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volume 9, number 1 • May-August 2024

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



A hummingbird moth takes nectar from springtime bee balm.
photo © by Rick Flematti

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Up a Tree
a photograph by Dale Monette

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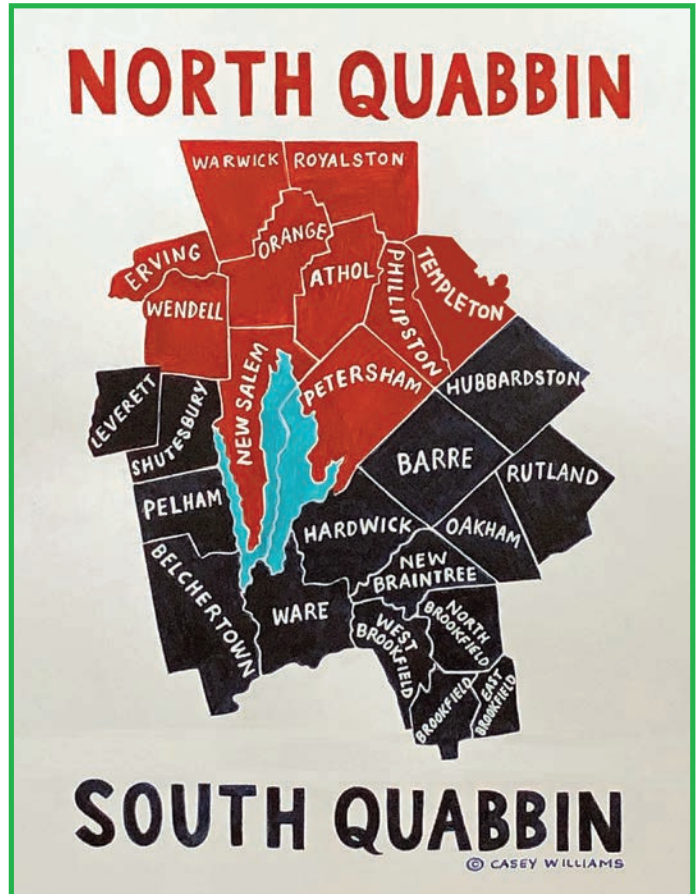
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about *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine

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

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

Please consider donating to
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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, Hardwick-New Braintree, Hubbardston, New Salem, North Brookfield, Orange, Pelham, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Rutland, Shutesbury, Ware, Warwick, Wendell, and West Brookfield for supporting *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine with local cultural grants for 2024. Generous support from those councils is so important to the continued life of our magazine.

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

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.

As you may have noticed on the front cover, this is our twenty-fifth issue, the first issue of Volume 9. It is hard to believe that we have eight years under our belts. We're still going strong thanks to all of you who read our magazine and encourage us to continue on with your positive feedback and generous donations. It is also thanks to the generosity of our local cultural councils who award us grants. It is thanks to our advertisers who, when we first approached them about advertising with us, without hesitation said yes even though we had nothing yet to show them. They just took a chance on our vision, and many of those advertisers still appear in every issue along with new advertisers in every issue. And, of course, thanks to writers, artists, and photographers continuing to provide us with everything *Uniquely Quabbin*.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you!!

Debra Ellis

Athol Historical Society

FIND LISTINGS FOR EVENTS IN
NORTH QUABBIN AND SOUTH QUABBIN
BEGINNING ON PAGE 70

a note from the publisher of *Uniquely Quabbin*

On the occasion of this twenty-fifth edition of *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine, we recognize how many individuals and organizations—writers, artists, photographers, graphic designers, print shop personnel, advertisers, donors, cultural councils, consultants, and more—have made the magazine possible since the first issue in May 2016.

Encouraged at first with a grant from the International Music and Art Foundation, we found abiding talent in so many areas in the Quabbin region as we enjoy its history, industry, natural beauty, commerce, sports activity, theatre, art, literature, orchards, farms, craft breweries, eateries, and ever so much more.

So many individuals join in production of each issue of *Uniquely Quabbin*, truly a manifestation of all that makes the area around Quabbin Reservoir significant and important in all that is Massachusetts.

We look forward to future editions of *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine and thank readers, contributors, printers, advertisers, donors, cultural councils, and others for all you do to help the magazine thrive. We hope you like it.

Sincerely,

Marcia Gagliardi, publisher

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Uniquely Quabbin magazine



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see letter to the editor on page 57

submit letters to the editor

for *Uniquely Quabbin* to

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Uniquely Quabbin

May-August 2024 • Vol 9, #1 • ISSN 2472-081X

published at Athol, Massachusetts

Uniquely Quabbin magazine is published three times a year by Haley's in January-April, May-August, and September-December.

Free

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Front cover photo by Dale Monette.

Cover designed by Mark Wright.

UQ logo by Mark Wright. *Uniquely Quabbin* logo by Mary Pat Spaulding.

Copy proofed by Mary-Ann DeVita Palmieri and Richard Bruno.

Uniquely Quabbin magazine is produced as a collaboration of

Athol Historical Society • Haley's Publishing

North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce and

Visitors Bureau

with an initial grant from

International Music and Arts Foundation.

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

sugarhouses bring maple syrup to Quabbin area residents

text by Sally Howe



Sally Howe

It is time to go pick up my yearly supply of maple syrup so I headed to Rick Gauvin's sugarhouse in North Orange. Residents and visitors can find sugarhouses in

many North Quabbin and South Quabbin towns.

The maple syrup season begins a time of ripening with maple syrup in March, strawberries in June, blueberries in July, then peaches and apples in August and September. As weather warms, other delights come into season.

For me, the time of year culminates in a hot Sunday morning as I sit outside in the sun, a steaming stack of homemade pancakes accompanied by fruit and a pitcher of warm maple syrup on the table. Remembrance of a steaming evaporator deepens the sweet taste as I lick the plate. Maple ice cream awaits in the freezer for the afternoon. Or another day, I will

pour syrup over any flavor ice cream or make a glaze for salmon. I'm not worried about too much sugar. According to Massachusetts Maple Producers, maple syrup is almost as healthy as raw carrots and full of vitamins, antioxidants, and whatever one needs to justify indulging in.

The sun shines for my visit to Gauvin's place in spring's tapping and boiling season, and steam emanates out the cupola. Inside the sugarhouse, boiling sap fills the space with warmth and sweet smells on a March day that promises local maple syrup, maple sugar, and other maple products available for purchase throughout the coming year.

continued on page 67



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Route 202 Marsh

text and painting in watercolors by Christine Texeira



Route 202 Marsh
watercolor on paper

When slowing down while approaching the Route 122 intersection on Route 202 going north in New Salem, drivers could miss the marshes on either side of the road. If they're like me, once they notice the beauty of the marshes, they'll slow even further to catch the changing colors of the slice of wetland.

A stunning Cuban blue sky with late August marsh grasses waving their last hoorah before colors faded to raw sienna enhanced the view the day I stopped for the source photo for the painting 202 Marsh.

I pulled far off the road close to a stand of trees and tromped to water's edge to catch the shot. When I got to the studio, 202 Marsh sailed out of my brush like it needed to be in the world before daylight ended.

With my next artistic project, I plan to dive deeper into the Quabbin and its history. I hope that 202 Marsh serves as headwater for the ones to come.

Christine Texiera is a Wendell artist interested in painting, art journaling, collage, and mixed media. Her love of watercolor and landscape painting are both new since the pandemic.



Quabbin area wetlands host variety of

by Sue Cloutier



Spotted salamanders migrate to vernal pools to lay eggs.
photo by Sue Cloutier

On warm rainy nights in spring, spotted salamanders emerge from the ground in forests to migrate to vernal or seasonal pools where they congregate and lay eggs. When they scurry above the ground to get to vernal pools, we can see them and so do predators.

Many salamanders become food for woodland birds and mammals or even get killed by cars if they cross a road. Crows have learned to check roads near vernal pools after rainy nights, and they feast on the salamander remains. During the rest of the year, mole salamanders, *Ambystoma maculatum*, make themselves busy under cover of leaves or in tunnels to feed on worms, slugs, and insects.



Female salamanders lay eggs in gelatinous masses.
photo by Sue Cloutier

Once in a vernal pool, female salamanders lay their gelatinous egg masses on submerged branches. The transparent egg blobs may be clear or green

due to special algae that may cohabitate. Transparency provides a view to developing embryos. Some egg masses may be milky, yet they contain healthy developing salamanders. Such egg masses comprise a rich source of food for turtles, raccoons, or other animals that live in the pool or nearby forest.



With their feathery external gills, just-hatched salamander juveniles usually hide in leaf litter at the bottom of the pool. There, young salamanders eat algae and



Salamander egg masses comprise a rich source of food for wood frogs and spotted turtles.
photos by Sue Cloutier

tiny insects like mosquito larvae. If by chance wandering salamanders lay their eggs in a pool with fish, juvenile salamanders become easy prey. All the young will most likely be eaten when fish are introduced to the pool.

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hardy springtime flora and fauna



Safe places for salamanders to reproduce, vernal pools dry out in summer and have no fish.

photo by Sue Cloutier

Vernal pools that dry out in summer have no fish and make safe places for salamander reproduction.

Once a pool starts to dry out in summer, young spotted salamanders lose their gills, and their air-breathing lungs go to work. On rainy nights, the juveniles leave their pool and spread out into nearby woods. Once there, young salamanders remain under cover and only occasionally emerge to hunt when humidity is high.

When fully mature, some eighty or ninety percent of surviving salamanders return to their original pools. The other ten to twenty percent are true wanderers that go out looking for a new pool. Wandering is a survival strategy for that population. Over time, leaf litter can fill and dry out a pool, and then many salamanders from the original pool are out of luck. Wandering salamanders that find new vernal pools provide a future for that regional population.

The struggle for survival is a fact of life. Vernal pools comprise the first stage where salamanders live and die. Then forests provide for salamanders during their terrestrial stage in two ways. Fallen leaves preserve moisture in the soil that protects moist salamander skin from drying. Underground dead tree roots provide passages easy for salamanders to move into. Abandoned tunnels of moles and chipmunks also become salamander highways.

Salamander excretions fertilize tunnel soils, and activity in the tunnels keeps them open, bringing oxygen and rainwater near living roots of trees. Salamanders, forest predators, and even the trees experience mutual benefit from salamanders' seasonal behavior. And food chains link life in vernal pools to the forest.

Quabbin forests include a patchwork of vernal pools, ponds, and wetlands. When on a Quabbin path or roadway that passes a wetland edge, look for special habitats that include sphagnum moss and cranberry plants, because two other plants may be found there, and they have an unusual survival strategy.

Plants usually do well as they sit in the sun and have no need to hunt for food because they get energy by the

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ephemerals—colorful wildflowers—

text and photos by John Burk

Colorful forest wildflowers, known as ephemerals because of their short life cycles above ground, reward Quabbin region explorers and naturalists in spring. Hardy species emerge from late April to June in an intricate adaptation that enables plants to take advantage of soils watered by melted snow and rain, sunlight before trees and shrubs unfurl leaves, and less competition for pollinators and other sources. Early flowers serve as crucial food for ants, flies, and bees that overwinter. In turn, insects disperse flower seeds and pollen to help propagation.

Predominantly acidic soils and diverse habitats of the Quabbin region support a variety of flora characteristic of central and eastern New England. Locations with abundant soil nutrients, such as river valleys and mountain or hill slopes, sustain rich botanical communities. Threats include disturbance of habitats, competition from invasive species, overabundance of white-tailed deer, seasonal weather fluctuations, and

collection by humans. Disrupted populations often take many years to reestablish, and therefore people should not pick nor transplant wildflowers.

One of the first species to bloom in April, round-lobed hepatica, *Hepatica americana*, displays

colorful clusters of blue, lavender, pink, or white flowers. A low growing evergreen, its name comes from rounded leaves that last through autumn and winter. Petals close at night and on rainy days to protect flowers and pollen. Furry stems and buds retain heat from sunlight. Look for hepatica in rocky forests especially on moist ledges and steep hillsides.

Named for underground stems that contain red sap, bloodroot *Sanguinaria canadensis*, grows in forests



Round-lobed hepatica blooms in early spring.



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emerge in intricate springtime variations

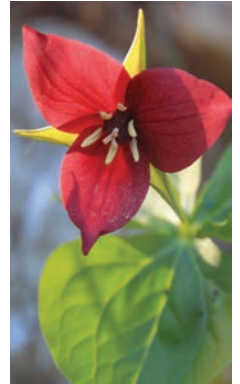
with rich soils and along streams during late April and early May. Large kidney-shaped leaves protect emergent stems and buds before unfurling to expose flowers. Elongated white petals drop shortly after pollination. Native American tribes used bloodroot for medicinal purposes and as dye for clothing, skin, weapons, and baskets. Groups near stone walls or foundations likely indicate former garden sites.



The leaf of bloodroot grows to protect the flower.

fully opens. Large colonies often contain many plants that do not flower.

Another member of the lily family, red trillium or *Trillium erectum*, also known as purple trillium, wake robin, or stinking Benjamin, features attractive but pungent dark red flowers pollinated by carrion flies. Yellow, white, or light green color variations sporadically occur. Find red trilliums in forests with rich soils especially near rivers, streams, and floodplains from late April to mid-May.



Carrion flies pollinate red trilliums.

Related painted trilliums, *Trillium undulatum*, which mostly bloom in May, favor cool, moist environments

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Trout lilies thrive in a variety of settings.

Adaptable trout lilies, *Erythronium americanum*, thrive in a variety of settings such as mountain ridges, forests near river banks, and meadows. Their name derives from brown mottled leaves that resemble scales of brook trout and brown trout. Bright yellow petals curve backward when the flower



Painted trilliums favor cool, moist environments with acidic soil.



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No Mow advocates say practice supports pollinators



by Amber Robidoux

In spring, No Mow signs sprinkle throughout communities across the Quabbin region. Benefits of mowing less in spring go beyond tall grass and wildflowers. During the critical growing season, hungry bees and other essential pollinators rely on local

resources for food. Without native food sources, bees and insects die off and, without pollination, so do some local plants and food crops. Native plants contribute to ecosystems, soil, air, and water. Taller lawns shade out unwanted weeds and return nutrients to soil.

Grass-only lawns lack floral resources, and owners typically treat them with pesticides that can harm the natural landscape. Less intense mowing practices encourage reduced pesticides and chemicals, while taller plants have deeper roots with more tolerance to drought while saving water. Homeowners save time and money while spending less time on lawn maintenance and less fuel for lawn equipment, all of it leading to less pollution.

A small shift can make a difference for pollinators. Delaying mowing to every two or three weeks allows a more diverse habitat full of blooms and native plants perfect for natural nesting sites. Grasshoppers, butterflies, fireflies, and other insects also thrive in vibrant, abundant lawns.

Mowing just the edge of a lawn may appeal to those who prefer a manicured look. Another option favors growing grass to six inches, then cutting down to four inches. Plenty of low-growing flowers will thrive. A pollinator garden with native plants and no fertilizers provides an interactive option for maintaining a yard while also feeding bees and other pollinators.

A finisher in National Novel Writing Month competition, Amber Robidoux is a freelance writer. She lives in Orange.



