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Organization for the Assabet River

Newsletter

April 2005

Boating on early Lake Boon

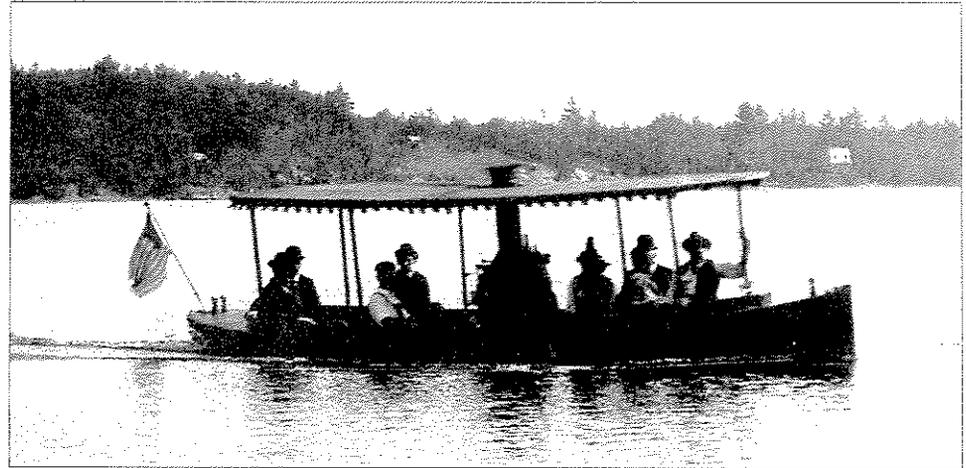
Lew Halprin

This, the first of two articles about the passenger boats of early Lake Boon, is based on information gathered from a lecture given by Laurence W. Kattelle to the Stow Historical Society about 1966. Part One will focus on the "Cleo," a small steam boat that provided passenger service on Lake Boon just before the turn of the last century. Part Two will focus on the Cleo's replacement, a gasoline-powered boat called the "Princess."

Many of us have had the pleasure of being taken around Lake Boon in a modern speedy motor boat, or climbing into our canoe or kayak to paddle around its five miles or so of shoreline. Some of us senior citizens still remember a large gasoline engine yacht called the "Princess" that carried people around the lake, often from their cottages to a dock near the railroad station. But before that, in the early days of Lake Boon (originally called Boon's Pond before the dam was built, greatly enlarging that body of water), there was a smaller boat called the "Cleo," an honest-to-goodness steam boat. The kids on the lake loved any opportunity to take a ride on the Cleo.

The CLEO was owned and operated by a man named Canning who had a few acres on the east side of the upper end of the narrows. The property extended around into the second basin and was known as Indian Point. On this property, he built a summer cottage and provided picnic grounds with tables, benches and swings. A covered and screened pavilion provided a space for indoor games and protection from rain. Kids could also buy a variety of soft drinks, including ginger ale, root beer, and moxie.

Cannings' picnickers usually came to Boons Pond by train on the B&M's Marlboro Branch, to a flag station called Whitman Crossing located near the spot where the Sudbury Road bridge crosses
Lake Boon, page 7



Cleo, an honest-to-goodness steam boat. The photograph is from the Richard Conrad collection of glass photographic plates by Alexander Berry of Marlborough and was taken in the early 1920's.

Assabet River sediment study underway

Julia Blatt

A new two-year sediment study begun this January should result in recommendations to help restore the river's habitat and water quality. Study recommendations could include treating or removing sediments in the river, and breaching or removing dams, and would complement municipal investments in wastewater treatment plant upgrades. The study is being conducted by the US Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of the Assabet Consortium, and funded primarily by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has provided \$500,000 in study funding, thanks to the efforts of our state delegation, led by Senator Pam Resor and Representative Patricia Walrath. The Army Corps of Engineers has contributed \$90,000, and the Assabet Consortium and OAR are working with the Assabet's federal delegation to underwrite the remainder of the study's projected \$1M cost.

Need for the study. The Assabet River's phosphorus problem has been well-documented by OAR and others. An excess of this nutrient, in combination with warm weather and a slow-moving river, causes

a heavy summer growth of floating and rooted green plants that harms wildlife habitat and recreation, and prevents the Assabet from achieving its Class B water quality standard of fishable and swimmable. The chief sources of the Assabet's phosphorus are the four municipal wastewater facilities serving six communities: Westborough, Marlborough, Shrewsbury, Northborough, Hudson, and Maynard (the Assabet Consortium). These facilities are operated under NPDES¹ permits, jointly issued by the US EPA and MA DEP every

Sediment study, page 6

Inside this issue	
Letter from the Director	2
Cross country skiing	3
Wachussetts Aqueduct	4
Development Coordinator	5
New members	7
Notecards	7
Spring meeting	7

OAR

The Organization for the Assabet River is a nonprofit organization established in 1986 to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural and recreational features of the Assabet River, its tributaries and watershed.

