

CONTENTS

volume 11, number 1 • May-August 2026

This issue features photos and art, nature, personalities, history, event listings, and sights to see in the uniquely Quabbin heart of Massachusetts.



Finding the Light
 watercolor on paper by Donna Eaton

ON THE FRONT COVER

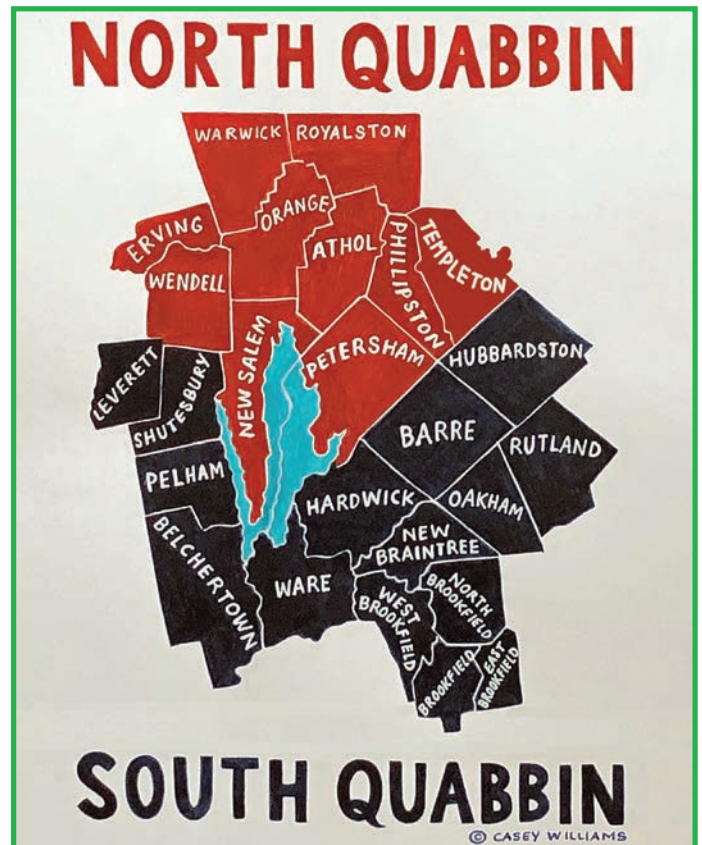
Spring Glory
 oil on canvas panel by Elizabeth Callahan

FIND CALENDAR LISTINGS ON PAGE 70.

FIND TOWN MEETINGS AND INFO ABOUT TOWN BOARDS
 AT WEBSITES FOR *UNIQUELY QUABBIN* TOWNS ON PAGE 70.

Quiet Places, Quiet Thoughts 4
 buds burst, seeds form 6
 glacial erratics endure 8
 turtle rescue league works to dispel myths 10
 variety of waters shapes region's history 12
 land trusts protect 2,500 acres of forestland 14
 University of the Wild encourages sense of place 16
 Quabbin gate acted as wartime weapons test range . . . 18
 Warwick had Revolutionary War-era Loyalist minister . . 22
 Mary Rowlandson's 17th-century trek through area . . . 24
 Hardwick's Calvin Paige prospected during Gold Rush 26

continued on next page



Quabbin towns past and present • maps © Casey Williams

CONTENTS

continued from previous page

lost towns ledgers reveal aspects of life	30
agricultural Greenwich centered on two villages	32
New Braintree celebrates 275th anniversary	36
New England Equestrian Center observes 25th year . . .	38
regional choruses welcome all who love to sing	40
<i>Uniquely Quabbin</i> poets	44
KRO's, Ye Olde Time New England Seafood	46
Quabbin Currents	63
Nature's Nuances	65
Our Waters observance June 27	68
<i>Uniquely Quabbin</i> listings	70

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, Erving, Hubbardston, Leverett, New Salem, North Brookfield, Orange, Pelham, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Rutland, Ware, Warwick, Wendell, and West Brookfield for supporting *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine with local cultural grants for 2026. The generous support from those 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.

Thank you to our readers who so generously support us with their donations. Not only do we appreciate your donations, but your kind, thoughtful enthusiastic words of support fill us with pride and the desire to continue bringing you this wonderful magazine.

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

The long cold, snowy winter has finally left us, and spring has arrived cool and rainy, with summer on its beautiful warm and sunny way. You will find plenty of articles to engage you on those lazy, warm days swinging in your hammock with an icy glass of lemonade in hand. You may find some interesting tidbit of history new to you, summer events to attend, and a restaurant or two you haven't visited yet. As always, artists and photographers have filled the magazine with beautiful images of summer and more.

So! Get reading and go have some fun.

Enjoy!

Debra Ellis

Athol Historical Society

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a note from the publisher of *Uniquely Quabbin*

Writers, artists, and photographers have brought fresh, vibrant, and absorbing articles and pictures to this May-August 2026 issue of *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine

From the forest to the gates of the reservoir to archives, libraries, and historical societies, our writers bring fresh and relevant information. Our photographers inevitably answer our call for the appropriate photo to enhance an article, while artists dependably depict features of the region with originality and (yes) affection. Behind the scenes, the editorial board quietly maintains what we consider appropriate standards. And, of course, we remain ever grateful to advertisers and donors.

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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West Brookfield Cultural Council

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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

seeing more animals out and about as summer emerges

by Sally Howe

As summer approaches, I think of ways the spring season eases into summer. Aside from grass growing and flowers blooming, I see more animals out and about.

One spring, I remember seeing an otter sliding on the thin ice of a small pond near where I lived. Suddenly, it raised up half its body and propelled itself under water through the ice.

At the edge of the ice, the otter the emerged with a frog in its mouth. It slipped back up onto the ice and lay on his back, devouring the frog

continued on page 52



Sally Howe



An otter subdues a frog in a Quabbin region pool.
photo by Rick Flematti



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summer hiking leads to paintings

watercolor on paper by Christine Texeira



Road to Water

watercolor on paper by Christine Texeira

After reading *Lost Towns of the Swift River Valley: Drowned by the Quabbin* by Elena Palladino and soon after attending a talk in Wendell about stopping Route 2 from cutting through town in the 1980s, I became fascinated by large-scale civil engineering projects—both those realized and those resisted. With very different outcomes, Wendell and Prescott share striking parallels.

I spent the summer of 2025 hiking through woods that could have become a highway and along shorelines that once were towns. One day, I walked from Farley to the Erving Energy Park and the next, from there to Wendell Depot. The journey resulted in a single painting of the water tower in the park.

Sweeping views of Quabbin Reservoir captured my artistic attention even more. Three additional paintings followed: a road dropping into water, *Windsor Dam Monument*, and *Quabbin Headquarters* shown here.

Christine Texeira discovered her love of figure drawing while studying math at the University of Lowell and continued her passion with the Naked Ladies drawing collective in New Salem. Over the years, she has explored art journaling, collage, and landscapes in watercolor, oil, and cold wax medium.

Buds Burst, Seeds Form, Life Goes On

text and photos by Sue Cloutier

A winter with snow makes it challenging to find signs of spring. Although the love songs of Black-capped Chickadees start in February, flowers and green leaves remain but a dream for at least a month or two. By April, plants show promise of the greens to come.



Skunk Cabbage

Nearby wetlands, even under cover of snow, harbor the first flower of spring actively melting the snow. Just by being alive, the flower of Skunk-cabbage makes itself known as it heats and melts the snow. If, by chance, someone steps

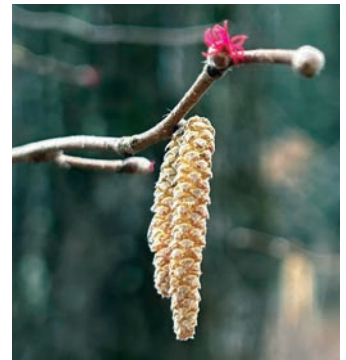
on or breaks the leaf or stem of Skunk-cabbage while searching for its flower, the reason for its common name becomes apparent.

With their guts backed up due to their winter sleep, hungry bears seek blooms of Skunk-cabbage each spring. The flower provides fresh and nutritious food

as well as a laxative for bears. When the bear poops in the woods and wetlands, the seeds emerge after their journey through bear country, and some of the seeds will produce plants. That works for the bear and the Skunk-cabbage, too.

More accessible than Skunk-cabbage yet still a challenge to discover are the flowers of some roadside shrubs and trees. Even in winter, the bare branches of trees and shrubs show promising structures. Promising full fledging in spring, buds of leaves, flowers, and branches appear even in the dead of winter.

Beaked Hazelnut blooms very early with flowers remaining into spring and summer. Male flowers hang down off the stem in narrow catkins with red, eyelash-like tiny female flowers forming at the end of branches or buds. Pollen from the catkin drifts in the wind to settle on sticky red stigmas of female flowers. Once fertilized, female flowers set seeds that hold real promise for new shrubs, although the nuts comprising favorite food for many animals become fully digested and never get to sprout.



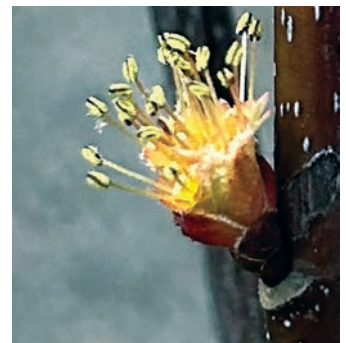
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Female Maple Bud, left, and Male Maple Bud

Small, paired buds of Maple trees eventually burst open and bring a blush of red and yellow to the trees. Red, Sugar, and Stripped Maples each uniquely and commonly populate the Quabbin region. Some Maples hold only male or female flowers, while some have both.

Maples depend on wind and insects to bring male pollen to female flowers. Maples then form

with Greening of the Landscape

double-winged seeds called samaras or spinners that twirl in the wind as they fall. Thus, seeds usually land beyond the shade of the parent tree. Each tree makes hundreds of such winged seeds, because not many find a good landing place and others become food for chipmunks and squirrels.



Hickory Bud

Later in the spring, Hickory and Ash trees burst their buds. Their large buds covered with protective scales hold compound leaves or flowers. When the buds burst open, the scales make the entire structure look flower-like. Finding buds early in the year

allows tracking their changes from bud to leaf or flower. Then, finally, nuts form from fertilized flowers.

It is possible to discover early alerts to seasonal change when finding tiny signals from plants. As the leaves of trees and shrubs emerge, wildflowers also emerge from roots or corms to make their presence known. Ferns emerge tightly coiled and then expand and add to the shade on the forest floor.

Seedlings and root sprouts all reach up toward any available light. Winter gray or brown landscape viewed from an overlook becomes a carpet of green in summer.

By summer's end, greens will turn to golden, red, and brown. Goldenrod offers gold, and Poison Ivy and Sumac, red. Sensitive Fern is among the very first to change from green to brown.



Poison Ivy

Seeds and Survival

Through all the stresses living things face, the important thing each species must do is reproduce enough so their species survives into the future. For a reason, some plants produce many seeds while other produce few. Some plants have evolved distasteful seeds not favored as foods, and those plants may survive as a species even when they produce few seeds. Other plants may have spined seeds or have seeds with hard husks that make them difficult for animals to eat. And some may hide their seeds underground or hold them covered and close to their stems.

Viewing seeds, flowers, and plants can raise questions. What are conditions of soil and light near the seed, flower, or plant? What other living things are its nearby neighbors? What is special about it that lets it survive as a species? Some questions stump even experts. And some questions may need more research. People do make discoveries.

continued on page 42

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region's glacial boulders called erratics

text and photos by Ken Levine

Used as landmarks and lookouts, rocked by mischievous individuals, climbed upon, serving as inspiration for artists, blown up in hopes of reassembly, and revered by the First People, mighty glacial boulders called erratics have endured over the millenia. Thousands of years ago, mile-high glaciers carried the behemoths, distinguished from the rock where they came to rest.

The designation erratic stems from the Latin *errare*, meaning to wander. Erratics have often become local landmarks with historical significance connected with folklore.

Rum Rock on Audubon Sanctuary land in Barre traces its name to a possibly fictitious tale about nineteenth-century Petersham in Julie Sherman's romantic book *The Old Road through Pirate Valley*. She writes,

On Sherman Hill, a runaway wagon drawn by four oxen and loaded with four barrels of rum crashed into the boulder, spilling rum all over the ground. On a clear day when the wind



On Audubon Sanctuary land in Barre, Jean Sinclair of Pirate Valley in Petersham pushes the erratic Rum Rock.

is in the right direction, one can still smell the rum as it trickles over the ground.

Rock House Reservation in West Brookfield, a south facing collection of erratics on Route 9, may have served as shelter for a Native American encampment



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have endured over millenia

and in the previous century as a popular picnic spot off the Copper Line, the trolley running between West Brookfield and Ware.

A collection of erratics between twenty and thirty feet high forms a cave-like shelter at Rock House Reservation. Their southern exposure made an excellent winter camp for Native Americans. Near two Native trails, the site may have been used for ceremony and worship.

Off Hastings Pond Road in Warwick, the Wawbeek erratic takes its name from a word meaning big rock in the Algonquin language. A 1916 inscription carved on the boulder reads “In the beginning—God” as a monument to God’s work on earth.

Rockin’ rocks appear in many places, including Rockingstone or Cradle Rock in Barre. Twenty feet tall with one giant rock balanced on top of another, no one has been able to make it rock for years. Referring to the outcome as the work of the devil, one story holds that Puritan era vandals pushed it and locked it in place.

continued on page 58



Janet Palin of Petersham takes a stand at West Brookfield’s Rock House Reservation.

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turtle rescue league works to dispel

by Ellen Woodbury

What large, prehistoric-looking turtle sometimes shows up in the road, on sandy beaches, or in ponds and lakes?

Likely, it's the common snapping turtle.

Fear and myths surround the common snapper that can reach 175 years of age and weigh as much as 90 pounds.

Snapping turtles make their homes in many Quabbin region ponds, lakes, and other waterways. Michaela Conder and Natasha Nowick of Turtle Rescue League in Southbridge work to dispel myths and ignite a respectful curiosity about the reptiles.

In sixteen years of operation, the rescue has seen a thousand snapping turtles including ninety-seven in 2025. Hours of observation and rehabilitation have provided the rescue an up-close study of the often hidden turtles.

Myth#1: Snapping turtles will bite off fingers and can break metal poles.

Fact: Since snapping turtles—tender and afraid—do not have teeth and since by nature they behave

defensively not aggressively, the risk of losing a finger stays low. If attacked or afraid, a turtle can stretch its neck and give a blow with its beak that may feel like a hammer whack. Snapping turtles bite with a force of a sixth the strength of a human bite. When lifted, they move and often scratch because they perceive humans as giant predators. The rescue advises not putting hands in front of any turtle's face.

Myth#2: Snapping turtles eat all gamefish in lakes and ponds as well as baby ducklings, other baby birds, and small mammals.

