



Update

F.O.P. Newsletter, Winter 2005, V. 19, No. 1

From the President

Dear Friends,

Our annual meeting was held at the Community Center in Hinsdale on November 16, 2004. Twenty three members attended and voted in the slate of officers presented (See Fall 2004 Update for names). For the program, Laurie G. Callahan, Aquatic Biologist, told about aquatic plants, comprised of invasive and native species. After her talk, she had many dried plants on hand for members and guests to examine. Laurie has checked Fullam Pond and the reservoir in Pisgah for different species. Luckily no invasive plants were found. Since Laurie has connections in the area, you may find her in the Park on occasion, perhaps checking out the myriad small and large ponds in Pisgah.

The barn project has been moving along since my last message. At this time Robert (Butch) Howe has made the small doors on the main floor. The large sliding door will take a little more time as Butch is going to be laid up with a knee operation the first of February. The cellar overhead door is finally here and, when the temperature gets bearable, that door will be installed. The insulation in the cellar ceiling is in place; the building is weather proof and it is a great looking barn. (see the picture on page 5). Negotiations are almost completed with the Timber Framers Guild on the final charges for the work on the barn. We are working out a few minor problems.

As you may recall, we hope that the state will use the barn for various educational activities. FOP is planning to house a collection of artifacts in the barn. We already have, in the barn, a 1914 Bob Sled that was donated to the Friends from Jean Hanson in the name of Raymond Rowe. The sled was built in Chesterfield and so has a strong connection to the Pisgah area.

A fine wood stove was purchased for the Visitor Center and has been installed in Norma's office. It is working well after some minor smoke problems in the building were corrected. Take time to stop in at the Visitor Center and see the new stove, as well as the various furniture items now in the parlor. Please remember that FOP continues to solicit your donations of antique or period items for display at the Visitor Center (see Jan Carpenter's note on page 7).

Please take a moment to review your records and see if you have paid your dues. While membership dues are for the calendar year, they may be paid as early as the annual picnic. If you are not paid at this time, then we would appreciate it if you could remit your membership dues promptly.

Think about friends and acquaintances who might be interested in supporting Pisgah Park and give them a copy of the membership application/renewal form found on page 7. If you need more forms or information, call or email Matt (see last page for phone/email/address information).

To verify if you are paid for 2005, check your mailing label. There is a code letter after your name to signify whether or not you have paid. If an N appears, you are not paid for 2005.

Bill Roberts

From the Park Manager

General Information

Happy New Year! The year 2004 certainly went by fast. I want to thank those of you who supported the Park this past year by volunteering to help us improve the trails. Your hard work is really noticeable and greatly appreciated by everyone. I received many comments regarding the great work that was done. According to my records we had over 700 volunteer hours from organized work days, not to mention the many unrecorded hours by friends who helped throughout the year when using trails.

Winter Action

The winter had been rather quiet due to the lack of snow. It's hard to believe we received our first measurable snow amounts at the end of January, making a short water season a possibility. This year we have the Chesterfield and Winchester Snowmobile Clubs to thank for the great job they are doing keeping Horseshoe Road and Reservoir Trailhead parking lots plowed out. I want to personally thank John Herrick for plowing the Kilburn Trailhead and Cliff Struthers for plowing the Old Chesterfield Road entrance and Visitor Center parking when the Park truck was being repaired. Also, with the cold weather we have had, it has been nice to have (in the office) a wood stove provided by the Friends of Pisgah. A snowmobile is available for Park use this winter.

Midweek Work Crew

Our very dedicated mid-week volunteer crew of Gil Cameron, Jerry Goslant, John Larson, and new member Kim Nielsen, continued to work through the Fall. November work consisted of clearing trails, blow downs and culverts. After the December 8 midweek work party, the crew had pizza and ceased weekly working until the Spring. We would be delighted to have you join the crew which goes out every Wednesday to carry out some project benefiting the Park. Give Norma a call (239-8153) to see when the first outing will be held.