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The OAR Newsletter is published three times a year by the Organization for the Assabet River. It is free to OAR members.

Julia Blatt, Dottie MacKeen, *Editors*
Julia Khorana, *Production & Graphics*
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Julia Blatt, Frank Boffoli, Michael Duclos, Aliza Edwards, Dave Griffin, Julia Khorana, *Photographs*



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Now, more than ever – the Assabet needs OAR



I am just back from a day on the Hill. Betsy Stokey, Paul Blazar and I met with staffers from four congressional and two senate offices – and one actual congressman. Betsy and I were there to ask them to support increased funding for Wild and Scenic Rivers; Paul, Chair of the Assabet River Consortium (of sewer municipalities), was seeking federal support for the Consortium's sediment remediation feasibility study. Our delegation has been wonderfully supportive in the past, and promised, once again, to go to bat for the Assabet. Watch this space for more news later in the year...

Betsy and I have been visiting the Hill annually for the past six years, and during our past few visits we've heard a lot about shrinking federal environmental budgets and the difficulty of shaking loose funding for anything in Massachusetts. Unless you've spent the last few months in a cave, you know that this is not likely to improve in the near future. And it's no better on the state level.

But does shrinking support for government really affect the Assabet River?

You bet. When government agencies charged with protecting the environment lose staff, the agencies are unable to do their work. The agencies take longer – sometimes years longer – to perform some tasks (permit writing, for example), do a poorer job of others (thoroughly reviewing the environmental impacts of requests to withdraw water or discharge pollutants), or simply fail to do them at all (comprehensive water quality monitoring, for example, used to be a state responsibility). Without sufficient money or staff to collect and analyze data, agency decisions can't be based on science. Without vigilant, well-staffed, well-resourced environmental agencies, the Assabet – and every other American river – is vulnerable to increased pollution, loss of clean water, and development in its floodplain.

This is where OAR and groups like us come in. While we don't have the authority to regulate, we do have the power to focus government attention on the Assabet River and its watershed. We can – and do – collect and analyze our own field data, and share that data with the government for regulatory purposes. We request additional scientific studies of the river to make sure that decisions are indeed based on good science. We work to get these funded. We weigh in, again and again, during permitting processes, in support of the river – and sometimes just to push things along in a timely fashion. And we're making a real difference.

Where does OAR get this power? It comes from you, our membership. When we weigh in, we do so on your behalf, for a river you care about. Thank you for your continued support. Happy new year!

Julia

P.S. Words fail me (I know, it's rare) when I try to describe the beauty of Dave Griffin's latest notecard collection for OAR. I am planning to have a set of them framed. Purchasing a set of these is a great way to help OAR. See page 7 for ordering information.❖

Cross country skiing along the Assabet

Stephen Hrones

One of the great joys for me of winter living on the Assabet is the opportunity to cross-country ski with a faithful companion, Austin, my golden lab, right out my back door along our beloved North River (original name of the Assabet for those of you who don't read Thoreau).

There is a well-worn path near the old dam at the Damondale Mill. I can imagine Thoreau trekking along it as he made his observations of nature. Although not far from "civilization," I experience there the beauty not only of the river but also of the utter stillness that I associate with the far-off Northern New England. When I ski, I am truly one with nature. This private trail is kept open by a fellow skier who cuts down overhanging branches and other natural obstacles that manage to grow up over the year and I am fortunate enough to have access to it.

At several points along the path, I see evidence of the beavers from gnawed quivering aspen to the fallen trunk of a silver maple. The beavers also love to eat the bark of the aspen. At a point across the river there is a large pile of sticks that appears to be a beaver home. Muskrats are also in evidence when the heavy March snow melts and rains flood the wetlands and they dive and surface near the riverbank.

A fox is occasionally spotted, particularly against the snow and ice since otherwise he blends into the landscape. He has been around for years, living on the railroad track side of the Assabet. In winter, when the river is frozen, it is a thrill to see the river otters frolicking on the ice, seemingly indifferent to the frigid cold. And the deer are, of course, plentiful although most visible

in the spring, summer, and fall where they are seen eating the leaves of the abundant growth in the river bed and drinking the cool water at a grassy spot.

However, the most consistent wildlife spectacle is the birds. The Canada geese, of course, are regulars, but their migrating brethren arrive in great numbers from the north in early November. One couple mates every spring right out in front of our house which sits high on a riverbank with a marvelous panorama of several hundred feet of river.