Fact: Snapping turtles are not good hunters. They prefer a quiet life in bottom mud and vegetation while eating dead, diseased, or dying fish as well as mussels and crayfish. They serve the environment of the wetlands by cleaning up the water. "They are amazing janitorial staff," exclaimed Natasha.

Fact: Shy and curious in water, snapping turtles watch from bottom mud and vegetation. Given enough distance and patience, a person may be able to watch a turtle watching them. Sometimes kayakers have seen snapping turtles swimming alongside. Its curiosity can lead to boat propeller strikes as a turtle investigates the color of the boat bottom.

Myth #4: Snapping turtles make good pets.

Fact: Law prohibits taking wild animals like snapping turtles, and taking one would deprive the animal of its natural habitat, food, and way of life. Feeding turtles puts them at risk of being caught by a fishing hook or poached.

Snapping turtles nest from May to July, the time when people most likely see them in the road, either crossing to build a nest or injured by car hits. The rescue advises helping an uninjured turtle out of the road by approaching it from behind and laying something like a beach towel over the length of its body before picking it up near its back by its sides. The rescue says to place it, most likely a female, in the direction she had headed. She likely knows where she was going!

If finding an injured turtle, usually by a car hit, the rescue advises taking a picture before placing the turtle in a clean, dry, empty cardboard box with a towel over



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myths about snapping turtles



snappers near East Branch of Swift River, Petersham
photo by Dale Monette



snapper near Fever Brook, Quabbin Gate 37
photo by Rick Flematti



a Brookfield snapper
photo by Michaela Conder



a New Salem hatchling snapper
photo by Sue Cloutier



a Rutland snapper
photo by Michaela Conder

the top. The rescue suggests sending the photo to Turtle Rescue League after calling (508) 404-7887 or contacting animal control or a wildlife rehabilitator.

continued on page 59

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rich variety of Quabbin region waters

by Allan Butler

Nature has gifted the Quabbin region with a rich variety of waters and, for residents, all just a short drive away. The waters that have shaped the region's history in countless ways from powering industry to facilitating the very existence of towns. From the first sawmill built

in the region to management of the drinking water of Quabbin, waters have shaped the area and its people.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sawmills proliferated in the Quabbin region. Residents of Barre, Hardwick, Hubbardston, Rutland, Ware, among many, created mills



Royalston's Doane's Falls dashes through lush greenery.
photo by David Brothers



An angler makes the most of a Millers River sunrise in Athol.
photo by John Burk

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along Ware River. Former towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott depended on power from Swift River as did Belchertown, Hardwick, New Salem, Pelham, Petersham, Shutesbury, and Ware. Athol and Orange colonial mills operated on Millers River. Other rivers and streams in the area hosted mills that originally depended on river power.

Twentieth-and twenty-first-century water experiences include the annual spring sixty-plus-year-old River Rat Race from Athol to Orange along Millers River. Anglers fish shoreside or in boats at Quabbin Reservoir where fish populate its clear depths. Waterfalls throughout area forests attract hikers.

Many of the region's ponds and lakes host summer cottages built generations ago when some began traveling from the city in the summer. Even today, the first trip of the season may involve cleaning up after mice and betting on who will be first to jump in still, chilly waters.

Massachusetts, fortunately, has many bodies of water with little or no development. By design with more than 180 miles of undeveloped shoreline and countless miles of old roads, gated Quabbin Reservoir roads



A twentieth-century postcard shows Ware River.

have gone to dirt. Few places in the country can compete with its wildness. Even the Millers River has long stretches with no houses on its banks. The section from Royalston to Athol represents some five miles of winding wilderness with only an occasional glimpse of a railroad track. At each turn, it enters a new world.

Many undeveloped smaller waterways wind through area woodlands and fields. Some visible from a road punctuate a familiar drive. Others hide down trails where few venture. Others accessed only by canoe, kayak, or hike run near no trail at all.

State parks, town conservation land, and organizations like Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust and the Trustees of Reservations open many wilderness areas to the public. Massachusetts has protected some twenty-eight percent of its land as Green and continues working to increase the percentage.

Find the latest information at athol-ma.gov/parks-trails

A resident of Athol, Allan Butler, also known as Stripernut, has been a fishing guide and outdoor writer for more than thirty years with a column in *On the Water* magazine. He serves on Athol's open spaces and parks board.

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land trusts protect 2,500 acres of forestland

by John Burk



The protected Sarah Cows Forest at Pelham Hills extends from Mount Orient in Pelham to Poverty Mountain in Shutesbury.
drone photo by Jamie Malcolm Brown

Finalized through collaborations between local land trusts and partners, a recent initiative protected twenty-five hundred acres of forestland in portions of seven towns of the west Quabbin region and adjacent Connecticut River Valley. Five conserved properties provide numerous benefits such as diverse habitats for wildlife, protection of water quality, mitigation of climate change, and opportunities for public recreation.

“This landscape scale conservation project is extremely significant because it includes two of the largest unprotected contiguous forested tracts in the state,” said Kristin DeBoer, executive director of Kestrel Land Trust, KLT, headquartered in Amherst. “The Quabbin region is one of the most critical forested areas in Massachusetts for biodiversity and climate resilience,” she added.

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in seven towns west of Quabbin Reservoir

In 2024, the former owner of the properties, Amherst-based timber company W.D. Cowls initiated the project with KLT. During the past twenty years, KLT and Cowls have collaborated for protection of more than eight thousand acres in the Quabbin region. A private investment firm that specializes in land conservation, sustainable forest management, and ecosystem services, Lyme Timber Company purchased the Cowls parcels in December 2024. For permanent protection of the land, Lyme Timber partnered with KLT; Trustees of Reservations, TTOR; and Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, MGLCT.

One of two large tracts managed jointly by KLT and TTOR, Sarah Cowls Forest at Pelham Hills extends from Mount Orient in northwestern Pelham to Poverty Mountain in Shutesbury. A crucial link between land conserved by KLT and the towns of Pelham and Amherst, the 1,094-acre parcel contains headwaters for Amethyst Brook, a major tributary of Fort River. The property's namesake, Sarah Cowls Jones, a sixth-generation Cowls, stewarded thousands of acres of land owned by her family.

Establishment of Sarah Cowls Forest ensures public access for a popular segment of the Robert Frost Trail, RFT. An iconic long distance hiking route managed and maintained by KLT, RFT passes through portions of Belchertown, Pelham, Shutesbury, Leverett, and Wendell.

Located in northern Belchertown between Quabbin Reservoir and the Mount Holyoke Range, Hop Brook Forest lies within another corridor of conservation land providing habitats and travel routes for wildlife such as moose, migratory songbirds, and brook trout. Natural

features include eleven hundred acres of contiguous forest and a segment of Hop Brook, designated a coldwater fisheries resource by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Preservation of Hop Brook Forest adds to more than eight hundred acres conserved by KLT and the town of Belchertown, including Holland Glen Conservation Area with a scenic waterfall.

Plans for restoration of a segment of the New England National Scenic Trail in Hop Brook Forest and Holland Glen are in development, according to DeBoer.

"The Pelham and Belchertown properties are critical to maintaining connectivity to benefit wildlife habitat and water quality in the Connecticut River Valley and are part of an effort to protect the broader Appalachian landscape," said Peter Stein of Lyme Timber Company.

Established in December 2025 by MGLCT, Eagleville Barrens Conservation Area preserves two hundred acres of diverse forests and wetlands on the west side of Lake Rohunta in New Salem and Orange. Dave Small, MGLCT conservation director, described the property as "one of the North Quabbin region's most ecologically rich landscapes."

Upon completion of an updated inventory of biodiversity, MGLCT plans restoration of pine barrens that likely characterized the landscape of Eagleville prior to the twentieth century. In 1883, a visitor described "vast plains which look like western prairies in miniature," according to the *Lake Rohunta Natural Resource Inventory* of 2000. Sustained by sandy glacial soils and periodic fires, pine barrens support many rare

continued on page 60

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University of the Wild encourages recognizing place in the

by John Burk

Founded in 1999 by Dr. Larry Buell of Petersham, University of the Wild provides education related to human relationships with the natural world, sustainability, global ecology, social justice, and earth-based living.

Through multi-disciplinary sources such as historical perspectives of Indigenous peoples, current scientific research from around the world, and interactions with teachers, mentors, and practitioners, the alternative educational curriculum of University of the Wild trains teachers, leaders, thinkers, activists, writers, and citizens. Programs offered include events, workshops, classes, and credit courses for students of all levels.

Located in Petersham and surrounded by more than four thousand acres of protected land and farms, the twenty-six acre campus features outdoor learning spaces and organic gardens utilized for education in agriculture.

Recent initiatives related to the mission of University of the Wild include Wild Earth Communities Households International, WECHI, a global network

of individuals and organizations aligned with earth-centered living and learning. A consortium of organizations, the Alliance for Self-Directed Learning, supports individual projects fostering curiosity, resilience, inventiveness, and self-education.

Located near University of the Wild, the 228-acre Global Roots Farm will be developed through a lease to purchase agreement as a cooperative dedicated to production of local food, education, and stewardship of land and culture.

University of the Wild derives from sixty years of teaching, programs, and initiatives spearheaded by Buell, including Earthlands Community and Environmental Center in Petersham and the Outdoor Leadership Program at Greenfield Community College. Buell coined the name University of the Wild during a 1991 trek through Ukraine and Siberia in the former Soviet Union.

Buell is currently working on several book projects, including *University of the Wild: The Primer—The Vision, Practice; Promise for Earth-Based Living*,



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environment

Learning, and Action; and a comprehensive natural and cultural history of the Swift River Valley. He also contemplates histories of Petersham and of the Buell family as well as his own memoir.

In 2025, Dr. Buell and his wife Katja Esser received the National Lifetime Achievement Award for Volunteer Service from President Joseph F. Biden, Jr.

“My work and study of the North Quabbin region for over sixty years, particularly the Swift River Valley, has been the main focus of teaching sense of place to many people,” Buell said.

Contact Buell at (978) 855-1420 or Larry@UofWild.org. Find more information at UofWild.org.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.



Dr. Larry Buell, rear, encourages listeners to understand and recognize their sense of environmental place.

photo courtesy of Larry Buell

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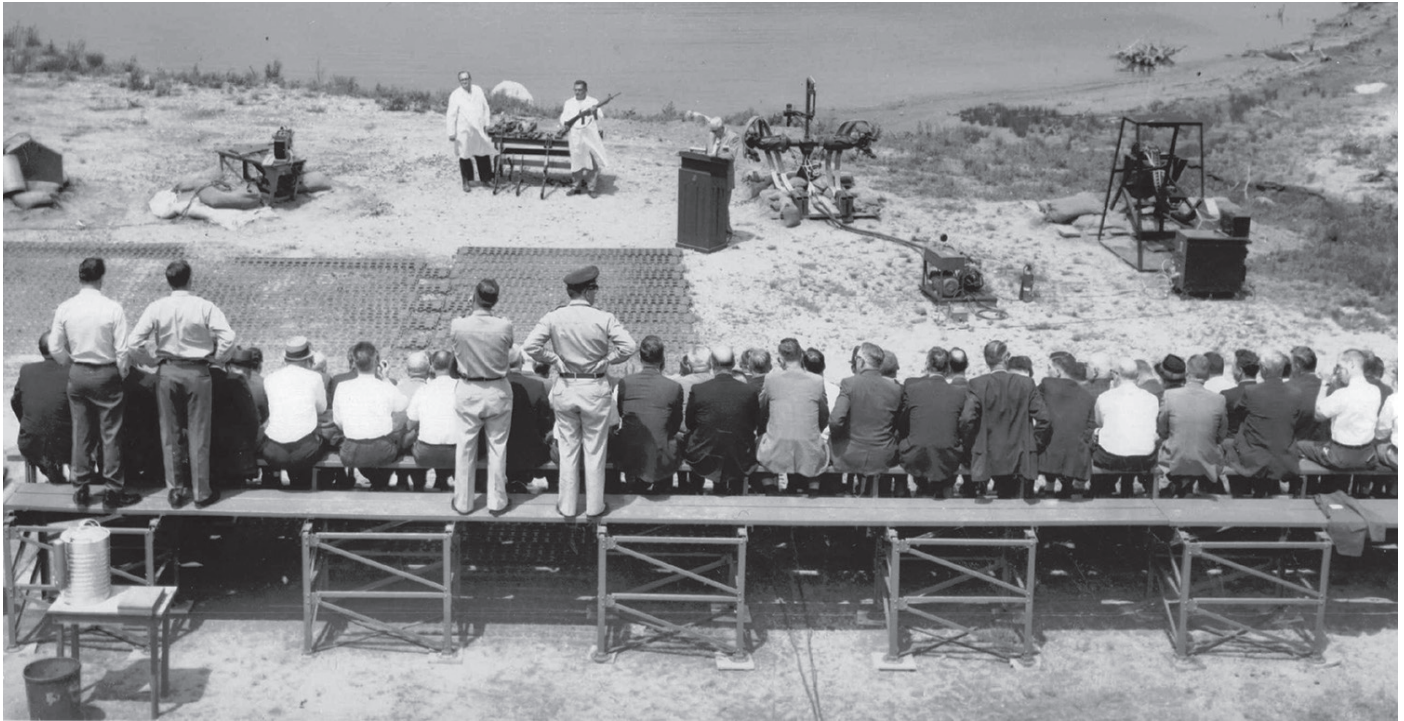
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Quabbin Gate 52 test range instrumental

by Edward T. Knight



After World War II, an audience of military personnel and civilians observes a demonstration of the Vulcan minigun near Quabbin Reservoir Gate 52.

photo courtesy of Edward T. Knight

Some Massachusetts historical events resonate as familiar, depending on regional associations. Quabbin region residents likely know about early/mid twentieth-century dissolution of four towns to create a water supply for Boston or Shays's Rebellion, a 1775-1776 attempted raid on Springfield Armory.

Familiar Massachusetts events less dependent on region impact United States history, among them the

1620 landing of the *Mayflower* and its passengers at Plymouth, the 1770 Boston Massacre, the 1773 Boston Tea Party, the 1775 battles at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill, and the role of the *USS Constitution* in the War of 1812.

In 1777, George Washington established Springfield Armory, once the major supplier and research facility of small arms for the United States military. Springfield and the armory became well known around the world for arms called Springfields or Springfield Rifles. They include the M1861 rifled musket primarily used by the Union Army during the War between the States, the Krag-Jorgenson rifle of the 1898 Spanish-American War, the M1903 of World War I, and the M1 Garand for World War II. General George S. Patton deemed the M1 Garand "the greatest battle implement ever devised."

Creation of Quabbin Reservoir impacted the history of the United States. During the process of creating Quabbin, the federal government and more specifically the United States War Department recognized creation of vast spaces free from inhabitants and close to major war material production facilities.

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in US military weapons development

My father told me of days as he grew up in the center of Belchertown when the sound of thunder came from the direction of the Quabbin. We know what he didn't: Springfield Armory was testing the next generation of heavier weapons for eventual use by US soldiers. They include the M60 machine gun and the Vulcan cannon.