Massachusetts roadways, including Route 2 at the on ramp near Exit 77, have areas not mown. photo © by Jane Gagliardi

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Flowering Magnolia a visual haiku by Ami Fagin

The captivating burst of spring blossoms from the saucer magnolia offers a tutorial on the irresistible charm of the floral world. Its velvety, sizable, and fragrant blooms boast an array of colors in white, pink, green, purple, or yellow. Magnolia, an ancient genus with specimens dating back twenty million years, pre-dating even the evolution of bees, stands as testament to nature's enduring beauty. Majestic and resilient magnolia trees grace our surroundings with their exquisite blooms and the poetic visual haiku Flowering Magnolia.

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Quabbin region no stranger to dramatic

by Christopher Coyle



A brakeman escorted one of two boxcars twelve miles from Rutland to Oakdale after a 1938 train wreck.
photo from the collection of Christopher Coyle

Things do not always go as planned in the train world. Wrecks, floods, and other calamities result in service interruptions as with all forms of transportation.

The Great Hurricane of September 1938 hit Quabbin region railroads hard. Several large washouts east of Coldbrook in northwestern Oakham spelled the end of Central Mass Branch rail service from Boston to Northampton. Two boxcars were marooned in Rutland. The track east a dozen miles to Oakdale was deemed safe to support a freight car but not a locomotive. B&M rented the town tractor and towed cars one at a time to Summit Crossing about a mile east of Rutland. From there, a brakeman riding each boxcar coasted them downgrade to Oakdale. Section men provided crossing protection.

Another tragic and completely avoidable accident happened in Rutland on a rainy August 1932 day. An error in issuing train orders combined with the engineer of Extra 1435 mistakenly running east from his working limit of Rutland resulted in a head-on collision with Extra 1365 a short distance east of Rutland. The engineer and fireman of the 1435 perished with the flagman seriously injured when he was thrown into a wood-laden hopper car while crossing the tops of cars from the caboose in a futile attempt to signal the engineer to stop.

In the days of railroad building, railroads named steam locomotives instead of numbering them. The Vermont and Massachusetts Railroad locomotive named Athol got destroyed when it, two railcars, and fifteen men crashed through the second bridge west of South

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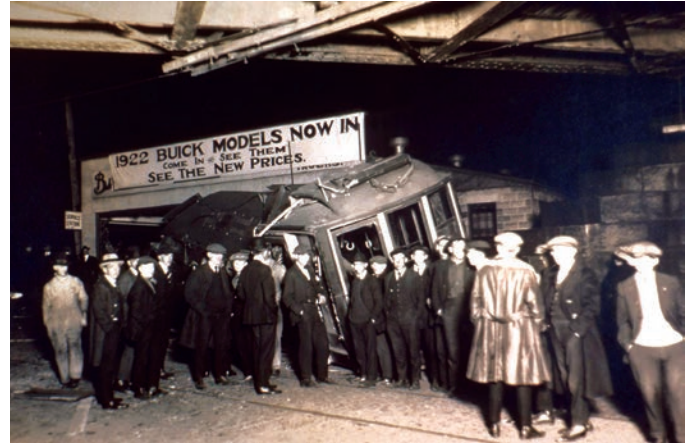
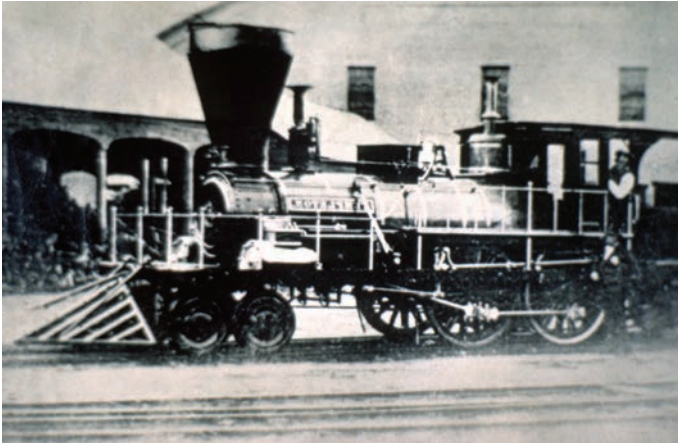
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railroad wrecks, floods, and other calamities



A Vermont and Massachusetts locomotive named Templeton, left, resembled one named Athol destroyed in South Royalston in October 1847. Faulty brakes accounted for a 1921 Athol trolley wreck at the School Street overpass. photos courtesy of Athol Historical Society

Royalston on October 27, 1847 before the locomotive went into service. The accident killed several laborers and destroyed the engine. Plans had called for using the locomotive Athol on the first train into the town of Athol in December of that year, but a different engine had to be used for the initial run.

School Street hill on the Athol and Orange Street Railway constituted one of the steepest streetcar grades in the state. A streetcar ran west one October evening in 1921 when somewhere in uptown Athol the motorman, fortunately the only one aboard, found that the car's brakes no longer worked. He jumped to safety. Without operator, the trolley car continued to pick up speed and flew down School Street until it crashed into the front wall of Cass Garage next to the sharp curve at the railroad overpass. Evidently, proprietor Ira Cass had a bit of a sense of humor, as a sign appeared a short time

later in front of the showroom window noting that "Everyone stops at Cass Service, even electric cars!"

As there were no dining cars on trains along the line, a restaurant opened in the old two-story depot in Athol in the 1870s. Trains stopped in Athol for twenty

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official 1754 Rutland district documents

by Charlotte Westhead

In May 1754, 270 years ago, James Caldwell of Rutland District, later Barre, perhaps hitched up a horse and wagon, possibly in bright light of a spring morning, and drove to meet his neighbor and brother John Caldwell, esquire. Records in Barre Historical Society indicate they went to Rutland to buy a pair of slaves. Zedekiah Stone, a prosperous lawyer and owner of extensive farms and lands, planned with a friend to bring slaves from Petersham to sell.

The landowners may have met in a tavern. It was a comfortable place where, sitting at a table with food and drink, they could discuss crops, cattle, and the pending sale. John Caldwell inspected the man and the woman and found them “fit and well,” the records tell us. The female, Dinah, was said to be “about 19 years old” and the male, Mingo, was “about 20 years old.” There may have been an infant male called Quork, a West African name meaning “son born on a Wednesday.” The men agreed on a price of 108 pounds. James Caldwell drove

his wagon to Stone’s wagon and transferred the bits of belongings the couple brought with them to his wagon.

In an unverified account, Dinah is said to have told Quork when he was older that Zedekiah Stone had eight slaves and only needed six, so he sold Dinah and Mingo. Documents do verify that Zedekiah, a very wealthy man, owned several farms in various parts of Petersham. He would need labor to maintain them.

Petersham and the community on the Stone properties may have been the only home Dinah knew. Perhaps the sale caused her to leave her mother, siblings, relatives, and people who cared for and supported her. She later reportedly told Quork that, despite records to the contrary, she was seventeen, not nineteen, years old at the time Caldwell sold her. She had her first baby to care for in strange surroundings without the help of a woman she knew. She didn’t know what she would be expected to do.

That the infant was named Quork may indicate Stone was not concerned or involved in the naming of his

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record sale of pair of slaves from Petersham

slaves. The African name may indicate a close emotional attachment to an African home.

Perhaps the house James Caldwell was building was habitable. A few years later, a visitor to the Caldwell home wrote that the slaves “lived about 100 yards to the south.” A hard-to-find cellar hole in the area filling up with leaves and other debris may have been their home. A cellar hole remains farther down the road near the corner of an abandoned road where a “free other” family lived, according to records.

James Caldwell had one son and perhaps a young wife. He was very involved with his cattle. As a single man, he had moved from Worcester to Rutland District where he drove his own small herd.

Weeks, months, and years went by, and James and Isobel had four children. Dinah and Mingo may have had six children. The children of James and Isobel and Mingo and Dinah probably played together and learned farm skills as they grew older. As later actions indicate, they also developed affectionate ties with each other.

To date, no baptism records have been found for they did not belong to the Congregational church. Presbyterian church records don't remain in the area.

In May 1763, James Caldwell and Quork were working in a field across the dirt road but not far from the Caldwell house when a sudden summer storm came up. They rushed from pounding rain for shelter under a near-by tree. Lightning hit the tree, and a branch fell that killed James and broke Quork's thigh.

Isobel had a child, Submit, born after James died. Dinah may have had Roseanne after Mingo died also.

Who owned the Negroes, as records identify them, became an item of great interest. Five years of guardianship followed by a variety of interested people. Isobel, a female, could not legally be guardian of her own children or property, including the black individuals. In 1768, Isobel, “the young widow,” married Nathaniel Jennison, according to records of the time.

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

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Quabbin Host Community Development Trust Fund

by Carla Charter

Today, some two hundred million gallons of water a day flow from Quabbin Reservoir to Boston and nearby communities with approximately three million people in the eastern part of Massachusetts drinking water filtered by the hundred-thousand-acre watershed owned and operated by the Commonwealth and its agencies.

After the central Massachusetts towns of Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott were disincorporated on April 27, 1938 to make way for Quabbin Reservoir, the towns' residents had to move. Buildings were torn down and graves disinterred. Quabbin Reservoir also destroyed lands of thriving Indigenous communities, according to state Senator Jo Comerford, and six surrounding towns Belchertown, Hardwick, New Salem, Pelham, Petersham, and Ware absorbed jurisdiction for the territory.

Watershed towns in return receive payment in lieu of taxes, PILOT, from the state to compensate the towns for nontaxable, state-owned watershed lands lost



Quabbin Reservoir hosts a springtime sunrise looking south at Gate 35, New Salem.
photo © by Rick Flematti

due to Quabbin. The PILOT program also reimburses watershed municipalities Wachusett, Sudbury, and Ware River. Senator Comerford has sponsored Quabbin Watershed and Regional Equity Bill, state senate bill S.447, which if passed would benefit Quabbin watershed towns. The bill would provide funds in two ways to compensate towns for land lost with building of Quabbin reservoir.

Proposed legislation calls for a fee of 5 cents for every thousand gallons drawn on the Quabbin with proceeds placed into a newly created Quabbin Host Community

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proposed for municipalities impacted by reservoir

Development Trust Fund, a separate fund for the municipal service, public safety, and development needs of the Quabbin Reservoir watershed communities. The proposed fee would raise \$3.5 million a year while adding less than 7 cents a month to the water bill of the average family using Quabbin water, Comerford said.

At least seventy percent of the new fund would go to communities directly impacted by the reservoir for municipal operations and capital improvements. Up to another twenty-five percent of fund expenditures would go to nonprofit organizations, including tribal

entities, directly serving health, welfare, safety, and transit needs of the Quabbin Reservoir watershed communities, Connecticut River Basin communities, and Chicopee River Basin communities.

The second part of the bill concerns PILOT payments. If the bill passes, Quabbin watershed towns would receive PILOT payments based on total acreage of state land in each community rather than land only above the high-water mark. Quabbin is the only watershed that does not receive payment based on total acreage including land below watershed waters.



Summertime proclaims itself at Quabbin Reservoir from Soapstone Mountain Overlook, Petersham.

photo © by Rick Flematti

Quabbin watershed towns would welcome funds in the event S.447 passes. Potential monies could be used for infrastructure improvements including water and sewer improvements as well as for transportation and roads, according to Stuart Beckley, Ware town manager. "For the town of Ware, it certainly would help," he said.

"We direct a majority of funds toward the operating budget, so capital projects are unfunded," said Steve Williams, Belchertown town administrator.

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comprised of four small villages,

by Diane Kane



A giant wooden birthday cake proclaims Leverett's 250th.
photo © by Marcia Gagliardi



Leverett Village Coop offers local food and products.
photo © by Louise Minks

Leverett has much to be proud of and 250 years of history to celebrate. A giant wooden birthday cake shared with Leverett from a neighboring town's prior celebration is on display near the library, with 250 candles lit during the festivities.

The cozy town of Leverett in Franklin County lies just west of Quabbin Reservoir on the edge of Pioneer Valley and east of the Connecticut River. Located north of Amherst with an approximate population of 1,865, it was originally part of Sunderland. In 1774, settlers there petitioned to become their own town named for John Leverett, the twentieth governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The town comprises four small villages: Leverett Center, East Leverett, North Leverett, and Moore's Corner. A fifth, Hillsboro, existed with its own post office until disestablished in 1934.

Leverett has a total area of 23.0 square miles of which 22.9 square miles are land and 0.1 square miles totaling 0.61% water, according to the United States Census Bureau. Several brooks drain through the town, all heading toward the Connecticut River. Leverett Pond, near the center, is the town's largest body of water.

The southwestern corner has relatively flat plains while hills dominate the rest. The tallest, Brushy Mountain, has an elevation of 1,260 feet. A unique geological feature, Rattlesnake Gutter, is a boulder-filled chasm three quarters of a mile long and an eighth mile wide along a short section of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail just south of Leverett Village Co-op near

Shutesbury Road. Origins of the chasm are uncertain, but theories include a subglacial channel, a tear of an old geologic fault, or a spillway for a proglacial lake.

Many visitors come to Leverett to tour the New England Peace Pagoda, considered the first of its kind in North America. Built entirely by volunteers in 1985, the Buddhist antinuclear monastic order Nipponzan Myoji erected a large monument in Leverett in the style of an Indian Asokan stupa, a style that dates to six



New England Peace Pagoda stands on Cave Hill Road, Leverett.t
photo © by Marcia Gagliardi.

cozy Leverett celebrates 250 years

centuries before this era. The tradition of constructing pagodas around the world began with Nicherin monk Nichidatsu Fujii in 1947 in response to US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Completed in 1986, the New England Peace Pagoda features a hundred-foot-high dome and several statues of the Buddha carved by Sri Lankan artisans. The site also contains a reflecting pool and rock garden. A separate wooden temple built on the site burned in 1987 and was replaced in 2011 with a new building in the style of a Hindu temple for activities, including prayers, Buddhist ceremonies, and interfaith gatherings.



A Cambodian Buddhist temple on Cave Hill Road features a monumental reclining Buddha.
photo © by Marcia Gagliardi

Another Buddhist shrine, a Cambodian temple on Cave Hill, features Buddhist statuary and, near the top of a hill, a reclining Buddha some twenty feet long.

Leverett is also the home of a number of churches, including Leverett Center Congregational Church, North Leverett Baptist, Moore's Corner Community Church, and Mount Toby Friends Meeting House. The founder of the Baptist church, originally from Scotland, was a protégé of evangelist D. L. Moody. Born in 1837, Moody founded Northfield School and Mount Hermon School, now Northfield Mount Hermon School.

Leverett has another rare distinction. In 2005, the Boston Globe described Leverett and its neighboring town Shutesbury as among "America's Broadband Black Holes." MassBroadband extended coverage to Leverett in 2015.