The quiet beauty of a rare pair of wild swans was a treat. Several years ago, I even saw a bald eagle. It looked like a Boeing 747, as it took off downriver. The blue heron are always stunning to watch fly and are now around all year. We have seen them fishing, occasionally with bullfrogs in their mouths. One seagull (we call him Sam) has been a regular visitor for years. He can be seen occasionally feeding on a big fish on the ice. The common mergansers show up every winter and are easily identified by their handsome crowns and diving habits. The cormorants visit and dive too. While skiing, I spotted the less common hooded merganser. Even bluebirds have been spotted in winter. After disappearing over the last seven years, they are apparently back. A broad shouldered hawk was observed in the fall, perhaps on his way south, but some are here year-round. One day at dusk, I was fortunate to see a great horned owl.

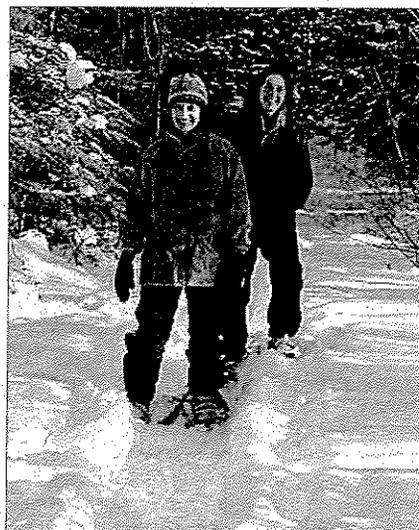
Most of us only get to enjoy our beautiful Assabet in the other seasons, but it is equally a treasure in the winter.❖

Editor's Note: If you would like to experience the beauty of the Assabet next winter, there are several public areas where you can hike, showshoe or cross country ski. In **Concord**, the Simon Willard Woods has paths that go down to the river and can be followed to Egg Rock (check out the Concord Land Conservation Trust web site at <http://concordland.org>.)

All conservation trails in **Maynard** are open in the winter but are better suited to walking or showshoeing than skiing. You can find trail maps on the town's website at <http://web.maynard.ma.us/gov/conscom/trails/index.htm>. The Assabet River Walk and Ice House Landing both take you to the river. There is a nice flat stretch about 3 miles long that is part of the Assabet Rail Trail beginning at Ice House Landing off Winter Street in Manard and traveling along the edge of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge to Sudbury Road in **Stow**. Both ends are good for skiing but the middle section does get plowed.

The Stow Town Forest off Bradley Lane in **Stow** has ten square miles of trails, at least one of which will take you down to the river. They are suitable for cross country skiing as well as walking and snowshoeing.

Westborough has several large open spaces suitable for both skiing and showshoeing in the Westborough Charm Bracelet, a planned network of trails throughout the town. You can get details on their website <http://www.westboroughcharm.org/index.htm>.



OAR's Julia Khorana and Sue Flint snowshoeing in Simon Willard Woods, conservation land along the Assabet River in Concord.



Celebrate Earth Day with OAR

Saturday, April 30

Join OAR members to march in a parade in Concord. This is a wonderful family activity.

Give us a call at 978-369-3956 for more information.

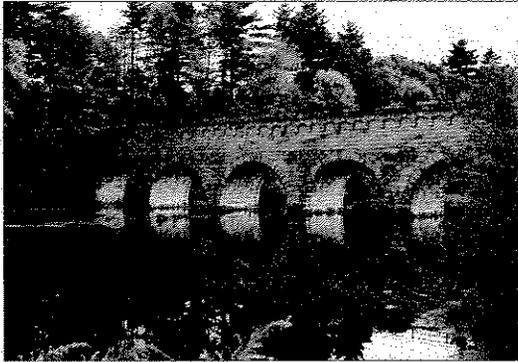
Northborough preserves records of Wachusett Aqueduct's creation

John Leonard

In a small cinderblock annex behind the main building housing the Northborough Historical Society, historian Robert Ellis keeps watch over a treasure trove of written material and photographs documenting every aspect of life in Northborough since the town's founding in 1766. Ellis preserves archived copies of newspapers like the Worcester Telegram and the Northboro Profile. These papers document daily life down to the minutest details, such as when Charles Mowry visited friends in Brookfield, or when dairy farmer Philip Hilliard purchased a new horse to deliver milk.

Ellis also carefully preserves numerous letters that the society has procured from various estates in and around Northborough. One such set of letters from 1896 to 1898 shows how the state negotiated with Hilliard, a prominent landowner, to acquire land on which to build the Wachusett Aqueduct. More than 100 years later, the structure still sits astride the Assabet River, where people come to admire its scenic beauty, and animals come to use it as a refuge.