At Quabbin, bomber crews, many from Chicopee's Westover Field, then Westover Air Force Base, now Westover Air Reserve Base, used a newly created bombing range. World War II cohesive flight crews trained at Westover before entering European combat.

Following World War II, the US Army Ordnance Department, now US Army Weapons Corps, found a need to expand outdoor testing facilities. Indoor test ranges in tunnels under the armory, ranges on Page Boulevard and Carew Street, Springfield, near Chicopee River no longer adequately served the Armory. After establishing agreements with the Commonwealth, the ordnance department expanded facilities into the southern part of the Quabbin near Gate 52. The Gate 52 test range served as primary outdoor test range and development facility until the armory closed in 1968.

Early work at Gate 52 included testing of the T-20 series of rifles following World War II. T represents the word test. Development of a suitable T-20 would eliminate military use of the M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle, BAR, and combine it with the M1 Garand Rifle, basic weapon of the US soldier. Over time, testing

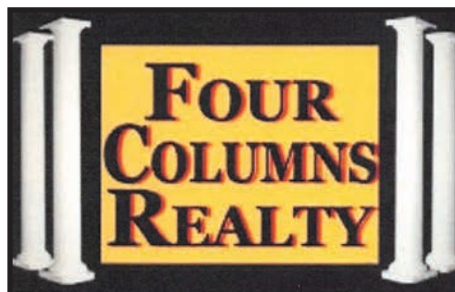
showed the T-20 as too heavy with the required ammunition load. The project developed into the T-44 test series.

Targeted to replace the M1 rifle, M1 Carbine, M2 Carbine, M1918 BAR, M1917, and M1919 Browning machine guns as well as the M1/M1927 Thompson and M3 sub machine gun, SMG, the smaller, lighter rifle T-44 used shorter, lighter ammunition. The US Army accepted the T-44 as the M14 with

new ammunition that went with it as NATO 7.62x51-millimeter standard or what US sportsmen know as 308 Winchester.

A new general purpose, GP machine gun developed at the armory constituted an improved version of MG42 German machine guns of World War II. The armory also mounted M60s on helicopters to test fire. Technicians from the armory developed methods so that

continued on page 62



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Three baby geese take in their surroundings near Lake Lashaway in North Brookfield.
photo by Gary McComas



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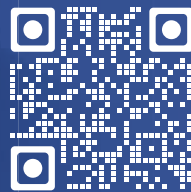


A pair of wood ducks swims on Lake Lashaway in North Brookfield.
photo by Gary McComas



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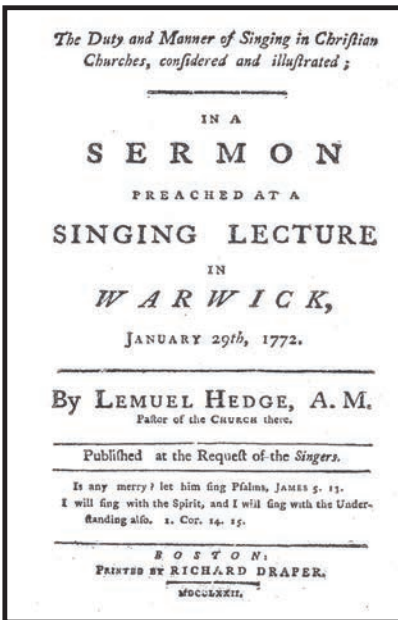
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revolutionary era Loyalist minister

by Carl Hammer



1772 broadside publicizes Lemuel Hedge sermon.
document courtesy of Carl Hammer

The war for independence from Great Britain, the American Revolution, also became an internal conflict within America—a civil war—among factions, tribes, and interests of its European, Native American, and African peoples.

In the Middle States and South, differences led to violent armed conflict. Though not the case in New England, acrimonious divisions between Whigs or Patriots supporting independence and Tories or Loyalists supporting continued union led to the abuse and exile of numerous Americans to Canada and England.

In the Quabbin region, the best known of those forced to leave for Loyalist allegiances, Brigadier General Timothy Ruggles of Hardwick had prominently supported the last colonial governor, Thomas Hutchinson.

Lemuel Hedge, Loyalist and eventual first pastor of Warwick was born in 1734 and settled with his family in Hardwick shortly after 1745. Hedge entered Harvard at age twenty in the Class of 1758. In his junior year, he led a student revolt against faculty punishment of a classmate. He refused to apologize.

Harvard sent him home for more than a year until June 1758 and his readmission to the Class of 1759. Perhaps during that year he met General Ruggles, a 1732 Harvard graduate. Hedge's stubborn behavior marked him as a man ready to express his views and accept sacrifice for his principles.

Ordained at Warwick in 1760, Hedge promptly married the daughter of his Hardwick pastor and built a substantial house still standing at 49 Athol Road. The

only controversy of his early ministry involved his effort to introduce choral singing in place of traditional "lining out" of psalms and hymns with each line spoken or chanted by a leader and then sung by the congregation.

In 1772 Hedge conducted a singing school at Warwick and published a defense of the new musical method that followed the lead of Isaac Watts, British minister and hymn writer. Because it was "a newfound invention", many found the change unwelcome. Hedge persisted and probably lost some support.

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served Warwick

When in 1775 conflict with Great Britain took an armed turn in Massachusetts, local Committees of Correspondence began to pay close attention to professed views of their fellow citizens. It quickly became apparent that Hedge, while acknowledging problems in the colonial relationship, opposed independence.

Combined Committees of Warwick, Northfield, and Athol summoned him to examination on June 12, 1775, but he refused to attend. Instead, he immediately wrote a letter to his Harvard classmate, Joseph Warren, then president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress sitting at Watertown. He sent the letter by Samuel Williams, Warwick's representative to the Congress and head of the town militia.

Hedge trusted the Patriot Williams to "give a more particular account of my Sentiments and of our affairs" to Warren. Warren, however, was killed at Bunker Hill on 17 June. Although reportedly found in his pocket, the letter is now lost.

In a later copy with idiosyncratic orthography, Hedge argued that "the Conciquencies of Civel war filled my mind with Horror nor can I think that we Should be Succeeded in our attempt" and further defended himself by arguing that his offense was in "Speaking my Sentiments freely" and not in any action that would harm the cause of independence or "ade or assist the common Enemy or that is unfriendly or ungenerous to the Caus[e] which as a people we are ingaged in."

He asked Warren—apparently rhetorically—whether "a man of these Principles [and] Disposition ought not to tary in the Country" and whether the Congress intended that the "Community is unsafe to Harbour



The Lemuel Hedge house stands at 49 Athol Road, Warwick.
photo courtesy of Carl Hammer

Such in her Bosom," in which case he would follow the Provincial Congress's provision and remove himself to Boston, then under British occupation.

With no prospect of help, Hedge—unlike many other Loyalists—continued "speaking [his] sentiments freely" and was left to deal with the Committee in Warwick.

continued on page 69



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Mary Rowlandson memoir

text and photos by David Gordon

Seventeenth-century settler Mary Rowlandson, wife of the Reverend Joseph Rowlandson, traversed the Quabbin Region on foot while a captive of Native American forces following their February 10, 1676 attack at Lancaster. Her captors took Rowlandson to a Native American gathering place known as Wenimisset located in the New Braintree/Barre area.

On February 21, during her captivity at Wenimisset, other Native American forces successfully attacked the colonial settlement at Medfield, Massachusetts, approximately seventy-two miles away. Those Native American forces then made their way to Wenimisset. Shortly thereafter, the combined Native American forces made the strategic decision to leave Wenimisset.

Taking Mary with them, they departed on or about February 27 and headed toward the Native American village of Squakheag on the Connecticut River at the future site of Northfield, Massachusetts.

After the first day of travel, Native American forces arrived at a location Rowlandson describes in her journal as: a desolate place in the wilderness where there were no wigwams or inhabitants before; we came about the middle of the afternoon to this place; cold, wet and snowy, and hungry, and weary, and no refreshing for man, but the cold ground to sit on.

They encamped there for four days.

Native Americans of New England typically moved from one seasonal location to another to follow food resources. They often disassembled their wigwams and took them with them to reassemble at the next location. If previous Nichewaug occupants had moved on for the season and taken their wigwams with them or even if the wigwams remained, it may well have appeared desolate to someone of Rowlandson's situation and background, particularly in winter. But to those Native Americans who had been familiar with the site, it may have seemed safe and reassuring.

Where might the four-day encampment site have been located midway between Wenimisset and the

This article represents the second installment of David C. Gordon's account of captive Mary Rowlandson's seventeenth-century travels on foot through what would become the Quabbin region.

The first installment appears in the January 2026 issue of *Uniquely Quabbin*.

details 17th-century captive journey through area



A historic marker on Athol's South Athol Road designates the likely place where Native Americans forded Bacquag River (or Pequig River or Millers River) with captive Mary Rowlandson.

Athol fording place of the Bacquag River (aka Pequig River or Millers River)? The only present-day town between the New Braintree/Barre area and Athol is Petersham. During the early colonial era, there existed within the bounds of present-day Petersham an area known as Nichewaug frequented by Native Americans. A number of historians identify Nichewaug as the site of the four-day layover described in Rowlandson's narrative.

Some maps of Petersham show Nichewaug as a village place name for the Woodward Road/Glen Valley Road area in the southwest section of town, while some local historians consider the



Possibly Petersham Town Common marks the original site of Native American Nichewaug.

Upon hastily leaving the site, Rowlandson's journal says they traveled for a day northwesterly toward the Bacquag River which they intended to ford at a place in present-day Athol. A roadside historical marker on South Athol Road marks the approximate location of that river crossing. The exodus from Nichewaug represented no mere maneuver made by a contingent of combatants with their captives. Rather, it constituted a mass movement of refugees. Rowlandson writes of the number of people:

continued on page 55



Nichewaug Native Americans may have camped several centuries ago in the field, above, near 10 Main Street, Petersham. center of town as the location of that Native American site. The actual location of the encampment Rowlandson refers to remains an open issue.

Rowlandson's narrative states the Native Americans tarried at the place about four days before rather suddenly departing upon receiving word that colonial forces were pursuing them.

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Calvin Paige, Hardwick entrepreneur, prospers

text and photo by John Burk

In 1850, Calvin Paige, a young entrepreneur from Hardwick, arrived in California during the height of the gold rush. Unlike most prospectors who performed arduous and often dangerous work in search of gold, he astutely realized provision of supplies for miners as a most effective way to prosperity. In San Francisco and Sacramento, Paige established successful stores that sold gold pans, tools, tents, clothing, and other products. Through sound investments in stocks and real estate, he expanded his wealth during the late nineteenth century.

Appreciative of the heritage and scenery of Hardwick, Paige made numerous gifts to his native town, including an agricultural fund that has provided support for the Hardwick Fair and other interests since 1910. "Calvin Paige was well ahead of his time when he set up the fund. He supported farming when it thrived in Hardwick with the idea of keeping it viable for future generations," said Stan White, chair of the Paige Memorial Trust.

The youngest of seven children, Paige was born in Hardwick in 1827. He helped with chores at his family's farm that fostered a lifelong interest in agriculture. After graduating from New Salem Academy, Paige worked at a dry goods store in Boston, where he gained experience in retail and commerce.

In 1849, news of discovery of gold in California abruptly changed the lives of Paige and thousands of others. One of the most significant events of nineteenth-century United States, the gold rush prompted widespread migration to the West, reinvigorated the nation's economy, and led to construction of the Transcontinental Railroad.

After many discussions with his family, in early 1850 Calvin Paige sailed to San Francisco with a group of prospectors that included one of his brothers, cited by sources as either David or Timothy. Prominent financier, philanthropist, and founder of banks and railroads that served miners, Darius O. Mills also joined the expedition.



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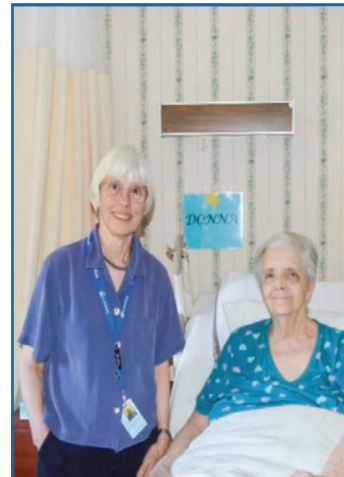
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during mid 19th-century California gold rush

During his time in California, Paige often returned to Hardwick for visits. He desired that his hometown, where dairy farming flourished during the nineteenth century, continue as a successful center of agriculture. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Paige supported improvement and beautification of Hardwick center. He donated hundreds of trees and shrubs for the town common, the Universalist Church, Hardwick Cemetery, and adjacent roads.

Upon retirement, Paige moved to New York City around 1900. He died there in 1909 at the age of eighty-one. He is buried at Hardwick Cemetery.

In his will, Paige left four bequests to the town of Hardwick, including an endowment, subsequently known as Paige Agricultural Fund, of a hundred thousand dollars for support of the Hardwick Fair and other endeavors related to farming. He also donated thirty thousand dollars for maintenance of the town common, cemetery, and roads; twenty-five thousand dollars to Hardwick Center School; and twenty-five thousand dollars to the Universalist Church.

Appropriations from Paige Agricultural Fund helped revive and maintain the Hardwick Fair, a popular tradition of the community that began in 1762. After a hiatus of more than thirty years, in 1905 Hardwick Grange reinstated the fair.

In accordance with Paige's request for establishment of a permanent location of fairgrounds near the center of Hardwick, in 1911 the town acquired a farm adjoining the town common. The fair's cattle show takes place on a portion of that property. By 1914, managers of the fund

continued on page 55



In the early 1900s, the Paige Agricultural Fund helped revive and maintain the Hardwick Fair, still an annual tradition.



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Sun sets over Quabbin Reservoir.
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ledgers from lost towns reveal many aspects of

by Charlotte Westhead with photos courtesy of UMass Archives

Old store ledgers from the Quabbin region reveal many aspects of life.

A store ledger from Enfield begins in December 1821 and records the cost of what people bought and how they paid.

People paid for transportation for business or personal reasons with charges figured by the mile and for use of a wagon and or a horse. The ledger records cost of labor.



The 1819 cash book or ledger from the John Milton Howe Store in Enfield shows day-by-day transactions.

Records refer to women frequently paying for goods they bought by the amount in yards of braid made at someone else's home.

The ledger records prices of groceries, food and drink, household goods, clothing, tools, and lumber. Items no longer part of most contemporary homes include snuff, blacking, flints, quills, whips, gills for measurement, and starch for clothing. Men did most sales or bartered. Women also bought goods and paid for them in cash or through barter.

Colonial braided ribbon, often using imported silk or wool, constituted a highly valued item for decorating clothing, tying hair, and enhancing festive items. Also used sparingly for functional purposes, it might adorn bonnets, pockets, and garments.

