River. In 1928, the state of Connecticut unsuccessfully sued Massachusetts in the Massachusetts Supreme Court.

On May 28, 1926, Governor Fuller signed Chapter 375 of the Acts of 1926, the Ware River Act creating Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission. The act charged building Ware River diversion works and a tunnel to Wachusett Reservoir. The act charged the new commission with proposing legislation to authorize flooding of Swift River Valley and purchase real estate there.

The water supply commission chose Frank E. Winsor as chief engineer. Winsor had just completed the Scituate Reservoir water supply in Rhode Island. Goodnough would become a consulting engineer for the water commission until his death in 1935.

A later edition of "Quabbin Currents" will discuss passage of the Swift River Act in 1927.

Lifelong Athol resident J.R. Greene has written sixteen books relating to the history of the Quabbin Reservoir and the towns destroyed to build it. His 1981 book, *The Creation of Quabbin Reservoir*, suppliied information for "Quabbin Currents."

NATURE'S NUANCES

text and photo by Clare Green

bound by sky and love
roots grow deep within
earthened rich soil

Roots importantly absorb water, minerals, and nutrients that a plant needs to grow. A root system network silently functions while allowing intricate communication from root to root. During winter, roots rest silently dormant. Roots typically stop growing when soil temperature reaches below forty degrees, but if soil is moist and above forty, roots may grow a bit during the warmer days of winter.

A root collar at the visible base of the tree helps to stabilize a sugar maple.

An underground structure, a root system produces stability like an anchor for growth of a plant. It encompasses and expands into newer areas of soil in order to support healthy plant growth. Tree roots send communications throughout the forest for protection, safety, and encouragement, according to Zoe Schlanger in The Light Eaters. Sunflowers, for example, exhibit social compatibility while growing.

Always something new to learn. Edible mycelium roots of mushrooms have high protein content. Branching, thread-like filaments called hyphae compose mycelium that serves as a root system for various fungi.

Root vegetables—categorized as root, tuber, bulb or corm, and rhizome—operate as powerhouses of nutrition. The best roots to eat include carrots, beets, yellow dock, and rutabaga. The edible taproot comprises the fleshy and enlarged root of the plant.

I once had quite the struggle to pull up a yellow dock root. No wonder. It has the deepest taproot sometimes from two to three feet deep! A dynamic accumulator by definition, yellow dock root mines for minerals such as calcium, potassium, and nitrogen.

One yellow dock root plant produces up to thirty thousand seeds. The presence of yellow dock root indicates good soil. Eating dock root helps to tone the liver and kidneys and detoxify bodily systems. It can irritate stomach and intestinal lining, and those with gastrointestinal conditions should not consume dock root.

Another root vegetable, the potato—technically a tuber—has eyes or nodes that can sprout and grow into new plants. Another tuber, the sweet potato, is super rich in nutrients.

Onions and garlic categorize as bulbs. A rhizome, ginger has a type of underground stem growing horizontally.

Along a favorite forested path, notice root collars at the base of trees. The large, lengthy roots visible near the surface help to secure the tree upright. Those roots grow longest and thickest toward the direction of the prevailing winds.

"Where are your roots?" may refer to one's genealogy. On introduction to someone new, the Irish always ask that question.

"We're rooting for you!" may bring hopeful cheer and goodwill to a friend in need.

Words themselves have roots, the basic forms of each word.

The word root presents in so many ways—as a noun, a verb, or an adjective.

Clare Green of Warwick is a lifelong educator and naturalist. She welcomes visitors to the woodland labyrinth and fairy cottage.
dclara_2000@yahoo.com • claregreenbooks.com

Mount Everest summons Craig Twohey and companions to Nepal's base camp

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Craig Twohey's hiking companions Sean, Sergio, and Craig, from left, pause during their climb.

photos courtesy of Craig Twohey

said, with loss of appetite one of the signs of altitude sickness. When she didn't feel well, Sherpas brought Eva to a lower elevation for her safety on the last day. Icy conditions made walking slippery on the group's final day of hiking.

Twohey described daily crystal-clear blue skies. Looking back at his amazing trip, he commented that he had trained well for high altitudes. His legs felt okay after daily six-to-eight mile hikes. Although gaining altitude each day, the hikes did not take place on a steady incline but rather on a gentle increase in elevation with lots of ups and downs.