One day in May 1896, Hilliard got a letter from the Metropolitan Water Board, a state agency created in 1895. The board informed Hilliard that it had purchased a parcel of land



that he owned in town. Between then and February 1898, a series of letters from board members to Hilliard would show the steps the two parties took to convey Hilliard's land to the state, while still allowing him to raise cattle near the property that would become the Wachusett Aqueduct.

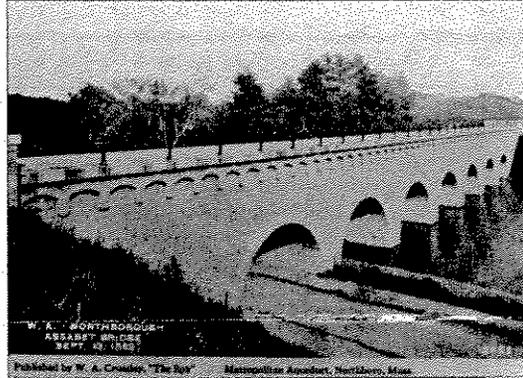
By mid-February 1898, the state had agreed to pay Hilliard and his wife what was then a tidy sum for land that the state took to build the aqueduct. The settlement between the state and the Hilliards also released the state from responsibility for "damages on account of work carried on by contractors under this Board, loss of water and other matters."

The first letter, dated May 28th, 1896, was a formal notice from the board, written in legal language. Using grandiose prose, the state tries to impress upon Hilliard its power and authority to take private land for public purposes. The document imparts a sense that the taking of Hilliard's land was a "done deal":

"You are hereby notified that the Metropolitan Water Board ... by a taking filed in the registry of deeds at Worcester ... took for the purposes of the Metropolitan Water Works a certain parcel of land, situated in Northborough ... of which you are supposed to be the owner."

But 17 subsequent correspondences from the board showed that

taking Hilliard's land would not be as easy as that. Several letters written by Board Secretary William Davenport in 1897 convey Davenport's frustration at being unable to meet with Philip Hilliard to discuss which parts of Hilliard's property the state would take. In a March 17 letter to Hilliard, Davenport said he had asked board engineer Thomas Richardson what to do with a reservoir on Hilliard's property, and whether workers could



Top: In 1898, the newly completed aqueduct then known as the Metropolitan Aqueduct. Photo courtesy of the Northborough Historical Society.

Left: The Wachusett Aqueduct today. Photo by Frank Boffoli.

build a pass over the aqueduct for Hilliard's cattle during construction:

"When I hear from Mr. Richardson it would be well for you to have a conference with me [at board headquarters], or I will try and see you at such time as may be convenient for both at your place in Northborough."

Back and forth

Between March and September 1897, Davenport attempted to meet with Hilliard several times. His correspondence betrays a growing impatience as demonstrated in this April 15 letter:

"I have been trying to get up to your place for some time, and go over the ground with you, with a view to ascertaining what can be done in the matter of a pass for your cattle and also getting a water supply to take the place of the reservoir which has got to be taken away this year. ... It is necessary for the contractor on the aqueduct to push the work along through your premises at once, and I presume the reservoir will have to be destroyed."

By late summer 1897, Davenport still had not met with Hilliard, even though he had gone to see him in person, as this September 17 letter shows:

"I called at your place Wednesday morning, and was very sorry that you were away and would not return until noon. I had a number of other places to visit and was unable to wait until the hour named. ... I should have notified you of my coming on that day, but did not know of it until 5 o'clock Tuesday."

A letter to Hilliard on September 30 continues in this vein, but shows that work on the aqueduct had already begun. In the letter, Davenport offers Hilliard \$1,750, the board's first proposal to compensate him for "damage caused you and injury to your farm by the taking of land and construction of the aqueduct through it." Davenport gives Hilliard about a week to think things over.

Aqueduct, page 5

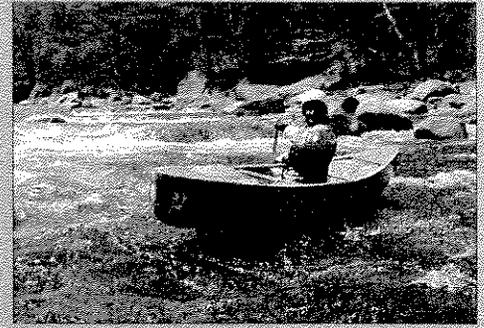
Julia Khorana takes on Development role

We are delighted to announce that Julia Khorana has agreed to serve as OAR's new Development Coordinator. A long-time OAR volunteer, Julia also currently chairs OAR's very active Public Outreach Committee, co-chairs the Annual Assabet River Cleanup, and designs and produces most of OAR's public outreach materials, including our newsletter.

