

QUABBIN

Voices

The Friends of Quabbin Newsletter

We must hear and listen to all of Quabbin's many Voices; Voices of the Past, as well as Voices of the Present and of the Future; Voices of the Trees, the Sky, the Rain that falls, and all the Wild Things; Voices of the People who depend on this valuable resource for their daily needs of clean water, and Voices of those who draw upon it for deeper needs of the Soul.

QUABBIN VALLEY: INSPIRATION FOR POETS, WRITERS & ARTISTS

THE story of the Quabbin (or Swift River) Valley vanishing under waters destined for Boston communities has been an inspiration for artists, poets and writers since the 1930's, when four towns and many villages were literally wiped off the map of Massachusetts by the construction of one of the largest drinking-water reservoirs in the world.

But the valley was inspiring long before this. In 1876 Henry Clay Work, a well-known songwriter of the day published *My Grandfather's Clock*, the lyrics of which were inspired by a visit he made to his wife's family in Greenwich Village, where he sat in the shade of a clump of pines on the river's edge near the Mill Pond. Tradition says that he often wrote songs and poems there.

In 1893 Francis Underwood, a native son of Enfield, wrote *Quabbin*, one of the first works of social and cultural history, now republished by Northeastern University Press with a foreword by Robert Gross of Amherst.

In the late 1800's and up until the 1920's Burt Brooks, a talented valley artist and early photographer lived and worked in Greenwich, now under fifty feet of water at the bottom of the reservoir. Thanks to photographer Les Campbell, FOQ has copies of Brooks' priceless images of village life in the valley. The Swift River Valley Historical Society in New Salem has many original paintings and photographs by Brooks.

FRIENDS' FALL PROGRAMS AT THE QUABBIN VISITOR CENTER

September 30, 2PM-4PM

Reception for Quabbin Artists and Writers

featuring Gail Thomas, reading from her new book of poetry

No Simple Wilderness, An Elegy for Swift River Valley

This series of short linked poems about Quabbin's lost towns and displaced people, with "its testimony of lost voices" speaks to experiences of displacement now common in our culture and elsewhere in the world today. The poems, while an elegy to past place, is also a celebration of the present beauty of Quabbin's wilderness and wildlife. When Gail lived in Shutesbury, she spent many hours

walking in the Quabbin Reservation and talking with former residents of the area. Gail's first book, *Finding the Bear*, was published by Perugia Press, and her poems have appeared in a variety of literary journals and anthologies. Her work has been recognized by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Ludwig Vogelstein Foundation, the MacDowell Colony and the Ucross Foundation.

October 28, 2PM-4PM

A New Video Documentary about *Quabbin Historian Walter King*



Walter King spent his retirement years researching Quabbin history, especially that of his home town of Greenwich, and then sharing that knowledge in a series of colorfully presented slideshow lectures throughout the area.

Using our oral history files, historic photos and video clips of Walter, our own board member Lisa Yeisley, who also wrote and narrated our very successful audiocassette "Here Was Home" has fashioned an interesting and informative video.

QUABBIN VOICES

is the periodic newsletter of the
Friends of Quabbin, Inc.

Edited by Lois Barnes
Design & production by Lisa Yeisley

*The views and opinions expressed in this
newsletter do not necessarily reflect the
views of Friends of Quabbin, Inc.*

MEMORIAL DAY 2001

Despite threats of downpours and possible flooding, Memorial Day Services at Quabbin Park Cemetery were well attended. Local historical societies, with banners flying, marched along with local veterans. A brief ceremony included the usual placing of wreaths at each town's (Dana, Enfield, Greenwich and Prescott) memorial by veterans escorting former residents. Local journalist Kim Ring interviewed people who were there, including Elwyn Doubleday who placed a wreath for the town of Prescott. "It makes me sad sometimes when I think of my parents," Elwyn said. "Here they were married in 1912, and 20 years later they have to pull up their roots and go."

Senator Stephen Brewer of Barre spoke movingly during the ceremony about the tragic ending of the towns. "Think about World War I and the people who left those towns to fight in France and saw the carnage there. They came home and to be told they had to leave, 'and by the way, you've got to dig up granny from the north forty and take her along, too. . .'"