Railroad enthusiast, historian, and retired UMass research technician, Chris Coyle lives in Athol. He recently launched his memoir *We Lived in the Woods* about family summers in a Maine cabin. He's at work on a new book, *Trains and Me.*

creation of Quabbin Reservoir reshaped the region

continued from page 9

At the shore of Quabbin Reservoir, it looks as if that vast body of water has always been here, but of course, that is not the case. In the early years of the past century, engineers and water managers in Boston looked west for new sources of drinking water beyond polluted wells in the city. In 1848, Boston received water piped from Lake Cochituate in Framingham and Natick. Runoff from nearby development contaminated the waters of Lake Cochituate by the 1930s when Boston planners looked to the Swift River Valley in central Massachusetts as a good site for a new reservoir for the city. With displacement of the towns Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott, the landscape changed.

Our shaping of Quabbin region landscape continues. Sandplains, where the glacier left a level area, was ripe for development. Neighborhoods built there suppressed natural fires that kept sandplains open. Pine forests grew on surrounding plains and shaded out sandplain plants and animals. Scrub oak, pitch pine, bluestem grasses, New England Blazing Star, lowbush blueberry, tiger beetles, meadowlarks, and grasshopper sparrows no longer had needed habitat.

Many Massachusetts species of concern need such habitat. The state has moved to reclaim some sand plain habitats in the Quabbin region. There, the state arranged for removal of mature white pines that shade out most rare and endangered sand plain plants and animals that once lived in the pitch pine forest on special sandy soils of the plains.

Pitch pines survive better on sand plains than white pines and let more light to the ground than a white pine forest.

To change white pine forest to lasting pitch pine forest, the state sponsors removal of white pine trees, with no parts left behind to rot. Heavy equipment used to clear out white pines intentionally kills recently sprouted and young white pines that would in the future compete with pitch pines. Rare species can grow from seeds waiting in the sand. A rich complex of unusual plants and animals will again establish in the Quabbin region. Biodiversity matters.

Drought and more violent rainstorms also change the look of the land. Once isolated islands in Quabbin Reservoir connect by spits of sand. Streams that ran clear after a violent rainstorm carry loose dirt into lakes and ponds. Faster streams can break through beaver ponds that then run dry. Not static, the landscape of the Quabbin region will continue to undergo change.

Experienced nature center direcvtor Sue Cloutier specializes in biodiversity and educational programs. She is inventorying living things on her New Salem property.

Sandplains resulted when glaciers left level areas like those above. Over time, people often developed sandplains with with towns, farms, commercial areas, roads, railroads, airports, and more.

Quabbin Gate 30 Keystone Bridge Stabilized

by Paul Godfrey

Keystone Bridge, built without use of cement in 1866 on the middle branch of Swift River, stood in danger of collapse for four years until October 15, 2025, when work began to stabilize the bridge.

Friends of Quabbin assembled a unique team for the task. Michael Weitzner of Thistle Stone Works provided expertise on dry stone construction with the repair involving no cement, just rocks. Marc Curtis of Curtis Construction Services of Brookfield did excavations.

Scott Campbell and Alex Surreira represented Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Quabbin. Paul Godfrey, Ed Comeau, and Dale Monette, Friends of Quabbin, documented work.

A stone platform for excavation work rose on the southeast corner of the bridge before focus on building a wing wall that props up the east spandrel, the triangular space between the arch and the upper surface that extends to the side and forms the ramp onto and over the arch. That ramp onto the arch rises ten feet above water level. A wing wall keeps the spandrel from pushing out more rocks and provides additional support to the arch.

The crew dedicated final days to making the work site look relatively undisturbed by adding loam and seeding native plants for spring bloom.

Cost of restoring Keystone Bridge proved difficult to estimate because of the nature of the original construction. Friends of Quabbin paid costs that greatly exceeded well-considered estimates.

Friends of Quabbin continue to seek donations, especially to provide signage explaining the bridge's unique history and to credit the donors for the work.

Supporters may send donations to the Friends of Quabbin, 485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007

Paul Godfrey, UMass professor emeritus, serves as Friends of Quabbin treasurer and newsletter editor.

During summer and fall 2025, funded by Friends of Quabbin, expert contractors in dry stone construction saved Keystone Bridge from collapse. The bridge awaits repair of stone work, top photo. Repair proceeds in the middle photo. Bottom photo shows completed work.

photos by Dale Monette

region's ski areas flourished until

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Snow Hill—originally Ward Hill—in Phillipston attracted many skiers, shown with an Imp groomer, left, for tidying up snow on the slope next to a T-bar from Austria with skiers waiting at the bottom of the for the lift to take them to the top.

photo from the 1970s by Doug Smith of New England Lost Ski Areas Project

old tractor motor, a snack shop, and a small hut. It operated from the 1940s to the early 1970s, when the state expanded Route 2.

