



Update

F.O.P. Newsletter, Summer 2008, V. 22, No. 2

Save The Date: Saturday, September 20, 2008 – Annual Picnic

From the President

Greetings and Happy Spring.

The snow is gone, the rains have finally come and, followed by warm sunny days, a burst of growth is spreading across the landscape. Of course we know that the bugs soon will follow (and are already making themselves known)! It is still manageable outside, trekking through the woods, but by the time you receive this newsletter, the black flies, at least, should be in full swing. A couple of thoughts to help you enjoy the outdoors: Council member and V.P. Gary Montgomery recommends pinning a fabric softener sheet to the back collar of your shirt and/or hat. I have found “designated” clothing for bug juice application to be effective. In addition to keeping the product from coming into direct contact with the skin, and reducing the need for frequent applications, it keeps the ingredients from making their way into places like Kilburn Pond. If the chemicals from sunscreens are being found in our oceans, you can bet these same products are following us into our lakes, ponds and rivers. It won't eliminate migration into the water stream but will certainly help.

My favorite way to avoid the bugs is to get out there when it rains. The woods are a beautiful place to be on a rainy day – the sounds, the smells, the richness of the colors. On a chilly day, proper clothing will address your needs and on a warmer day, the rain can be a welcome companion. Speaking of rain in the woods, there have been problems with wheeled travel in the park. Whether motorized or mountain bikes, wheels on wet, muddy trails speed up erosion.

At this time of year there is a lot of activity in the world of amphibians which can be found in the wet areas along trails, some of which harbor vernal pools, an essential habitat for many of these little creatures. So please use discretion and, please, stay on designated trails. And speaking of trails, please “curb” your dogs, either training them to relieve themselves off-trail or removing feces from the trail. All those sticks come in handy for such a task! We want to keep our dogs welcome visitors in the Park.

Second Saturday work days are temporarily on hold as we coordinate our projects with State protocol. We are in the process of putting up message boards with FOP mailboxes that are located at trailheads in order to do a better job of relaying information to folks regarding activities and ongoing projects related to the FOP. We are also in the early stages of creating a website to provide yet another avenue of information. We will keep you posted (literally!). The Technical Team, in order to assist the Steering Committee and the State with a management plan for the Park, is continuing to gather information about the natural resources of the Park as well as investigate GPS locating of the trails. The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20th. Call me for location. These meetings are the venue for public participation, so please put it on your calendar if you can!

Please feel free to come to Council meetings (first Tuesday of the month at the Visitor Center, 7:00 p.m.), get involved on workdays on trails or historical documentation or simply enjoy this beautiful Park we are so fortunate to have here in our communities. After all, the days are getting longer so there's more time to get outside!

Well, it's time to head to the Park and get some fresh air and exercise, perhaps I will see you there! Here's to the pleasure of each season and the gifts they bring as we journey through the Park. Please feel free to contact me and enjoy the Park! Cheers.

Kathy Thatcher (603-363-4482)

FOP Newsletter Summer 2008

Around the Park

Spring in Pisgah

In the earliest part of spring, a small group of friends hiked in Pisgah not knowing what to expect. As we started down from the Visitor Center on Old Chesterfield Road we found it clear and relatively dry because of the snow plowing done by the logging crew. The sun had succeeded in warming the nearby area. We heard a lone peeper in the swamp next to the Doolittle Farm site. We followed the tracks of a young moose as it ambled out of the old beaver pond near the Jedidiah Eaton's barn site and down the road.

Winter held on tight in the shaded evergreen forest whose canopy covers Broad Brook Road. The hard-packed road was still covered by solid ice except in selected spots that collapsed under our weight. Bubbles of mud or melted snow bubbled up between cracks in the icy hardness. Snow lingered in crevasses and in the dark corners of the forest. The sun showered its strength through any breaks and its warmth created an eerie fog that flowed and ebbed in the places where the heat had not yet reached. It swirled with the breezes and air currents created by the shifting temperatures. This snow-eating fog nibbled on any remaining snow that it encountered. The sun's rays seemed to be spotlighting green treasures that were emerging from under snow that had hidden them from our view for months.

A beaver had used the canal behind the Boarding House site near the Dickenson Barn site to venture off the beaten track to find tender young trees after a long winter. Many trees were fully cut down, others just nibbled. The tree holding the sign for the canal was one such snack.