Women often received store credit for braid they made at home. According to the ledger, Roxanna bought two yards of ribbon for ten cents and paid for it out of the \$1.35 she received for the braid she made at home. Eliza earned \$0.83 store credit for braid. Harriet earned \$3.00 for 200 yards of braid. Abigail earned \$3.75 for 300 yards of braid.

Braid itself could qualify for credit. Polly, for example, had a balance of \$1.54 she could receive in future braid. The amount women earned for braid seems to be related to quantity, width, and quality.

The ledger also shows bartering for weaving. Avis was paid \$1.92 for 48 yards of sheeting.

Men earned money by labor, according to the ledger. Owen earned 50 cents for work. A hired man would earn \$200.00 for a year of service and "may take clothing he may want within the year," according to the ledger.

The ledger records a variety of items sold in the store, including a pen knife for 33 cents, a hair comb for 13 cents, shears for \$1.67, a book for 20 cents, a grammar book for 18 cents, 6 sheets of paper for 6 cents, 16 quills for a total of 13 cents, and a pair of spectacles for 46 cents.



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daily life

The ledger shows that the store served as a post office that sold stamps and posted letters and packages.

Indicating the popularity of home sewing the ledger shows that the store carried fabric and other sewing needs, including black velvet and silk. Josiah bought 44 yards of cotton stripe for \$8.90. Tom wove blanketing. Gordon bought a set of hooks and eyes for 17 cents. Ezra charged \$11.18 for making a cloak.

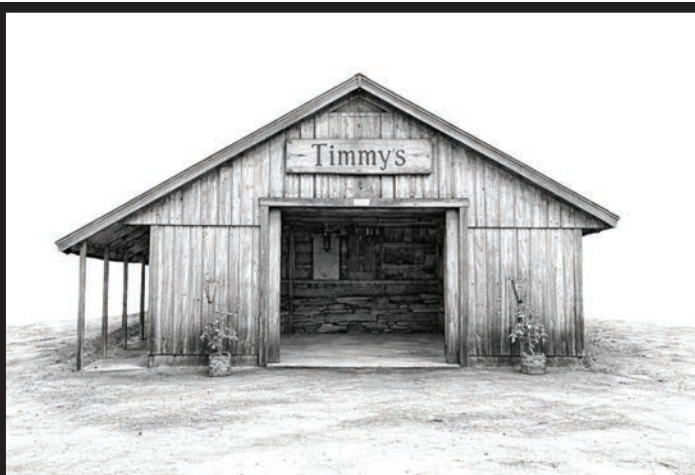
The store also sold equipment, according to the ledger. Jacob bought a pound of 8-inch nails for 6 cents. George bought 1,000 feet of pine board to be paid for in yarn. Door latches and handles cost John \$1.33, 2 flints cost 2 cents, and Isaac paid \$2.00 for a wood saw.



Before flooding of Quabbin towns, a newspaper holds a man's interest.
photo from Burt V. Brooks photograph collection/Howe Family Papers

The same day he bought the 8-inch nails, Jacob bought a half pound of sugar for 7 cents. The ledger shows that brown sugar cost less than white

continued on page 54



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agricultural Greenwich centered on

by John Burk



In 1929, as officials considered how to flood the Swift River Valley to create Quabbin Reservoir, they commissioned Carl Remington to photograph designated locales, including the village of Greenwich, above.

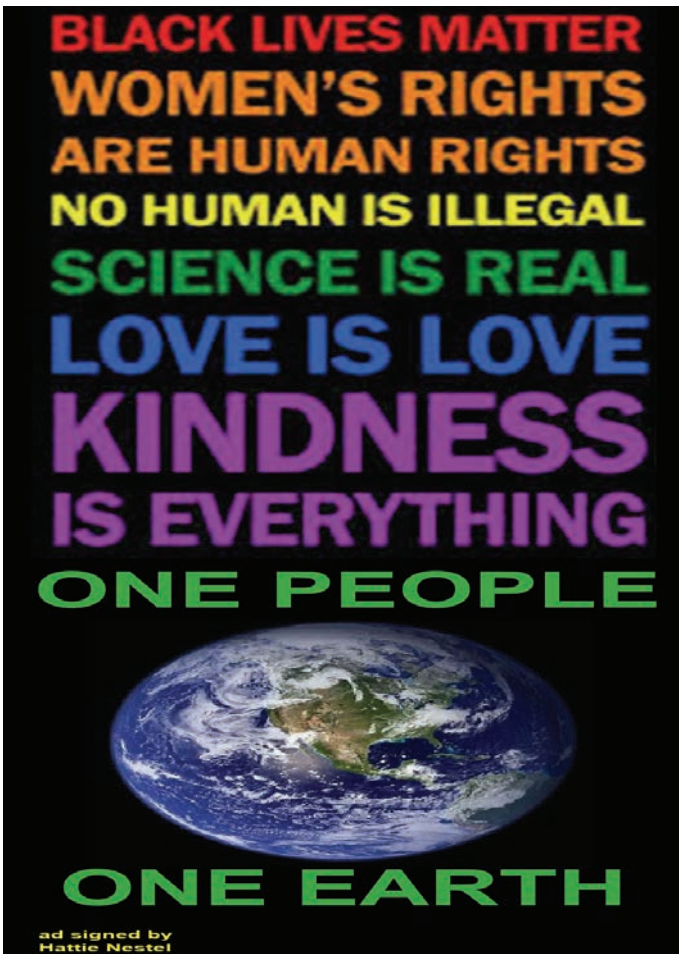
photo courtesy of Digital Commonwealth/Massachusetts Collections Online

The first Swift River Valley town established by English colonists, Greenwich was an agricultural community with two small villages. Located in northeastern Hampshire County, its landscape comprised fertile plains bordered by rocky ridges and

approximately ten hills. Prominent eminences of less than a thousand feet each included Mount Pomoroy and Mount Lizzie near the center of Greenwich and Mount Zion at the boundary with Dana.

Residents pronounced the town name as Green-wich, not Greenwich.

Renowned for scenic lakes, ponds, and streams, Greenwich encompassed lower watersheds of Swift River Middle and East branches that converged in the southern part of town. On Swift River East Branch, Quabbin Lake, originally known as East Pond, was the town's largest waterbody. Greenwich Lake, also called Davis Pond, occupied a basin between Mount Liz, Little Quabbin





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two villages on Swift River East Branch



Before the reservoir, Greenwich Congregational Church, Walker's Hall Store, and Farmers' Hall bordered the town common.

photo courtesy of Petersham Memorial Library

Hill, and Prescott Peninsula. In the northern part of town, Curtis Pond and Warner Pond drained to Swift River Middle Branch.

Nipmuc Native Americans established a settlement near confluence of Swift River East and Middle branches, where natural resources included abundant fish and soils ideal for cultivation of corn. Before creation of Quabbin Reservoir, many arrowheads and other artifacts were discovered in Greenwich plains.

During the 1730s, Massachusetts General Court granted a twelve-hundred-acre tract, originally named Quabbin, to veterans of King Philip's War. After incorporation of Quabbin Parish in 1746, Greenwich established as a town in 1754. Settlers of Scottish ancestry renamed the town in honor of the Duke of Greenwich, England. In 1801, the northeast section annexed to Dana. A settlement in the southern part of Greenwich, South Parish split off to form Enfield in 1816.

Named for location on an intervalle between Mount Pomeroy and Mount Liz, Greenwich Plains was the town's governmental center. Built in 1744 by the Standing Order of Christians, the first church established in the Swift River Valley

continued on page 66

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The Bowl—a visual haiku by Ami Fagin



The Bowl, an effusive watercolor interpretation of Tuckerman Ravine on Mount Washington, New Hampshire, takes its title because of its distinct, steep-sided and concave shape, carved into the mountain by glaciers. The ravine is a massive glacial cirque resembling a giant, amphitheater-like basin named for the botanist Edward Tuckerman, who studied Alpine plants in the area during the 1830s and 1840s.

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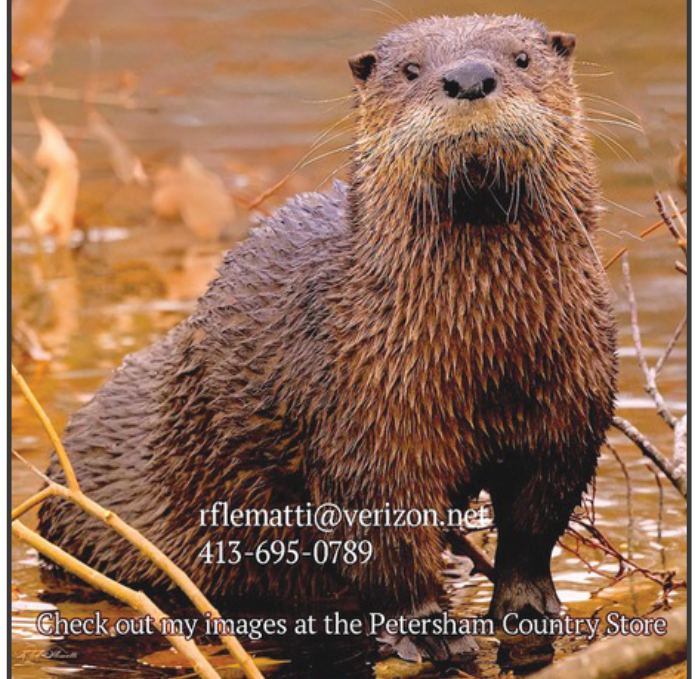
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Check out my images at the Petersham Country Store

town of New Braintree embarked

by Jennifer Pollard, town historian

photos courtesy of New Braintree Historical Commission



New Braintree's 2001 250th anniversary celebration featured a patriotic birthday cake.

Nestled among Hardwick, Oakham, the Brookfields, and Ware, the town of New Braintree traces its European roots to colonial farmers of Braintree, Massachusetts, who summered their cattle in the area, then called Braintree Farms.

New Braintree will celebrate its 275th anniversary with special events throughout 2026.

Territory of three colonial-era towns comprise New Braintree: Braintree Grant, a six-thousand-acre tract granted in 1666 to residents of Braintree; all of Lambstown—later Hardwick—east of Ware River, annexed in 1733; and about twelve hundred acres of what was then known as Brookfield. In 1749, residents of annexed territories petitioned Massachusetts General Court to become a separate precinct with all the rights of a town except representation in the General Court, which finally granted the petition on January 31, 1751.



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on celebrations of 275th anniversary



Featuring the town seal adopted in 1900, the ribbon honors the town's 150th anniversary.

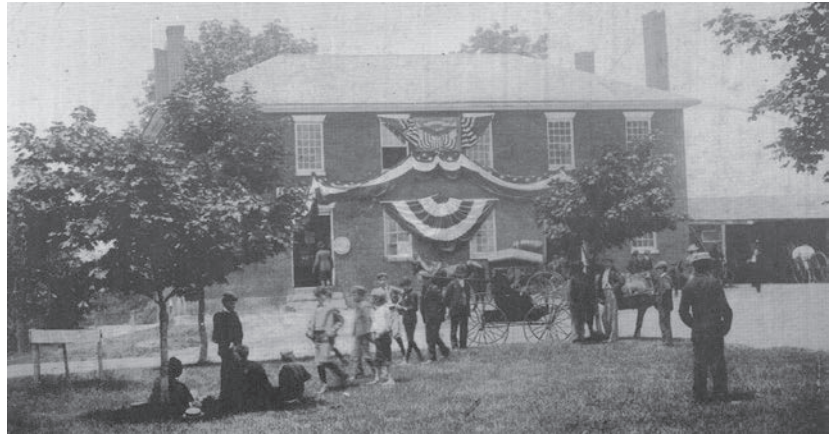
With 1751 accepted as the date of incorporation of New Braintree, 2026 marks the 275th anniversary. The official invitation to the 150th anniversary celebration reads, "An event of this nature ought not to pass unobserved."

Residents and others highly celebrated previous milestone anniversaries, including the 150th anniversary on Wednesday, June 19, 1901. Festivities included a concert by the Battery B band of Worcester followed by a welcome and historical address at the Congregational Church with

a formal dinner served at 1:00 p.m. in the town hall. Afternoon events included a second band concert and social reunion at the church with speeches from dignitaries from neighboring towns, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and past residents from as far away as Kentucky. The day ended with a third band concert. The State Library of Massachusetts Digital Archives includes a memorial booklet of the event accessible at archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/848153

The bicentennial anniversary celebration spread over the weekend of July 14 and 15, 1951. A rendition of the "Star-Spangled Banner" and flag raising opened the ceremonies at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 14. A devotional service, welcome, and historical addresses took place during mid afternoon.

Exhibits by 4-H clubs, school children, and the library were open for viewing late afternoon. Saturday ended with a square dance on the green with a live orchestra. Sunday began with a worship service at the Congregational church. Hardwick Community Band entertained attendees later with an afternoon concert. The church hosted




Built by Joseph Bowman and John Wetherell in 1816 and decorated in 1901 for New Braintree's 150th celebration, the Brick Store served as a general store until 1953.

photograph by W. G. Rixford.

an organ recital in the early evening followed by a banquet with the Honorable Philip J. Philbin, US Congressman, as guest speaker. Events concluded with an historical pageant and music performed by the town's school children.

continued on page 54



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New England Equestrian Center, NEECA,

by Caroline Mansfield

What began as an ambitious dream in the late 1990s has grown into a thriving destination for horse lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. New England Equestrian Center of Athol, NEECA, stands as testament to community vision, volunteer dedication, and shared passion for horses.

From Dream to Reality

In the late 1990s, Elwin and Kim Bacon, along with Jim and Tammy White, spearheaded the vision for

a municipal equestrian park in Athol. They located a parcel of more than two hundred acres near New Sherborn Road. They worked with the Town of Athol, long supportive of the endeavor, to secure a grant through the state Department of Conservation and Recreation to purchase the land. NEECA officially incorporated in 2001.

NEECA operates under a ninety-nine-year lease to manage and maintain property owned by the Town, thus ensuring long-term access and stewardship for the community.

Built by Volunteers

A board of directors oversees operations at NEECA, an all-volunteer organization. A committed group of volunteers shows their support by participating in and helping at a number of events throughout the year.

In the early years, progress came through hands-on workdays clearing trails and creative fundraising efforts like Death by Chocolate events, wine tastings, and tack sales—sales of useful equestrian items.

The main arena was built in the early 2000s followed soon after by a trailer-friendly driveway for those transporting horses by truck and trailer, allowing NEECA to host events on site.

Growth and Opportunity

During twenty-five years, NEECA has transformed from raw land into a busy facility. Membership has grown from twenty in 2001 to nearly three hundred. The property includes more than four miles of trails, a main arena, a warm-up arena, a round pen, a confidence course, and a driving arena.

NEECA hosts more than thirty annual events—many of them specialized for equestrians—including gymkhanas, hunter paces, driving competitions, and organized trail rides.

Diverse programming also includes dressage shows, jumping competitions, poker rides, and versatility clinics.