Future Plans

I'm looking forward to Spring with lots of projects planned for this year. If you would like to join our Volunteer Crew give me a call at the Park Office (239-8153) and I will try to keep you posted as to when and where we will be working. Maybe you would like to adopt a trail to help monitor damage after the storms. Any help is appreciated.

Changes in Concord

Throughout the year 2004, there were many changes in personnel in our Concord office owing to people retiring or moving on to other jobs. As of January this year our Parks Director, Rich McLeod, retired after many years in the system. I wish him good luck in his future plans and want to thank him for his support for Pisgah State Park and the F.O.P. projects. The new Governor will be appointing someone to fill this position so we are not sure who it will be or when it will happen.

Norma Reppucci

Some Ski Trips in Pisgah

The snow is here! Many days with below freezing temperatures and over 15 inches of new snow since January 22nd have conspired to make the Park trails good for snowmobiles and, thus, good for those of you who like to cross country ski but don't enjoy the tedious process of breaking trail in deep snow.

Many skiing opportunities are possible. My favorite route, perhaps because it is so close to our house, begins at the Visitor Center on Old Chesterfield Rd. I ski down Old Chesterfield Rd to the Broad Brook Rd. Go down the Broad Brook Rd to the Doolittle Trail. Then up the Doolittle Trail, crossing Broad Brook, paralleling the swamp/marsh for a way, and then uphill to Old Chesterfield Rd. Then it is only a quarter mile uphill on Old Chesterfield Rd to the Visitor Center. The roads are generally good for skiing but the downhill sections on Old Chesterfield Rd (just past the Doolittle Trail and again several hundred yards past the John Hill Rd Junction) can be very fast at times if they are heavily packed by snowmobiles or there is ice. A variation is to leave the Visitor Center, go to John Hill Rd and then on to the Old Spofford Rd. Go north on the Old Spofford Rd a few hundred yards to the old parking lot and enter the Snow Brook Trail from there. Follow the Snow Brook Trail to Old Chesterfield Rd and then head south, passing Broad Brook Rd, and return to the Visitor Center. The Snow Brook Trail can require some side stepping downhill in a few spots but is very pleasant.

Matt Donachie

From the Treasurer

As promised in our last newsletter, I said I would provide the year-end 2004 numbers after year-end. Well, it's that time. Income from membership dues (\$1350) and member contributions (\$1305) and other contributions (\$450) subtotaled \$3105. This income more than covered, as it should, our ongoing Administrative expenses of \$1570 --- for newsletters (\$474), meetings including the picnic (\$372), N H fees (\$75), gifts (\$40), and office expenses (\$156).

Including interest income of \$6959 (from our checking account and CD's), our total 2004 income was \$10,064. This additional income enabled us to pay expenses associated with both our Plains Rd and Dort* properties as well as pay initial expenses of \$1291 for initiation of a Pisgah Management Plan. Our "only" other expense this year was \$134,484 for our barn – dismantling and moving it from Westmoreland; storing it until necessary replacement beams, siding, roofing, foundation, etc. were prepared; and raising it across from the visitor center. Additional expenses will be incurred this year, but all expenses associated with the barn will be more than met thanks to a sizable bequest received last year.

As I pointed out in our last newsletter, our books run on a calendar year ending December 31st, and thus, for those of you who have not either joined or renewed since our picnic in September, your memberships have technically expired. Now I know that some of you pay at various times throughout the year, but as of January 15, less than half of last year's membership have renewed. Your membership is important to us, not only for financial support, but also to remind the state of New Hampshire that we are a strong and active group which is very interested in Pisgah State Park.

Also, as pointed out in our last newsletter, the membership application form (new/renewal) has been revised to change the phrase "interests" to the phrase "willing to serve on committee for" We hope that this rephrasing of your intent with regard to committees will help us find people who are actually willing to help us help one another (and all users of the park).

