



Trail Markers

Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc.

The Weston Land Trust

Dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of open space in Weston
Incorporated 1955

Annual Meeting **Sunday May 3, 2015 at 4 p.m.**

We will convene at the Weston Scout House, on School Street following the regular Sunday 2:00 p.m. walk. See our website for details.

Light refreshments will be served. The brief business meeting will be followed by the presentation below. Trustees are requested to remain after the presentation for a brief meeting to elect officers for the 2015-2016 year.

The Bay Circuit Trail and Greenway

By Kristen Sykes, Director of Conservation Strategies

The focus of the presentation will be The Bay Circuit Trail and Greenway (BCT) along with a brief overview of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC). The AMC was established in 1876, and is the oldest and largest conservation, recreation, and outdoor education organization in the country.

The AMC is playing a leadership role in the **BAY CIRCUIT ALLIANCE** to improve and complete the BCT. With over four million people in the greater Boston metropolitan area, the BCT is an incredible public outdoor activities resource and destination, but for many area residents it remains a hidden gem. This 230 mile trail arcs around Boston from Duxbury to Newburyport, and offers close-to-home outdoor recreation. Learn about AMC's work with communities, volunteers, and BCT enthusiasts to build awareness of the trail and to take the BCT to the next level.



Kristen Sykes is Director of Conservation Strategies at the Appalachian Mountain Club and Director of Operations for the Bay Circuit Alliance. She has been at AMC for over 10 years working to advance land protection and trails in the Mid-Atlantic and the Northeast. She has worked on conservation and recreation issues for 20 years and has a M.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana. She is also a Senior Fellow with the Environmental Leadership Program.



Letter from the President:

MAKING LEMONADE OUT OF 108.6" OF SNOW



Along with everyone else in town, this winter the Weston Forest & Trail Association (WFTA) trustees braved the harrowing driving conditions and emptied cupboards to reassign pots and pans to far flung dripping corners of our homes, but we have also had fun promoting exploration of our snow-covered trails network. This winter it provided ideal conditions for cross country skiing and snowshoeing. If you would like to experience some of our favorite trails, members and non-members alike are invited to join us on the first Sunday of every month for a trail walk (or ski/snowshoe) from October to May. Details can be found on our website (www.westonforesttrail.org). Please join us!

WFTA is dedicated to enhancing enjoyment of Weston's unique open space, trails and scenic outlooks. The association was formed in 1955 by a group of forward-looking citizens who were concerned about maintaining the rural character of our town in the face of tremendous post-WWII development pressures. This makes us one of the oldest organizations in Massachusetts devoted to the preservation and conservation of open land for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Our merger with the Weston Land Trust in 2011 enhanced that mission and our ability to protect and promote the sustainable use of our town's treasured open space resources. Today, Weston has about 2000 acres of protected conservation land laced with 90 miles of trails that WFTA manages for the enjoyment and use of the public.

The WFTA trustees and I welcome your involvement in preserving this very special and unique asset. Please consider becoming a member if you are not already, (you can do so easily at www.westonforesttrail.org) and take advantage of the longer and warmer days to explore the bucolic corners of your town! To help you explore on your own, trail maps are available at Town Hall from the Conservation Commission office for \$10.

Meg Kelly, President



The wonderful world of walks in the Weston woods

Our Trustees enjoy using the many trails on Town conservation land, and we asked a few of them to tell about their favorites. Here are three of the best:

Doublet Hill

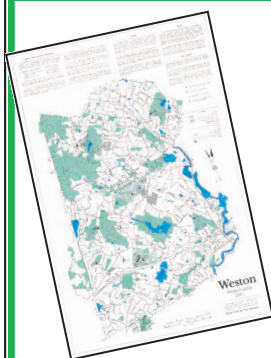
Did you know the highest point in Weston is on Doublet Hill? It doesn't seem like much of a hill, but when you climb it from bottom to top it is a significant climb. Of course, the reason for the name Doublet is there are two of these high spots. One is on private property which is about 360 feet above sea level. The house can be spotted when you are exiting the Mass Turnpike onto Route 30 toward Weston. The other is not far away, marked by a fading white X on the large rock face you walk across.