Education at the Core

Education is central to NEECA's mission. The organization offers an annual winter lecture series covering topics like equine first aid, nutrition, conditioning, and more. Hands-on clinics such as trailer safety, saddle fitting, and equine rescue further support learning.

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list compiled by Marlene Chaisson

celebrates 25th year of passion for horses

Educating equestrians for betterment of the horse and for generations to follow is an important part of NEECA's mission statement and serves to guide the board of directors. NEECA strives to create a welcoming, low-pressure environment where riders can enjoy time with their horses, learn, and find support.

A Natural Treasure

Beyond its equestrian focus, NEECA is also rich in natural beauty. Board member and longtime science educator Linda LeBlanc has spent years documenting the park's ecosystems, which include forests, vernal pools, meadows, and open fields. Those habitats support a wide variety of wildlife, including salamanders, frogs, and nearly 100 bird species. Seasonal changes bring everything from spring frog choruses to vibrant fall foliage and quiet winter landscapes.

LeBlanc's passion led to creation of a native plants trail with educational signage and artwork by Krissy Dorn, local artist. LeBlanc also leads guided walks to help visitors connect more deeply with the environment.

"When I walk the trails and focus on nature," she shared, "I find myself breathing differently. It's calming in a way that's hard to describe."

continued on page 51



New England Equestrian Center of Athol
NEECA
802 New Sherborn Road, Athol



Riders and horses explore the New England Equestrian Center Ring.
photo courtesy of New England Equestrian Center

without audition, regional choruses

by Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri

I love to hear a choir. I love the humanity—to see the faces of real people devoting themselves to a piece of music. I like the teamwork. It makes me feel optimistic about the human race when I see them cooperating like that.

—Paul McCartney

The Quabbin area has a number of opportunities for people in the twenty-five area towns to sing in a chorus. In New Salem, Barre, Leverett, and Wendell people can find a choir open to anyone who wants to sing.

Quabbin Valley ProMusica, QVPM, founded in 1988, serves as resident chorus of the 1794 Meetinghouse in New Salem. Originally Athol Musicale, QVPM morphed into the chorus that exists today.

Conductor Geoff Hudson follows a long list of conductors including first music director Gail Ares-Laraba and more recently Charles Heffernan. Judy Johnson is collaborative pianist for the group. The chorus mainly sings classical choral works, though it

occasionally includes modern compositions and folk and world music. The upcoming spring concert scheduled for 4 p.m. June 7 in the Meetinghouse will include an original piece by chorister and local Orange resident Carolyn Brown Senior.

Longtime QVPM tenor Phil Rabinowitz of Royalston echoes sentiments of many people who sing in a choir, calling the experience “life-changing.” Always a musician, Phil couldn’t read music before joining QVPM. He became a treasured member of the chorus and one of its longest singing members.

Anyone interested in joining will contact Geoff Hudson at HUDSONS@earthlink.net.



Geoffrey Hudson conducts Quabbin Valley Pro Musica during its January concert in Athol Congregational Church.

photo courtesy of Quabbin Valley Pro Musica



Leverett Community Chorus and its sister group Caravan Chorus provide another opportunity for someone who wants to sing in a group. Anne Louise White leads both choruses.

White explained that the community chorus was founded twenty-five years ago and affords choristers the opportunity of “being in community” by presenting a variety of uplifting music from many cultures.

Rehearsals for the Leverett Community Chorus spring season have begun and will culminate in a

concert on Sunday, June 14 in the sanctuary of the Jewish Community of Amherst.

The Caravan Chorus performs somewhat less challenging music at assisted living centers and senior community centers throughout the spring. According to White, “Music is powerful, and people with dementia respond to it.” The goal of Caravan Chorus is to provide community outreach through song and includes sing-alongs with its elderly audiences.

For more information or to join, contact Anne Louise White at Leverettchorus@gmail.com.

welcome anyone who wants to sing



Directed by Anne Louise White, Leverett Community Chorus performs in the sanctuary of the Jewish Community of Amherst. Leverett Community Chorus will sing in concert there at 4 p.m. Sunday, June 14.

photo courtesy of Leverett Community Chorus



On the eastern side of the Quabbin, Barre has a resident community chorus, Circle of Song. Led by Julie Rawson, the chorus celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a Christmas concert in December in Barre Town Hall. According to Rawson, music the chorus sings is “reasonably challenging.” The only

requirement for potential choristers is that they “are able to sing in four-part harmony with other people of different backgrounds.” Circle of Song had its spring concert on May 15.

To join the chorus or to get more information, contact Julie Rawson at (978) 355-2853 or Julie@mhof.net

continued on page 56



Julie Rawson conducts Barre's Circle of Song.
photo courtesy of Circle of Song

nature's varied life forms show off their colors

continued from page 7



Red Oak Acorns

How did it happen that White Oak acorns sprout in the fall and grow quickly while Black and Red Oak acorns sprout the next spring? Why?

Poison Ivy will turn a beautiful red. Is that a warning like the red of the Monarch Butterfly or Red Eft salamander?



Red Eft Salamander

Mushrooms of many colors explode into view as their root-like mycelium do their job of recycling decaying material in the soil. Does mushroom cap color matter or is mushroom shape more important?



Purple Mushroom

Each week, new life forms emerge in ponds, streams, wetlands, fields, and woodlands. Hikers may consider returning to a favorite spot to inventory what they find or make some record in notes, photographs, or drawings as they go.

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poem by
Brian Fournier



Bluebird

watercolor on paper by Brian Fournier

About Bluebirds

How our seasons revolve in change,
but nothing living stands alone.

A life of experience grown
to a glimpse, the bluest of range
such a suit with a rusted vest
my palette lacks in evidence—
incapable of relevance
unmarked upon a white canvas.

Does that sienna breast define
true colors in most ample stock?
Dipped out of our Nature's paintbox
in gilded hand of such refine,
the purest pigments do unlock
a master's artwork in design.

Art can, but in a static play
God builds, she turns and flies away.

Poet and artist Brian Fournier lives in Orange.

from the pens of

poem by
John Lindgren

Summer Breeze

Spring once more has passed us by,
and dandelions are gone.
Their golden heads now snowy white
... await another dawn
when a summer breeze comes dancing
across the fields of grain,
whispering through the hedgerows high,
... and down a dusty lane.
It kissed the aging dandelions,
their spirits lifted high.
With satin wings, they lightly sailed
... across the azure sky.
Away it sweeps the morning dew
like nature's tender broom,
to awaken tiny sleeping flowers,
... that make the meadows bloom.
It flirts now with summer sun
to change a cloudy day.
It scatters tiny diamonds
... across a waterway.

There was once another summer breeze,
that happened by one day.
It left a mark upon my cheek

... and scampered on its way.
A moment ... or a passing tone,
and time moved swiftly by.
The summer breeze just said, "Hello,"
and as quickly said, "Goodbye."
Its presence ... simply disappeared.
I'm suddenly alone.
A touch of moisture on my cheek,
and the summer breeze is gone.
Silently the clouds move in.
The sun peeks out in vain
The skies begin to darken,
... and then slowly ... falls the rain.

A resident of Orange, John Lindgren grew up in Sudbury where he supervised maintenance of the roads. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts designated July 19 in his name for dedicated service to the Town of Sudbury.

Uniquely Quabbin poets

poem by

Wendy Cornwell

A Hopeful Gardener

Ground breaks as the sun hits the frozen Earth.
Beneath the land, bulbs and flowers await birth.
Gardeners eager to get their hands wet and dirty,
Dance around the flower beds, in a moment,
quite flirty.

Ah, yes. Here are new bulbs I planted last Fall,
Hoping they will bloom and flourish one and all.
Now the challenge begins to identify weeds.
So much work, and toil and so many needs.
Weeks of weeding and studying have gone by,
as I spot a plant growing up to the sky.
I examine and wonder as I watch it grow,
“Is it a flower? Exotic plant?” I just don’t know!
Alas, I respect it and water it well.
As it reveals itself slowly and from what I can tell,
It is just a shameless plant, but
imposing indeed,
Tricking this gardener declaring,
“I’m just a weed!”
May you always remain
humble as a gardener true.
You cannot know all as they masquerade while brand new.
We can try our best, but nature is in
charge,
Every Spring, weeds will appear, more gorgeous and large!

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Wendy Cornwell graduated as a registered nurse with an associate’s degree in nursing from Greenfield Community College. She also obtained a bachelor of science in nursing from University of New Hampshire and a degree in psychology from UMass, Amherst. She retired in 2016.

Submit poems for *Uniquely Quabbin*

to marcia2gagliardi@gmail.com

poem by

Wally Swist

Ode to the Oriole

Turning my head to see you
as you turn
in the birdbath, turning
to splash your orange feathers
and black wings, revolving
in a watery renewal, making
your colors brighter, refreshing
their juxtaposition just through
their sheer propinquity,
by increasing the vibrancy
of their tone by cleaning them
in the water, cooling yourself
in the midday heat, keeping
the pesky robins at bay,
by your dazzling presence,
a dimensionality of picturesque
flamboyance, from beak
to tail, from one wingtip
to another, to portray a vividness
in a flash, leaping to the edge
of the bath, balanced on
the concrete plinth, the way
you are poised, clutching the rim
with your claws, plumage
dripping with droplets, until
a last shake, before you fly up
on your sleek wings to
what we can imagine as
your hanging nest amid
the Norway pine’s heavy branches,
where you will entertain us
especially toward twilight
and well into dusk with
the loquacity of your flute-like whistle
and its resonant tremolo
unmistakably sweetening the air.

Wally Swist recently launched *Aperture*, published by Kelsay Books. His “A Bird Who Seems to Know Me” won the 2018 Ex Ophidia Poetry Prize. He lives in South Hadley.

KRO's on the Common and Olde Time New

text and photos by Chris Coyle



KRO's at 10 Baldwinville Road, Templeton, serves breakfast and lunch from Thursday through Sunday and caters special events.

KRO's on the Common has been serving meals at 10 Baldwinville Road in Templeton for several years. Silas Stone constructed the building, an architectural gem—the only brick house in the center of Templeton constructed in 1770 with bricks imported from England. Later known as the Joseph Upham Tavern and enlarged in 1830 with a two-story ell, the building became a private boys' high school.

Several physicians resided in the historic house later in the nineteenth century. In the mid 1940s, a Harvard professor and his daughter tutored Boston-area boys in the building. The antique business Country Mischief called it home from 1991 until 2018 when the current owners, Karen Osterberg and her husband Terry Fougere, purchased it and opened her dream small restaurant

The establishment's name KRO's derives from owner Karen R. Osterberg's name.



KRO's offers spacious interior seating.

Recently, I enjoyed KRO's salmon avocado bagel with a fine, bottomless cup of coffee. The fantastic menu item features a griddled bagel topped with smashed avocado, sliced tomato, homemade arugula pesto, and pickled red onion. I appreciate the coziness and cleanliness of the dining establishment along with courteous and friendly service. Many windows in the dining room provide great views of Templeton's quintessential New England town common.

The menu notes certain entrees as gluten free or modified on request as vegetarian.



A side of fruit accompanies the salmon avocado bagel at KRO's.

Among several items offered for a lighter fare, a Mason jar parfait piqued curiosity. On my next lunchtime visit, I may have the half sandwich with a cup of soup or perhaps the turkey pesto wrap. So many mouth-watering offerings on the menu pose a challenge for settling on any one item.

KRO's sources many ingredients based on season and availability from local farms such as Pease Orchards, Red Apple Farm, Smith's Country Cheese, Westfield Farms, and Windy Knoll Farm.

The restaurant serves breakfast and lunch from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Thursday through Sunday. Social media lists special

England Seafood Company serve sumptuous fare

events such as live entertainment, specialty, and holiday dinners and outside dining. The facility has space for private events and offers a “made- from-scratch” menu. Summer visitors may consider walking nearly across the street to visit Narragansett Historical Society open Saturdays in the summer from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Open Tuesday through Saturday, Olde Time New England Seafood Company at 2294 Main Street in Athol has operated for forty years on a part-time basis. Originally known as Today’s Catch Seafood, a retail fresh seafood market, the establishment offered items such as live lobsters, fish and scallops.

Keith McGuirk, who owned the business from 1988 until 1996, installed a commercial kitchen and began selling prepared primarily take-out seafood meals. Later, proprietors installed seating on a small scale, although takeout continued as the business mainstay.

Ed Drouin purchased the restaurant in 2001, changed the name to Olde Time New England Seafood, and expanded seating capacity. A veteran chef, Drouin started working as a teen at the former Pete and Henry’s Restaurant in South Royalston. Under his more than capable leadership, meals exude perfection to the disappointment of no one.

Unpretentious ambience, great food, and friendly service have attracted a loyal following both for dining and for takeout. I recently enjoyed a fine meal consisting of a lobster roll, French fries, and coleslaw along with the classic drink, a non-alcoholic Arnold Palmer featuring iced tea and lemonade in equal measure.

Accompanied by crispy French fries prepared to perfection, the roll overflowed with fresh, delicious lobster meat. I have the Pan-Seared Scallop Dinner and Lobster Casserole on my list of entrées to try very soon.



Olde Tyme Seafood serves lobster roll with French fries and cole slaw.

Upon a diner’s seating in the restaurant, a friendly staff member brings freshly baked corn bread . The menu features clam chowder, lobster bisque, and other daily soups along with salads and stir-fry and pasta dinners. Dinner entrées include two sides prepared fresh and a fine part of any main meal.

A very hungry patron will surely like the Fisherman’s Deluxe Dinner including whole clams, sea scallops, shrimp, and haddock as well as the two sides of choice. Olde Time New England Seafood also offers non-seafood entrées such as chicken and beef dinners, and diners will find prime rib after 4 p.m. Thursday through Saturday.

continued on page 51



Comfortable seating encourages conversation at Olde Tyme New England Seafood.



Open Tuesday through Saturday Ye Olde Time New England Seafood Company serves seafood meals at 2294 Main Street, Athol.

DIY Happiness Meals

text and photos by Christine Noyes



Decadence is not a four-letter word!

**VERY LITTLE NEEDED TO MAKE YOUR LIFE HAPPY.
IT'S ALL WITHIN YOURSELF AND YOUR WAY OF THINKING.**

—Marcus Aurelius

I recently wrote a blog to document the absurdity of my discontent when I couldn't order ribs at a BBQ restaurant because they had run out. I spent days wallowing in that disappointment. When I realized how ridiculous my reaction was, I cooked my own BBQ ribs and enjoyed the heck out of them.

Lesson learned! I can—and should—create my own happiness. Even when it comes to my evening meal.

I've always thought of short ribs as a special treat—something I would order only at an upscale restaurant. To me, the flavorful, melt-in-your-mouth cut of beef seems decadent.

But guess what! I can go to almost any Quabbin area meat market and buy short ribs, especially when I shop at one of the many excellent farm stores in the area. If the farmers don't have short ribs in their meat case, most will be happy to cut some—fresh, no additives, and without food dyes.