"Julia is multi-talented, full of ideas, and lots of fun to work with," said OAR Executive Director Julia Blatt. "She is genuinely dedicated both to the river and to our organization. The staff and board are thrilled to work with her in this new role."

"I've loved volunteering for OAR the past few years," Julia Khorana said, "and this position will allow me to work more directly with the membership to protect the Assabet and its watershed. I look forward to getting to know more OAR members over the coming year."

An avid white-water canoeist, Julia is a leader in New England's recreational boating community. She has taught white water paddling classes for the AMC for many years and is a current chair of that organization's Boston Chapter Paddlers Committee. She is also active in FLOW, an organization which promotes whitewater boating opportunities in New England. Julia and her husband, Michael Duclos, live in Stow. ❖



Aqueduct, page 4

"If I do not hear from you on or before the date named, I shall understand that you reject the proposition."

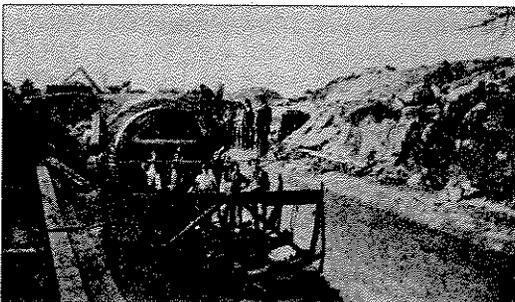
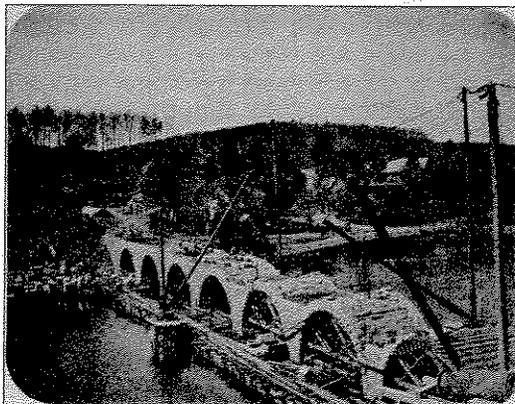
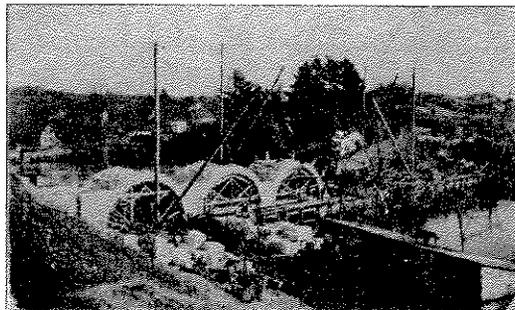
Over the next few months, Hilliard apparently pressed the board for more money. Betraying a hint of irritation, Davenport agrees, in a January 21, 1898 letter, to up the settlement amount:

"I have considered your letter relative to the matter of settlement, but it hardly seems that the Commonwealth ought to pay interest for the length of time which you name. My proposition to you was \$1,750. I will give you \$1,850 in full settlement, and we will have fences replaced and a cattle pass constructed, as you suggest."

The board sent Hilliard several more letters asking him to help them define the extent of his property, and how he came to own it. With those issues sorted out, on February 16, Davenport wrote Hilliard to say that the board would pay him the amount he proposed as compensation for taking his property:

"Enclosed please find deed from yourself to the Commonwealth, conveying land which was taken for the Wachusett Aqueduct. You will also find an order for \$1,887.50, the amount agreed upon between us in the settlement."

Hilliard had made it a condition of doing business with the state that he receive payment by March 1, 1898. In the February 16 letter, Davenport told Hilliard that if



he returned the signed deed by the end of the week, the board would send him the settlement fee by then, and the state would own his property free and clear.

A happy ending

Two days later, Hilliard received another letter from the water board, this one signed by a man named George Bigelow. Bigelow said the board had received the deed from Hilliard, and thanked him for helping sort out some more questions regarding his property. This final correspondence made clear that the board considered the matter closed:

"Unless there is some unforeseen hitch as to which I know nothing about and which is not likely to occur, you will receive your money a few days before the time specified in the settlement. I am glad of this as I always like to see everybody happy." ❖



Photos from 1897 and 1898 show the Wachusett Aqueduct under construction. Top photo shows three of the seven arches that would span the Assabet River in Northborough upon the structure's completion. The middle photo shows the seven arches with construction still underway. Bottom left shows workers and bottom right shows a field supervisor in the tunnel that would carry water from central Massachusetts to Boston. Photos courtesy of the Northborough Historical Society.

Sediment study, page 1

five years. These permits, under the federal Clean Water Act, must enable the river to attain water quality standards.