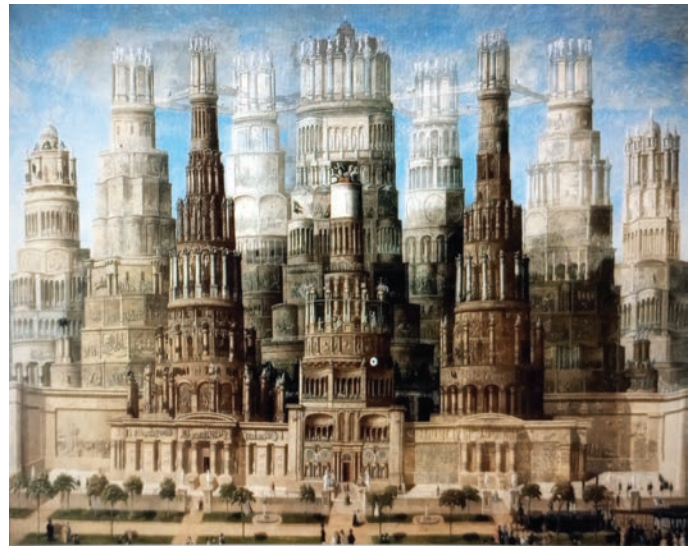
Leverett Crafts & Arts near the town's municipal buildings hosts artists and artisans with exhibitions, working spaces, and work for sale. Originators established the crafts and arts space in a former factory building that housed a box shop founded in 1919.



Leverett Crafts & Arts provides artist and crafter studios and offers exhibition space.
photo © by Louise Minks

The town survived in the mid 1900s thanks to many water-powered mills, some of them still standing.

The paintings of nineteenth-century Erastus Salisbury Field of Leverett are displayed in Historic Deerfield, the



Erastus Salisbury Field, born in Leverett, painted *Historical Monument of the American Republic* between 1867 and 1888. The painting hangs in D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts Blake Court, Springfield.
image courtesy of D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts

D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield, and the National Gallery in Washington DC.

Leverett boasts other famous residents. As a teenager in his family home in 1969, candlemaker Michael Kittredge II founded Yankee Candle when he started

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noted for having had many names, Barre

by Diane Kane

With approximately 5,530 residents in Worcester County, Barre celebrates its 250th anniversary this year.

“Our committee has worked hard over the past four years to fundraise and plan events to celebrate Barre’s 250th anniversary. Along the way, we have seen wonderful enthusiasm from so many of Barre’s community members,” stated Meghan Peddle, vice-chairwoman for the 250th Committee.

“The committee is made up of Barre residents whose families have been here for generations as well as many new residents,” she continued. “Many committee members served on Barre’s 225th anniversary and fondly remember the 200th anniversary.”

The celebration includes Barre’s Autumn Fair beginning at 10 am September 14 on the Barre Common and Barre’s anniversary parade and fireworks beginning at 1 pm September 21.



Barre has a history in names. It began as a district of Rutland and later incorporated in 1774 under the name of Hutchinson after Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson. When Hutchinson resigned from his office and returned to England, the town was renamed Barre in 1776 in honor of Colonel Issac Barre, a champion in the war for independence.

Barre has a total area of 44.6 square miles, with 44.3 square miles of land and 0.3 square miles or 0.63% of water, including part of the Ware River, according to the United States Census Bureau.

Seven towns border Barre—Hubbardston to the northeast, Rutland and Oakham to the southeast, New Braintree to the south, Hardwick to the southwest, Petersham to the northwest, and a small portion of Phillipston to the north.

Although the name includes Barre, the Boston, Barre, and Gardner Railroad never came to Barre. In 1849, the idea began as a rail line from Worcester to Barre, but builders lacked the capital. When the project revived in 1869, it bypassed Barre but kept the name.

Barre is known for having had the longest parade in Massachusetts on April 11, 1943 when, with much fanfare, Barre welcomed home Basil Izzi. A local soldier, he survived eighty-three days in the Atlantic Ocean on a life raft after the torpedoing of his ship, the MV Zaandam, a Dutch cargo ship in service of the United States. When Izzi died in 1979, officials



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renamed a bridge in South Barre on Route 32 over the Ware River in his honor, the Seaman 2nd Class Basil D. Izzi Memorial Bridge.

Barre has been home to many well known citizens. Stephen Brewer, a Massachusetts state senator, began his political career on the Barre Board of Selectmen, where he served from 1977 to 1984, eventually becoming the board's chair. He also worked as an aide to state Senator Robert D. Wetmore from 1980 to 1988. Brewer became a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1989 and moved on to the Massachusetts Senate in 1997, where he served until his retirement in January 2015.

Kwaku Walker Lewis, an African American Freemason and Mormon born in Barre in 1798, became an active member of the underground railroad and the antislavery movement.

Quock Walker, an American slave purchased by Barre farmer James Caldwell, won his freedom through the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1781. His case helped to abolish slavery in Massachusetts. Massachusetts observes Emancipation Day/Quock Walker Day annually on July 8.

Another eventual Barre resident, Jacob Riis emigrated to America from Denmark in 1870. A journalist and author, he began his career in New York City advocating for better conditions for immigrants. His articles also promoted effective treatments for tuberculosis and, in cooperation with the American Red Cross, encouraged fundraising for the cause through Easter and



A few carriages and a pedestrian made their way down Common Street, Barre in 1900. photo courtesy of Woods Memorial Library, Barre

Christmas seals. An unmarked granite boulder in Barre's Riverside Cemetery marks Riis's grave.

Significant change to the town's topography occurred in the late 1950s when the US Army Corps of Engineers constructed a dam on Ware River at Barre Falls at a cost of two million dollars to reduce the flow of water along the Ware, Chicopee, and Connecticut rivers.

Barre Historical Society at 18 Common Street "strives to preserve history and share it with the public," according to the website. "Members work hard to maintain the archives and museum displays to share with the public and future generations. We offer lectures and programs of interest."

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Scotch-Irish settlement of Oakham began in

by John Burk

Oakham's 21.1 square mile landscape lies at the northern end of a plateau of gently rolling hills with elevations of roughly 800 to 1,000 feet. The plateau extends though western Worcester County. Five Mile River, a major tributary of Quaboag River, flows from headwaters in Rutland State Park south past 70-acre Lake Dean to Brooks Pond at the boundary with New Braintree, North Brookfield, and Spencer. A half-mile segment of Ware River meanders along Oakham's boundary with Barre.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Water Supply Protection owns approximately one third of Oakham's land for preservation of the watershed of Ware River, which supplements Quabbin and Wachusett reservoirs. Other conservation lands include 742-acre Oakham Wildlife Management Area encompassing forests, fields, old orchards, and wetlands and Oakham State Forest, comprised of three tracts in the southeast part of town.

A segment of the Midstate Trail for hiking passes by Browning Pond and a giant glacial boulder called Sampson's Pebble.

What is now Oakham originally was the southwestern portion of Naquag, a large territory the Nipmucs used for seasonal hunting, fishing, and gathering. Possible sites included Five Mile River, Browning Pond, Dean Pond, Muddy Pond, and other waterways. Colonial proprietors acquired Naquag in 1686.

European settlement began in the 1740s when Scotch-Irish Presbyterian immigrants purchased land in western Rutland, a locale called West Wing, with the intent to establish a separate town. The area incorporated as Oakham, a Massachusetts district, in 1762 and became a town in 1775 with a population of six hundred residents. The first meetinghouse, originally built in Rutland, relocated to the present center in 1761. The Sixth Massachusetts Turnpike, an early toll road that followed present Old Turnpike

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1740s on former Nipmuc Naquag territory

Road, provided connections to the Connecticut River Valley and Worcester.

Agriculture led Oakham's economy from colonial times through the mid twentieth century. As in nearby communities such as New Braintree and Hardwick, dairying predominated in the nineteenth century. Oakham ranked as one of Worcester County's leading cheese producers before farmers shifted to milk and butter in the late 1800s. A cheese factory operated from 1864 to the early 1880s in the former Methodist church in the town center. Other commodities included poultry, fruit, and vegetables.

A variety of small industries, shops, and home businesses served residents during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They included boot and shoe makers, wood and metal workers, palm leaf hat dealers, sawmills, tanneries, a plow and farm products maker, carriage manufacturer, clock and jewelry shop, wood furnace dealer, wire products manufacturer, and the *Oakham Herald* print shop. Park View Inn, built in the

1790s, stood as a landmark of the town center until 1908, when a fire destroyed it.

Coldbrook Springs, named for mineral springs on what is now called Parker's Brook, became Oakham's largest village in the nineteenth century. Abundant waterpower and location on the Barre to Worcester stagecoach route prompted establishment of businesses such as a tavern, grist mill, cotton factory, basket company, boot shop, box mill, and a bowling alley. The Parker family owned a successful sawmill and a general store that housed the village's post office and a telephone company.

In the late nineteenth century, Coldbrook Springs became a popular resort destination. The Coldbrook House and Eagle Inn hotels hosted many visitors who used water from the mineral spring for treatment of a variety of ailments such as diabetes, rheumatism, and gout.

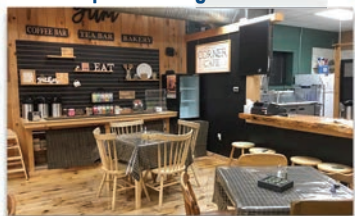
Railroad service began in 1873 when Boston and Albany's Ware River line opened a depot near

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Phillipston landscape comprises hills,

text and photos by John Burk



Mountain laurel blooms in profusion along a trail in Elliott Laurel Reservation, Phillipston.

Located in uplands south of Millers River, Phillipston's 24.6-square-mile landscape comprises hills, swampy lowlands, streams, and brooks in the Swift, Millers, and Ware river watersheds.



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Contiguous Popple Camp and Phillipston Wildlife Management areas, part of a large corridor of conservation land, help maintain water quality of Quabbin Reservoir and protect forty-four hundred acres of hardwood and hemlock woodlands, ridges, swamps, old fields, and upper reaches of Swift River East Branch. Fox Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, protected by Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, encompasses Popple Camp Brook headwaters and surrounding forests. Named for mountain laurel thickets that produce colorful blooms in June, Elliott Laurel Reservation preserves a rocky hill and old pasture near Queen Lake.

Hilly topography likely limited Native American activity to seasonal hunting, fishing, and agriculture in the area. Sources cite Queen Lake and adjacent meadows as locations where Native Americans camped and planted corn. In 1967, divers discovered a primitive dugout canoe, currently displayed at Phillipston Historical Society, on the floor of Queen Lake.

Prospect Hill, the highest elevation in Phillipston at 1383 feet, lies within Harvard Forest near the Petersham town boundary.

Queen Lake, 160 acres and well-known historical site and recreation destination, occupies a glacial basin in the southeast part of town. Popple Camp, Bigelow, and Shattuck brooks form headwaters of Swift River East Branch, largest source of Quabbin Reservoir. A major tributary of Ware River, Burnshirt River flows south through a hilly valley at the boundary with Templeton.

In 1733, Massachusetts General Court granted Narragansett Number Six, a tract that encompassed present Phillipston, Templeton, and part of Athol, to sixty veterans of King Philip's War or their heirs. Settlement of western Templeton, which became Phillipston, began in 1751. Distance to churches prompted incorporation in 1786 of Phillipston, originally named Gerry for politician Elbridge Gerry. Gerry's controversial policies, such as rearrangement of voter districts that prompted the term gerrymander, caused officials to rename the town in 1814 for then state lieutenant governor William Phillips.

After the end of an economic depression that followed the American Revolution, Phillipston grew rapidly in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

swampy lowlands, streams, and brooks

centuries. Most residents tended farms that produced crops, butter, cattle, and other commodities. Industries included gristmills and sawmills on Burnshirt River, Powers's Sawmill at Kendall Brook, a tannery, and home businesses such as woodworkers, chair painters, and palm leaf hat and boot makers.

Goulding Village, Phillipston's first and largest industrial center, formed in the early nineteenth century at the northern end of Queen Lake. The lake's outflow powered cotton and woolen mills, a hat shop, and a cobbler shop. Chair and paint factories utilized the mills in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A creamery, supplied by local dairy farmers, produced butter from 1886 to 1899.

The town center, designated as a National Historic District in 1999, features several eighteenth-century civic buildings and homes. Built in 1785, the first meetinghouse remains in use as the Congregational Church. Schoolhouse #1, constructed in 1790, houses Phillips Free Library. The town hall opened in 1891. Past businesses included Gould's Tavern on the Athol to Templeton stagecoach road, a successful mercantile establishment that sold a variety of products to regional customers, and a general store that burned in 1936.

Although segments of the Vermont and Massachusetts and Ware River railroads traversed Phillipston's boundaries, no lines ever ran through town. Like other communities bypassed by railroads, Phillipston's economy and growth declined after the mid nineteenth century. Closures of businesses and farms caused a decrease of population to 390 residents by 1915.

A trolley line, part of a regional route that extended from Boston to Greenfield, operated on State Road from 1901 to 1929. Horse-drawn barges brought passengers from Templeton to Queen Lake. Route 2, the Mohawk Trail Highway, opened during the 1920s.

Historically known as Great Pond, Jackson's Pond, and Phillipston Pond, Queen Lake became a popular vacation and recreation destination by the early twentieth century. An exclusive girl's camp with sixteen cottages, athletic fields, a dining hall, and a library operated on the southeast shores from 1921 to 1969. Phillipston officials and residents thwarted attempts by Baldwinville to acquire Queen Lake for water supply during the 1930s.



Storm clouds gather over Queen Lake, whose outflow once powered nineteenth century cotton and woolen mills, a hat shop, and a cobbler shop. An exclusive camp for girls operated in summers on Queen Lake from the 1920s to the 1970s. Summer residences dot the Queen Lake shoreline.

Red Apple Farm, Phillipston's oldest extant agricultural business, originally opened in 1912. The Rose family acquired the orchard, which includes an

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QUABBIN CURRENTS

demolition threatens historic Belchertown and Athol buildings

by J. R. Greene

Authorities control and threaten to demolish two standing structures, one an old farmstead in Belchertown, the other an old farm barn in Athol, and both on public land.

The Baraniuk family bought the farmhouse on Blue Meadow Road in Belchertown in 1925. The building dates to 1900. Because of the building's proximity to the future reservoir shoreline, the family had to sell their farmhouse in 1928 to the Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission that constructed the Quabbin Reservoir by damming Swift River in the 1930s.

To accommodate reservoir employees, the commission rebuilt the house and built two new buildings on the same street constructed of materials salvaged from buildings torn down in Swift River Valley.

While all three buildings housed a series of employees over the years, the commission converted the center building for use as offices in the late twentieth century.

Baraniuk house became the ranger station around the same time.

The center building continues in use for offices, with the other two buildings mothballed in 2023. The superintendent at the Quabbin has obtained permission from the Massachusetts Historical Commission to demolish the buildings.

The Baraniuk house is the last original building standing in Quabbin watershed state property and should be saved even if no work on it can be done in the near future. While the building has rather cheap twentieth-century windows, vinyl siding, and vinyl flooring, the original walls and structure survive. It retains two sets of narrow stairs to the basement and second floor.

Both the boards of directors of Friends of Quabbin, the support group for the Quabbin Visitors Center, and the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Council voted to

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Authorities propose demoiution of the Baraniuk farmouse, left, in Belchertown and the Bidwell barn in Athol.
 Barianuk photo courtesy of Digital Commonwealth • Bidwell barn photo © by Jane Gagliardi

oppose demolishing Baraniuk house at meetings held in March 2024.

Fifteen years ago, the Town of Athol purchased the Bidwell barn on a hundred-acre parcel for future use. The barn and property on South Athol Road face the junction with Partridgeville Road. The original farmhouse on the west side of the road is a private residence.