In my blog I included a quote from the second-century Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius: “Very little is needed to make a happy life; it is all within yourself and your way of thinking.”

So, I was decadent. I cooked short ribs. It made me happy. I used all the ingredients I knew I would love.

I found the preparation therapeutic and the hours of anticipation as short-rib aroma filled my kitchen energizing. And the culmination of my efforts . . . immensely gratifying.

But it's the opportunity to share my special treat with special people that most warms my heart. Be happy. Be decadent. Enjoy!

DO IT YOURSELF SLOW COOKER SHORT RIBS

serves 4

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cup lightly seasoned flour—salt, pepper, garlic (to taste)

4-5 medium carrots-peeled and chopped into 1/4-inch to 1/2-inch cubes

1 large, sweet onion-chopped into 1/4-inch to 1/2-inch pieces

1/3 cup olive oil for vegetables

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon granulated garlic (may substitute garlic powder)

3/4 teaspoon thyme

1 1/2 tablespoon parsley

1/4 cup olive oil for short ribs

8 pieces (approximately 2 pounds) short ribs with bone

6 ounces Cabernet Sauvignon (or to taste)

3 ounces tomato paste

24 ounces beef broth, preferably low sodium

1 sprig fresh rosemary (may substitute dry or omit)

1 package/1 ounce au jus mix, dry

INSTRUCTIONS

Coating all sides, dredge short ribs in seasoned flour, and set aside.

In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat 1/3 cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Add carrots, onion, salt, pepper, garlic, thyme, and parsley. Cook for 12-15 minutes. Remove carrots and onions from the pot, leaving remaining oil, and put vegetables into a slow cooker. Set the slow cooker to high and cover.

Add 1/4 cup olive oil to the pot and heat. Sear short ribs on all sides in the oil for 30 to 45 seconds. Remove ribs and add them to the slow cooker. Cover.

Slowly add Cabernet Sauvignon to the pot and scrape remnants from the bottom and sides. Allow wine to heat before adding tomato paste, beef broth, and au jus packet. Mix well.

Pour the mixture into the slow cooker. Add rosemary. Stir.

Cook covered on high heat for 2 hours.

Reduce heat to low and cook for an additional 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

(The meat should fall off the bone with a fork.)

Skim excess grease off the top.

Serve over mashed potatoes, egg noodles, or rice.



chopped carrots and onions



floured short ribs



ribs, carrots, onions, and broth in slow cooker

Accomplished chef Christine Noyes has led life as a sales representative, entrepreneur, and 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.

Process and Practice

pencil on Strathmore vellum and watercolor on 300-pound Arches

by Elizabeth Callahan



Patience, trial and error and lots of practice. The large sketch is the final of many before deciding on this composition for my painting. You may recognize it as the cover of this issue. Once it was finalized, the research began. There are no daffodils from which to paint in real life during the winter so the internet served as a resource with many photos. Flowers are not something I have much experience painting. It required sketches to learn about their shapes, growth patterns, colors and values and multiple small paintings to test the techniques and paint colors I would use. When a painting is completely from the imagination many other details must be worked out: the time of day which dictates the length and color of the shadows, location of the sun, amount of cloud cover, how every facet of the landscape will be affected by these elements in the environment. If there had been a photograph of this composition it would have made things much easier. However, the learning process would not have been as fulfilling.

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

open to All, NEECA focuses on horses

continued from page 39

Expanding into Driving

In 2023, NEECA expanded into carriage driving thanks to board members Althea Bramhall and Pam DeGregorio. What began as a small effort has grown into a popular program with regular events and a dedicated driving arena.

With an emphasis on safety and learning, participants take part in skills instruction, cones courses, and obstacle challenges. Clinician Devin Burdick, a silver medalist with United States Dressage Foundation, has been instrumental in guiding those sessions.

The program continues to grow, fostering a welcoming community for drivers of all levels.

Open to All

While NEECA focuses on horses, the park is open to the public for hiking, birdwatching, and dog walking with dogs on leash. For the safety of everyone, NEECA asks that visitors remain mindful if encountering other horses and riders on the trails.

The facility is also available for rental to individuals or other organizations.

Looking Ahead

From its grassroots beginnings to its role as a vibrant local equestrian community hub, NEECA has become a valued asset to Athol and the surrounding region. To date, the organization has invested more than four hundred thousand dollars into NEECA through fundraisers, events, donations, grants, and membership dues. NEECA looks forward to continuing to improve the facility so that generations of horse lovers and other recreational enthusiasts can enjoy it for many years to come.

With continued growth, new programming, and ongoing improvements, NEECA remains true to its founding vision of providing a welcoming place where people can learn, connect, and enjoy horses.

“And after twenty-five years,” said NEECA board members, “it’s clear—the best is still to come.”

A resident of Athol for more than forty years, a member of NEECA for twenty-five years, and a horse lover all of her life, Caroline Mansfield has committed herself to seeing the organization continue to develop as a very special equestrian facility in Athol.

KRO's and Ye Olde Tyme New England Seafood Offer Intriguing Menus

continued from page 47

The dining room board includes daily specials with appetizers, desserts, and a multitude of drinks on the menu. A kid's menu includes a nice selection of meals for young diners.

A local restaurant offering great seafood of high quality, the hungry diner will surely enjoy Olde Time New England Seafood Company.

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

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spring and summer bring unexpected inspiring, mesmerizing,

continued from page 4

Mesmerized, I thought how brilliant. That otter knew exactly the psi—pounds per square inch—its body weight exerted on the ice. It knew to stretch flat and reduce the psi and how to concentrate its weight to pierce like an arrow through the thin ice. The otter knew just how thin or thick the ice at any given spot.

Spring brings sightings like that.



Fox kits frolic in springtime.
photo by John Burk

Under a neighbor's deck, foxes have returned to start a new family. The kits grow and frolic in the yard.

Searching for bird feeders and other food, bears roam out and about.

Birds return, and insects, too. At last, it feels warm enough to bring my tea outside in the mornings to sit and listen to bird song.

Summer comes alive with life

And then there is us—humans—swimming in lakes and ponds, gathering outdoors for picnics and BBQs, growing food. I love the warmth and abundance of summer.



A moose goes for a swim.
photo by Dale Monette

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One summer, another neighbor saw a moose enter Lake Mattawa in Orange, then swim across. I didn't know they could swim!

A salient story in my family lore concerns animal sightings. It took place when I was very young. We lived in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York City. In second grade, my older sister's teacher was Mrs. Blanchet.

Gesturing with red fingernails, Mrs. Blanchet dressed up in silk blouses and high heels. My parents took a liking to her and her Haitian husband. They socialized beyond the classroom.

One night, the Blanchets had my parents for dinner. They sat in their living room chatting over hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. The evening wore on and on with no smells coming from the kitchen, no move to

refreshing experiences

dine. Finally, my mother suggested she could help in the kitchen.

“No, no, I’ll get to it,” said Mrs. Blanchet as she rose to her feet to go to the kitchen.

Then came the scream.

The others rushed in to see what happened and saw snails crawling over the counters, up the cabinets and



Some escargots don’t get out of the bag before serving as appetizers.
photo courtesy of Sally Howe

across the floor. Mrs. Blanchet had planned to start with escargots, and the live critters had gotten out of the bag.

I don’t recall what happened after they laughingly scraped up all the snails. I hope they ordered in pizza!

Just the other day, I heard a scrambling and cries by a tree. I looked over to see a bobcat chase a squirrel that escaped up the trunk.

My dog then took off after the bobcat!

Surprising encounters with the natural world add zest to life, sometimes charming, scary, or just memorable. They contribute a sense of wonder, and that is a good thing.

Actor, lover of language, and retired teacher of French, Sally Howe lives in Orange.



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ledgers reveal aspects of life

continued from page 31

sugar. A quart of butter cost 10 cents, a pound of raisins went for 14 cents, 3 candles for 8 cents, a dozen eggs or 2 nutmegs for 12 cents, a quarter pound of cinnamon for 20 cents, and a pound of ginger for 17 cents. The town of Greenwich bought a peck of salt for 35 cents. Each Twist, a form of candy, was 6 cents. Calvin earned \$2.40 for 8 bushels of oats.

The store sold household items, too. Laburn bought a set of knives and forks (no spoons) for \$1.75. Ezra bought a 1-quart pitcher for 20 cents. A wash bowl sold for \$1.00. The store also purchased meat for local resale and for the Boston market. In December, Jonathan received \$13.63 for a hog. The following week, Rufus sold a goose. Hannah made arrangements to sell a lamb. Issac earned \$7.47 for 166 pounds of pork.

The ledger records transactions for trade, transportation, household, farming, and more.

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

New Braintree 275th year

continued from page 37



The Brick Store sported decorations in 1951 for the 200th celebration.

A yearlong celebration with special events each month marked the 250th anniversary. Events began with a gala New Year's Eve party in 2000. In January 2001, townspeople performed a dramatization of the first town meeting on March 13, 1751. Town resident and playwright Cynthia Kennison created the script.

Other highlights from the year included a reenactment of the Battle of New Braintree by the Rehoboth Minute Company in May, an Old Home Day and parade in September complete with a cow float considered infamous, an October barn dance, and another New Year's Eve Gala in December 2001. Memorial booklets for the 1951 and 2001 anniversaries can be viewed at the New Braintree Historical Society.

This year's 275th celebrations will kick off with a free concert, by the United States Air Force Heritage of America Band on Sunday, July 5, 2026 at 2:30 p.m. Attendees will bring lawn chairs or blankets to the parade ground between the post office and town hall. An Old Home Day will take place on Saturday, October 3 and will include a parade, bands, children's games, food, and a bonfire. Celebrations will end with a New Year's Eve gala dinner and dance.

More information regarding 275th events will be posted on the town website newbraintreema.us.

Jennifer Pollard, a direct descendant of one of the original settlers, has served as town historian since 2018.

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Hardwick's Calvin Paige

continued from page 27

began partnership with the fair. When the fair resumed in the late 1940s following the Great Depression and World War II, Paige Agricultural Fund provided endorsements and premiums.

Another longtime institution of Hardwick, the Farmer's Co-operative Exchange developed through support of Paige Agricultural Fund. For coordination of wholesale purchase of supplies and retail sale of commodities such as milk, apples, and eggs, twelve farmers established the co-op in 1914. Manager of Paige Agricultural Fund from 1920 to 1960, Ernest Ritter spearheaded growth of the co-op to a successful enterprise with more than two million dollars of commerce.

Paige House, a historical store in the center of Hardwick housed the exchange from 1914 to 1974. In 1974 the co-op moved to its present location on Route 32, where it operates a retail store and three warehouses. More than 2,700 farmers and members of the community own shares of the co-op.

Other early projects of Paige Agricultural Fund included a demonstration farm at Ruggles Hill where workers cultivated experimental crops, raised poultry, and established a herd of purebred Holstein cows. The fund also supported development of livestock, purchases of equipment, educational programs, maintenance of orchards, and community events.

For management of Paige Agricultural Fund, five trustees meet periodically. The fund continues to provide premiums for Hardwick Fair, scheduled this year on August 14 and 15.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

HARDWICK FAIR
with events for all ages from
4 p.m. August 14
to
10 p.m. August 15

locations throughout the town of
HARDWICK

Mary Rowlandson's journey

continued from page 25

When all the company was come up (to the river at Bacquag) and were gathered together, I thought to count the number of them, but they were so many and being somewhat in motion, it was beyond my skill.

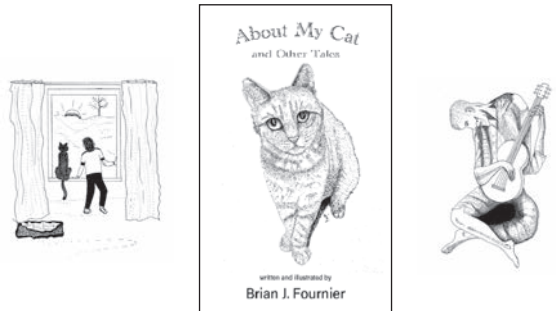
The number of people in transit had been greater than she could count. Historians have estimated the move may have involved more than two thousand people.

She wrote of their plight:

They marched on furiously, with their old and young; some carried their old decrepid [sic] mothers, some carried one, and some another. Four of them carried a great Indian upon a bier; but going through a thick wood with him they were hindered.

Rowlandson stated they arrived on the easterly bank of Millers River at Athol during the afternoon on a Friday, which one historian has calculated to have been March 3. There they halted. With spring approaching, the river had become swollen with runoff, and they could not ford it.

Retired engineer David Gordon grew up in North Orange. His avocation involves researching local and regional history. He lives in Fitchburg with his wife, Carolyn, and cat Hunter.



About My Cat
and Other Tales
selected poems 1970-2020
written and illustrated by Brian J. Fournier

Barely camouflaged in the rhyme and meter of Brian Fournier's verse in About My Cat are profound glimpses of a boy emerging from a painful childhood as he finds his true creative spirit in adulthood and changes his family legacy once he becomes a grandfather. Through inspirations born of pain, conversations with his feline companions, and sharing of his inner reactions to deeply moving human experiences, Brian's poems truly take the reader on a journey to discover what one finds in between each and every line.

—the Reverend Candi Ashenden, DMin
pastor at Athol, Massachusetts, Congregational Church

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Morning Star Chenven conducts Wendell Community Chorus.

photo courtesy of Wendell Community Chorus

community choruses sing out

continued from page 41

For a smaller group singing experience, there is the Wendell Community Chorus. The group, under the direction of Morning Star Chenven, performed at the Wendell MLK celebration and the Memory Café.

The Wendell Community Chorus has been together for fifteen years performing in many venues all over the Pioneer Valley including festivals, political rallies, assisted living centers, and local events.

According to Chenven, “We sing songs of hope, inspiration, and joy. We are often joined by master singer Moonlight Davis and other area musicians. Our repertoire includes world music, gospel, new folk, and more.”

Although currently a small group, Wendell Community Chorus has included up to twenty members. The group produced a compact disc a few years ago.

For more information or to join, contact Chenven at (413) 363-3636.

Quabbin area towns have many choral opportunities in towns surrounding the region. Pioneer Valley Symphony Chorus, flagship chorus of Pioneer Valley Symphony, located in Hadley, is in its sixty-second year. Choruses in Amherst, Worcester, Gardner, and Acton also include singers from the Quabbin region.

For more information, check out chorus websites for rehearsal days and times, dues requirements, and more.

QVPM at 1794meetinghouse.org/qvpm

Leverett Community Chorus and Caravan Chorus at Leverettchorus.com

Circle of Song at Circleofsong.net

Pioneer Valley Symphony Chorus at pvsoc.org/chorus

Longtime former resident of New Salem Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri serves as copy editor for *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine.

Quabbin Valley Pro Musica concert

4 p.m. Sunday, June 7

1794 Meetinghouse • New Salem

Leverett Community Chorus concert

4 p.m. Sunday, June 14

sanctuary of Jewish Community of Amherst

On Windows

text and watercolor on paper by Brian Fournier

What is a window?