Help may be: maintaining (vs. using) trails; organizing (vs. attending) the annual picnic; writing (vs. reading) newsletter articles; or whatever. Each "committee" may meet once or twice a year (picnic), or several times within a couple months and be done (planning), or "as necessary" (history/newsletter) – each committee is different, and the task at hand will determine necessary time and effort.

I have to admit that the response to date has been anything but enthusiastic. A few individuals have indicated a willingness to get more involved – won't the rest of you give some thought to helping out in whatever way(s) possible? If you are not sure what may be involved, give anyone on the Executive Council a call.

John Larson

* Wondering what the Plains Rd and Dort properties are? In brief, the Plains Rd property is one which FOP agreed to purchase and now holds in Hinsdale to provide for the ultimate success of the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Greenway. You may wish to refer to the reports of the Wantastiquet – Monadnock Greenway Committee in this issue of Update and in some previous issues in recent years. The Dort Property on the other hand, is one which was donated to The Friends of Pisgah. It consists of a parcel of land adjacent to Pisgah Park above the Kilburn Trailhead and east of Rte 63. This land at present is being retained by FOP. It has been surveyed and a trails connect it with Pisgah Park. Some timber management may be undertaken but there are no plans to convey the Dort Property to the State of New Hampshire to enlarge Pisgah Park.

Matt Donachie

Emergency Response in the Park

As you may be aware, there are occasional instances of emergencies in Pisgah Park. It is not uncommon for persons hiking in the Park to become "lost." More serious emergencies may arise. These emergencies are covered by local police and fire departments and the state. The Winchester departments frequently are called to respond as so much of the Park lies within the boundaries of the town of Winchester. The Winchester Fire Dept (WFD) recently purchased an emergency response trailer and is looking for donations to equip the trailer. The FOP Executive Council voted in January to donate \$300 for help in equipping the trailer.

More About Steps on the Road to a Management Plan for Pisgah State Park

As reported in the last Update, in view of the concerns expressed in the spring of 2004 about the future direction of Pisgah State Park, the Friends of Pisgah Council voted to provide assistance in the development of a Master Plan for the management of the Park. The state approves of the project. Sound management requires sound information.

The FOP invited Antioch New England Graduate School to submit plans for a Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) as a first step toward developing the management plan. Dr. Jon Atwood, Director of Conservation Biology at Antioch, and Tom Sintros (Executive Council member and teacher in the Keene school system) began to prepare an NRI of the Park starting last summer. This work will resume in the spring and will summarize existing information about natural features and collect data that can guide future discussions of how the Park should be managed. Jon Atwood provided some information for the last Update. Subsequently, Tom Sintros provided the following details of work.

“Keene High School students from my A.P. Environmental Science class completed ‘ground truth’ work regarding forest community types for approximately 20 miles of trails in Pisgah. We hiked main trails stopping at points 150 meters apart and logged the dominant tree species within a 50 meter radius circle. We covered the Doolittle Loop, the Kilburn loop, the Horseshoe Rd. trail to the Hubbard Trail and down through the Chesterfield road trail along with the Habitat Trail, lastly we completed a loop from the Nash trail. May have been more than 20 miles but close enough. We have been in touch with DRED ... (parent department of *Parks and Recreation* and of *Trails*.)

Other projects included vernal pool mapping and analysis with my students and an Antioch intern, Brandy Bornt. We covered quite a bit of territory along the Horseshoe Rd., Chesterfield Rd. and Habitat Trail areas (We) also worked with a Fisher ... ‘print traps’ (were) set at 8 different sites. Rain this past summer did not help this project as the prints became smeared due to all the moisture. It was very difficult to distinguish what actually went into the traps. We did however learn much about how to improve on the methods and practice.

Other studies that were done included: a small mammal study, a butterfly and beetle study in the fields near Horseshoe Road, some bird count studies, and a bat study done by a professor at Franklin Pierce College. He will be sharing the data for that study soon ...”

Brandy will present and show maps and data at an FOP Executive Council meeting (tentatively at the February 2nd meeting to be held as this issue of Update goes to press). We will report on the presentation and additional details of the management plan study in the next issue of the Update.

