



Improvement Projects

Two Eagle Scout projects have recently been completed at the Acton Arboretum by members of Troop 1.

James Kinicki installed a new post and rail fence surrounding the farm pond.

The materials were chosen to match fencing installed around the upper farm pond, privately owned by neighbors at 433 Main St.

The sturdy fencing provides enhanced safety to viewers of the pond. A new section was built along the pond's edge paralleling the wildflower trail boardwalk. The fence protects the viewer from slipping along the steep embankment. He also built a glass-enclosed case



Scout James Kinicki installed new fencing surrounding the farm pond last fall.



A new trail was constructed by Scout Sahil Gandhi, defining the rhododendron collection, which is located to the right of the trail.

to be used for the display of educational materials.

Sahil Gandhi was busy working at the Arboretum on the construction of a new trail around the rhododendron collection.

Surrounding brush has been cleared to define a lovely spot anchored by a larch and two metasequoias (Dawn redwoods). A variety of deciduous and evergreen rhododendrons are grouped to the right of the trail.

Sahil also cleared and planted additional shrubs on the left side of the trail.

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Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum is scheduled for Thursday, June 26, 2003. It will begin at 6:30 pm at the Acton Arboretum at the Reading Circle. An informal walk will follow the business meeting. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will be moved to Acton Town Hall and the meeting room will be posted in the lobby. Members of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum are invited to attend.

Green Invaders — True Threat or Baseless Concern?

Plants and animals have traveled from one part of the world to another for as long as man has moved from one place to another across the globe. Many times movements of new plant species brought great benefits — new food crops or more productive seed stock for those who cultivated the land for food.

As early as the mid-1700s, those knowledgeable about plants recognized that over time some plants introduced from other parts of the world grew rampantly, displacing native plants in their natural habitats. “Many of today’s most seriously invasive, non-native species were established in this country as [garden] ornamentals by the beginning of the 20th century.” Concern regarding preservation of native plants and the threat to native

vegetation caused by invasive, non-native species was first expressed in a 1938 paper by M.L. Fernald, a Harvard botanist most knowledgeable about New England’s native plants. Among the aggressive plants he discussed in that paper, purple loosestrife, Japanese honeysuckle, and flowering rush are all considered highly invasive today.

“Until the mid-1980s, little official concern was shown for non-native plants. By that time, the numbers of individuals of some invasive species had reached proportions that could no longer be ignored. [The words] ‘invasives,’ ‘exotics,’ ‘aliens’ became part of the conservation lexicon... Each year more and more people become concerned about the problem of invasive species, and people are begin-

ning to understand more about the negative roles these invasive species play in natural plant communities.”

Read elsewhere in this newsletter about how a highly invasive species such as Norway maple crowds out more beneficial native species and learn about a plan to reduce the Norway maple population in one area of the Acton Arboretum to allow re-growth of native trees and understory.

^{1,2} Mehrhoff, Leslie J. “Legacy of Concern,” *Conservation Notes of the New England Wildflower Society*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1998, p.7.

Recently Completed at the Acton Arboretum

- ◆ Trail reconstruction funded by the Town of Acton
- ◆ Installation of farm pond fencing by an Eagle Scout and funded in part by the Friends of the Acton Arboretum
- ◆ Creation of trail in Rhododendron Garden by an Eagle Scout
- ◆ New picnic tables funded by the Town of Acton
- ◆ Bulbs planted by various volunteers
- ◆ Gardens mulched by ABRHS Seniors
- ◆ Brush-cutting to maintain open spaces

Upcoming Projects at the Acton Arboretum

- ◆ Additional trail reconstruction funded by the Friends of the Acton Arboretum
- ◆ Installation of plant identification labels on various specimen trees and shrubs, funded by the Friends of the Acton Arboretum
- ◆ Addition of trail blazes using the system established by the Acton Land Stewardship Committee
- ◆ Removal of invasive species from a small wooded plot in the northeast corner of the property
- ◆ Development of self-guided tours of the Acton Arboretum

President's Message

The Acton Arboretum is a delightful place to visit once more this spring. Volunteers have been working hard to freshen up their gardens and to clean up the Arboretum after the long winter we endured. If you haven't been at the Arboretum recently, it's a perfect time to visit and enjoy its beauty.

Notice the new trail and shrubs near the rhododendron garden being installed by an Eagle Scout candidate. Walk by the farm pond and notice the newly installed safety fencing, added on the south side of the trail by another Eagle Scout candidate and on the north side by the private landowner. Look for new picnic tables on the lawn that we added last summer so that more people could picnic more comfortably. Notice the daylily garden recently mulched by ABRHS seniors. Check out the hosta, herb, and butterfly gardens as they are cleaned and prepared for the summer season. Look for the work being done in the northeast part of the Arboretum to eradicate invasive plant species. Listen to the stream going under the boardwalk on the Wildflower loop trail. Test your map-reading skills and find an area in the Arboretum you have yet to explore!

A number of memorial donations have been received by the Friends in honor of Franklin Charter, Acton's tree warden for 29 years, who passed away on April 5, 2003. The Board of Directors will confer on an appropriate way to use these funds to honor the memory of this longtime member of our community. An American Beech, measuring 2.5—3 inch caliper, has been planted in Franklin's memory in the open meadow near the Wood Lane entrance to the Arboretum.

Join us for the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc. on Thursday June 26, 2003, at the Reading Circle in the Arboretum at 6:30 P.M. A two-part business meeting will follow a short social. After the meeting, we will take a short walk through the Arboretum to admire its beauty and to discuss upcoming projects. Please join us.

It is membership renewal time and a form has been provided below for you to submit your annual dues.

Cathy Hatfield, President

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Type of Membership **___ New**
___ \$15 Individual **___ Renewal**
___ \$25 Family
___ \$40 Supporting
___ \$100 Corporate

Commemorative gifts, honoring marriages, births, deaths or other special dates are gratefully accepted and recorded in a commemorative listing.

A courtesy envelope has been provided, otherwise please mail to:

**Friends of the Acton Arboretum
P.O. Box 2607
Acton, MA 01720**

Membership Benefits for Friends

- **A Spring and Fall newsletter**
- **Seasonal walks, talks and workshops**
- **Civic pride in a special gift of land used for enjoyment and education**

The Acton Arboretum is town conservation land managed by the Acton Natural Resources Department and the Acton Conservation Commission.

Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc.
P.O. Box 2607, Acton, MA 01720

Board of Directors

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Our Mission

To raise and donate funds, materials and services to the Town of Acton for the development and maintenance of the Acton Arboretum; to educate the community about the unique environmental, horticultural, geological and historical qualities of the Arboretum property, about the process of wetland and field succession, and, in an era of decreasing public funds and natural resources, about conservation, effective horticultural practice; and generally to do all the things permitted to non-profit organizations under the provisions of Chapter 180 of the General Laws of Massachusetts and Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1984, as from time to time they are amended.

Arboretum Notes produced by Cathy Fochman and Jean Yatteau