According to research done by Carolyn Brouillet of the Athol Historical Commission, a barn stood on the property as early as 1827 with one recorded in a

property transfer around 1850. Records do not indicate if the current barn dates back that far, but its structure appears to date from the 1800s. The solidly built barn has three stories. Water leakage has kept an apartment on the first floor out of use for many years.

The town stores holiday street decorations in the barn, and two private parties use parts of it for storage. Sections of the abandoned rail bed of the old Rabbit Run, the Athol Branch of the Boston & Albany

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Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem

old-time string band – 7:30PM Saturday June 8

Quabbin Valley Pro Musica

classical choral music – 4:00PM Sunday June 9

Jung-Yi Alice Hsieh Daugherty with Ilya Kazantsev

classical flute and piano – 4:00PM Sunday June 23

Christine Ohlman & Rebel Montez

roots rock – 7:30PM Saturday July 13

Magpie

American folk duo – 7:30PM Saturday July 20

Leah Kunkel

atmospheric soft rock – 4:00PM Sunday July 21

Tracy Grammer with Jim Henry

post-modern folk – 7:30PM Saturday July 27

John Gorka

iconic singer-songwriter – 7:30PM Saturday August 31

Samirah Evans Band with Anand Nayak

eclectic jazz standards & more – 7:30PM Saturday Sept. 7

Steven Schoenberg

improvisational piano – 4:00PM Sunday Sept. 8

Mad Agnes – New Salem Old Home Day

innovative folk – 4:00PM Saturday Sept. 14

Peter Blanchette & Charlotte Malin

11 string arch guitar & violin – 4:00PM Sunday Sept. 15

Deep River Ramblers

American roots – 7:30PM Saturday Sept. 21

Times, ticket prices & details are on our website

[HTTPS://1794MEETINGHOUSE.ORG](https://1794MEETINGHOUSE.ORG)

26 South Main St, New Salem MA 01355

Quabbin Region Farmers Markets

Barre Farmers Market

Common Street • Barre

9 am to 12:30 pm Saturdays

May 7 thru October 29

vegetables, fruits, plants, dairy products, eggs,
jams and jellies, maple syrup, baked goods

Belchertown Farmers Market

Belchertown Common

10 am to 2 pm Sundays

June 9 thru October 6

Hardwick Farmers Market

Hardwick Common

11 am to 2 pm Sundays

June 19 thru October 30

produce, eggs, crafts

Orange Farmers Market

Orange Armory Parking Lot

135 East Main Street • Orange

3 pm to 6 pm Thursdays

May 16 to October 17

produce, bakery items, meat, eggs,

maple syrup, prepared foods

on-line ordering through

Facebook page with curbside pick-up

Petersham Friday Market

On the Common • Petersham

3 pm to 6 pm Fridays

May thru October

produce, eggs, garden plants and flowers, baked goods,

hand-crafted items, tables for social service agencies

live music at the bandstand

Phillipston Farmers Market

Phillipston Common

3:30 pm to 6 pm Wednesdays, weather permitting

West Brookfield Farmers Market

Town Common • West Brookfield

3 pm to 6 pm Wednesdays

June 5 thru October 9

produce, fruits, vegetables, baked goods, honey, maple

syrup, pickles, kimchi and other fermented foods, eggs,

meats, hard cider, ice cream



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from the pens of Uniquely Quabbin poets

poems by Mary Lou Conca

Mother

Mamma, don't leave me.

I need you right now
to trust in,
to hold me,
to free me somehow.

You can't see me shakin'.
I'm frightened and lost.
The price that I'm payin'
is far past the cost.

Mamma, don't leave me.

I need to confide,
to tell you my secrets
of thoughts trapped inside.

You can't see the tears flow
or hear all the screams,
but I've cried out so many
in all of my dreams.

So, Mamma don't leave me,
and I shall succeed,
for your trusting love
is all that I need.

Paradise

We are like two peas
in a pod of poverty
perplexed
by the powerful people
pounding on our heads
patiently awaiting
paradise.

Poet and photographer Mary Lou Conca lives in Shutesbury.

Love Goes

for a child I once taught

Who is this child
who comes flying into my room
smiling from ear to ear,
her words all scrambled,
excitement lighting her being
so happy to be here,
so happy to have a fresh meal?
Calm down and sit.

Tell me where you've been.

Suddenly just as quickly
as light flashes on, then off,
you retreat
to the darkest corner of your soul
and hide
withdrawn and withered.

You attempt to do class work.

Who is this child
who I can not reach?

She now refuses to speak
and leaves me to guess
of suspected mistreatment,
of acts unspeakable.

Your deep dark silence
a shroud you must carry,
a veil you hide beneath.

Until you speak
and tell of your ventures,
we are useless in efforts
to ease your pain
and sufferance.

Oh, sweet flying child,
my love goes

poem by

Kathy Kramer-Howe

Porch Spider

I have befriended a spider,
though she doesn't know it.
Master weaver, her web
spans two hanging pots
of begonias and the porch
overhang. Her lines are tight,
symmetrical. Scrambling
along the rigging,
she resets them each night.

After dark, she appears,
chubby and painted,
in the epicenter.

I turn on the porch light
to lure tiny bugs
that she races to bite,
spin, and pin like French knots.

Yesterday, I unglued
a large grasshopper
that she had not yet encased.
It sprang onto my head
before leaping away.

Spiders used to be décor
for my hair when I was small,
especially leggy black
and yellow garden spiders.

With so few left, insects
as well as spiders,
I celebrate each perfect
morning web, offer
my apologies.

Poet Kathy Kramer-Howe
lives in Paradise City, Arizona,
and spends time each summer
at Lake Mattawa in Orange.
Some of her poems are collected in
Lake Mattawa, 2020.

Submit poems for Uniquely Quabbin to
marcia2gagliardi@gmail.com

poem by
Clare Green

One Small Moment

Humble violet
of purple cloak,
hearts of green encircle you
in silence.
Springtime's floral goddess
sheds her crown
upon this bowered
Earth.

Gently partake of beauty.
Dream amidst soft blankets of
luminous violet stars
as warmth continues the soft vernal
symphony.

Underfoot and free, sweet violet,
echoing
eternity,
live simply
and
let be.

I remember
as a child my clenched fist dripping
with violets,
feet scampering, saluting spring's
endless flower joys.
To Mother I ran and proudly
bestowed the small bouquet.
I remember
her voice, smile, and a gentle hug
my gifts she took with a reminder:

"Clare, always be sure
to have enough green leaves with a
bouquet."

Rest with me awhile,
dear delicate memory

small is treasureful.
"Listen and receive.
Live simply and let be,"
whisper
the
humble
woodland
violets.
Shhh . . .

Poet, author, and educator Clare Green from Warwick welcomes folks to visit her Woodland Labyrinth and Fairy Cottage.

claregreenbooks.com

poem by
Brian Fournier

Dance

As every weekday I sat at my desk
quite contented in that desk chair
dreaming dreams with the best—
With coffee's warmth in my stare—

And as I worked just after dawn,
the business world began to yawn.
Around me some start to chatter.
Papers shuffled. Typewriters
clattered.

The volume rose with the sun
bringing life where there was none.
My office has no walls to know.
It's open to such busy flow.

I could feel the moving air
like the heat and cold we shared
as every cheery face appeared.
Each star twinkled as it neared.

Smiling people groomed with care
bound with duty they must share.
Now the hum has reached a pitch
like someone finally pulled the
switch.

So like a dance, the music's begun,
And I may choose to dance this one.

Poet, writer, and artist Brian Fournier spent his working days in the offices
of local industry. His book *About My Cat* features his poems and drawings.

poem by
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
1807-1882

Mezzo Cammin

Half my life is gone, and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspirations of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.
Not indolence, nor pleasure, nor the fret
Of restless passions that would not be stilled,
But sorrow, and a care that almost killed,
Kept me from what I may accomplish yet;
Though, half-way up the hill, I see the Past
Lying beneath me with its sounds and sights,
A city in the twilight dim and vast,
With smoking roofs, soft bells, and gleaming lights,
And hear above me on the autumnal blast
The cataract of Death far thundering
from the heights.

imagining life like a

text and art by Brian Fournier
Into each life some rain must fall

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Imagine life is like a mountain climb, bottom-the beginning, top-the completion. You are halfway up sitting on a rock looking down at your past. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had such a thought with his poem “Mezzo Cammin.” As a thirty-five-year-old in 1842, he wrote the poem at Boppard on the Rhine in Germany, a town with nearby hills.

When I hike on Tully Mountain in Orange and pass the overlooks on Route 202 in New Salem and Pelham, I think about the poem “Mezzo Cammin.”

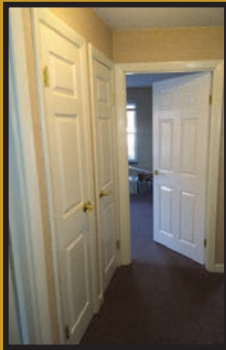
The words “mezzo cammin” come from Dante’s thirteenth-century *Divina Commedia: Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita, which translates to midway upon the journey of our life.*

Longfellow, a most celebrated poet of his time, possibly felt nostalgic as he wrote his verse. “Half my life is gone,” he starts as he suggests he has not achieved his goals:

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mountain climb

*The years slip from me
and have not fulfilled
the aspiration of my youth . . .*

He references his wife's death because of a fire. Possibly due to her melting wax to seal envelopes, her dress caught fire. Her distress awakened him, and he put out her flaming dress. He had severe burns on his face and chose thereafter the bushy beard he was famed for. She died from her burns the next day. He identifies her death as the most devastating experience of his life. He relays it in Lines 5 to 7 of "Mezzo Cammin":

*Not indolence, nor pleasure,
nor the fret
of restless passions that would
not be stilled
But sorrow, and care that
almost killed.*

He finishes his thought with determination on Line 8:

*Kept me from what
I may accomplish yet;*

The beauty of the poem lies in lines 10, 11, and 12.

*Lying beneath me with its
sounds and sights,
A city in the twilight dim and vast,
With smoking roofs, soft bells, and
gleaming lights.*

What a perfect romanticizing of his past there beneath his perch. We might think about sitting at a favorite hiking spot in the Quabbin area and reminiscing.

Like an inverted cone, a mountain becomes smaller the higher the hiker ventures. Toward the peak, it becomes rocky with jagged edges and no flora high above soaring birds: a perfect metaphor for old age.



If life compares to a mountain climb, the bottom may equal beginning and the top completion, according to the writer.
pen and ink drawing © by Brian Fournier

Longfellow ends "Mezzo Cammin" with a look to the future, a scary future as he portrays it:

*And hear above me
on the autumnal blast
The cataract of Death
far thundering from the heights.*

Time is such a precious commodity. Perhaps Longfellow tells his story as a carpe diem tale, advising the reader or listener to seize the day because time is precious.

In his later years and after his death, Longfellow was widely criticized as a children's poet. Of course, everyone who offered criticism finished by calling him a great man. Who can forget "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere," "The Village Blacksmith," "The Arrow

and the Song" or "The Song of Hiawatha," all by Longfellow?

Certainly, Longfellow passed the New England poetic torch to Robert Frost. Longfellow undoubtedly influenced Frost. From his many travels and language studies, Longfellow once wrote a poem based on an old Lapland song. The refrain went like this:

*A boy's will is the wind's will,
and the thoughts of youth
are long, long thoughts."*

Frost named his first published book of poetry in 1913 *A Boy's Will*, a definitive nod to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

With its natural beauty and complex history, the Quabbin area can have the calming of Longfellow's mountain.

Writer and artist Brian Fournier wrote the book *About My Cat*. He lives in Orange.



Hard at work, a beaver makes progress on a Quabbin wetlands building project.
photo © by Dale Monette

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Interested in something somewhere out there, three turtles take the sun on a Quabbin area pond.
photo © by Dale Monette

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Red Apple Farm, Phillipston, hosts a variety of celebrations and events in its barn and farm store and on its grounds.
photo © by John Burk





About My Cat
and Other Tales
written and illustrated by
Brian J. Fournier



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

available at
Haley's, Athol • New Salem General Store • Petersham Country Store
brianfournierbooks.com • Amazon • Barnes and Noble



workshop13.org

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Apple blossoms glow in evening light on trees at Red Apple Farm, Phillipston.
photo © by John Burk

history, topography characterize Phillipston

continued from page 25

eighteenth-century farmhouse and barn, in 1929 and developed a thriving regional attraction that includes apple picking, hikes, and holiday celebrations.

Snow Hill Ski Area operated on Ward Hill from 1961 to 1979 with five trails on two slopes, a lodge, ski school, and summit house with views of Mount Monadnock.

Find information about the Historical Society of Phillipston at historicalsocietyofphillipston.org.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

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Athol Historical Society

by

Barbara Ellis

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FOR UPDATES ABOUT OPEN HOURS AND EVENTS.

Quabbin Visitor Center schedules events and hikes

submitted by Maria Beiter-Tucker of Quabbin Visitor Center

Sunday, May 26, 2024 11 am to 12 pm

Memorial Day Commemoration at Quabbin Park Cemetery

Refreshments will be offered at 10 am

parade and services begin at 1 pm

registration not required

In 1868, Major General John A. Logan, commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, named May 30 as a day for honoring soldiers who died in the Civil War. Like communities across the United States, towns of the Swift River Valley commemorated their war dead each year on Memorial Day until construction of the reservoir ended the towns in 1938. Since 1947,

Memorial Day services for the lost towns of

Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott have taken place in

Quabbin Park Cemetery.

Friends of Quabbin, Swift River Valley Historical Society,

Veterans Council of Belchertown, Chauncey D. Walker Post

#239 American Legion, and staff of the state Department of

Conservation and Resources will conduct the Quabbin Reservoir

service at Quabbin Park Cemetery. Please no dogs.

Sunday, May 26, 2024, 2 pm to 3 pm

Quabbin Park Cemetery Tour • Memorial Day Edition

easy walk, uneven ground

maps.app.goo.gl/rv4tzdEPproba1jV9

The tour will begin at the town monuments.

register at

[app.smartsheet.com/b/form/31306340e82941628d5e7fb1](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/31306340e82941628d5e7fb1bee3b017)

bee3b017

Saturday, June 8, 2024, 11 am to 1:30 pm

Exploring Quabbin Park via East Gate Trail and Goodnough Dike

maps.app.goo.gl/m7UyxtzWLSBfETmG7

Quabbin Reservoir, East Gate entrance, Route 9, Ware

A 4.2-mile hike on a mix of foot paths, forest roads, and paved road, featuring the scenic view the top of Goodnough Dike.

Hike begins at East Gate parking area across Route 9 from

Quabbin Park Cemetery.