Doublet Hill conservation lands have an area of about 35 acres, separated from Elliston Woods and Hemlock Pond by the Weston Aqueduct. The long level aqueduct is an easy, sunny path from the beginning of Loring Rd. across Newton Street, all the way to the Ash Street Reservoir.

I enjoy the climb up almost to the top where there is a beautiful view of Boston. On a clear day you can see the Zakim (Bunker Hill) Bridge, as well as a panoramic view of the Boston skyline. Continuing north, the trail gradually turns downward to the top of Doublet Hill Road (where there is parking for cars), then back down through pine woods, stone walls and finally to where I started on Meadowbrook Rd. It's such a peaceful woods so close to civilization, where I can look out at the busy world going by.

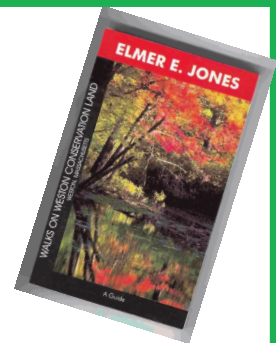
— Mary Ann Pappanikou



Trail Maps and Elmer's Book

Don't miss the new Tricentennial edition of the **Weston Forest and Trail Association trail map!** Frame it or fold it up and put it in your backpack. Either way, it shows Weston's 2000 acres of conservation land and 90 miles of trails. And Elmer Jones' *Walks on Weston Conservation Land*

is the ideal companion to the town's trail map. Lovingly compiled and written by a noted naturalist and former WFTA trustee, this primer on our trails and special places is not to be missed! Both the map and the book are available at Town Hall (upstairs) for \$10 and \$15, respectively.



Sears Land and Cat Rock

Of the 90 miles of trails in Weston, these two walks are my favorites. The first, Sears land, is a quiet, solitary walk. The other, Cat Rock area, is a fun place to meet people and their dogs.



The Sears land and abutting Forbes conservation land off of Church Street make for a quiet, pretty walk through woods and meadows. I often have the entire trail to myself. Three Mile Brook is a lovely place to stop and enjoy the stream tumbling through. The new Lee's Bridge in memory of our longtime Trustee Lee Cohen is a perfect place to linger on a warm afternoon. In the fall, the sugar maples shine a golden glow along the trail. There is plenty of history here with old mill foundations still showing.

If you follow the trail out to the pond and look across you will find nesting sites for Great Blue Herons. The pond has lots of wildlife and is a good place for bird watching.

My other favorite hike is Cat Rock and "80 Acres", which comprises 130 acres to explore. This is where I go to find what I like to call a "dog party". This is a mellow crowd of people and their dogs enjoying the trails, with the four-footed ones swimming in Hobbs Pond and chasing balls and each other in the big field nearby. People are generally good about picking up after their dogs which is important (and required) since many come to enjoy these trails.



Elmer Jones, in his book "Walks on Weston Conservation Land", describes both areas as having a variety of habitats that provide food and shelter for wildlife. Both are good areas for bird watching, particularly during migration.

See you out there!

Meg Steiner



Mount Lemuel

From Doublet Hill, you can see Newton, Boston, the State House, and the Zakim bridge. From Cat Rock, you can see Route 128 and Waltham. From Sunset Corner, look west to Nobscot Hill, Wayland and Sudbury and sometimes Mount Wachusett.

From Mount Lemuel? Well – when I moved to Weston four decades ago, there was a view of Blue Hill. Now there is a view of an unvisited dell, the chimney of a fallen cabin, and trees, barriers of trees, where I used to see Blue Hill. But I walk there often.



Mount Lemuel is the apex of Pine Street Forest: 21 acres of woodland that lies roughly across the street from my house. Not as stunning as Weston's other high points, it is (surprisingly!) higher than Cat Rock and about as tall as the east summit of Doublet Hill. (Sadly, the west summit, the highest point in town, is privately owned.) The bedrock summit of Pine Street Forest is named for Lemuel Smith, a farmer who once owed this tract.



Despite its modest size and limited views, this little forest contains enough trails to occupy me for an hour. If you tire of dog packs encountered at Cat Rock, try Mount Lemuel. I see dog tracks and boot tracks, deer and scarlet tanagers. But I seldom see a person or a dog.