The most reliable and direct route to water quality improvements is via wastewater treatment plant upgrades. A dramatic decrease in effluent phosphorus (P) would lead to a dramatic improvement in water quality. Relying solely on wastewater treatment plant upgrades to achieve water quality standards would require the facilities to decrease P concentrations (currently permitted at 0.75 mg/L) to levels below .05 mg/L.

Innovative permits. In response to the communities' concerns about the cost of meeting very low P levels, the agencies chose to implement the lower P requirement in a phased approach and to offer the communities the option of combining investments in wastewater technology with other, possibly less costly, alternatives to restore water quality. This approach is set forth in the draft NPDES permits for the four facilities, issued in June 2004; final permits are expected out this spring. The draft permits stipulate that beginning in 2009, the wastewater treatment facilities will need to meet P limits of 0.1 mg/L. The sediment study is a joint effort by the communities, the agencies, and OAR to explore other, complementary routes to water quality improvement.

Treating or removing P-rich sediments in the impounded (dammed) sections of the Assabet River could help restore

wildlife habitat and water quality in the river, according to the phosphorus Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study of the Assabet, completed last year. A computer simulation of the river indicated that if the river's four municipal wastewater treatment facilities decrease P concentrations in their discharges to 0.1 mg/L, AND 90% of the P contributed by the river's sediments is removed, the Assabet could achieve its water quality standard. If no feasible alternatives are identified in the study (or implemented by the communities), the municipal wastewater treatment facilities will need to meet lower P limits, beginning in 2014.

Study objectives. The study is being conducted by the US Army Corps of Engineers, on behalf of the Assabet Consortium, and will investigate the technical feasibility and cost of various alternatives such as dam removal or breaching to allow fish passage and improve flow; and removal, treating, or capping of sediments in impoundments to reduce sediment P flux. The study will evaluate the potential effectiveness of these alternatives, and will include a public outreach component to assess public support for these actions. The study's management team will include representatives from all six seweried communities, state and federal agencies, and OAR. ❖

¹ National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

Lake Boon, page 1

where the Sudbury Road bridge crosses the Assabet River. It was named after the man who gave the land for it when the line was built. This was a very dangerous grade crossing, especially blind for highway traffic going west across the Assabet river. So the railroad had a flag man on duty for all trains from about 7 AM till 7 PM. He was paid \$1.00 per day!

It was a five minute walk to Lake Boon from the station, then a one mile steamboat ride to the picnic grounds. During the day there would be a ride around both basins at 10 cents a head. The Cleo was about 25 feet long with canopy top, seating about 25. A smoke-stack came up through the roof, raking backward like a tug boat. It was very quiet and smooth running, but slow!

There was some competition from a gasoline driven boat owned by a Mr. Brigham who also ran a small store at the north tip of the lake near the intersection of Sudbury Road and Pine Point Road. He named his boat "The Highland City."

The novelty of the gasoline engine that the Highland City used, compared with the hot and smoky steam plant which some people were afraid of, forced Mr. Canning to give up steam. He ordered a new boat built at Riverside on the Charles River. It was 35 feet long, had a 10 foot beam and seated 50 passengers along each side and around the stern. Stanchions every five feet supported a roof and side curtains which were rolled up in fine weather, and gave protection when it rained. The new boat was



Moxie refreshment stand. The photograph is from the collection of Alda and Lee Parker of Hudson.

trucked up to the lake and put in service during the summer of 1900. Canning named her "Princess" and she was a success from the start, putting The Highland City out of business. ❖

Note: Photos were taken from the Images of America book "Lake Boon" by Alan Kattelle and Lew Halprin; published by Arcadia Publishing Company.

Welcome, new members!

Samuel Adelman
 Robert and Annette Albright
 Colin and Melody Anderson
 Dorothy Ann Arrigo
 Mr. and Ms. Robert Asher
 Chris Avery
 Bruce and Mary Hemenway Bailey
 Stephanie Beaudoin
 Sandra P. Bedoya
 Mark Bentley
 Barbara D. Bergemann
 Heidi Blais
 Bruce Blumberg
 Amy and Joshua S. Boger
 Ardis and John Bordman
 Martha Broad
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 Richard Burati
 Ann Cairns
 Eileen Callahan
 Dierdre Campbell
 Stephen Carr
 Gary and Ann Cattarin
 David Cobb
 Java Cohen
 Christa and Jeff Collins
 Joel Crandall
 Richard Crowley
 Tom and Susan Curtin
 Jim Davidian
 Barbara and Dekkers Davidson
 Arthur J. Duffy
 Molly and Jeff Eberle
 Kat Edwards
 Amal Moamar and Robert Ferstenberg
 Irene Freidel
 Leslie Frodema
 Jeff Führer
 Ralph N. Fuller
 Paul Gallagher
 Eileen P. Gebrian
 Richard Gentilman
 Joanne and Chuck Gibson
 Andrew and Patricia Goldstein
 Christine and Mario Gonzalez
 Kathy Gorman