Hikers should dress for weather and bring water. No dogs.

register at

app.smartsheet.com/b/form/8690ed7c74ab40f982865ddea94fd8a

Saturday, June 15, 10 am to 1 pm

Explore the Road to Dana Common

moderate walk, 3.6 miles

meet at Gate 40 on Route 32A, Petersham

goo.gl/maps/d4RxN91vsyHUzhEE6

The old foundations, stone walls, and shade trees of Dana Common denote Quabbin's unique history. The hike includes mention of notable residents of Dana and description Swift River Valley more than a hundred years ago, including photos and letters illustrating Quabbin's past.

register at

[app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6741b6657b6948c5b5239c7120a](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/6741b6657b6948c5b5239c7120a0ea1c)

0ea1c

Sunday, June 16, 2024 11 am to 1pm

Exploring the Ware River Watershed • Rutland Prison Camp

easy, approximately a mile, uneven ground

meet at Rutland Prison Camp, main parking lot

299 Intervale Road, Rutland

maps.app.goo.gl/J1iuV7QGB3rEAbxJ9

The successful social experiment of Rutland Prison Camp included fresh air, three home-cooked meals a day, and comfortable sleeping quarters. Staff from Massachusetts DCR will lead exploration of the site . Tick protection advised.

register at

app.smartsheet.com/b/form/27b860913b844a109280f0a3506f0381

Quabbin Interpretive Services program operates the

Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center,

100 Winsor Dam Road, Belchertown, and offers

public and school education programs, teacher workshops, and general information about DCR's water supply resources and watershed management, the history of Quabbin Valley and Ware River Valley, and wildlife of the area. Staff members assist with visitor information and services. An automated telephone system at (413) 323-7221 provides twenty-four-hour access to current information on fishing, hunting, programs, rules and regulations, and public access. Also reach the visitor center by email at

QuabbinVisitor.Center@mas

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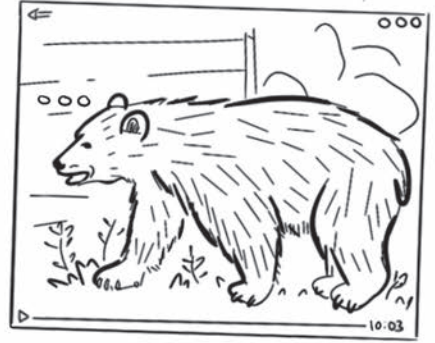
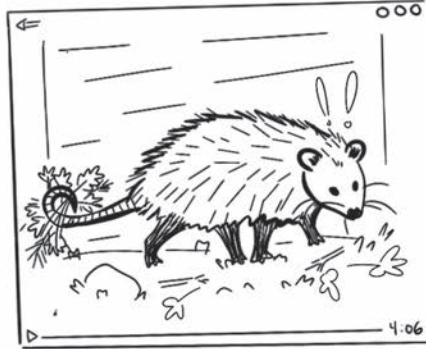
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A great blue heron takes flight from a New Salem field near Gate 29-5, Quabbin where Moosehorn Brook enters the reservoir..
photo © by Rick Flematti

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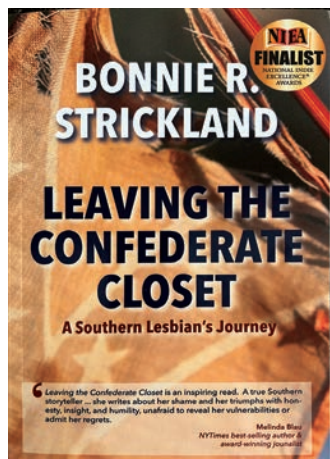
retired professor addresses LGBTQ, women's issues

by Diane Kane

Author and educator Bonnie Strickland has come a long way in time and distance. Strickland was born in the late 1930s and raised in what she refers to as the deep south Alabama and the panhandle of northwest Florida.

"I attended public schools, a small women's college, and Ohio State University. My professional life was as a clinical psychologist. I received my PhD in 1962 and was first a professor at Emory University in Atlanta."

Strickland moved to Massachusetts in 1973 to teach at UMass until her retirement in 2002.



Retired UMass professor Bonnie Strickland identifies *Leaving the Confederate Closet* as "the most meaningful" of her writings. photos courtesy of Bonnie Strickland

"I live on a lake in Belchertown and love the small-town atmosphere and being in the Pioneer Valley."

Strickland has achieved numerous awards and honors in her long career, including the 2014 American Psychological Association Gold Medal Award and Life Achievement in Psychology in the Public Interest.

But there is much more to Strickland.

"As long as I can remember, I have been active in the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans, LGBT, community. I have donated to LGBT organizations and marched in demonstrations in Washington, DC (which I led); Birmingham, Alabama; and Northampton, Massachusetts."

As a faculty member, Strickland wrote almost entirely research articles and book chapters published in her field. Not until 1990 did Strickland begin working on her first book.

"As president of the American Psychological Association, I proposed a task force on women and depression. In 1990, I co-edited *Women and Depression: Risk Factors and Treatment Issues* with Ellen McGrath, Gwendolyn Puryear Keita, and Nancy Felipe Russo, published by the American Psychological Association."

Much later, Strickland's book *Leaving the Confederate Closet* came about after Strickland joined the writing group Writing to Remember sponsored by the Five College Learning in Retirement program.

"*Leaving the Confederate Closet* is the most meaningful of my writings," she said. "It's a personal memoir I struggled over for many years. I worked with a fantastic editor to get the book published in 2021." Her book is available online and from independent booksellers.

"When I was young," she said, "I never dreamed that someday gay people could marry. While antigay actions are still targeted at gay, bisexual, and transgendered people, the social climate has changed so dramatically for the better in the last couple of decades."

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while retired elementary teacher shares stories

Strickland occasionally does public readings from her books. Email bonnie@psych.umass.edu for information.



Author and educator Clare Green of Warwick draws inspiration for her writing from nature and life experiences.

“I hail from Wilton, Connecticut, where I attended high school. I later graduated from Keene State College in New Hampshire. When I divorced, I moved to the North Quabbin region and have been here since, some fifty years later. I am blessed with a little bit of heaven in Warwick.”

Green taught for thirty-five years, including a number in Athol and twelve in Warwick teaching elementary and special education until her retirement in 2012. During that time, Green established a nature camp for children.

“I enjoyed sharing stories and teaching about nature. I made homemade books with the children to help them develop reading skills.”

Green developed a passion for historical people and regularly volunteers at the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst.

“I’ve portrayed historical figures such as Emily Dickinson, Clara Barton, and Sacajawea. In 2013, I produced a play for Warwick’s 250th celebration and represented past Warwick librarian Clara Jones.”

While researching Warwick’s history for the Quabbin Guide Training Program, Green discovered a colorful local character, Zylpha Smith.

“As a longtime member of the Warwick Historical Society, I was inspired to create a persona for the well known recluse from the 1800s. Zylpha now appears at

Old Home Days every August, leading the Cemetery Walk with other Warwickians in character.”

Green’s published booklets include *Zylpha Smith: A Life in Warwick*, *Celebrate Santa Lucia Day*, and *Hearts and Hands on Herbs*. Her children’s book, *The Little Pine Tree*, features illustrations by her childhood friend, Zackery Zdinak. She recently produced *Legend of the Rainbow* and offers reprints of *Celebrate Santa Lucia Day*. Green writes “Nature’s Nuances,” a regular column in *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine.



Retired elementary teacher Clare Green’s published works include historical booklets, children’s books, and a collection of journal writings created by her late son Ned.

photos courtesy of Clare Green

Green’s most meaningful publication celebrates her son’s life and passion.

“After my son Ned Green passed in an ice-climbing accident in 2001, his friends encouraged me to write his

continued on page 61

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summer reading recommendations from

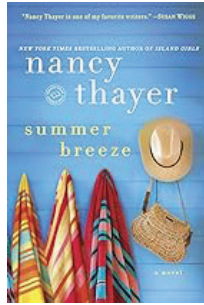
by Carla Charter

With warmer weather comes time for vacation and backyard reading. The following are summer read recommendations from the Hubbardston and Erving public libraries, all available with a library card.

recommendations from Hubbardston Public Library

Adult Fiction

Summer Breeze by Nancy Thayer
a story of three women who forge a unique bond one summer on Dragonfly Lake



Young Adult Books

The Ruins of Gorlan
by John Flanagan
a fantasy novel that follows orphan Will as he becomes a king's ranger



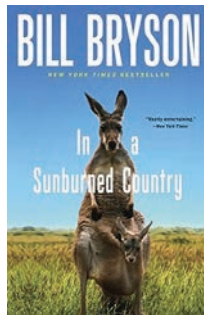
That Summer by Jennifer Weiner
a book about intrigues, secrets, and the transformative power of female friendship where two friends can only move forward with their lives by confronting their shared past



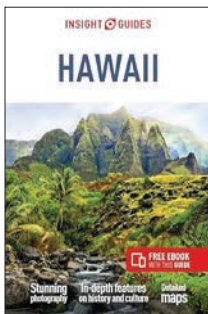
Skulduggery Pleasant
by Derek Landy
a story about magic, wizardry, and a teenage girl learning from her mentor, a five-hundred-year-old wizard with a skull for a head

Adult Non-Fiction

In a Sunburned Country
by Bill Bryson
a journey through the wilds of Australia, a place that has the most peculiar, most lethal wildlife and the friendliest inhabitants



Leviathan by Scott Westfeld
a steampunk, sub genre of science fiction alternate history set during World War I



Insight Guide to Hawaii
a travel guide that explores the major Hawaiian islands and places to experience that paradise



My Hero Academia
by Kohei Horikoshi Iuzku
Midoriya wants to be a hero more than anything else in the world, and All Might, the greatest hero ever, may give him his chance.

Hubbardston Public Library
7 Main Street • Hubbardston

Monday 1 pm to 7pm • Tuesday 4 pm to 7pm

Wednesday 10 am to 4 pm • Thursday 1 pm to 7 pm • Saturday 9am to noon

Hubbardston and Erving libraries

recommendations from Hubbardston Public Library continued

Juvenile Fiction



Spy Camp by Stuart Gibbs in the continuing Spy School series, Ben has to attend survival spy camp in a rustic wilderness setting, but the enemy organization SPYDER is out to get him

Juvenile Non-Fiction



Gardening with Kids by Catherine Woram an introduction to gardening for children

recommendations from Erving Public Library

Erving Public Library plans two programs featuring pollinators and native species.

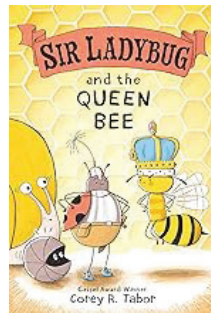
A Popular Pollinators grant runs April through September funded by FirstLight Sustains.

The summer reading program, "Read, Renew, Repeat," will take place from June 23 to August 11.

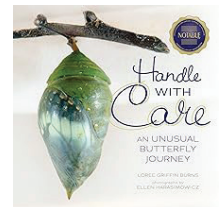
Children's Books

recommended by Andrea Deluliis in accordance with program themes

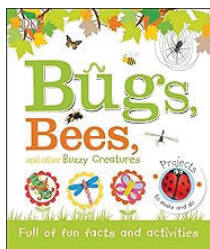
Sir Ladybug and the Queen Bee
Geisel Award by Corey R. Tabor
a graphic novel for young readers following Sir Ladybug and his friends as they try to outwit the Queen Bee



Handle with Care, an unusual butterfly journey
by Loree Griffin Burns
with photographs by Ellen Harasimowicz



a photographic picture book about a butterfly farm and the journey butterfly pollinators take



Bugs, Bees, and other Buzzy Creatures, author not listed
facts and crafting activities with insect themes for kids and caregivers



Bugs Everywhere
written and illustrated by Britta Teckentrup
a colorful book about the world of bugs that encourages bug hunting with a magnifying glass

Bees, Bugs, & Butterflies by Ben Raskin
an illustrated, interactive family guide to garden pollinators



Carla Charter is a freelance writer. She lives in Phillipston.

Erving Public Library

2 Care Drive • Erving

Sunday 10 am to 4 pm • Monday 10 am to 4 pm • Tuesday through Thursday noon to 6 pm

erving-ma.gov/erving-public-library

using saffron derived from *Crocus sativa*

text and photos by Christine Noyes

An idea that is developed and put into action is more important than an idea that exists only as an idea.

-Edward De Bono

In ancient times from four thousand to five thousand years ago, an enterprising Persian had the foresight to use parts of the *Crocus sativus* L. flower to produce a dye to create a luminous orange-yellow fabric suited for royalty and Buddhist monks. It is believed that Buddha himself wore such a robe. Although I cannot in good conscience attribute the idea to one person, I can assume the original idea formed in a single person's mind.

Not only did the crocus create beautifully colored fabric, but for centuries it has served as a health remedy for infections, stomach ailments, and more. The fragrance industry creates oils, perfumes, and soaps from the remarkable plant. And the culinary delight that the flower provides long ago captured my interest.

The spice saffron is derived from the *Crocus sativus* plant. Each plant produces two or three flowers. From the center of each flower grow three crimson colored stigma and styles, otherwise known as saffron threads. The threads must be hand-picked, making the collection tedious and extremely labor intensive.

Cultivated chiefly in Iran, saffron also has growers in Spain, France, and parts of Italy and India. Once picked, saffron threads are set on trays, then dried over a charcoal fire. It takes 150 flowers to produce just one

gram of dried saffron threads, which contributes to the reason it is the most expensive spice in the world.

The aroma of fresh saffron compares to sweet hay with a hint of pepper. Once dried, the threads possess an earthy, sweet flavor—slightly bitter with a floral note and just a hint of honey. Used widely in Mediterranean and Asian dishes, saffron pairs well with rice, fish, and breads, and is a key ingredient in bouillabaisse.

Years ago while making my living as a chef, I was gifted a large tin of the prized spice affording me the wonderful opportunity of experimentation. My creative juices flowed. Knowing I could not afford to replace it, I remember feeling a loss as I used the last of the coveted ingredient.

Not until recently had I again thought about acquiring saffron for personal use. Searching the internet, I found I could purchase a small tin, 0.07 ounces, for the mere price of \$12.95. Knowing it does not take much of the seasoning to elevate a recipe, I purchased it. And, once again, my creative juices flowed.

Edward De Bono also said, "Creativity makes life more fun and more interesting." I hope you will treat yourself and give this recipe a try.



Chefs rely on red *Crocus sativus* stigma and styles for saffron.

photos by Serpico - own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11822266

to honor ancient traditions in cooking for health

Roast Onion and Saffron Risotto

makes 6 to 8 servings



Roast onion and saffron risotto hies back to ancient times.

INGREDIENTS

1 large sweet onion cut into slivers
1/2 red onion cut into slivers
1 medium garlic bulb, cloves peeled and divided
1-1/2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon saffron threads
1 tablespoon fresh or dried parsley
salt and pepper to taste

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons butter
5 tablespoons white wine, Chardonnay
1-1/2 cups arborio rice
4 cups chicken broth
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In a bowl, toss together onions, garlic cloves, 1-1/2 teaspoons olive oil, saffron, and parsley. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Lay on sheet pan and roast for 12–15 minutes until onions are soft. Remove from oven.

Pick out the garlic cloves and mince them. Toss the garlic back into the onion mixture and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat chicken broth in a saucepan. Keep hot. In a separate large heavy saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil and butter over medium heat. Add the rice and stir until completely coated and slightly translucent, about 2 minutes. Add wine and continue stirring until completely absorbed. Stirring constantly, add 1 cup of hot chicken broth at a time, waiting for broth to absorb completely before adding another. Use enough broth to cook until rice is al dente. When the last bit of broth has nearly absorbed, incorporate the onion mixture into the rice. Remove from heat and stir in Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.