Special Thanks to the Following:

Veterans Council of Belchertown; Chauncey Walker, Post 239, American Legion, Belchertown; MDC Division of Watershed Management; FOQ, Inc.; Swift River Valley Historical Society, Inc.; The Belchertown Community Band; Belchertown High School Band; Belchertown Veterans of Foreign Wars; Petersham American Legion & Auxiliary Post #415.

From Belchertown: Bell and Hudson Insurance Agency, Checker's General Store, Hawley's Family Restaurant, and Kristina's Kafe & Bakery
From Ware: Big Y Supermarket, Country Bank, Dunkin Donuts, Friendly's Restaurant, Homestyle Bakers, and WalMart.

To Dan Miron for his invaluable assistance in setting up the program; to MDC foreman Mike Czech, Billy Chrabasz and the other MDC staff who made the cemetery look so good; to bandleader Mike Bauer, drummer Kyle Hume and buglers Lydia Lindhult and Dan Fijalkowski.

And to the Trust of Eleanor Griswold Schmidt which makes possible the continuing participation of the local historical societies.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

One of my special summer activities has always been picking blueberries. There has been an especially abundant crop this year and I have taken full advantage. Even the heat, mosquitoes, and a few yellow jacket stings did not deter me. As the berries plunked into the empty pail, I realized something was not quite right. Berries hitting the bottom of a plastic pail do not sound the same as the "plink" of berries against the bottom of my favorite metal pail which I always used when blueberry picking with my grandmother. Alas, my favorite berry pail is long gone. I came upon signs of another lover of blueberries, one perhaps less discriminating. This was just a few hundred feet from my house and I knew no one else had been picking. The scatted bushes, and broken ferns told the story. There were enough berries for both of us.

The blueberries must be great in the Quabbin Reservation around ponds, under transmission lines, and along the shore of Quabbin. Blueberry picking must have been a favorite summer activity for young and old in the Valley towns, especially along the shores of the many ponds and along the railroad tracks.

by

Bob Clark



Steam engines occasionally caused fires, and the burned over areas were great for blueberries. Sights, sounds, and smells were different. There were pastures with grazing cows to cross and no jet airplanes to interrupt the natural and other manmade sounds. Mingled with the fragrance of blueberries and vegetation were the smells of cows, horses, and steam engines.

Lets hear your blueberry picking stories and other summer stories from the Swift River Valley, your encounters with snakes, inquisitive cows, fresh vegetables, canning, cows in the garden, raccoons in the corn, etc. Write us or come to the Tuesday Teas and share your stories with others.

We have some interesting programs planned that you will read about elsewhere in this issue of Quabbin Voices. I'm sure you will find them interesting, fun, and a chance to share your love of Quabbin with others.

Hope you had a great summer.
Bob Clark



***A "polychrome" postcard of the Greenwich Village Mill Pond.
The required postage was one cent.***





INTERPRETIVE SERVICES REPORT

by
Clif Read

It is with sadness that I note the retirement of Terry Campbell from the Quabbin Interpretive Services staff in mid-July. Terry has been an instrumental part of Visitor and Interpretive Services at Quabbin for nearly 20 years, bringing energy, expertise and humor to her job and making Quabbin a better place. She and husband Les first established the Quabbin Visitor Center and the Friends of Quabbin back in the early 1980's, laying the foundation for the current Interpretive Services program. Terry was the sole staff member at the Visitor Center during those early years, handling school groups, dispensing information, developing informative displays at the Center for the general public and assisting other staff on various projects among her many duties.

Finally in 1987, after many years of lobbying and pleading, the Interpretive Services staff positions were approved and staff was hired during 1988. Terry formally assumed the position of Visitor Center Manager, using her many skills to keep the Center operating smoothly and efficiently. As hostess for the regular Tuesday Tea gatherings at the Center, she remained connected to the former residents who attended those events. Terry always immersed herself into projects whether it was helping someone track down genealogical information, or organizing the microfiche collection so that it was easier to use. Of particular note was the slide show and video production of the Construction of Winsor Dam that she developed. The extent of research for this project and the attention to detail is clearly evident in the final product. As

supervisor of the program, I was always grateful for Terry's breadth of knowledge, for her genuine love of the Quabbin area, and for her enthusiasm, it always made my job a lot easier. We will all miss you Terry, and we wish you all the best.