Matt Donachie

Wantastiquet – Monadnock Greenway Update

On November 20th 2004, a new trailhead and parking lot for four cars was completed at the Bear Mountain Connector on Plains Road in Hinsdale. The Bear Mountain Connector Trailhead is on what we informally call "the Hinsdale Lot". This lot was created in a subdivision plan of Plains Road Associates and sold to the Friends of Pisgah "at a bargain price" (in this case slightly more than half price) in May, 2002. The purchase price was \$15,000. A total of \$21,500 was raised for the overall project. Of this total project cost, \$5000 was donated by the Friends of Pisgah, \$5000 came from the Trust for Public Lands (part of a donation to the TPL from the foundation of the mother of Ann Stokes of Chesterfield), with \$11,500 coming from a state of New Hampshire LCHIP grant. The Chesterfield Conservation Commission was helpful regarding the latter as they were able to loan the Friends of Pisgah \$11,500 from their conservation fund for the closing as the LCHIP funds were not available at the time of the closing. A debt of gratitude goes to: Robert Borofsky of Plain Road Associates, who arranged this and other land and easement transfers in the area for FOP; David Mann who substantially discounted the survey cost; and to Keith and Diane Whitworth who donated both an easement to secure the space for the parking lot(see the last newsletter) and gravel to cap the parking lot. Volunteer labor and chain saw work were contributed by Dr. Jeff Newcomer, Tom Duston and Steve Fisher, members of the Chesterfield Conservation Commission.

John D. Summers, Chair



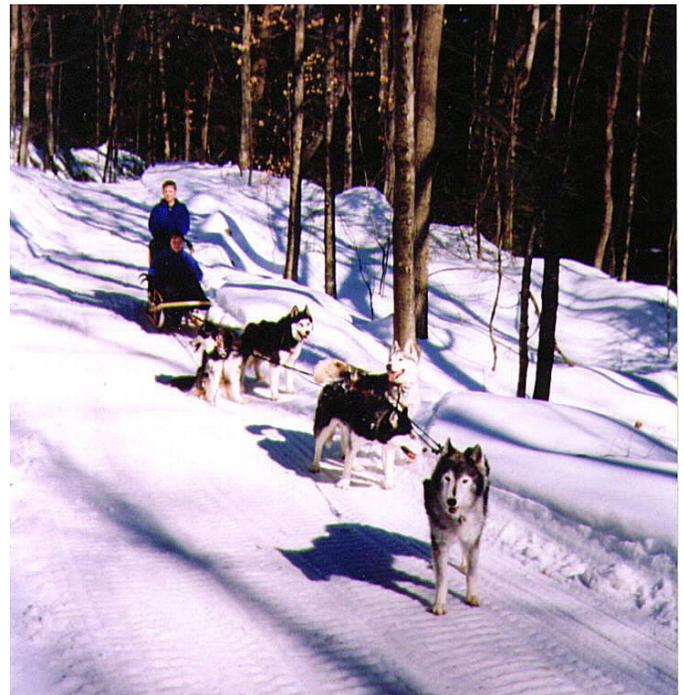
Grading the Improved Fort Hill Line Rail Trail.
(Photo courtesy of Bill Roberts)



John Larson, Kim Nielson, Cliff Struthers
At Mid-Week Work Day Building a Bridge
On the Fullam Pond Trail
(Photo courtesy of Norma Reppucci)



The “New” Old Barn Opposite the Visitor Center on Old
Chesterfield Rd in Winchester. See Bill Roberts’ message for
some details.
(Photo courtesy of Bill Roberts.)



Diane Steeves Son and Sled Dogs in Pisgah Park 1998. See
Diane’s article under Weekend Ranger for more information.

(Photo courtesy of Diane Steeves)

Changes and Transitions

For those of you who have not ventured into the Park since operations were transferred to the Trails Bureau in late spring of 2004, there have been changes. Norma Reppucci is now the Park Manager and is available weekdays but not normally on weekends. A Weekend Ranger reports to Norma and handles Park operations on Saturday and Sunday. That Ranger is Diane Steeves, a long time Winchester resident and user of Pisgah Park. We are fortunate to have Diane available to fill this vital role since weekends often are the peak times of Park use!