Saffron with onion, left, roasted above, and added to rice, right, goes into making roast onion and saffron risotto.

An accomplished chef, Christine Noyes has led life as a sales representative, entrepreneur, and writer and illustrator. She writes Bear Hug children's books and the Bradley Whitman mystery series, including her forthcoming *Reaping Redemption*. Her romance novel *Winter Meets Summer* appeared earlier this year.

Barre's versatile Spotted Cow Café serves up more than good food

by Diane Kane

The Spotted Cow Café at 2291 West Street, Barre, opened for business to small fanfare just before Christmas 2023. Undeterred by a slow start, Rachel Simoncini, entrepreneur, baker, and café owner has had previous experience finding her niche.

"We originally ran a small country store, café, and vegetable stand on East View Farm in Rutland. We sold coffee and baked goods. We tried everything from pumpkins, flowers, local honey, and local craft items. For months, we saw only curious people driving up the quarter-mile-long driveway to see what was happening at the farm."

After moving their business to Barre in September of 2023 and spending six months revamping the former seafood restaurant into a breakfast and coffee shop, Simoncini was ready to take action.

"Last Christmas, shortly after we opened in our Barre location, I decided we needed to get the word out. I attended a tree-lighting ceremony and walked through crowds passing out business cards and flyers. I introduced myself and asked, 'Do you like coffee?'"

That got people's attention.

"By the next week, we had bunches of new customers coming in to give us a try. Since then, our customer base has continued to grow."

Always trying something new, Simoncini says coffee flights are her best seller.

"A flight consists of four specialty drinks on a tray. We feature four new flavors every two weeks. Many of the flights are seasonally inspired and have different themes for holidays or school vacations."



Weather permitting, those dining at the Spotted Cow or attending paint nights, yoga classes, fundraisers, or holiday photo shoots may take advantage of outdoor seating. photo courtesy of the Spotted Cow



The Spotted Cow coffee flights like the one above attract many return customers. photo courtesy of the Spotted Cow

Besides offering coffee, breakfast, and baked goods, Simoncini hosts paint nights, yoga classes, fundraisers, and holiday photo shoots throughout the year. The Spotted Cow has an indoor dining room, and outdoor seating is available, weather permitting.

"As a mother of three, I was inspired to create a place where everyone felt welcomed and wanted to stay a while."

Simoncini only needed to look out the window to create the name for her new business.

"We are located in the middle of a two-hundred-acre farm in the middle of nowhere! You can see cows in the pastures from the coffee bar or front porch!"

Raised in a large Italian family, Simoncini learned to bake and cook from her mother and grandmother.

"I grew up inspired by small shops and cafés like Tatnuck booksellers and small shops on Shrewsbury

continued on page 60

S.H.E. Shed in Athol prepares homemade meals for takeout only

text and photos by Diane Kane



Michelle LaBelle of S.H.E. Shed serves homemade takeout meals at 460 South Street, Athol.
photo courtesy of S.H.E. Shed.

The S.H.E. Shed at 460 South Street, Athol is located in the building formerly occupied by Eddie's Restaurant and, more recently, Black Crow Catering. The owner, Michelle LaBelle, serves up homemade meals from 11 am to 7 pm Tuesday through Saturday for takeout only.

LaBelle makes one main entree fresh each day, with options like a tempting chicken pot pie, vegetable lasagna, or baked stuffed haddock to name just a few. Daily, she makes different soups, including broccoli cheddar, chicken chowder, and fish chowder.

Mother of three and grandmother of two, LaBelle has always had a passion for people and cooking.

"Right out of school, I went to work in the kitchen at Cushing Academy. From there, I've worked at many restaurants, including the Ellinwood Nine and Dine, 1880 House in Orange, and The Black Crow."

After The Black Crow catering moved from the South Street location to the Ellinwood Country Club, LaBelle took over the building and opened for to-go orders in late January 2024 after a longer-than-anticipated transition. She hopes to make up for lost time.



"We look forward to seeing our beloved loyal customers again! S.H.E. Shed will have a variety of favorites and continue to serve up homemade quality food at affordable prices. So many have requested to have ten-dollar meals back. Although that was a promotional deal with The Black Crow, I have decided to make ten-dollar Tuesdays a new thing. The goal is to meet the needs of busy families, making it affordable to have dinner ready to pick up on your way home."

"Call ahead with a pick-up time so your delicious meal is fresh and hot!!" LaBelle advises. "Lemon chicken is always a best seller and sells out quickly."

Although she serves only takeout for now, LaBelle plans to open the dining room in the future. She has additional plans for craft nights and cooking parties.

"We post weekly menus on our Facebook page," LaBelle said.

Open 4 pm to 7 pm Tuesday to Saturday

Contact S.H.E. Shed

Facebook.com/S.H.E.Shed460

(978) 830-0126

Writer Diane Kane lives in Phillipston.



A prolific span of daisies blooms in a Quabbin region field.
photo © by David Brothers



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Daffodils line a stone wall on a Quabbin region hill.
photo © by David Brothers



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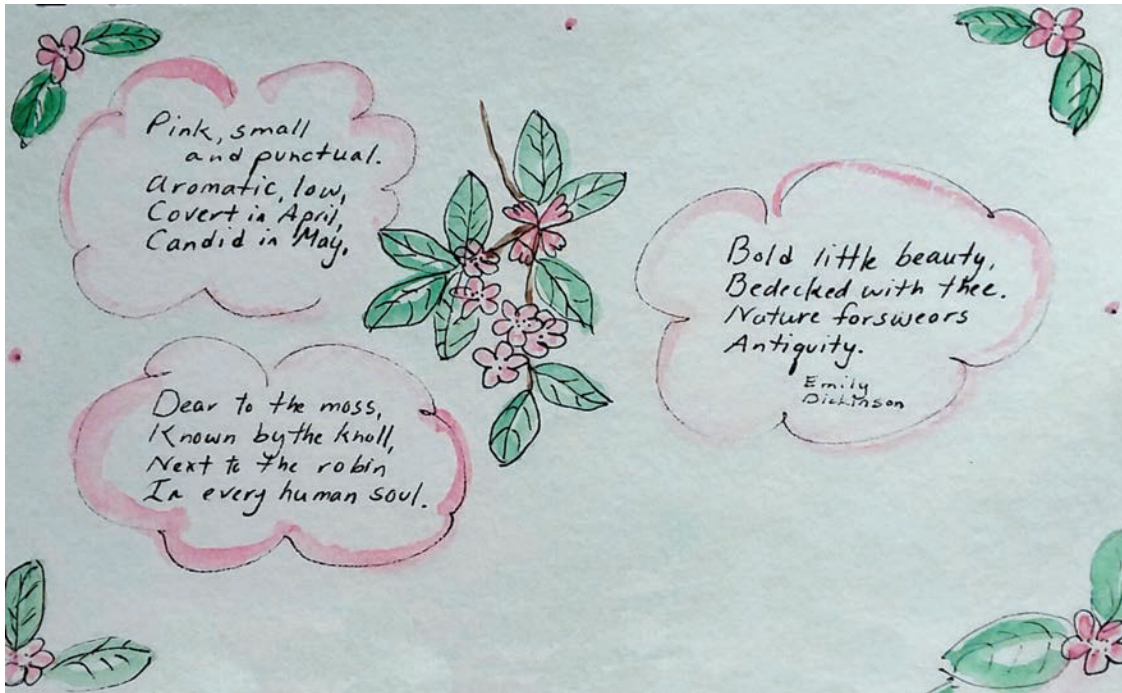


NATURE'S NUANCES

by Clare Green

The earth laughs in flowers.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson



Poet Emily Dickinson of Amherst offered her tribute “May-Flower” in the middle nineteenth century.
watercolor on paper © by Clare Green

When spring emerges, I can imagine the earth giggling as flowers appear, and by summertime, it's into a full belly laugh if one gives credence to Emerson's quote. Indeed, laughter like joy is emblematic within the beauty of flowers. How naturally one smiles while gazing at a floral bouquet or a field of wildflowers! Beauty and fragrance intertwine to permeate its grace.

One of my favorite wildflowers is the trailing arbutus, commonly known as the mayflower which is also the Massachusetts state flower. The state highway sign features it at the entrance to Massachusetts from Connecticut on Route 91. A famed ship setting off to the new world from England carried the name *The Mayflower*. The mayflower, *Epigaea repens*, belongs to the Heath family, Ericaceae, with some fifteen hundred species across the world. The large family embraces plants that all have roots with mycorrhizal fungi that help them absorb nutrients in acidic soils where other plants couldn't survive. Other members of the Heath

family include blueberry, wintergreen, mountain heather, Labrador tea, cranberry, and cowberry.

A creeping evergreen, the mayflower has a woody stem punctuated by oval leathery green leaves. Its small buds overwinter protected by leaf litter groundcover. The tiny buds burst into fragrant flowers. Each white or pink flower is tubular with five petals.

One must bend down to experience the amazing floral bouquet emanating from the tiny flower, its fragrance on a par with Asiatic lilies.

Mayflowers should not be picked but rather enjoyed in the moment. Emily Dickinson wrote a poem about the sturdy yet delicate flower. Her poem encapsulates it.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Every moment of the year has its beauty.” As I look forward to seeing old friends, I look forward to seeing and smelling the trailing arbutus each year. May you treasure the moments of beauty that come your way as spring recedes and summer advances.

Clare Green of Warwick welcomes folks to visit her woodland labyrinth to view her patches of trailing arbutus and lady slippers.

claregreenbooks.com

photos of mayflower, top, © by Pan Wilson



Clearing Up Spring, Norcross Hill, Templeton, an oil painting on canvas by Sonja Vaccari represents Quabbin region landscapes in their inimitable glory.



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region witnesses memorable train wrecks

continued from page 13

minutes to permit patrons to dine. As traffic increased, a sizeable kitchen was built on the northwestern corner of the depot. Something went wrong in the kitchen on the evening of July 22, 1892. The entire structure burned, destroying the second floor and towers. For several months, an old passenger car served as the depot until construction of a new station.

In preparation for when things do not go right, the Boston & Maine Railroad kept wreck trains at several strategic locations along the line. The East Deerfield wreck train included a 250-ton Industrial Brownhoist wrecking crane, reputedly the heaviest such piece of equipment east of the Mississippi River. The train included a 1906-built wooden café-coach car until the late 1990s when it qualified as one of the oldest railroad cars in use in New England other than at a train museum. Other specialized cars made up the wreck train that had to leave for a wreck site within an hour of being called.

Railroads operate their trains by very stringent rules with safety of utmost concern. Yet, even with good track condition and careful operation, things do go wrong from time to time, sometimes with tragic and disastrous results.

Rail enthusiast, historian, and retired UMass research technician, Christopher Coyle lives in Athol.



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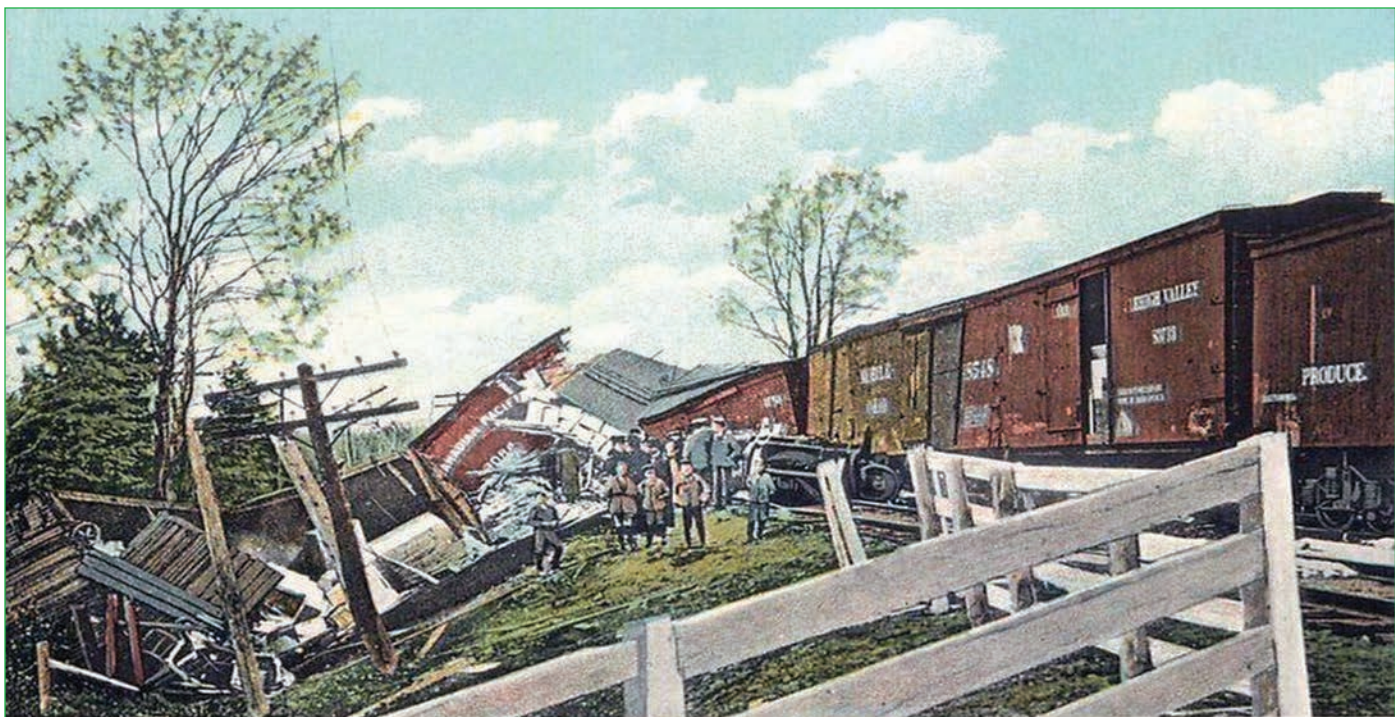


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Wreck on Boston & Maine R. R.

Below Orange, Mass.

A freight train wrecked west of Orange in the early 1900s.
postcard from the collection of Christopher Coyle



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Rutland Train Wreck ♦ August 3, 1932

a narrative poem by Len Mazarowski

It was a warm rainy day in central Massachusetts.
Today on this Boston & Maine Railroad's fateful run,
locomotive 1435 chugged through lush forest eastbound,
the wind pushing its smoke forward on a day with no sun.

Engineer Young and Fireman Bacher pushed east
with no concern.

The track was in fine condition as the tall oaks
framed their way,
steaming on their way to Boston just like on any
other working day.

The wind today wouldn't help them, but for others
well it may.

Miles away, westbound Locomotive 1365 climbed
its shallow grade.

Proudly did they move along through
the rain and wind they faced.

Engineer Goodfield and Fireman Boudreau
ate their pail lunches
and stared quietly into the wet wind's eastward trace.

Eastbound 1435 and Westbound 1365 today
unwittingly shared one track.

Usually, they only ever passed each other
in the safety of Rutland's yard.

Today, a dispatcher's error sent them hurtling
down a solitary track.

In the poker game of life they had been dealt
frightfully losing cards.

But sometimes and often, Nature plays a pivotal role
giving clues to those held firmly in its grip.
A west wind pushes smoke and sound before it.
Locomotive 1365 today benefitted by its westward trip.