The Doolittle Trail also was still covered with its winter coating of snow and ice. The brook was swirling and rushing swollen with the winter snowmelt. A male hairy woodpecker was announcing his availability by pounding out a greeting to anyone who would listen on the trees above our heads. A female was attracted to his invitation and they wove a path through the limbs chasing each other in pure delight.

We all may forget that each section of a season holds special delights for those who venture into Pisgah. It is possible to nourish our souls on the forgotten beauty of late winter and early spring. Even mud season is beautiful!

Some photos from this ramble are on page 4.

Matt Edson, Ginny Knapp and Laurel Powell

Midweek Work Days

Work done by the Volunteers on the Midweek Work Crew is just one illustration of the assistance that the FOP has provided in the past for Pisgah Park and is committed to do in the future. Your membership supports these efforts.

Our Volunteers on the Midweek Work Crew provide assistance to the Staff on one Wednesday a month from April to November and did so again in 2007. The Crew normally is not active during the winter. At this time, owing to a recently communicated State concern about protocols for working in the Park, we are unable to perform our usual activities. The Midweek Work Crew hopes to be able to resume activities soon.

Meanwhile, FOP, although having done so for over 20 years, now is not permitted to assist the Park staff with needed maintenance without significant paperwork impediments. If you have questions and concerns about such policies, why not contact the appropriate State departments and give voice to your concerns.

Matt Donachie

Citizens Needed

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources' State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program (SCRAP) will be conducting historical surveys and inventories of the historic Broad Brook Community with Edna Feighner on these dates: July 28-Aug. 1 and August 4-8, 2008

They will need citizen volunteers to assist with the work. There are registration forms available at the State website

www.nh.gov/nhdhr/histarch.htm

You also may contact Laurel Powell at 336-7479 (email cpowellbks@cheshire.net) or Sarah Bockus, Department of Environmental Studies, Antioch University New England (sbockus@antiochne.edu)

Laurel Powell

Historical "Workday" at the Visitor Center

Spring Cleaning will start on Wednesday, May 21st from 4:00 to 6:30 pm. and continue on Sunday, May 25th from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Our workdays will focus on the beautiful barn at the Visitor's Center. It's time to open and clean up the barn! There are many pictures of the homesteads and logging and details about tools and machines that were used in houses, farms and the sawmills formerly situated in the Park. Come and join in the many projects! Contact Laurel Powell at 336-7479 or email cpowellbks@cheshire.net for more information.

Farming with the Doolittles

Reported by Laurel Powell

On April 27, 2008, Fred Doolittle of Winchester, his wife, Janet and daughter and son-in-law JoAnn and Tony Perlowski entertained a dozen, history buffs. They willingly shared stories and family treasures to help us all appreciate life in the early 20th century in what is now called Pisgah State Park.

Many pictures document and preserve the Doolittle story (see page 4), as Fred and his grandmother, Abbey, were both avid photographers who developed their own film. Forrest - Fred's father, Edwin, his grandfather, and Fred's uncle George kept detailed records starting in 1902 accounting for each sale and purchase made and payment for a day's work. This valuable document tells the price of each barrel of cider, gallon of maple syrup, or pound of ground corn. Receipts show the purchase in 1908 of a 5 horsepower gasoline engine with steel trucks, a circular saw frame, and a grinder for a grand total of \$380 and later in 1918, a wood splitter for \$73.50 from the Abenague Machine Works in Westminster Station, VT. There is a sales slip from 1914 for clothing bought by Forrest in Greenfield MA at C. S. Barrett Custom Clothing, Shirts, Underwear and Butcher's Clothing. Maps and deeds of the Doolittle' properties are other pieces of the puzzle. Shall we travel back one hundred years?

Are these dry, sunny days making you thirsty? Do you have a craving for a cool, healthy, refreshing drink? Well, all you need is a lively imagination and a desire to revisit the year 1908, a time full of hard and honest work.

You'll need to hook up your horse and wagon and head on up from town to Doolittle's Farm on Old Chesterfield Road in Winchester. The apple trees in the orchard are heavy with ripe, juicy apples that have been cared for by Edwin Doolittle (1847-1926), Abbey Tyler Doolittle (1853-1921), and their six children: Forrest 1888, Flora 1886, George 1883, Emma 1876, Jenny 1872, and Fred 1870. Edwin C. Doolittle lived on the premises from 1884 until his death in 1926.