Thanks to the hard work of Dale Monette, the Visitor Center is now in possession of three eagles - an adult and an immature bald eagle, and a golden eagle. Although these mounts are no substitute for spotting an eagle in the wild,

***We will all miss you Terry,
and we wish you all
the best.***

they do provide a unique opportunity for visitors to view these birds up close. They can observe the subtle differences between the immature bald eagle and the golden eagle, birds that are very similar in appearance. This identification can be challenging for many people, including experienced birders. One observation that I found fascinating was the size difference of tal-

ons between these two species. Although they are relatively similar in size, the predominantly mammal-eating golden eagle has significantly larger feet than its chiefly fish-eating cousin. Our sincere thanks go out to the Massachusetts Audubon Society that has provided these birds to the Visitor Center on long-term loan.

In spite of the stretches of hot weather this summer, the reservoir continues to maintain a reasonably high elevation. As of mid-August, the water level registered 2.7' below capacity, or 95 % full, which is very good for this time of year. However my prediction in the last issue of Voices for a Quabbin overflow this spring proved false. After rising precipitously this spring, a lack of spring rains halted the rise in elevation. Although water did flow through the flash-board section of the spillway wall, water never reached the top of the wall but rising to within a foot of capacity. So much for predictions!

Editor's Note: Part 2 of Pete Tandy's "Cutting the Ice" will appear in our November 2001 issue.



by **Elizabeth Howe Lincoln**

AN OCTOGENARIAN'S MEMORIES OF "OLDEN DAYS"

By Elizabeth Howe Lincoln



Roger and Elizabeth (Betty) Howe Lincoln

Ware was only seven miles from Enfield. It was a trip we made most every Sunday, and always on Thanksgiving and Christmas to be with our Howe cousins at Grandma Howe's big house with an attic and a barn with a two-holer.

There was a big old crank victrola with scratchy needles on which we played hymns like "Tell Mother I'll Be There" and "Uncle Jack and The Lightning Rods." Mom played the piano and we all sang Christmas carols. I loved to hear Aunt Edna's clear contralto singing "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear."

No Rock'n'Roll, Greatful Dead or rap musicians around then to threaten our ear drums! "What did you ever do without TV or computer games" queries granddaughter Alma, incredulously?

We lived out in the country and played around the Anderson Farm next door. I helped milk the cows, and brother Donny tried to ride a pig pastured across the wall in the field. We weren't allowed to go downtown on Saturday afternoons to see the Roy Rogers and Charlie Chaplin movies every Saturday or to swim at Lake Wickaboag for fear of polio.

But we were left to tromp freely around all the woods and play in the brooks, building dams, Donny made

flutter wheels, and Mom and Pop both knew their flowers. We still have watercolors of Josie's flowers and Grampa Don's book of pressed plants. So we learned their names. As little kids we put dandelions of yellow buttercups to each others chins - a yellow reflection meant we liked butter. We sucked the bitter dandelion hollow stem and made "curls."

We stuck the Maple seeds' sticky halves onto our noses to become rhinoceroses. And can you catch a bee and hold him buzzing in a hollyhock blossom? Hold a stiff piece of Timothy Hay in your mouth and wiggle it in and out with your lips and you are a "feeler bug!"

"Umbrella grass" can be tied and pushed open and shut for a little parasol. Those big thick sedum leaves we'd press carefully with thumb and finger to flatten and then blow up to make "frog bellies!"

Over at Uncle Bert's farm (later Uncle Ned's) in Packardville we went every spring to look for wildflowers. Mayflowers, with their heavenly scent, were so plentiful we carried home a nosegay for Mom. And we picked (heaven forbid today) a bunch of pink lady slippers.

The brook in swampy places yielded big patches of cowslips which gave us a bushel of greens for supper - lucky to find any of those bright yellow blossoms today!

And of course dandelions everywhere in the spring - spring tonic, served boiled with butter and vinegar! Better than poisoning to clear your lawn! Brother Don watched for the young milkweed shoots, milder to eat than asparagus.

There was always a dog to explore the fields and woods with one. He'd bark at snakes, and old Sam was a whiz at finding a woodchuck and giving him a few deadly tosses!