Goodfield and Boudreau had a second to decide to jump
on smelling and hearing Eastbound 1435
in their inescapable path.

Young and Bacher received no such blessed warning.
In seconds, locomotive steel immersed them
in a hellish bath.

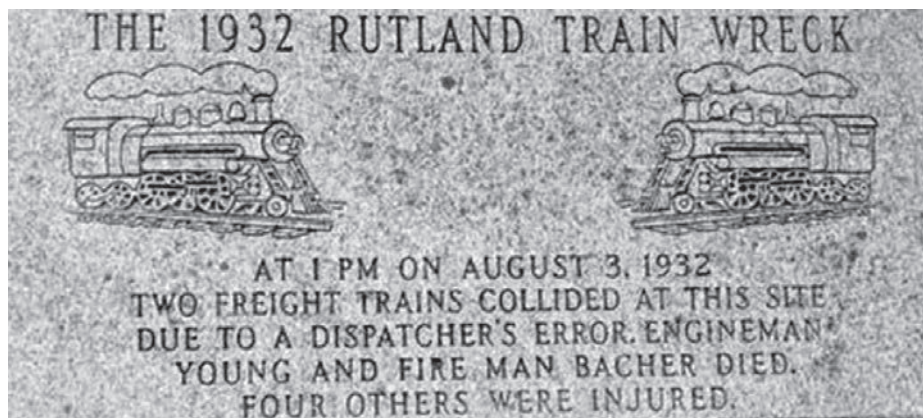
That once proud and beautiful
New England Railroad line
claimed dispatcher human error that time
was the only fault,

but relentless Nature was to return just six years later,
the Hurricane of 1938 bringing that railroad
forever to a halt.

The old railroad is now a smoothed path of level rail trail
for myriad hikers and bikers throughout
a beautiful state.

I, too, have trod the trail that locomotives once rolled
where one summer day long ago
they forever sealed two men's fate.

Len Mazarowski, retired senior hydrologist of National
Weather Service/River Forecast Centers,
where he forecasted some major flood events.



A historic marker commemorates the site of the 1932 Rutland train wreck.
photo courtesy of Len Mazarowski

Quabbin trust fund would compensate reservoir host towns

continued from page 17

Capital funding needs that could be addressed include building repairs and equipment needs.

Kathy Neal, New Salem town coordinator, said possible funds could mean updates and repairs to New Salem's older buildings. "Being such a small town, we are able to keep up with basic needs, but there are greater needed repairs and updates."

John Trickey, chairman of the Pelham Finance Committee, said what the potential money would be used for depends on the amount received. Among the possible uses, he said, could be roads as he observed that in fourteen years, the state has not increased Chapter 90 support for roads.

"If it's more than ten thousand dollars," Trickey said, "it could be put toward regional capitol assessment. DCR Quabbin money is assessed at the same level as undevelopable land in town," he stated.

Comerford's bill also proposes adding two more people who are residents of a Connecticut River Basin community to Massachusetts Water Resources Authority board, which would increase representation of the community from one to three individuals. Currently there is only one member from that community on the board.

Senator Comerford represents the city known as the town of Amherst, the city of Northampton, and the towns of Hadley, Hatfield, and Pelham in the county of Hampshire; the city known as the town of Greenfield and the towns of Bernardston, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Leverett, Leyden, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Shutesbury, Sunderland, Warwick, and Wendell in the county of Franklin; and the towns of Ashburnham, Athol, Petersham, Royalston, and Winchendon in the county of Worcester.

Carla Charter is a freelance writer. She lives in Phillipston.

Letter to the Editor

To the editor of Uniquely Quabbin magazine:

The January 2024 issue of the magazine was just delivered to me, and in reading the article regarding John Murray, I was surprised at no mention of where he lived in Rutland. My husband and I own his former home, now a National Historic Landmark, The General Rufus Putnam House. I cannot imagine that his homestead would have been missed in the article about John Murray. It is too bad that we were not contacted for the article, as we have several documents regarding Murray and his history which could have added to the story. It is also a shame that the public was not made aware of where his homestead was and is to this day.

There have been articles about our home in the magazine in the past, so this oversight is truly disappointing and a missed opportunity to your readers to get the full story of John Murray, his home and what it has become.

Sincerely, Marcia Warrington

The General Rufus Putnam House • (508) 886-4864

The editor of *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine stands behind coverage of John Murray as presented in the January 2024 issue of the magazine.



Records indicate that John Murray, 1669-1724, first Duke of Atholl, Scotland, likely lived for a time in Athol before moving to Rutland, where he lived in what today is called the Rufus Putnam House.

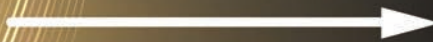
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Jack Reynolds, sixteen-year-old power weightlifter of New Salem, brought home a gold medal in January from 2024 Bench Nationals, a national powerlifting competition in Austin, Texas. He bench-presses, above, and wears his medal, right. Some 250 lifters ranging in age from 14 to 77 competed in age and weight categories according to age and weight. Reynolds broke the national record for his age group on his first attempt and finishing by benching 386 pounds to earn the Best Lifter Award along with a gold medal.

photos © by Natalie Reynolds



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10:30 am June 24

information compiled by Carla Charter

Spotted Cow, Barre, offers full breakfast and more

continued from page 48

Street in the Tatnuck Square area of Worcester. Baking and cooking are part of my family's love language."

Simoncini's family moved to Rutland when she was in high school.

"I never left. I love raising my children in picture-perfect small-town Massachusetts."

The Spotted Cow Café offers a full breakfast menu from 6 am until noon, including farm-fresh eggs, bacon, hand-pressed sausage, and ham off the bone.

"I bake *all* day from around 3 am until 4 pm daily. Our absolutely must-try item is our fan favorite blueberry muffin! We will have ice cream starting in the spring and intend to keep going year-round! Our newest venture is ice cream flights!"

Open 6 am to 6 pm Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, with plans to expand hours soon.

Contact The Spotted Cow facebook.com/the spottedcowcafe instagram.com/the spottedcowcafe (774) 823-5513

Writer Diane Kane lives in Phillipston.



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Members of the Simoncini family pick fresh berries in season for use in Spotted Cow dishes.

photo courtesy of The Spotted Cow

versatile authors cover many subjects

continued from page 43

story. With the help and supervision of Jared Grange of Huntington Graphics, Vermont, I self-published *Cutting a Bond with the Long Trail*, a compilation of Ned's trail journals and poetry."

The Ned Green Scholarship, established in 2001, includes a memorial hike up Mount Grace every Mother's Day.

As a resident of the world, Green participated regularly in the Black Lives Matter Stand Out at Orange Peace Park. She is a Warwick Metcalf Chapel Mission Committee member and initiated a prayer shawl ministry.

Green is working on a memoir of her spiritual experiences based on her clairvoyant abilities, a book of flower verse meditations, and a children's story.

In 1998, she created a woodland labyrinth on her property and welcomes folks to come explore.

"Small kind words and gestures to strangers are so important," she said.

Email dclara_2000@yahoo.com for contact, comments, and storytelling requests. Her books are available at Haley's, the Book Forge in Orange, the Country Store in Petersham, and Petersham Arts Center.

Writer Diane Kane lives in Phillipston.

Belchertown, Athol historic buildings face possible demolition

continued from page 27

Railroad, run behind the Bidwell barn parallel to South Athol Road.

The town is exploring ways to turn that old railroad bed into a rail trail for hikers and bicyclers. Since the property sits at the northern end of the public part of the railroad bed, the barn would provide a spot for display on the history of the railroad with a parking lot nearby.

J. R. Greene is author of twenty-three books on historical subjects and the chair of the Athol Historical Commission. The author's opinion does not represent any official view of the Athol Historical Commission nor of *Uniquely Quabbin* magazine.



A turtle lays eggs near Silver Lake, Athol.

photo © by Nancy Lagimoniere



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mineral springs brought tourists to nineteenth-century Oakham

continued from page 23



The village of Coldbrook Springs, above, became a popular resort during the nineteenth century, with visitors often staying at Coldbrook House, left. photos courtesy of Barre Historical Society

Coldbrook Springs. Boston and Maine's Coldbrook Station on the Central Massachusetts Branch hosted as many as eight freight and passenger trains daily in the early twentieth century. The 1938 New England hurricane washed out portions of the Boston and Maine line near Coldbrook.

After the state passed the Ware River Act that authorized use of Coldbrook Springs land for water supply protection, workers razed or moved all buildings during the 1930s, and thus little evidence of the village remains today. A former Baptist church on Barre's side of Ware River relocated to Greenfield.




A state scenic byways marker commemorates the village of Coldbrook Springs. photo © by John Burk

Historic buildings of Oakham center include an 1814 Congregational church that formerly housed the town hall, a 1790 home on Coldbrook Road, Memorial Hall, and Fobes Memorial Library, which opened in 1907. Oakham Village Improvement Society, founded in 1891, held a popular annual fair with parades, baseball games, and vendors.

Oakham Historical Association and Historical Museum on 1221 Turnpike Road preserves a large collection of documents, photographs, books, and artifacts. See oakhamhistory.net for details and information about seasonal events.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.




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The US Army Corps of Engineers constructed the Barre Falls Dam, above, at the site of the village of Barre Falls, top, photos courtesy of Barre Historical Society

Barre plans observances for 250th anniversary

continued from page 19

The society overlooks Barre Common with three buildings. The main building is an 1836 Greek Revival structure. In back, a post-and-beam carriage house built in 2001 houses larger artifacts, including a restored town hearse, an 1842 Conqueror Engine No. 2 fire department hand-pumper, an 1830 Acorn printing press, and more. The society has open hours for the public on Thursdays from 10 am to noon or by appointment with Eileen Bohigian at (978) 502-0691.

Writer Diane Kane lives in Phillipston.

Leverett anticipates 250th celebrations

continued from page 19

making candles at sixteen, as the story goes, because he “was too broke to buy his mother a Christmas present.” It’s said he melted some old crayons to make his first candles, one for his mother and one to sell.

Events planned for this year’s anniversary celebration include an antique vehicle and equipment show May 25 on the ballfield of Leverett Elementary School. Naturalist Jean Bergstrom will lead a plant walk on Saturday, June 15 (rain date June 16), registration required at Blueskyberg1@gmail.com or by calling (413) 374-5461. A parade and barbecue will take place July 6. Celebrations will continue at the October Harvest Festival with music, dance, and food.

Special projects in the works include historical presentations about the Indigenous people who lived in the area long before the town’s founding, commemorative plantings, a quilting endeavor, and an oral history project.

Find information at celebrateleverett250@gmail.com.

Writer Diane Kane lives in Phillipston.



ELIZABETH CALLAHAN

The Masters

oil painting on canvas by Elizabeth Callahan



The Masters, left, oil painting on canvas by Elizabeth Callahan

Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose, right, oil painting on canvas, 1885, by John Singer Sargent

Copying or studying techniques and styles of the Old Masters is a time-honored method through which artists hone their skills. So many advantages include improving observation, repetition, focus, building confidence, and inspiration.

Many professors and art teachers will require copying Old Masters of their students to provide a perfect avenue for critique and to help students develop their own unique styles. Even when copying, students make slight changes based on their own vision.

The Old Masters, generally understood as European artists working before 1800, offer great inspiration to artists, especially when they feel creatively blocked. Inspired by one of my favorite artists, John Singer Sargent, I painted *The Masters* in homage to one of his paintings.

Sargent himself, who enthusiastically and diligently copied Old Masters, created *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose* in 1885. It took him many months to complete because he painted on it only during the three-to-four minutes at dusk when he judged colors as perfect. Then he waited till the next evening to set up his easel again. His dedication to his own vision and perfection defines the word inspiration.

Elizabeth Callahan, the first Home Stager and Staging Realtor in Massachusetts, creates art using pastels, oil, pen and ink, and watercolor. She lives in Rutland.

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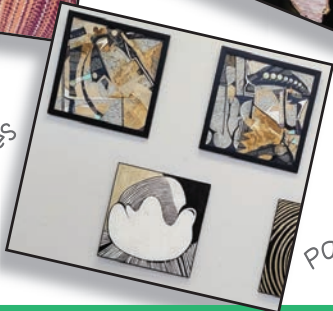
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Quabbin Region Maple Sugar Farms

compiled by Carla Charter

Barre

Bumpas Maple Syrup • 1550 Pleasant Street
sold at Bumpas Maple Syrup by appointment
and Barre Farmers Market

Belchertown

Underwood Farm • 415 Rockrimmon Street
sold at Underwood Farmstand
www.underwoodfarm.net

Shattuck's Sugar House
34 Kopec Avenue

sold at Belchertown Farmers Market

Brookfield

Harm's Family Farm • 8 Mitchell Hill Road
sold at Harm's Family Farm by appointment
and Tip-Top Country Store, Brookfield
and Farmer Matt's, New Braintree
www.harmsfamilyfarm.net

Erving

Dan's Veggies and Poplar Mountain Maples
sold at Dan's Veggies
and Poplar Mountain Maples farmstand

Hardwick / Gilbertville

Hardwick Sugar Shack • 572 Jackson Road
Hardwick Sugar Shack Maple Syrup
sold at The Country Gourmet
and Hartman's Herb Farm, Barre
and Rose 32 Bread, Gilbertville
and Hardwick Farmer's Coop
and Mimi's Coffee House, Hardwick

Leverett

Field Family Sugarhouse • 264 Long Plain Road

West Brookfield

Bucket List Maple Syrup • 84 Long Hill Road

New Braintree

Grand Maple Farm • 727 Moore Road
sold at Grand Maple Farm Sugarhouse
and other stores

Thompson's Maple Farm • 377 Dennis Whitney Road
sold at Sturbridge, Brimfield, and West Brookfield
farmers markets.

Oakham

Agronomy Farm Vineyard • 338 Ware Corner Road
sold at Agronomy Farm Vineyard
agronomyfarmvineyard.com

Orange

Gauvin's Sugarhouse
28 Royalston Road, North Orange
sold at Gauvin's Sugarhouse

Old Town Farm • 122 Town Farm Road
sold at Trailhead, Orange

Petersham

Valcourt Sugar Shack • 67 New Salem Road
sold at Flis Market in Erving
and Kitchen Garden in Templeton.

Royalston

Sweet Water Sugar House • 56 Brown Road
sold at Sweet Water Sugar Shack
and Bates Craft Gallery, Orange

Rutland

Sap Castle • 29 Overlook Road
sold online and at their self-serve box anytime

Mason Farm • 244 Barre Paxton Road
www.masonfarm.farm



maple syrup: first agricultural crop of the year in Massachusetts

continued from page 4

I find a place to stand and engage in friendly conversation. A couple who comes every year from Westminster is there. Neighbors help fill the fire box called the arch. They may check the hydrometer, which measures the viscosity of syrup. Rick fills a cup for me with the day's syrup, and I sip slowly, taking in the scene, sweet flavors, camaraderie. The steam of evaporation fills the space, and sun seeps through gaps in the siding. It is a magical space, quintessential New England springtime.

I didn't grow up in New England, although my father's family is from Orange. I was in my late thirties when I first experienced going to a sugar shack. Then, Steve Johnson's on Wheeler Avenue in Orange was in operation. I remember taking my Brownie troop there for a tasting. Of course, Dede Johnson, his wife, was my co-leader, so it was a natural. The marvel I felt the first time has stuck with me. A visit to a sugar shack represents passage of winter into spring. Change is in the air, frozen streams start to burble, geese honk again, and sap flows.