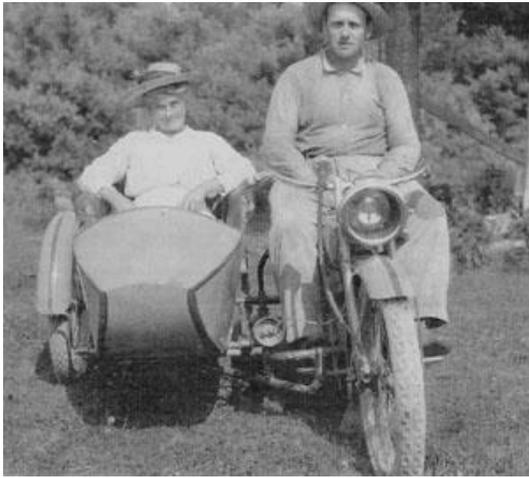
Maintaining this large orchard that was on the west side of Old Chesterfield Road was a year-round job. Each season demanded specialized work. The labor involved ridding the land of rocks after the winter's frost. In the spring, the family trimmed around the apple trees, then they took care of the pruning and spraying of all the trees. In-between the rows of trees, it was plowed with the horse or oxen to fertilize the trees and then corn was planted. In the fall, when it was time to harvest the fruit trees, a few hands were hired but friends and family picked most of the apples.

Forrest Doolittle continued his father's work. With his growing family of eight children, there were enough hands to pick the Baldwin, Macintosh, Delicious and Northern Spy apples. This large brood helped to manage the large farm consisting of 148 acres of farmland that was initially leased from Dickenson Lumber Company then bought in 1948 by Forrest. A smaller 42-acre parcel of land down at the intersection of Jon Hill Road and Old Chesterfield Road was bought from Dickenson's Real Estate in 1955 for \$250.00.

Our narrator, Fred Doolittle, the next to the oldest son of Forrest recalls, "We could not stay after school because we had to do chores: take care of crops, take in the hay, pick apples to store in the root cellar or pick up drops to make into cider. We had a gas engine for the cider press, for sawing up lumber and grinding corn." The receipt book details sales of jugs, casks or barrels of cider for 2 cents a gallon in 1909. The price of cider varied from year to year ranging from three cents a gallon to 10 cents. Looks like many townfolk were impressed with the Doolittle cider - Fred. L. DeTour, P. Willard, C. Putnam, and Albert Clark. Let's not forget the beautiful peaches, pears and cherries that have been collected and preserved or canned by Elsie, Fred's mother.

So, the next time you saunter by the Doolittle Homestead starting a scant 100 yards past the Visitor Center and continuing down the road, pause to listen. You still may hear the laughter of the Doolittle family enjoying a Sunday afternoon picnic of fried chicken, pickles, baked beans sweetened with maple syrup, blueberry pie and apple cider! Each part of this meal was lovingly tended to, collected, grown, or produced on the Doolittle farm and surrounding lands. Check out the only Russet apple tree on the whole farm near the site of the house. In the fall of 2007, the tree was still bearing fruit. Think of the stories this tree could tell.

The Friends of Pisgah will continue to collect stories, preserve them and share them with generations to come. If you are willing to share your memories & treasures, please contact Laurel Powell at 336-7479 or email cpowellbks@cheshire.net.



Flora & Brother Forrest Doolittle Probably 1920s



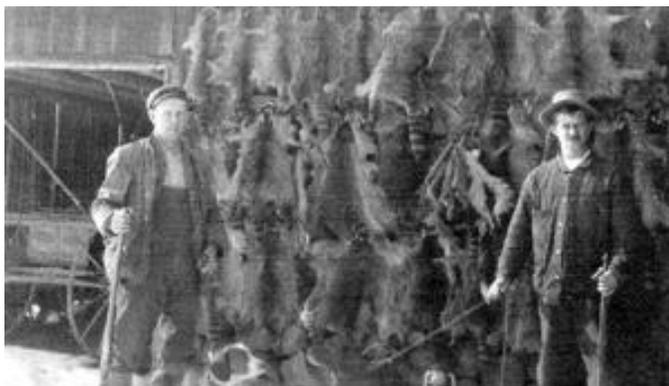
Laurel Powell at Old Cellar Hole Broad Brook Rd.
Note snow still on ground.