An oblong space for hope?

A place for something new? Or
for what we've not seen for so long?

Spring is ever welcome!

We see her coming up the walkway.
Magician-like, she dissolves winter
and opens our view from the sash
for sunshine and shades of green,
the smells of new life, and sounds
of birdsong and humming bees.

Windows are like a portrait
hung to display tectonic grace,
a thoughtful repose in calmness.

So, turn down your collar and
feel that orb's soothing heat
while you watch Henry the cat's
backbone liquify, becoming fluid
like cooked spaghetti while he
sprawls near the flowerpots.

Windows lead to doors, and

doors are where we find
ourselves for another year . . .



Poet and artist Brian Fournier lives in Orange.

glacial erratic boulders punctuate region's forests

continued from page 9

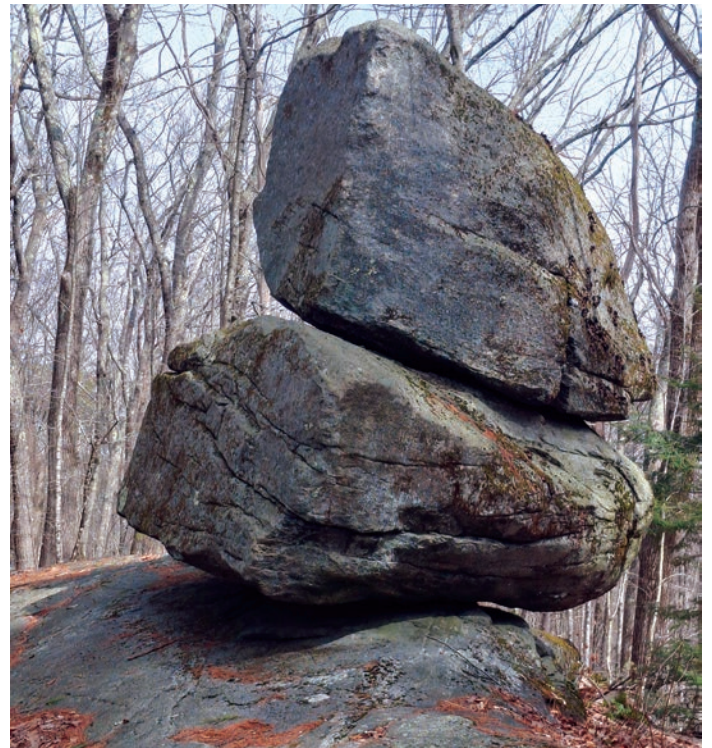
Beloved old Rollstone sits on a small triangular traffic island in downtown Fitchburg. Once it resided on top of Rollstone Hill between two granite quarries. By 1899, cracks had developed. Though filled with cement by erratics enthusiasts, the cracks continued to threaten Rollstone even after attachment of an iron band to keep it from falling apart altogether.

By 1929, still in danger of falling apart, the rock occasioned drastic action when taken apart to save the city's beloved stone. The plan called for blowing up the erratic with black powder after numbering of sections for reassembly down the hill, where it resides to this day. Unfortunately, reconstruction proved nearly impossible as rumbling passing trolleys caused pieces to fall off.

After many attempts to put Humpty Dumpty together met with failure, Rollstone fans used iron bands and spikes to recreate the original shell. They poured cement into the interior to make it whole again. A plaque on the boulder memorializes the extraordinary and heartfelt effort of restoring the Rollstone in 1930.

Extraordinary and imposing erratics bear silent witness to the power of the glaciers of past aeons as they slowly wandered in glacial time from north to south. Icebergs on prehistoric lakes sometimes carried rocks and deposited them where they remain.

Ken Levine of Petersham admits that he has a granite obsession and he and his wife Janet built their house on old granite sills moved from a barn foundation in Massachusetts.



Quabbin region erratics include, from top down, left, above, the Wawbeek erratic in Warwick; another Warwick erratic with the carved words "In the beginning—God"; and Petersham's Dragon Rock and at right, above, Barre's Rockingstone or Cradle Rock.

photos by Ken Levine



Hikers pause during a Barre Historical Society hike to view erratics. From front, Erin Stevens with granddaughter Maple DuBois; from left to right behind them, Dave Flick, Kay Flick, unidentified hiker, Judy Schmitz, Chuck Coppelino, Lucy Allen, Mary Springer, Molly Stevens Dubois, Meg Michalski holding daughter Cora Michalski; Ron Potter, Ivana Kazda, Bob Bentley, Emily Peddle, and Jeff Michalski holding daughter Vivi Michalski.

photo courtesy of Barre Historical Society

snapping turtle myths dispelled

continued from page 11

“Snapping turtle nests are ‘architectural wonders,’” said Natasha, who described the process involving test digs. Eggs will hatch in two or three months or sometimes longer.

Humans can help protect a nest from predators by never moving it or by putting tarps or buckets over it. Move hatchlings to the water’s edge but not into the water. The move may help them in their dangerous trip from nest to water, where they can grow up.

Massage therapist Ellen Woodbury lives in Athol.

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land trusts protect natural treasures

Sarah Cowls Forest and Eagleville Barrens

continued from Page 15



Protected Eagleville Barrens includes frontage on 255-acre Lake Rohunta in Athol, Orange, and New Salem.

photo by John Burk

and uncommon species such as whippoorwills, box turtles, and Karner blue butterflies.

“The Eagleville Barrens acquisition enhances public access for all to enjoy,” Small added. Former logging roads provide opportunities for development of recreational trails, including a planned accessible route with a wildlife observation station on the shore of Lake Rohunta.

Preservation of Eagleville Barrens builds on other land around Lake Rohunta conserved by MGLCT and partners, including 330-acre Eagleville Pines at the

former site of Morgan Memorial Fresh Air Camp as well as 210-acre South Athol Conservation Area.

“I am grateful for the extraordinary collaboration between Kestrel Land Trust, W. D. Cowls, the Trustees of Reservations, and Lyme Timber that made this project possible,” said Emma Ellsworth, executive director of MGLCT.

In addition to land in the Quabbin region, the initiative also protected seventy-seven acres in north Amherst and forty acres in Gill.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

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At Quabbin Gate 52, evaluators participate in testing during development of a Vulcan mini gun on a simulated helicopter mount.
photo courtesy of Edward T. Knight

Gate 52 Quabbin range tested varied military weapons

continued from page 19

crews from downed helicopters could demount the M60s and use them as they tried to get back behind friendly lines. Such techniques would play a vital role in the survival of US air crews in future conflicts in SE Asia.

Development work of the Vulcan cannon, a high-powered Gatling gun, occurred at Gate 52, and the gun remains in use. Vulcan cannon work led directly to development of the 30-millimeter GAU-8 cannon Air Force A-10 aircraft still in active service today.

The Gate 52 Quabbin test range played an important role in US arms development continuing to influence deployed weapons systems of the US military.

A lifelong resident of Belchertown and 1988 graduate of UMass with a BA in history, Edward Knight connects to the Quabbin and Swift River Valley through his great grandmother, Edna (Doubleday) Knight, daughter of Rollin Doubleday and Anna Jenkinson Coolidge. Edna's husband, Herman C. Knight, served as last superintendent of Enfield Schools before unincorporation of the town.



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QUABBIN CURRENTS:

When They Bombed Quabbin Reservoir

by J. R. Greene

Quabbin Reservoir in central/western Massachusetts constitutes the largest water supply for Metropolitan Boston and three western Massachusetts communities. Constructed from 1926 to 1946, it entirely destroyed four towns and parts of seven others.

After relocation of twenty-five hundred residents of Swift River Valley and removal of all buildings and trees from the thirty-eight-square-mile flow area, flooding to create the reservoir began in the summer of 1939. Soon, World War II broke out in Europe and caused the United States to begin to gear up for war preparations. One project involved constructing a US Army Air Corps base on twenty-five hundred acres in Chicopee and Ludlow.

Opened on April 1, 1940, the new base was named for Oscar Westover, chief of the army air corps for three years before his death in 1938. The base had two large runways and headquartered the air corps Northeast Air Command, NEAC. Training both bomber and fighter pilots occurred at Westover, where flights launched to search the New England coast for German submarines.

The British government sought permission to use the Quabbin basin for artillery practice in 1940 with permission denied. Instead, the US Army Air Corps received permission to use the Quabbin, identified as “the only place available in the East for practice bombing sites.”

Officials constructed a storage building for crash boats on the Old Enfield Road in Belchertown. The air corps supplied firefighting equipment to subdue any fires started by practice bombing.

During the war, the public was barred from walking in the reservoir watershed lands. To keep trespassers from wandering into bombing target areas, officials constructed a chain link fence across the northern end of Prescott Peninsula. The water commission building the reservoir found comfort in the fact that, only a few minutes flying time from Quabbin, the air corps base offered “an added insurance to the protection of the two dams there.”

The US Army also received permission to set up platforms at Quabbin for artillery practice during the war. A remnant of one platform remains visible on the small peninsula northeast of the site of North Dana with a larger one on the Gate 52 road in Quabbin Park.

A spotting tower built at Gate 35 on the former Route 21 stood near the Petersham-New Salem line. By the beginning of World War II, the water commission based a police unit at the reservoir to protect it from potential sabotage or trespassers. A state police barracks remains at the administration building in Belchertown.

As recounted in a history of Ware, the Quabbin was used for target practice “extensively throughout the war. The sound of frequent bombing was a constant reminder of the possibility of battle.”

Public access returned to most of the reservoir watershed in June, 1945 after conclusion of use of the area for military purposes. To keep people out of what became designated as a wildlife area, the water commission retained a fence across the northern end of the Prescott Peninsula. In 1947, Chicopee and two adjoining towns received permission to hook up the Quabbin water supply. That same year, the US Air Force became a separate division of the armed services, and Westover became an air reserve base.

Near the site of the former New Salem village of Millington, a few bomb craters remain visible from the air at low water.

J. R. Greene, a lifelong resident of Athol, is author of sixteen books relating to the history of Quabbin Reservoir and the towns destroyed to create it. His 2010 book *From Valley to Quabbin 1938-1946* includes information about Quabbin and Westover during World War II.





Laurel Bloom in Wendell Swamp
acrylic on paper by Donna Horn

NATURE'S NUANCES

text by Clare Green • photos courtesy of Harry Greenwald

Harry Greenwald, soft-spoken and sharp-witted, part-time Warwick neighbor of mine and current Brooklyn resident, recently talked about his family, career, health, and art.

Harry didn't start out in the Northeast nor did he begin as a found-object craftsman. Harry's wife, Babette Krolik, recollected that

Harry's mother, Audrey Greenwald, left Miami, where Harry had been raised, and bought a house in Warwick in 1968 while he was still in college. After graduating from the University of Chicago in 1970, Harry moved home to Warwick and took a job as reporter for the Orange *Enterprise and Journal*, then a weekly newspaper. He also worked for a local radio station before moving to the State House as an aide to John Olver, at that time a state senator but later a congressman. A stint with the Massachusetts Senate Ethics Committee convinced Harry he did not want a career in politics, and he pursued an MBA at night at Boston University.

While he was in Boston, Harry met Babette. "I was smart enough to marry her. It was the best decision of my life," Harry recounted.

He went on to serve as chief financial and operating officer for a series of small businesses and non-profits for twenty-five years.

Harry's artistic evolution continued after he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease when he was sixty. He developed his creativity as a visual artist. He began making amusing animals, characters, and ensembles out of his amassed, empty pill bottles and then from household and found objects. He displays them at hpgreenwald.com.

The Montessori school his three children attended provided an inspiration for his art. The school encouraged kids to make things out of ordinary items and urged parents to collect and donate art materials. "We live in a world that throws a lot away," Harry noted. "My art takes things people discarded and makes whimsy out of them."

Parkinson's Disease itself provided another inspiration. Parkinson's, a rapidly growing incurable disease, strikes people, generally older, of all nations and demographic groups. Once diagnosed, Harry found himself collecting a lot of pill bottles.

After Harry had collected a substantial inventory of empty plastic pill bottles and began taking pramipexole, he thought, "I could make something with all these empty pill bottles," and his "Pill Bottle Period" began. Works included a larger-than-life striding human figure called "Pilldown Man" and smaller groups of musicians, animals, athletes, and cowboys all fashioned from pill bottles.

Within months of creating his first sculpture, he ran out of empty pill bottles. He moved then to what he calls his cast-off metal period as he rummaged through household closets for odd bits of metal, left-over parts from home repairs, old kitchen equipment, and similar items he could screw together to

create more figures. Shows in Warwick and Turners Falls as well as Brooklyn, New York, exhibited Harry's work. The National Institute of Health Headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, showed his work in 2015.

After eighteen years of Parkinson's, Harry makes home repairs, walks around Warwick and Brooklyn, and does yoga. He plays bridge online daily and enjoys crossword puzzles and games. He has used an incurable disease to develop entirely new sides of his personality and create charming art.

Contact Harry Greenwald at hpgreenwald@gmail.com

Clare Green of Warwick, dclara_2000@yahoo.com and claregreenbooks.com, is a lifelong educator and naturalist. Folks are welcomed to visit the woodland labyrinth and fairy cottage on her property.



Harry Greenwald



found-objects art by Harry Greenwald

home to sawmills, gristmills, and manufacture,

continued from page 33

also served as the town hall until the 1820s. Other landmarks included the Hotel Greenwich and a general store. Originally laid out by early settlers, Greenwich Cemetery was the largest of thirty-four burial grounds relocated during construction of Quabbin Reservoir.

Situated on Swift River East Branch roughly one mile north of Greenwich Plains, Greenwich Village was the site of most of the town's industries. Early businesses included sawmills and gristmills built in 1745, a scythe factory, silversmith, and a match shop that utilized brimstone mined from nearby hills. From 1884 to the 1930s, Walker Mills produced floors, clapboards, shingles, and lumber for construction of summer cottages and Gilbertville factories. Other shops sold textiles, boxes, grain, brooms, rakes, pewter buttons, carriages, and sleighs.

Agriculture was the primary enterprise of Greenwich for nearly two hundred years. Rich loam soils of the plains sustained numerous farms that produced cereals and other commodities. Popularity of dairy farming in the mid nineteenth century prompted construction of a cheese factory at Greenwich Village that processed milk supplied by local farmers. A cranberry bog operated in wetlands near Greenwich Village.

Completed in 1873, the Athol Branch of Boston and Albany Railroad traversed lowlands between Swift River middle and east branches, with depots near the centers of Greenwich Plains and Greenwich Village.

Proximity to Worcester, Boston, and Springfield prompted growth of tourism in Greenwich during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A popular destination for boating and swimming, Quabbin Lake hosted roughly twenty-five camps. Located on a hillside above Quabbin Lake,



An early twentieth-century postcard shows Hale's Bridge in Greenwich.