Originally known as Ward Hill Ski Area, Snow Hill was a popular winter attraction of Phillipston during the 1960s and 1970s. Built by the family of Herb and Doris Smith, the facility included two slopes, five trails, floodlights for night skiing, a lodge with a dining area and equipment shop, a ski school, a machine for grooming trails, and a T-bar lift imported from Austria that replaced the original rope tow. Skiers enjoyed views to Mount Monadnock from a summit house atop the east slope. The Smiths closed the facility in 1979.

During the 1960s, another ski operation at Christian Hill on Williamsville Road existed in Barre. Built and managed by the Bassett family, it had one trail with a vertical drop of 160 feet, a small lodge at the top of the hill, and a 600-foot long rope tow powered by a 1953 Ford truck.

At Pine Acres Campground in Oakham, the Packard family ran a ski area from 1961 to 1974 with five trails, three rope tows, professional equipment for grooming, lights, a ski patrol, and a lodge near Lake Dean. Activities included an annual winter festival, races, and instruction for local school groups.

At Mount Grace in Warwick, downhill skiing began during the 1930s on open slopes and trails to the summit. During the late 1930s, Civilian Conservation Corps workers created two routes, Pro Ski Trail with an elevation gradient of 1,000 feet over one mile, and a slope for novices that dropped roughly 740 feet. Other

early 2000s

amenities included lifts, shelters, and fireplaces. In 1950, the *Massachusetts Ski Guide* publication described the Mount Grace facility as a "championship racing course" with "excellent novice slopes."

Outdated infrastructure, the remote location of Warwick, and competition from resorts prompted closure of the Mount Grace ski area in the 1970s. Remnants of the rope-tow motor and poles stand as evidence of the site.

In the Pine Crest section of Hubbardston, a small ski operation comprised a wide slope with less than one hundred feet change of elevation and a rope tow powered by an old truck. It was known as an upside-down ski area because the entrance, lodge, and parking were at the top of the hill.

Many residents of Rutland, Worcester, and nearby communities learned to ski at Rutland Hill on Pommoguesset Road. Amenities included three trails, a slope for beginners, rope tows, and a concession stand. Owner Ray Kline groomed trails with an old bulldozer.

One of two ski areas built in Ware, Riggity Alps on Morse Avenue had an eight-hundred-foot-long slope, lights, a hut, and a rope tow with the engine of an old Rio truck. Managed by Donald and Evelyn Boos, it operated from 1947 to 1953.

Listings of a *Massachusetts Ski Guide* published in 1949 include a site on Gilbertville Road in Ware across from Allard Farm. Owned by Donald Scott, it had a 270-foot-long rope tow.

Private ski slopes with rope tows existed at Eagle Hill School in Hardwick and the former Pioneer Valley Academy, present site of the Massachusetts State Police Academy in New Braintree.

Several factors, including numerous mild winters with reductions in snowfall, expenses of equipment and insurance, housing developments, and competition from resorts, caused closure of most local ski areas by the late twentieth century. "Traces of these places can still be found in the landscape, but as each year passes they fade further into history," Davis added.

Thanks to Jeremy Davis and contributors to NELSAP for information and photographs. Find more details at nelsap.org

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

Skiers at Mount Grace in Warwick used a rope tow to convey them from the present Round Top Mountain Trail to the top of the slope.

photo by John Burk

winter drive through Quabbin region

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Hardwick Common features the Calvin Pagie Memorial Fountain across from the building housing Hardwick General Store, Post Office, and Mimi's Café. Other nearby attractions include Hardwick Historical Society, the Old Town Hall, the Brick Schoolhouse, and the First Universalist Church.

A South Quabbin road features two horses and their leader all wrapped up for winter.

see sights up close, perhaps do a bit of shopping or antiquing, and enjoy a great breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Located just about seventy-five miles from Boston and the big cities that make up Boston suburbs, the Quabbin region lies worlds away in many ways. The towns comprising Quabbin's Golden Triangle remain a secret oasis, a private sanctuary, a relaxing retreat from the cares and concerns of big city life.

In winter after a snowstorm, the Golden Triangle offers iconic sights characterizing Massachusetts and New England throughout the world: snow-covered country roads, frozen lakes and ponds, raging rivers and meandering streams,

offers classic New England diverse sights

As the circuit winds around, Route 202 in New Salem features woodlands and farmlands including Little Creek Farm.

maples and evergreens frosted with snow, stately town commons and gazebos, time-honored and well-preserved cemeteries and burial grounds, classic town halls and meetinghouses, famed statues and monuments, white-steeple churches, beloved libraries, lovely town parks, farms, bright red barns, and picturesque hills and valleys.