– Marty Carlock



MEMBERSHIP

Since 1955, the Weston Forest and Trail Association has been dedicated to preserving and enhancing the more than 2000 acres of Weston conservation land for the enjoyment of everyone in town. With over 400 families as members, we are one of the largest organizations in town, but we still need your help to do our work!

10 GOOD REASONS

We're in your backyard. If you live in Weston, conservation lands crisscrossed with trails are within walking distance of your home.

We work for you. The Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc., is a non-profit organization founded to maintain open space and promote the development of all of Weston's conservation land with trails for walking, horseback riding, and cross-country skiing. We're dedicated to promoting the enjoyment and appreciation of the land by the residents of Weston.

We're trailblazers. Weston has 90 miles of trails, open to hikers, skiers, and horses, but not to motorized vehicles. Our trail map (\$10) can be purchased at Town Hall.

We offer free guided walks. We meet in a different part of town and explore different trails the first Sunday of each month from October through May. All the walks start at 2:00 p.m., and we have socializing and snacks afterwards. There is always a notice of the meeting place in the Town Crier on the Thursday before each Sunday walk and on our website at www.westonforesttrail.org



We prevent you from tripping. We maintain the trails on all of the Town's conservation land. This means that we make sure blowdown trees and debris from snow and ice storms are cleared away to maintain safe access. Your dues help pay for this work.



We plan ahead. The Weston Forest and Trail

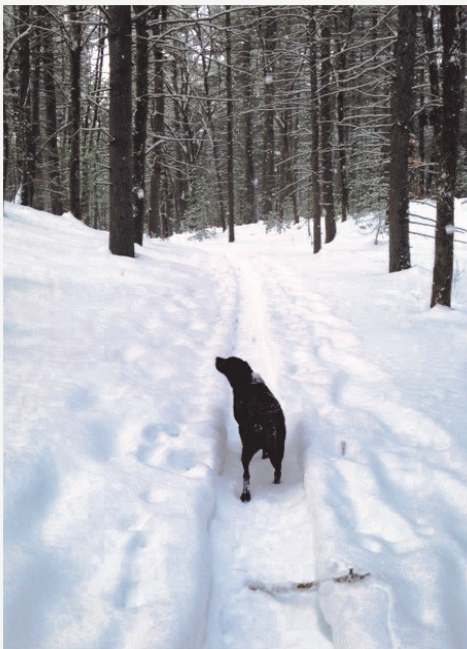
Association was formed in 1955 by twelve founders who understood that the sprawl of suburban development after World War II would put immense pressures on semi-rural towns like Weston. The heart of the organization for many years was the late Dr. William Elliston, physician, gentleman farmer and amateur naturalist. A part of the conservation land (Elliston Woods) is named in his honor.

We keep you connected. We obtain easements -

access ways across private property to link up trails and tracts of conservation land. We keep track of where they are, and enforce them if needed. If subsequent owners block them in any way, we get them opened again.

We enhance your property's value. We see ourselves as protecting and enhancing the character of the town by maintaining and augmenting the beauties of its open land. This benefits us all.

We need your support. We need membership income to cover operating expenses and to insure Weston's special and unique asset is preserved for future generations. Your membership is critical to help us pursue this important mission.



We know you care. So, please become—or stay—a member of the Weston Forest and Trail Association (as a non-profit organization, your contribution is fully tax deductible).

Go to www.westonforesttrail.org and click on “Membership”



Donations and Acquisitions in 2014

Land or easements acquired during 2014 by the Town and WF&TA for conservation purposes:

Received by WF&TA: two trail easements from The Santangelo Love Lane Realty Trust on the property at 84 Love Lane. One of the easements allows a connection with the trails located on the north side of Love Lane with Town owned Conservation Land on the south side of Love Lane. The other easement is a 1.29 acre area that has allowed for a new trail, which has been constructed recently, that avoids a very wet section of the preexisting trail that parallels Buckskin Drive.

Received by the Town of Weston Conservation Commission by a vote at the May 2014 Annual Town Meeting: a 2.8 acre parcel of land located east of Westerly Road upon which three preexisting trails are located. This parcel of land had been taken by the Town for nonpayment of real estate taxes. This 2.8 acre parcel is bounded on the east by Town Conservation Land and on the south and west by Weston Forest and Trail Association trail easements.