In addition, another long time user and friend of the Park, Cliff Struthers, has been volunteering his time to research historical issues in Pisgah. Diane has been able to devote some time to working with Cliff. Diane reports that “To date, I have been able to help Cliff Struthers in his historical quest in finding the locations of the Davis Farm cellar hole, wells, barns, barnyards, small fields, and house foundation. The information is semi-scaled, having been shot with a transit. Cliff is busy locating other old properties as well as their histories, and I enjoy helping him out in the park.”

Message from the Weekend Ranger

It's so good to be back in Pisgah State Park during the wintertime. Some of you might remember seeing me and my children on Broad Brook Road as we cruised around with our dog sled and team of five Siberian Huskies. Just as often, though, you might have seen us taking a break at the foot of Doolittle Trail or by the Water Canal. Ours was a motley dog crew of retired racers and Humane Society adoptees, and pulling three people made for hard work at times. Occasionally, we'd put my German Shepherd on the line to add “turbo power” to a run, as well as mileage. With him, we could sled from the Broad Brook gate all the way out to Fullam Pond and back.

We began dog sledding in December 1995, although we hiked with the dogs through Pisgah in the Fall. Interestingly enough, the coyotes would follow us sometimes, peeking over the stone walls and ridges to consider the Huskies' intrusion. Often, after fresh snow, we'd see the tracks of a lone coyote who had followed us for a while, to disappear when we turned the team around to head back to our car. My daughter, son, and I enjoyed their company and looked for them to join us in our excursions.

We knew very little about dog sledding when we began, having been bitten by the “bug” at Dennison State Park in Massachusetts some years earlier where we had the opportunity to catch some racing. Our lead dog, Marie, taught us everything else. Having raced as a lead dog on the sprint circuit for ten years, she was the undisputed boss and reigned supreme with just a curl of her lip. All other dogs were subordinate – even the German Shepherd! As a family dog, she was queen, stealing our hearts with her merry personality, Marie taught us how to manage the team and maneuver the sled. She let us know when to discipline Beau, who had a tendency to clown around and slack in the harness, occasionally taking matters to herself.

Our favorite trail was Snowbrook, even though Broad Brook was our mainstay, as it was the most easily accessible and great for short or long runs. Snowbrook, on the other hand, was a “commitment,” as it was all uphill on the return trip. The first time that we took the team down the trail, I worried about one particular slope because of its steepness, especially when covered with snow. (Trails change personality from season-to-season as you well know, and this one was Snowbrook's quirk.) I remembered something I'd read somewhere, and stopped the dogs before the drop. My son held the brake with both feet, and my daughter braced herself in the basket of the sled while I moved ahead to unsnap the harnesses from the gang line, leaving the dogs hitched at their collars to take some of the exuberance out of their pulling. Even so, the ride downhill was a “screamer,” but oh so fun! The scenery and atmosphere of Snowbrook is picturesque – breathtaking in spots. Snow cover gives the trail a postcard quality. Stopping by the swamp to let the dogs rest, you can imagine the wildness of the area in the days of Pisgah's first settlers. The stone wall that seems to cut the trail in half down by the brook takes you back in time. (To think of the hours and sweat that went in to building it.)

The years have gone by now, and my children are both young adults; Beau is the only dog left. He misses the old days – I can tell by his excitement whenever the snow falls. Maybe some day we'll go dog sledding again. In the meantime, I am so happy to be able to spend my weekends in Pisgah. Life has a way of keeping people busy, so I am blessed to be a weekend ranger as it is not a job so much as a pleasure.

It is an honor to share in the responsibility of helping to care for this ecological and historical preserve. I certainly hope to somehow be active in its upkeep for years to come. See you out there.