Quabbin Inn offered picturesque views and amenities such as a bowling alley. After closure of the inn, the building housed a



As shown in an early twentieth-century postcard, Quabbin Inn dominated a hillside above Quabbin Lake in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Greenwich. YMCA summer camp. Other camps and cottages operated at Greenwich Lake, Warner Lake, Curtis Pond, and Swift River.

A significant but often dangerous seasonal occupation, harvesting of ice thrived at Greenwich Lake and other waterbodies of Greenwich during winters. Businesses of Greenwich exported more than a hundred thousand tons of ice annually to cities of the Northeast.

Founded in 1901 by sisters Charlotte Drinkwater and Mary Warren, Greenwich Hillside School provided education and life-skill training for indigent, orphaned, and homeless boys. Located near Mount Pomeroy, the 215-acre campus included a schoolhouse, dormitories, barns, pastures, gardens, and woodlots. After authorization of Quabbin Reservoir in 1927, the school relocated to Marlborough, Massachusetts.

Shortly before official disincorporation of Greenwich, officials held a final town meeting on April 21, 1938. The town library transferred more than three thousand books to New Salem Public Library. Ware, Hardwick, New Salem, and Petersham annexed portions of Greenwich. Apart from high elevations such as Mount Pomeroy, Mount Liz, Mount Zion, and Curtis Hill, nearly all of the former town lies beneath waters of Quabbin Reservoir.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

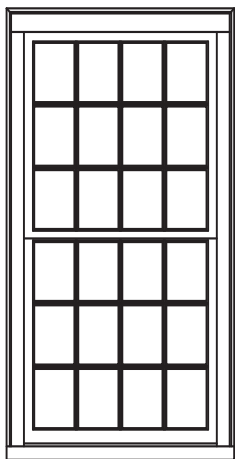
Greenwich hosted tourists and boys' school



Before flooding of Greenwich to create Quabbin Reservoir, Greenwich Hillside School stood in the village. Sisters Charlotte Drinkwater and Mary Warren founded the school on their farm in Greenwich for, at the time, underprivileged boys. Due to the creation of the Quabbin Reservoir, the school relocated to Marlborough, Massachusetts in 1927.

photo courtesy of Petersham Memorial Library

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697 Templeton Road - Athol, MA

Our Waters event scheduled June 27 at Silver Lake Park, Athol



Exuberant summer greenery dwarfs Athol's Silver Lake Beach, right.
photo by Marcia Gagliardi

ANTICIPATED 2026 OUR WATERS EVENTS

10 a.m to 4 p.m. Silver Lake Park

Presentations by the Athol Bird and Nature Club

Invertebrate Workshop

Fishing for Beginners with Mass Wildlife

Pickle Ball Clinic

Fly Fishing with Millers River Trout Unlimited

Athol Fire Department Water Rescue Demos

American Houndsmen

Fisher Museum, Harvard Forest, Petersham

Athol Public Library Storybook Walk

Advanced Fishing in Local Waters
with Allan Butler, guide and outdoor writer

Magnet Fishing

Nature Scavenger Hunts

The 2026 Our Waters event sponsored by the Athol Open Space and Recreation Review Committee will take place on June 27 at Silver Lake Park with rain date June 28. Attendees will gather at the pavilion. Mostly free events will occur between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. with food available for purchase.

The committee dedicated a day in 2025 to celebrate Our Waters. Each year, the town will choose a different body of water where the committee will host a day of fun, information, and food. Though cut short by rain, last year's celebration took place on June 7 at Silver Lake near downtown Athol.

With last year's temperature a little too cold for swimming, the committee has scheduled Our Waters later in the month this year when water temperature will likely be warmer.

Loyalist minister served Warwick

continued from page 23

In July the town voted “to Disarm and Confine the Reverend Mr Lemuel Hedge to the Town of Warwick.” The vote by the town tallied fifty-five in favor and forty-five against the proposition.

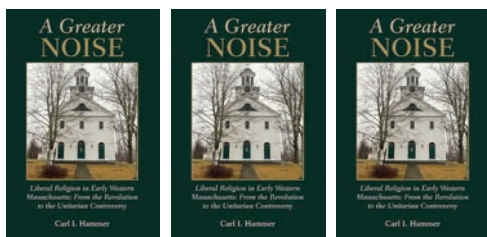
Notably, a large number of those voting to confine Hedge were also religious dissenters opposed to him as minister of the established Congregational church. Thereafter, he experienced personal abuse and vandalism of his property. The town stinted Hedge’s support but could not dismiss him. He finally returned to Hardwick where he died on 15 October 1777.

Nevertheless, he was buried in Warwick. The Reverend Bunker Gay of nearby Hinsdale, New Hampshire, preached his burial sermon. With Hedge’s aged father present, Gay took the occasion to shame the people of Warwick for their treatment of Hedge. After commending the pastor’s virtues, he continued:

But falling in with the *unpopular side* in the present *grand political controversy*, it is no wonder that many have conceived an ill opinion of him. But why any should shew themselves so bitter against him as they have done, I cannot easily conjecture. For I could never learn as he has done any thing to merit the hard and *very shameful and abusive treatment* he has met with . . . For why we should break friendship and communion with one another merely because we differ in our political sentiment is very difficult for me to determine while it remains so highly repugnant to the Christian doctrine . . . [He was] a hearty *friend* to mankind in general and that as he lov’d *his God*, so he lov’d *his country also*, and would by no means have done any thing which he knew or thought would be injurious to its true interest though he did not seek its political welfare in the way which many of us so ardently wished.

Gay’s thoughts remain worth considering as we remember the 250th anniversary of our country.

Carl Hammer lives in Easthampton and Pittsburgh and contributes regularly to *Uniquely Quabbin*. His latest book is *A Greater Noise: Liberal Religion in Early Western Massachusetts from the Revolution to the Unitarian Controversy*, 2025, from Levellers Press in Florence.



1794 MEETING HOUSE

SUMMER CONCERTS 2026

Friday/Saturdays @ 7:30 – Sundays @ 4:00

- | | |
|---|--|
| Jun. 6 (Sat.)
Ray & the Lovers
<i>rhythm & blues</i> | Jul. 10 (Fri.)
Louise Coombe
<i>country</i> |
| Jun. 7 (Sun.)
Quabbin Valley Pro Musica
<i>choral music</i> | Jul. 11 (Sat.)
The Green Sisters
<i>folk trio</i> |
| Jun. 13 (Sat.)
Mad Agnes
<i>folk trio</i> | Jul. 18 (Sat.)
Trio Sefardi
<i>world music</i> |
| Jun. 14 (Sun.)
John Clark Quartet
<i>jazz with French horn</i> | Jul. 19 (Sun.)
Arborio Duo
<i>classical</i> |
| Jun. 20 (Sat.)
Crys Matthews
<i>singer-songwriter</i> | Jul. 25 (Sat.)
Seth Glier
<i>singer-songwriter</i> |
| Jun. 21 (Sat.)
Steven Schoenberg
<i>solo piano</i> | Jul. 26 (Sun.)
Yvonne Rogers
<i>jazz piano</i> |
| Jun. 27 (Sat.)
The Klines
<i>Appalachian</i> | Sep. 5 (Sat.)
Hildalund
<i>Celtic duo</i> |
| Jun. 28 (Sun.)
Valley Arabic Music Ensemble
<i>world music</i> | Sep. 6 (Sun.)
Elm Chamber Ensemble
<i>classical quartet</i> |

TIMES, TICKET PRICES, & DETAILS @:

www.1794Meetinghouse.org

26 South Main St., New Salem

Uniquely Quabbin Calendar Listings

PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK DETAILS FOR EVENTS\

May 24, Sunday

Memorial Day Commemoration
10:00 a.m. Refreshments
11:00 a.m. Parade and Services
Quabbin Park Cemetery
557 Belchertown Road
Ware
Hosted by the
Swift River Valley Historical Society

May 28, Thursday

Mel Allen: Fifty years of life in New England
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Athol
A look at our region Mel Allen covered for *Yankee Magazine*. Allen will share slides and stories from nearly fifty years writing about New England.
Registration required.
athollibrary.org

June 1, Monday

The First First Lady with Anne Barrett
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Athol
A Woman-In-History Theatrical Performance. Spend an hour in the eighteenth century with our first ever First Lady, Martha Washington. Includes songs from the battlefields. Sponsored by Friends of Athol Public Library.
Registration required.
athol.librarycalendar.com



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

June 5, 6, and 7

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday
Petersham Art Show and Reception
Friday 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Petersham Town Hall
1 South Main Street
Petersham

June 5, 12, and 19

Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

June 6, 13, and 20

Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

June 14 and 21

Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Barre Players Theater
64 Common Street
Barre
barreplayerstheater.com

June 6, Saturday

Hubbardston Fair
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Curtis Rec Field
Hubbardston
A fun-filled day outside with entertainment for all ages! Local artists and handmade crafters with live music and food vendors.

Uniquely Quabbin listings

continued from previous page

June 6, Saturday continued

Love Loud at the Mansion
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Revival Wheeler Mansion
75 East Main Street
Orange
Celebrate Pride with a night of dancing, laughter, community, acceptance, and celebration of diversity and friendships for those twenty-one years old and older. Tickets required.
revivalwheelermansion.com

June 13, Saturday

Disco Lemonade Live
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Candlelite Cafe
712 Patriots Road
Templeton
Fundraiser for the Smoke Crest Animal Sanctuary with great music under the summer sky at the Candle. Facebook event

June 17, Wednesday

Museum Opening Day
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
The museum is open Wednesdays and Sundays from June 17 through September 16.

June 20, Saturday

Summer Social
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Williamsville Chapel
4 Burnshirt Road
Hubbardston
Sale of pies and baked goods sale with the Hubbardston Historical Society.

June 20, Saturday continued

Jazz, Gin, Money . . . and Murder
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Revival Wheeler Mansion
75 East Main Street
Orange
A night filled with mystery and intrigue! Step into a world of deception and suspense. An immersive experience designed to keep you on your toes while solving the puzzle. Tickets required.
revivalwheelermansion.com

June 20 and 21 *Saturday and Sunday*

Summer Strings Music Festival
11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Red Apple Farm
455 Highland Avenue
Phillipston
Two-day celebration of live string music. Performances on the Moon Hill Brew Barn Stage and Cidery Stage all weekend long! Delicious Farmhouse Feasts from the Brew Barn Taproom and Kitchen, craft ales from Moon Hill Brewing, hard ciders from Red Apple Farm, TimberFire Pizza, local vendors, live music, and more!
redapplefarm.com/events

June 21, Sunday

Museum Open
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Royalston Historical Society
1 On the Common
Royalston
Also open Sundays July 19, August 16, and September 20. Visit the "Women of Royalston Exhibit" with additions of several samplers and other artifacts.
royalstonhistorical.org

June 27, Saturday

Our Waters Celebration
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Silver Lake Athol
Celebrate local bodies of water with family fun, presentations, and food! Guided bird walk, working dogs, fishing for beginners, pickleball, fly fishing demonstrations, story walk, scavenger hunt. Hosted by Athol's Open Space and Recreation Review Committee.

Orange Solstice Riverfest

5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Downtown Orange
Welcome summer in the Friendly Town! Illuminated parade of boats, floating firepits on the river, local food and music, vendors, children's activities, fire spinners, and more. Rain date June 28.
orangeriverfest.com

June 28, Sunday

225th Anniversary of Dana, Massachusetts
slideshow
1:00 p.m.
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
Dana did not vanish. Swift River Historical Society has photographs of homes, families, cars, churches, and town buildings along with names passed down, stories passed down, maps of where things used to be, and a museum of artifacts to see and touch. SRVHS knows people whose families were "from there." Free admission.

continued on next page

events compiled by Emily Boughton

Please submit listings for the next issue before July 20, 2026 to UQCalendar@gmail.com

Uniquely Quabbin listings

continued from previous page

July 5 Sunday

US Air Force Heritage of America
Band

2:30 p.m.

20 Memorial Drive

New Braintree

In celebration of New Braintree's 275th anniversary, the US Air Force Heritage of America Band, an ensemble of forty-five professional Airmen musicians playing a variety of music. newbraintreema.us

July 8, Wednesday

America Is Wild!

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Athol Public Library

568 Main Street

Athol

An interactive "road trip" from west to east across the United States featuring plants and animals with Brad Timm, wildlife ecologist, author, and founder of the Northeast Wildlife Team. Registration required.

Athollibrary.org

July 12, Sunday

Women of '76

1:30 p.m.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

40 Elm Street

New Salem

Presented by Rita Parisi in honor of the 250th anniversary of our country. A solo theatrical performance that brings to life remarkable women of the American Revolution. Free admission.

July 19, Sunday

Dana Reunion

10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Dana Common

Gate 40

Sponsored by Dana Reunion

Association.

danareunion1938@gmail.com

July 26, Sunday

Dana Vespers

2:00 p.m.

Prescott Church

40 Elm Street

New Salem

Cake and lemonade served after the concert in honor of the 188th birthday of Mrs. Clary of the Swift River Valley Historical Society Whitaker-Clary House. Free admission.

July Weekends/Dates TBA

Blueberry Jamboree

Red Apple Farm

455 Highland Avenue

Phillipston

A celebration of all things blueberry. Pick-your-own blueberries. Sip ice-cold blueberry cider or try blueberry ice cream and blueberry-glazed cider donuts. BBQ firing up the grill, local vendors/crafters, and live music. redapplefarm.com/events

August 9, Sunday

Quabbin Quilts of Old

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

40 Elm Street

New Salem

The complete collection of Valley Quilts on display in the sanctuary of Prescott Church. Every quilt tells a story. Free admission. Also shown on August 16.

August 23, Sunday

Dragoon, Musketeer, Prisoner

1:00 p.m.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

40 Elm Street

New Salem

Hear how Revolutionary era Hessians got to our area, why they were here, and why some remained in the region. Presented by Dennis Picard.

August 29, Saturday

Revival Society Ball

6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Revival Wheeler Mansion

75 East Main Street

Orange

A night of music, dancing, hors d'oeuvres, and cocktails in the garden as when garden parties were all the rage. Cocktail hour and hors d'oeuvres at 6 p.m. followed by a two-hour concert by a full female swing and jazz group, She Bop Orchestra. Summer gala formal attire. Tickets required. revivalwheelermansion.com

August 30, Sunday

Virtual Hike of Road to Dana Common
1:00 p.m.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

40 Elm Street

New Salem

Along the old road to Dana Common, find foundations, fields, walls, and trees that tell the story of towns long gone—a talk about remnants of valley towns and about the landscape of the reservoir today. Free admission.

September 12, Saturday

New Salem Old Home Day

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

New Salem Center

September 13, Sunday

Birds of Prey

1:00 p.m.

Swift River Valley Historical Society

40 Elm Street

New Salem

Naturalist Tom Ricardi with live raptors such as eagles, falcons, owls, kestrels, and hawks. On the grounds of SRVHS, rain or shine. Free admission. Bring chairs or blankets for outside seating.