Weston Forest & Trail Association, Inc. Operations – 2014

Cash & Cash Equivalents 1/1/14		147,524.18
<u>Receipts:</u>		
Dues	\$ 21,562.40	
Endowment Fund	61,676.85	
Map sales	1,232.90	
Book sales	299.00	
Interest	2,399.30	
Operations Fund	4,900.00	
Weston Reservoir Fund	<u>4,035.00</u>	
Total Receipts		96,105.45
<u>Disbursements:</u>		
Office Expense	\$ 10,522.78	
Insurance Expense	2,427.36	
Accounting	1,685.00	
<u>Maintenance:</u>		
Contract Services	25,418.50	
Other	<u>9,675.02</u>	
	35,093.52	
Weston Reservoir Fund	3,403.80	
Map Expense	897.00	
Promotion	1,165.15	
Surveying	3,027.00	
Endowment Fund	30,000.00	
Total Disbursements		<u>(88,221.61)</u>
<u>Cash and Cash Equivalents 12/31/14</u>		
Checking Account	\$ 31,730.12	
Vanguard Short Term Corp. Bond Fund	<u>123,677.90</u>	
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents		<u>\$155,408.02*</u>
*This total includes Restricted Funds as follows:		
<u>Restricted:</u>		
Weston Reservoir Fund	\$ 6,206.04	
Cohen Fund	47,736.41	
Weston Land Trust Fund	<u>19,721.84</u>	
Total Restricted		<u>\$73,664.29</u>



**Weston Forest & Trail Association, Inc.
Endowment Fund - 2014**

Balance 1/1/14	\$1,377,750.46
Income and Capital Gains	121,046.28
Year end Contribution	<u>30,000.00</u>
Balance 12/31/14	<u>\$1,528,796.74</u>

The average market value of the Fund in 2014 was \$1,438,273.60. The Cost of Living Index for all Urban Consumers in the Boston Area increased 1.6% during the year ended November 2014. 1.6% of \$1,438,273.60 is \$23,012.38. Real income from the Fund in 2014 is calculated as follows:

Income and Capital Gains	\$ 121,046.28
Less inflation adjustment	<u>(23,012.38)</u>
Real Income or (loss)	<u>\$ 98,033.90</u>

\$98,033.90 is 6.82% of the average market value of the Fund in 2014. The average real rate of return on the Fund starting in 1989 is 3.79%.

During the year we received contributions to the Endowment Fund in the amount of \$61,676.85 of which \$30,000.00 was added to the Endowment Fund and \$31,676.85 has been retained as operating funds.



Join the Association...make us stronger than ever

- ☐ Individual membership \$ 25
☐ Family membership \$ 50
☒ **Supporting membership*** **\$ 100 *** (recommended)
☐ Leadership Support \$ 1000*
☐ Life Membership** \$ 2,000 or more**
☐ Other amount _____

Note that all membership contributions are fully tax-deductible

* If you wish to receive the exclusive, unique WF&T coffee mug, please check here ☐

** Life Members will receive a framed certificate of appreciation, unless checked here ☐

Also, please send me ☐ copies of **“Walks on Weston Conservation Land”** by Elmer E. Jones @ \$ 15.00 each, plus \$ 2.00 for postage and handling. This book and the map of the Weston Trail System (\$ 10.00) are available at the Conservation Commission office in the Town Hall.

All these items can also be purchased on the WF&TA website at www.westonforesttrail.org

CHECK HERE (☐) TO GET IT ALL:

Supporting Membership + Trail Map + Trail Guide + coffee mug for \$ 125.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please make checks payable to the **Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc.** and mail, together with the above form, to Mr. George Bates, Treasurer, 266 Glen Road, Weston, MA 02493. **You can also join at www.westonforesttrail.org**

WFTA Board of Trustees

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Paul Arkema	Harold Hestnes	Meg Steiner, Secretary
George Bates, Treasurer	Meg Kelly, President	Bill Stevenson, Vice President
Roger Burke	John McDonald, Vice President	Jenna Vettel
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Weston Forest and Trail Association, Inc.
The Weston Land Trust
266 Glen Road, Weston, MA 02493

Non-Profit
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Come to the Annual Meeting
May 3, 2015
4-6 p.m.
Weston Scout House on School Street