Andy Gould
 Douglas Govan
 Alice C. Grady
 Amy Guilford
 Louise and Chuck Haldeman
 Robert and Sandra Hall
 Phebe Ham
 Joyce Hamel
 Spencer Harvey
 Mark Hazel
 Michael Henchman
 Jan Herzog
 Carolyn Stock and Ennis Holt
 Aaron Hope
 Robin B. Humes
 Bruce Hurter
 Teresa Ilgunas
 Sue Ellen Imhoff
 Randi Isaacson
 Mary McCabe and Sam Joffe
 Edgar Johnson
 Karen and Fred Jones
 Angela M. Kearney
 John F. Kennedy
 Christopher J. Keyworth
 Karim Kovacevic
 David and Toby Kramer
 Carol Kyte
 Donna La Madeleine
 Jon Larkin
 Mark Larrousse
 Peter and Brenda Luciano
 Christopher and Jennifer Ludwig
 Victoria Mangus
 Martha Rounds and William Manning
 Jean D'Amico and David Mark
 Arlene Marshall
 Rebecca Mattison
 David McKinley
 Thomas McKinney
 Kathy McMillan
 Daniel J. Meenan, III
 Stephen E. Meltzer
 Deirdre and Eric Menoyo
 Margaret Sanderson McKenna and
 Steven Mirin
 Robert J. Morris

Betty Salzberg and Lawrence Morris
 Henry Moss
 Elizabeth Nahas
 Lisa Nevin
 M. Carol O'Neill
 Michael Paine
 Santo Parente
 David Parker
 Robert G. Pfost
 Frank and Jane Phillips
 Anthony and Jean Poteete
 Barbara Powell
 Barbara Raab and Jeffrey P. Protentis
 Mahesh Kumar Raghavaraju
 Tapas Ray
 Margaret H. Raymond
 Susan O. Rieder
 David and Eileen Robichaud
 Dan Robinson
 Chris and Jen Rodstrom
 Russell Samara
 Barbara Blankenship and Michael Sanders
 William, Linda and family Schymik
 Judy Scotticki
 Judi Seldin
 Jean Sharp
 Richard D. Smith, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Morgan K. Smith, Jr.
 Remo G. Sodano
 Frederic and Patricia Steele
 Craig Surprise
 Paul J. Van Der Wansem
 Nina and Arden Veley
 Navin Viswanathan
 Joy Walsh
 Francis W. Warren, Jr.
 Kate Wheeler
 Harry W. Whittles
 Janet Silver and Jeff Wieand
 Michael L. Wilson
 Peter Wojtkiewicz
 Patricia Woods
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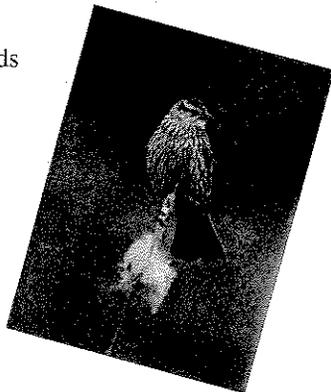
Birds of the Assabet

OAR's new Assabet River notecards with stunning photographs by Dave Griffin!

Packet of eight different cards with envelopes is \$15.

Available by mail for \$18 (includes tax and shipping).

Call OAR at 978-369-3956 or email oar@assabriver.org to place your order.



Photography talk draws crowd

OAR's March 22 spring meeting combined education and inspiration as board member Dave Griffin took attendees on a scenic "trip" down the Assabet River, followed by a photography tutorial. An accomplished amateur photographer, Griffin held more than sixty attendees spellbound as he shared memorable photos, humorous anecdotes, and photography tips. Our thanks to the Maynard Rod and Gun Club for donating the space for the evening. ❖



The day after OAR's spring meeting, featured speaker Dave Griffin joined OAR's Julia Blatt as guest DJs on WAVM radio (91.7 FM), broadcasting from Maynard High. The two played river music from their own collections and talked up OAR and the Assabet for an hour as part of WAVM's community week.