Diane E. Steeves

History and Memorabilia

Now that the old barn has been relocated and reassembled at Pisgah Park, the list of items that The Friends of Pisgah would appreciate having for the Visitor Center and Barn has expanded and includes the following:

beds, chests, bureaus, stands, lights, rugs, maps, pictures, chairs, books, tables, commodes, mirrors, spinning wheels, bed warmers, jugs, sleds, sleighs, tools of all kinds, farm equipment, horse and other livestock equipment, kitchen tools and utensils, old linens, 19th century clothing, anything pertaining to the industry carried on in the area, etc.

As mentioned in the last Update, FOP wants to provide opportunities for continued educational activities in Pisgah, in the Park or at the Visitor Center – Barn complex. The above items will all contribute to providing historical records of the long use of Pisgah Park by the surrounding communities. We encourage you to consider making a tax deductible contribution of some of the above items to FOP for educational use.

An interesting development in recent months was a donation from Dennis & Gayle Beaudoin. Back some 20 years ago, around 1982, when Pisgah Park was still in its formative years, a treasure hunt was planned and sponsored by the Environmental Studies Dept. of Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene. It was aimed at stimulating interest in the Park.

A small wooden box containing \$50 in coins was hidden in the Park and 11 riddles containing clues to the treasure were published in two local newspapers. The answers required persons to have knowledge of the natural and social history of the area. Two young couples from Keene were the winners. Gayle Beaudoin, one of the winners recently returned the little wooden box to the FOP together with several related newspaper articles. This piece of history will be given a special place in our collection of valued artifacts.

*Jan Carpenter, Chair
History Committee*

Membership Note

Please use the form below and send to the address shown if you wish to join FOP or renew your membership.

The Friends of Pisgah maintain a nominal dues structure with the intent being to encourage as many individuals and families as possible to join. Over half of the single address dues provides for printing and mailing the Update and the Annual Picnic notice, as well as for the fine food you are provided at the picnic. Dues are \$10 to cover all persons at the same address. Group (club) memberships are \$20.

Cut here -----

If you are joining or renewing, please use this form. Your dues support our Park efforts.

Date: _____	Category (Check applicable boxes)	Willing to Assist On Committee for:
Name(s): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Picnic
Address: _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Programs
Phone: _____ (Home)	<input type="checkbox"/> Single Address (\$10.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> History/Archaeology
Phone: _____ (Work)	<input type="checkbox"/> Group (\$20.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership
E-mail: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Articles
		<input type="checkbox"/> Planning & Strategy
		<input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations & Park Information
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rails to Trails Advisory
		<input type="checkbox"/> Trails/Maintenance
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wantastiquet-Monadnock Greenway
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

*Questions? Call Bill Roberts (603- 336-5462)
or Matt Donachie (603-239-6590)*

Send form and check to:
Friends of Pisgah, Inc.
PO Box 134
Chesterfield, NH 03443-0134

What Is A Natural Resources Inventory?

Some of you may be interested in the concept of a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). Antioch New England Graduate School's proposal for an NRI of Pisgah Park contains the following information which has been condensed from the actual proposal.

"A comprehensive NRI provides the basis for land conservation planning ... Ideally an NRI should include the following three components:

Maps: Inventory maps show the location and extent (as known) of existing resources

Associated Data and Information Sources: An NRI is more than just a mapping process. The data Can provide specific details about the information displayed on the inventory maps ... Documentation of the data source and the standards and scale used for the inventoried resources also should be included

Descriptive Report: A written report is an important element of a resource inventory. It should also include descriptive summaries of each resource inventoried."

And what you may ask are these resources to be inventoried? The list could be endless but, in the case of Pisgah State Park, maps that will be prepared plan to show: boundaries; corridors; surface water features such as Fullam Pond, Pisgah Reservoir, Broad Book, etc.; topography; rare plant and animal species; wetlands; location of watersheds; location of old growth forest patches; etc.

Matt Donachie

Update is published occasionally during the year by Friends of Pisgah, Inc.

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