And then appears one of Massachusetts's greatest hidden treasures—Quabbin Reservoir, often called the Accidental Wilderness. One of the largest man-made water supplies in the nation, Quabbin delivers roughly 190 million gallons of fresh, clean water each day to Greater Boston. Its creation came, of course, at a heavy cost with emptying, flooding, and erasing of the towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott that survive only in memories, old photographs, and historical records. Completed in 1946, the reservoir stretches 18 miles, spans 39 square miles, averages 45 feet in depth, and holds an astonishing 412 billion gallons of water. Thanks to its carefully protected watershed, the water remains remarkably pure to provide Boston with some of the cleanest, best-tasting tap water anywhere.

While providing clean drinking water for Greater Boston, the Quabbin makes a feast for the eyes and a photographer's dream. The camera will become anyone's best friend whether traveling with Nikon, Canon, or Sony—or light, as I did, with just my iPhone15 ProMax.

My visit took place the day after a January snowstorm that delivered from four to eight inches of snow to the area. The Quabbin Reservoir and surroundings are just as beautiful in spring or summer or with absolute radiance when dressed in autumn's vibrant colors. No matter the season, photographs will provide treasured memories of a day in Quabbin's Golden Triangle with incentive to visit again one day soon.

photos by Mitchell R. Grosky

Photographer Mitchell R. Grosky lives in Athol.

Uniquely Quabbin Calendar Listings

PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK DETAILS FOR EVENTS

January 10, Saturday

The Green Sisters
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Worskshop 13
Church Street
Ware
Hailing from a small farm in rural Massachusetts, the four Green Sisters grew up with music accompanying their chores. It's hard not to smile when treated with their tight harmonies and high-energy tunes.
workshop13.org

January 14, Wednesday

Virtual: Superspy Science
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Athol Public Library
Virtual
Kathryn Harkup explores the exploits of James Bond, 007, from the practicalities of building a volcano-based lair, to whether being covered in gold paint really will kill you. The talk will supply answers to Bond villain questions. Registration required.
athollibrary.org

FIND INFORMATION ABOUT TOWN BOARD AND ANNUAL MEETINGS AT WEBSITES BELOW

Athol • athol-ma.gov
Barre • townofbarre.com
Belchertown • belchertown.org
Brookfield • brookfieldma.us
East Brookfield • eastbrookfieldma.us
Erving erving-ma.gov
Hardwick • hardwick-ma.gov
Hubbardston • hubbardstonma.gov
Leverett • leverett.ma.us
New Salem • newsalemma.org
North Brookfield • northbrookfield.net
Oakham • oakham-ma.gov
New Braintree • newbraintreema.us
Orange • townoforange.org
Pelham • pelhamma.gov
Petersham • townofpetersham.weebly.com
Phillipston • phillipston-ma.gov
Royalston • royalston-ma.gov
Rutland • rutlandma.gov
Shutesbury • shutesbury.org
Templeton • templetonma.gov
Ware • townofware.com
Warwick • warwickma.org
Wendell • wendellmass.us
West Brookfield • wbrookfield.com

January 16, Friday

Six One Five Collective
Center At Eagle Hill
242 Old Petersham Road
Hardwick
A powerhouse blend of country, Americana. and pop music.
thecenterateaglehill.org

January 17, Saturday

Snowball Family Dance
5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Rutland Free Public Library
280 Main Street
Rutland
Music, dancing, snacks, face painting, crafts, family photo opportunity. Come dressed up for family photos, enjoy music, crafts, and finger foods.

January 18, Sunday

Hilltown Ham Hocks
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Red Apple Farm
455 Highland Ave
Phillipston
An evening of live music with the Hilltown Ham Hocks performing on the Brew Barn Stage.

January 22, Thursday

Bingo at the HUB
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Winchendon Community Action
5 Summer Drive
Winchendon
Bring your friends, grab your lucky charm! Fun-filled evening of bingo and prizes! Every fourth Thursday.

Uniquely Quabbin listings

continued from previous page

January 23, 24, and 25
Friday, Saturday, and Sunday
January 23 and 24
Friday and Saturday at 7:00 p.m.
January 25
Sunday at 2:00 p.m.
Into the Woods Jr.
Center At Eagle Hill
242 Old Petersham Road
Hardwick
Storybook characters come together in an acclaimed musical.
thecenterateaglehill.org

February 7, Saturday
Nova Linea Contemporary Dance
7:00 p.m.
Center At Eagle Hill
242 Old Petersham Road
Hardwick
Explore the depth of human emotion and connection with Nova Linea's *some wounds never heal.*
thecenterateaglehill.org

February 8, Sunday
(snow date February 22, Sunday)
Celebrate Black History Month through song sponsored by Lancaster Historical Society.
2:00 p.m.
Bulfinch Church, First Parish Unitarian
725 Main Street
Lancaster
Featuring vocalist Dr. Lanu Stoddard. Contact (978) 621-7600 to arrange a guided tour of the 1816 Bulfinch Church before the concert.