We didn't lack for drama - we had a dress-up trunk, acted out our

own plays. With my box Brownie - gift from Kodak when I was twelve, and a funny little camera Donny had, we took photos of us and our friends. Missie was tomboy who was the hero. He skipped school to take his lady friend fishing. I being tallest, as the ugly, irate school teacher, who was mollified by a big bunch of flowers presented by the truant. Donny fixed up a darkroom in a corner of the chicken house and printed his own snaps! He also built ingenious machines with his Meceano set. He constructed a working loom on which he wove the only neckties he could be coerced to wear.

Christmas was never as bountiful as today with electronic gadgets, plastic "thousands" of pieces for little builders, or American Girl Dolls with endless wardrobes and a story book about them, or those wealthy Barbie dolls!

My favorite was Raggedy Anne and the Volland "Happy Books for Happy Children" by Johnny Gruelle. I soon wrangled Donny's Raggedy

Andy Doll away from him. We made plays with the dolls - my seven-years younger sister and

"What did you ever do without TV or computer games?"

I. We made thrones and weddings by decorating our wicker furniture in the living room with roses plucked from the bountiful arbor of ramblers.

Paper dolls were even more fun. My best friend and I spent endless hours making dresses for them - and apartments in the book case furnished from the then Sears and Roebuck catalogue.

In the heat of the day we'd loll on our beds on the sleeping porch, where we kids spent the summers (no vacations to the beach in hard times). We read Little Women, Little Men, Joe's Boys - Alcott was a favorite, and later Gene Stratton Porter, advocate of the outdoor life. *

POEMS BY FORMER VALLEY RESIDENTS

"School Vacation 1937" by Isabelle Bowen Callahan

Vacation time in thirty-seven
With relatives, about eleven,
In Greenwich Plains so green and lush
Even birds their singing hush.
Alice, Lois, Roger, Rob,
Fred was away, he had a job.
Helen, Punky, Shirley, Jim,
Billie, Elwyn, and like him,
We were waiting for the hour,
That towns would cease, the number
four.
Swimming in the River Swift,
Rocks from bottom for a gift,
To help us ah remember long,
Quabbin Valley and her song,
Of houses gone, and people, too,
To far off places, no one knew
If we would meet again or not,
They parted with a heavy heart.
Uncle Fred worked on the dike,
Many miles he had to hike,
To reach the store right at the base,
Stanwood King's, a useful place
For workers as they sweat and toil,
Reworking this old valley's soil.
Stumps of trees, piles of slash,
Moving trucks which made a dash
To dump the rubbish down the lane,
And then to come back once again.
Lonely landscape, stark and brown,

Where has gone this lovely town,
Home to schools and stores and
churches,
Maples, pines and lovely birches.
Trunks of trees, piles of brush,
Nothing green, nothing lush,
Only tree stumps, fires that rush
Upward, and the woody smell
Night fires looking like a Hell,
Colors red, black the night,
To me it was a frightful sight.
Change was coming very soon,
And beneath the waning moon,
Trunks of trees, burning fires,
Become the sign of funeral pyres,
For lovely towns of stores and
churches,
Maples, pines and lovely birches.
Prescott, Greenwich, Dana, Enfield,
Towns all gone and now revealed
Their history and their daily lives
How they worked and how they
strived
How they lived and how they died,
Swept along by a rising tide
Of worldly needs and earthly wars
Fate had written in the stars,
That they must move so others might
Never see such fires at night.



Former site of Greenwich Village. Mt. Liz is in the foreground, Mt. Pomeroy beyond. Photo by Betty Lincoln.