OAR



Organization for the Assabet River
Damonmill Square
Concord, MA 01742

Non-profit Organization
US Postage
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Maynard, MA 01754

Return service requested

Lauren Rosenweiq
Chair, Planning Board
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

01720+3939 15



OAR



Organization for the Assabet River
Damonmill Square
Concord, MA 01742

**Yes, I'd like to help the Assabet River
and its watershed!**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- Leadership Circle:
 - Benefactor \$2500
 - Steward \$1000

Guardian \$500

Protector \$250

Friend \$100

Activist \$50

Member \$30

Student/senior \$15

Other _____

Make checks payable to OAR and mail to:

Organization for the Assabet River
Damonmill Square, Concord, MA 01742

- If your employer has a matching gift program, please include the company's form.
- Your membership dues are tax deductible and include a subscription to the *OAR Newsletter*.

The Organization for the Assabet River



Spring 2005 Calendar of Events



Earth Day

Saturday April 30

You can join OAR in celebrating Earth Day in two very different events. OAR members will be marching in the Concord Earth Day parade with our famous fish hats and the addition of dragonflies this year. Join us in the parade and at the fair after the parade on the grounds of the Emerson Umbrella. Call the OAR office at 978-369-3956 for information.

OAR will be working with the Marlborough Conservation Commission and EMS in Marlborough to do a cleanup along the riverbanks. Call the OAR office at 978-369-3956 to get details and to volunteer.

Marlborough Paddle

Sunday, May 15 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Meet OAR members at EMS in Marlborough to put in for a paddle down the river to Wood Park in Hudson. Call the OAR office at 978-369-3956 to register (and check with the OAR office on the day of the paddle if the weather is questionable)



RiverFest RiverQuest



Saturday, June 11 at 10 a.m.

Once again you can celebrate our wild and scenic river by participating in OAR's RiverQuest - a canoe/kayak hunt for clues along the river from the put in at Damon Mill to take out at Lowell Road. Put in your boat between 10 and 11 a.m. for a paddle that will take an hour or two depending on how fast you paddle and how intensely you observe. This is a great family event. Call the OAR office at 978-369-3956 to register and reserve your space on the shuttle.



River Solstice

Sunday, June 19

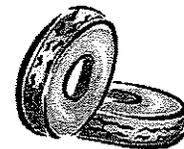
Celebrate the solstice with members of OAR and the Musketaquid Center for the Arts and Environment. Begin with a picnic on the grounds of the Old Manse and end the evening with a twilight paddle to the Calf Pasture and Egg Rock. Events will include bonfires, drumming, and lanterns to light the evening. Call the OAR office at 978-369-3956 for details.



SAVE THE DATE

Annual River Cleanup

Saturday, September 17



Mark your calendars to join us for the 19th annual river cleanup .
As always a morning of hard work will be followed by a pizza lunch.
Call the OAR office at 978-369-3965 to register and to get details on this year's sites.

The Organization for the Assabet River



StreamWatch Volunteers Wanted for the Assabet & Concord Rivers!!

Learn first hand about the river and its tributaries; become a StreamWatch volunteer! You'll learn how to take measurements at one of our training sessions and you'll work with our team of volunteers over the summer. The data you collect will help us understand the long term water quality trends of the Assabet and Concord Rivers and give us a snapshot of conditions in the tributaries each week.

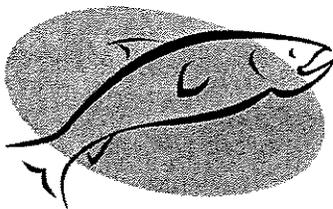
You can help in two ways:

(1) You could join our monthly sampling teams collecting water quality data on four Saturdays from June to September at sites along the Assabet and Concord Rivers and in their tributaries. You can sign up to help on all four Saturday or as few as two (dates below).

To sign up for training sessions email sflint@assabriver.org or call 978-369-3956

Returning volunteers: Thursday, June 2nd, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, Stow

New & returning volunteers: Saturday, June 4th, 8:30 - 10:30 am in Acton



Water quality sampling dates:

Saturday, June 18th

Saturday, July 16th

Saturday, August 20th

Saturday, September 10th

(2) You could help with plant biomass monitoring. Two or three days (weekdays, dates TBA) during the summer we will be identifying and measuring the aquatic plants in the impounded stretches behind the dams along the Assabet River. If you would like to help, email or call to be added to the contact list for this project. The training session for plant identification is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, July 5th, 10:00 am - noon. Biomass sampling dates: TBA

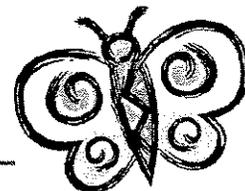
OAR will have a table at several local community events this spring.

To volunteer to help, please call us at 978-369-3956!

Eastern Mountain Sports Club Day EMS in Marlborough
Thursday, April 28 - Sunday, May 1

Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge Opening Hudson Road entrance
Saturday, May 21 in Sudbury

Hudson Community Fest Center of Hudson
Saturday, June 4



For more information on OAR events, please call us at 978-369-3956.

Visit www.assabriver.org for updates.