February 12, Thursday
Sewing Machine Basics for Beginners
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Athol
A workshop for people who have never touched a sewing machine with demonstration of how to make a patch pocket for utility or decoration. Registration required.
atholllibrary.org

February 14, Saturday
Valentine Day Teas
morning and afternoon
Rutland Free Public Library
280 Main Street
Rutland
Hot tea, hot cocoa, juice, finger foods.

February 15, Sunday
All Roads Lead to Rutland
7:00 p.m.
Rutland Historical Society
232 Main Street
Rutland

February 21, Saturday
Sock Hop
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Rutland Sportsman Club
75 Pleasantdale Road
Rutland
Back to the 1950s ready to boogie! Admission $10. Cash bar. Food for purchase from Flippin' the Bird. Tickets online at the Town of Rutland website or at the Annex, 246 Main Street or at Rutland Sportsmans Club, 75 Pleasantdale Road

March 6, 7, and 8
Friday, Saturday, and Sunday
March 6 and March 7
Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.
March 7 and March 8
Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m.
The Enchanted Bookshop
Barre Players Theater
64 Common Street
Barre
During the day, A Likely Story may look like any other used bookstore. But at night, it's a place where magic happens. That's when the characters inside the books come alive.

March 15, Sunday
Influential Women of Rutland
7:00 p.m.
Rutland Historical Society
232 Main Street
Rutland

March 21, Saturday
Scenes: A Billy Joel Experience
7:00 p.m.
Center At Eagle Hill
242 Old Petersham Road
Hardwick
A musical journey through the iconic songs of the Piano Man!
thecenterateaglehill.org

March 22, Sunday
Community Expo
11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Rutland Free Public Library
280 Main Street
Rutland
Interactive activities about Rutland community organizations.
Free admission.

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events compiled by Emily Boughton
Please submit listings for the next issue
before March 20, 2026
to UQCalendar@gmail.com

Uniquely Quabbin listings

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March 26, Thursday

Forestry Talk with Derek Beard
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Athol
Presentation followed by conversation.
athollibrary.org

April 10, Friday

Delvena Theatre Co. Presents: Bon Voyage Forever!
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Athol
A live comedy murder mystery set on a cruise ship. For ages 18 and older. Registration required.
athollibrary.org

Jonathan Dely
7:00 p.m.
Center At Eagle Hill
242 Old Petersham Road
Hardwick
From a career on Wall Street to one of jazz's most extraordinary live concerts.
thecenterateaglehill.org

correction

Uniquely Quabbin **published the photo of cows, above, on Page 18 of the September-December 2025 issue. The caption says the cows lined up on Hines Bridge Road, New Braintree. The owner contacted us to say the cows live on Hines Bridge Road, North Brookfield.** ***Uniquely Quabbin*** **regrets the error.**

April 14, Tuesday

History At Play
Rutland Free Public Library
280 Main Street
Rutland
A Rutland Historical Society Program featuring Rachel Revere.

April 26, Sunday

"I Now Pronounce you, Lucy Stone"
2:00 p.m.
Bulfinch Church - First Parish Unitarian
725 Main Street
Lancaster
Judith Kalaora in *History at Play* will portray West Brookfield-born Lucy Stone, an orator, suffragist and abolitionis. sponsored by Lancaster Historical Society
Contact (978) 621-7600 to arrange a guided of the 1816 Bulfinch Church before the concert.

Sponsored by the Lancaster Historical Society

May 7, Thursday

Golden Age of Silent Films with Richard Hughes
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Athol
Silent film clips, newsreels, cartoons, movies, and footage all to live piano accompaniment from Richard Hughes. Includes a short Buster Keaton film, *Sherlock*. Registration required! Funded by Friends of the Library!
athollibrary.org

May 9, Saturday

Earth Day Clean Up
9:00 - 12:00 p.m.
Rutland
Meet on the Common for gloves and garbage bags for town cleanup to help keep Rutland beautiful and litter-free! Register in advance here: forms.gle/E5rF2waWfXaCmq7GA.

Sunshine illuminates Petersham Memorial Library after an early morning snowstorm.
photo by John Burk