"Visions from the Old School Bell" by Chet King

Today I polished the old school bell
Yes the one from the village school.
What stories this old bell could tell
Of the memories drowned 'neath
Quabbin's pool.
As in the polished contour I gaze
Some dream like vision wafts oer the
years
Back to my old school days
To Kids I knew and teachers gone before.
Back through time I seem to travel and
Cannot tell just where I am
Lo from the bell a mirrored reflection-the
baffle dam.
As I sit and stare into the waters deep
It seems I hear distant music-what a fool.
That's the old school bell ringing its repeat
Calling the boys and girls back to school.
Drear twilight of realities overtake me
As faintly at the old school door
Laura Walker with bell in hand, I see
Calling us back from recess as in days of
yore.
There's Walter, Asa, Victor, and Andy
Loux
Frances, Agnes and Dorothy Hall
Oh, and Goldie, Anna and Agnes Lego,
too
Cliff, John Tokes and Raymond and
Lawrence Randall.
In the distant twilight other faces appear
I seem to be fading back through space
and time.
As I reach out for their hands, they disap-
pear.
Suddenly I realize they are only visions of
mine.
Oh how I wish I could make them stay
To visit about our yesterday.
I realize I've only memories to keep
Of old days 'neath waters deep.
One last look at the bell in its niche,
One last thought of old Greenwich
Through tears of sadness and pain
Oh to be back and hear that old bell again.



SCHOOL DAYS IN GREENWICH'S OLD NORTH SCHOOL

IN the early 1920's, just before the passage of the Swift River Acts, Greenwich schools were consolidated into a Village School and a Plains school with four grades in each. Prior to this, schools were eight grades in one room neighborhood schools, often with a muddy road leading past it. children were able to walk to these schools. Because of protests by parents in the Village, the Old North School was allowed to continue until the Acts were passed. According to Asa King, who went to this school and loaned us these pictures, everyone who attended that school was related somehow to everyone else in the school.



*Old North School,
Greenwich Village, MA*



*Above left: "The North School
Band, July 3rd, 1924"*

*Above right: "The North
School" class*



*Far left: "Miss Mealand. The
North School Teacher.
July 3rd, 1924"*

*Left: The "muddy road" lead-
ing past The North School*

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(permanent home coming soon!)



Summary of the Federal Appeals Court Decision of EPA's Appeal of the Federal District Court Ruling in Favor of the MWRA's Wish to Remain Unfiltered.

Prepared by Nancy C. Kurtz, General Counsel, MWRA

As many of you know, the Court of Appeals for the First Circuit issued its decision on July 16, 2001, affirming Judge Stearns' decision that the Safe Drinking Water Act allowed him the discretion to refuse to issue an injunction requiring filtration and to hold a trial on the issue of whether filtration was required for the MWRA system. The United States did not challenge any of the Judge's factual findings on appeal, so the district court decision that the MWRA's program of watershed protection, improved disinfection with ozonation, pipeline rehabilitation and public health research is an acceptable alternative to filtration still stands.

The Appeals Court noted that it was not faced with an imminent threat to public health as none had been alleged by the United States. After discussing the language and intent of the SDWA, and comparing it to other regulatory enforcement schemes, the Court found that the statute did not create a "necessary and inescapable inference" as to the necessity of filtra-

tion upon a finding of a regulatory violation. The Court also found that the goal of the SDWA was safe drinking water, and that although filtration served an important role, it is merely a prophylactic remedy: "the manifest purpose of the SDWA is safe drinking water, not filtration."

Disagreeing with the United States' claim that the lower court decision permitted "perpetual noncompliance," the Court found that Judge Stearns' order was designed to ensure that the Act's paramount objective of safe drinking water remains fulfilled. A water system's compliance with the filtration avoidance criteria "makes the water safe from the EPA's perspective," as the United States conceded at trial. Thus, the Court commented, "we fail to see how accomplishment of the Act's substantive goals is undermined by overlooking past violations of regulatory deadlines that have no bearing on the current or future purity of the water delivered to consumers."

In affirming the district court's exercise of discretion, the Court noted

that "the district court did not hold a trial to revisit the underlying wisdom of the SWTR; rather, it held a trial to ascertain whether, based on both the particular facts of this case and the substantive goals of the Act, it was more appropriate to order filtration or to permit the MWRA to pursue its alternative approach to the extent that it could satisfy the Rule's avoidance criteria and ultimately provide a safer water supply." The Court noted that "it should be a rare case in which violation of regulatory standards does not lead to an injunction" but it agreed with the district court that this was indeed such a rare case. It found that the district court had carefully shaped its decision to ensure continued compliance with the avoidance-criteria standards, and retained jurisdiction "for the purpose of policing any future violation." Thus, "the district court used its equitable discretion to appropriate ends: furthering the substantive purposes of the Act."