Maple syrup is the first agricultural crop of the year in Massachusetts. It takes forty years for a maple tree to grow to the required minimum ten-inch diameter for tapping that requires inserting a spigot into the tree to drain sap into a bucket.

Rick has been boiling sap for forty years, long enough to have planted his own trees for tapping. He began in high school in the kitchen of his family's rural second home and basically filled the place with so much steam that porcelain cracked. Finally, he built a sugarhouse in 1983 and has been boiling ever since.

Syrup producers have a strong connection to nature and the outdoors. They have to select trees for tapping, watch the weather, and clean equipment. Then they must gather sap, boil it down, bottle it up, and clean equipment again for another year.

For Rick and other Quabbin region producers, camaraderie caps the season. Rick relishes the pleasure visitors have at the sugarhouse, the wonder of kids



Maple sap boils at Gauvin's Sugar House in North Orange.

photo © by Sally Howe

experiencing a tasting for the first time. Sometimes those kids come back as parents of their own children, and thus, the tradition continues. Native Americans taught us about sugaring. Over centuries and generations and seasons, maple sugaring connects us.

No need to run out of local syrup regardless of the season. Some sugarhouses in the Quabbin area sell all year. Real, local Massachusetts maple syrup is a gift that can delight us all year long.

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



wetland sundews, pitcher plants can capture and kill small animals

continued from page 7



Pan and Pueo Wilson of Orange explore a Quabbin area wetland.
photo © by Sue Cloutier

internal process of photosynthesis. Plants' roots collect water and elements needed for that process.

Plants growing in still waters, on the other hand, have a problem. When moving water does not rinse away dead plants as they rot, acidic tannins form that make the water look like dark tea and rob the soil of elements critical for efficient photosynthesis. In that way, acidic water and soils result in plants struggling to survive. Over eons, two local wetland plants have changed and can do well by using a different way to get essential elements. Sundews and pitcher plants capture and kill small animals that compensate for what the soil lacks.

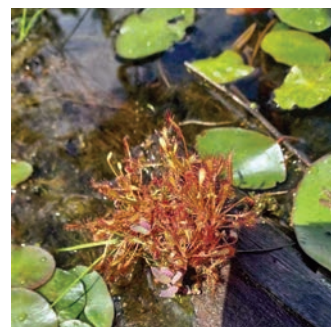
Sundews have adapted to acidic soils. Sundew leaves have hairs with drops of sticky liquid that can hold onto a visiting animal's legs. When a fly, ant, or other animal becomes stuck on those hairs, the captive gets dissolved. As the captive's elements are released, the leaf absorbs them.

The Quabbin region hosts two species of sundew. One, *Drosera intermedia*, has spatulate-shaped leaves that roll up from tip to base to enclose the captured animal. That species is not as common as the other local sundew species with rounded leaves, *Drosera rotundifolia*. The round leaves may fold to encapsulate the animal, but dew on the plant's hairs alone can be enough to dissolve the animal.

Above the base of sundew leaves, sundew's slender stalk upholds white flowers in multiple blooms along its length. Look for the blooms in June and July. Also check to see if any sundew leaves have captured prey.



Round-leaved sundews grow in wetlands.
photo © by Sue Cloutier



Wetlands also feature spatulate sundews.
photo © by Pan Wilson

Pitcher plants are the other unique plant of acidic wetlands. Their leaves have a vase-like shape that can hold rainwater. Many species of pitcher plant with different shapes grow in wetlands around the world.

Just one species of pitcher plant, *Sarracenia purpurea*, is found in Quabbin's boggy wetlands. The flared top of its leaf has downward pointed hairs that make it difficult for creatures that venture inside to get out. Drowned within the vase, any captured visitor dissolves and provides elements needed for the pitcher plant's photosynthesis.



A round-leaved sundew grows next to the tall leaf of a pitcher plant.
photo by Sue Cloutier

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

Artist and photographer Bruce Pan Wilson lives in Orange. He enjoys hiking in Quabbin region woods.

regions wildflowers present intriguing, considerable variety

continued from page 9

with acidic soils such as upland forests, swamps, and bogs. Photogenic flowers display three wavy white petals with crimson or pink stripes that attract and guide insects. Large dark green leaves emerge from stems that grow as high as twenty inches. Pollinated plants produce berries that turn bright red upon maturation in summer.

Unusual winged flowers distinguish fringed polygala, *Polygala paucifolia*, also known as flowering wintergreen or gaywings. Purple or pink petals form tubes with bushy tips where insects access pollen. Small oval leaves and low growth bear resemblance to American wintergreen. Despite similarity to orchids, fringed polygala is part of the overall milkwort family, so named for historic beliefs that consumption stimulated production of milk. Look for it in rich moist forests in May and June.



Petals of fringed polygala form tubes where insects access pollen.

photos by John Burk

Red columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*, grows in rugged settings such as outcrops, ledges, rocky woods, and road edges. Bell-shaped red and yellow flowers attract ruby-throated hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies in May and June. Native Americans used columbine plants for treatment of numerous ailments, ceremonial medicine, and perfume. Adaptability to a variety of environments and value for pollinators make columbine a popular garden plant.



Adaptable red columbine colonies grow in rugged settings such as outcrops, ledges, rocky woods, and road edges.

Showy displays of pink lady's slipper, *Cypripedium acaule*,



Lady slipper flowers contain narrow lips where bees can provide pollination.

make for colorful sights in late May and June. Large colonies often form in hospitable environments with acidic soils such as pine groves, mixed coniferous forests, rock outcrops, bogs, and swamps. Pouched pink or occasionally white flowers, named for resemblance to slippers or moccasins, contain narrow lips where bees enter to provide pollination. Like other orchids, pink lady's slippers often take many years to reach maturation.

Writer and photographer John Burk lives in Petersham.

Join Uniquely Quabbin
artists and photographers
from 5 pm to 8 pm Tuesday, May 21
in Athol Public Library to celebrate
the 25th edition of the magazine.
live music by Ryan Hood • refreshments

Uniquely Quabbin Calendar Listings

PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK DETAILS FOR EVENTS.

May 18, Saturday

rain date May 19, Sunday

Spring Fair
10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Rutland Town Common
264 Main Street
Vendors, garden plants, food trucks
and more
rutlandmahistoricalsociety.org

May 19, Sunday

Spring Hike
11:00 am
meet at New Salem Common
with Swift River Historical Society

Community Fair
11 am – 3 pm
Hosted by Rutland Events Committee
Rutland Community Center
53 Glenwood Road

May 21, Tuesday

Uniquely Quabbin Art Show Opening
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Artists and photographers whose
work has been published in *Uniquely
Quabbin* magazine will display
paintings, sculptures, and photos
during May, June, and July with
opening celebration May 21. Works
will be for sale to benefit the magazine
and Friends of Athol Public Library.
atholibrary.org

Moonlight Paddling
8:00 pm - 11:00 pm
Billy Goat Boats
25 East River Street
Orange
Water hazards marked with LED lights
or glow sticks with extra staff on the
water. Reserve a boat or bring one.

May 23, Thursday

Moonlight Paddling
8:00 pm - 11:00 pm
Billy Goat Boats
25 East River Street
Orange
Water hazards marked with LED lights
or glow sticks with extra staff on the
water. Reserve a boat or bring one.
billygoatboats.com/events

May 25, Saturday

Antique Vehicle and Equipment Show
11:00 am - 3:00 pm
Leverett Elementary School
85 Montague Road
Leverett

May 26, Sunday

Memorial Day Commemoration
10:00 am
Quabbin Park Cemetery
New Salem
Refreshments followed by parade and
services.

History of Oakham Center School
2:00 pm
Oakham Historical Museum
1221 Old Turnpike Road
Presented by Donna Neylon
June 1 and 2, Saturday and Sunday
Tri-Parish Annual Plant, Craft,
Tag, Book, and Bake Sale
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Hardwick Common
32 Common Street

June 2, Sunday

Soccer in Horseback
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Main Arena
New England Equestrian Center,
NEECA
802 New Sherborn Road
Athol
neeca.org/calendar

June 6, Thursday

I Was Amelia Earhart's Sister:
Meet Muriel Morrissey
6:00 - 7:00 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Jessa Piaia becomes Amelia Earhart's
sister in a portrayal women of the past.
Registration required. atholibrary.org

June 15, Saturday

Plant Walk
9:30 am
Leverett
Led by Jean Bergstrom.
Register by email: [Blueskyberg1@
gmail.com](mailto:Blueskyberg1@gmail.com) or call 413-374-5461

June 19, Wednesday

Museum Opening Day
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem

June 20, Thursday

Third Thursdays Street Fair
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Downtown Orange

June 22, Saturday

rain date June 29, Saturday
NEECA/Athol Area YMCA Triathlon
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
802 New Sherborn Road
Athol
Triathlon consists of three segments:
biking, running/jogging, and
horseback riding. Awards presented
neeca.org/calendar

Annual Pie and Baked Goods Sale
10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Williamsville Chapel
4 Burnshirt Road
Hubbardston
Usually sells out. Sponsored by
Hubbardston Historical Society.
hubbardstonhistorical.org/events

Uniquely Quabbin listings

continued from previous page

*June 22, Saturday
continued*

Hubbardston Garden Tour
10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Williamsville Chapel
4 Burnshirt Road
Tickets \$20.00 online or cash
only on tour day until 2 pm.
hubbardstonhistorical.org

Hills East of Quabbin Ride
9:00 am
Farmer Matt's
860 West Brookfield Road
New Braintree
register: eqlt.org/hills-of-east-quabbin-ride
Charity ride befitting East Quabbin
Land Trust with rides between
twenty-five and fifty miles.

Garden Party
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
1 Boynton Road
Templeton
Live music by Take Charge.
Refreshments. Suggested donation \$10.
Weather date TBA if event rescheduled.
Sponsored by the Narragansett
Historical Society with grant from
Templeton Cultural Council.

Orange Solstice Riverfest
5:00 pm - 11:00 pm
Downtown Orange
Illuminated parade of boats, floating
firepits, food and music, vendors,
children's activities, fire spinners
billygoatboats.com/events

June 23, Sunday

Museum Opening Day
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
Hardwick Historical Society
40 Common Street
Open the second and fourth Sundays
until mid October.
hardwickhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com

June 26, Wednesday

Food Margins: Book Launch
6:00 - 7:00 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Author Cathy Stanton launches her
book, Food Margins: Lessons from an
Unlikely Grocer.
Registration recommended.
athollibrary.org

June 28, Friday

Mini Golf in the Library
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Kick off to Summer Reading with a
free mini golf course in the library.
athollibrary.org

June 29, Saturday

Lemonade Social
1:00-3:00 pm
Wood House
232 Main Street
Rutland
rutlandmahistoricalsociety.org

July 4, Thursday

Fourth of July celebrations
5:00 pm
Bonfire and Midnight Riders Band
Lilac Hedges Farm
218 Wachusett Street
Rutland

7 pm Fridays in June and July
Orange Community Band
Butterfield Park Bandstand

6-9 pm Fridays
June 14 - September 6

Rutland Concerts on the Common
Rutland Common Bandstand

7 pm Sundays in June and July
Petersham Brass Band
Petersham Common Bandstand

July 6, Saturday

Parade & Barbeque Day
10:00 am start
Leverett Elementary School
85 Montague Road
Morning parade through town and
afternoon barbeque at the ball field.

July 9, Tuesday

11:30 am
Tom Sieling performs.
Rutland Free Library
280 Main Street

July 10, Wednesday

Afternoon Social Tea on the Porch
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Orange Historical Society
41 North Main Street
Live music. Reservations required by
phoning Ann at (978) 544-3864 at least
a week in advance

*July 11, Thursday
and*

July 23, Tuesday

Cosplay Character & Costume
Building with Eldritch Arts
5:00 - 6:00 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Showcasing materials and techniques
for making characters come to life!
Registration required. athollibrary.org

July 12, Friday

Town Touch-a-Truck Day
11 am - 1 pm
Rutland Free Library
280 Main Street

July 16, Tuesday

Leather Tooling Drop-In Workshop
with LaunchSpace
5:30 - 7:30 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Melissa Mallet will lead a leather tooling
project using scrap leather pieces.
athollibrary.org

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Uniquely Quabbin listings

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July 21, Sunday

Dana Reunion
11:00 - 3:00 pm
Dana Common
Gate 40
New Salem

July 25, Thursday

Grain Bag Totes Drop-In Workshop
with LaunchSpace
5:30 - 7:30 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
What can you do with all those
feedbags? Transform an old chicken
feed bag into a functional tote.
Registration required. athollibrary.org

July 28, Sunday

Dana Vespers
2:00 pm
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
Cake and lemonade served after the
concert.

August 2, Friday

Hear & Tell: Unbelievable but True
Stories
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Orange Historical Society
41 North Main Street
Reservations required at least a
week in advance for storytellers and
listeners by phoning Ann at
(978) 544-3864.

August 4, Sunday

10th annual Kite Fest
Narragansett Historical Society
12:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Brooks Field
342 Baldwinville Road
Templeton
Giant kites, hayrides, face painting,
giant bubbles, vendors, and live
music.
Bring a kite or buy one there.

August 4, Sunday (continued)

Quabbin Reservoir and
Watershed Protection
1:00 pm
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
with Maria Beiter-Tucker, interpretive
services supervisor, state Division of
Water Supply and Protection.

August 6, Tuesday

Toe Jam Puppet Band
7 pm
Rutland Free Library
280 Main Street

August 8, Thursday

Make Jewlery with LaunchSpace
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Athol Public Library
568 Main Street
Participants will use wire, beads, and
found materials to make jewelry. by
incorporating recycled materials.
athollibrary.org

August 11, Sunday

History in Glass Negatives
1:00 pm
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
with Peter Peirce, photographer.

Life Drawing Sessions
Petersham Art Center
6:30 to 8:30 pm
8 North Street
Petersham

Participants will bring their
own drawing materials
including paper, drawing board,
and easel if needed.

Clothed sessions
June 20, June 27, and
July 18, Thursdays.

Nude Sessions
July 11, July 25, and
August 1, Thursdays.

Sponsored free by the
Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Call Petersham Art Center at (978) 724-3415 or
email chrisoutdoors71@gmail.com to register.

August 18, Sunday

Mystery of the Prescott Quilt of Names
1:00 pm
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
with Karen Traub

August 24, Saturday

Snakes of the Swift River Valley
1:00 pm
Swift River Valley Historical Society
40 Elm Street
New Salem
With Michael Jones, Massachusetts
state herpetologist

August 31, Saturday

12th Annual Millers River Challenge
sponsored by Orange Lions Club
9:00 am - 3:00 pm.
11 am pro races. 1 pm youth races.
Billy Goat Boats
25 East River Street
Orange
Youth and family-friendly canoe, kayak
and stand-up paddleboard races.
Proceeds to Orange Firemen's Relief
Association, Northfield Dive Team,
and Orange Lions Club.
billygoatboats.com/events



events compiled by

Emily Boughton

Please submit listings for the
next issue

before August 1, 2024

to UQCalendar@gmail.com