Doolittle Dogs at Bottom of Old Chesterfield Rd North of Present Visitor Center. Note stone walls both sides of road and Cider Mill in right background



Matt Edson Pointing to "Wildlife Apartment" in Snag



George Doolittle (l) & Unknown Person (r) with Raccoon Skins On the Doolittle Farm, Early 20th Century. Note old wagon in back left, dog at George's feet.

(Pictures in this column courtesy of the Doolittles)



Water Diverter Channel for Canal c.a. 1850.
Note water in front and snow in far back.

(Pictures in this column courtesy of Ginny Knapp)

Annual FOP Picnic

The Annual FOP Picnic will be held at the Visitors' Center on Old Chesterfield Rd in Winchester on Saturday, September 20, 2008. This event is always well attended and enjoyed by all who come. Plan to attend this year, rain or shine, and enjoy some fellowship with other FOP members. The starting time is 11:00 a.m. Please bring a dish to share. Burgers and dogs, beverages and paper goods will be supplied. Interested in volunteering? We can use the help. Call 363-8420. Thank you. See you at the picnic.

Gary Montgomery

Web Site Planned – Your Input and Help Needed

The FOP Planning and Strategy Committee has diligently worked over the early winter months finding creative ways to increase membership and use of the Park. It has become evident that prospective visitors often rely on the Internet as a way to get information about the Park. We are working to create an FOP website. FOP member Bill Dow has produced a demonstration site and the Council is reviewing the next steps in the process. Please contact Laurel Powell at 336-7479 or email cpowellbks@cheshire.net. If you would like to help in this venture.

Membership

If you have renewed your membership since January, a membership card is attached to this newsletter. If you did not receive a 2008 card and have paid, contact the Treasurer. Otherwise, you should complete the application below and send it along with your check to the Treasurer at the address shown. We have a new membership fee structure as of 2008. A student category has been added. There is a single member (non-student) category and the one-address category is now family - covering all people at a single address. Group or club membership also is available. An N on your label indicates you have not renewed but we think you intended to do so and thus are sending this complimentary copy to you. We would appreciate your prompt remittance of 2008 dues.

Join, Renew, or Give a Gift Membership in FOP

Please use the form below and send to the address shown if you wish to join FOP, renew membership or give one as a gift . 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 student/single/family dues provides for printing and mailing the Update and the Annual Picnic notice, as well as for the fine food at the picnic. Dues are as follows: student - \$10, single - \$15, family - \$20, group (club) - \$30.

Cut here -----

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

Date: _____	Category (Check applicable boxes)	Willing to Assist On Committee for:
Member Name(s): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Picnic
Address: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Programs
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Gift	<input type="checkbox"/> History/Archaeology
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student (\$10.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership
Phone: _____ (Home)	<input type="checkbox"/> Single (\$15.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Articles
Phone: _____ (Work)	<input type="checkbox"/> Family (\$20.00/address)	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning & Strategy
E-mail: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Group (\$30.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising
	<input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations/Park Info
		<input type="checkbox"/> Rails to Trails Advisory
<i>Questions? Call Kathy Thatcher (603/ 363-4482) or Matt Donachie (603/239-6590)</i>	Name/Address of gift giver	<input type="checkbox"/> Trails/Maintenance
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Wantastiquet-Monadnock
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenway
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Send form and check to:

Friends of Pisgah, Inc.

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**Friends of Pisgah, Inc.
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First Class Mail

Message from the Dept. of Resources and Economic Development (DRED)

To the Friends of Pisgah:

It is a wonderful time of the year when we see flowers start to bloom and hardwood trees get their leaves. DRED manages over 200,000 acres of State owned land, and every acre is beautiful. We manage the land in cooperation with other agencies, such as Fish & Game, Environmental Services and the Division of Cultural Resources. Pisgah holds many historic sites, so Cultural Resources has a strong interest in our activities on the property.

DRED has a process on any work done on State property. We need this process to prevent the inadvertent misuse of historic sites by people who are well intentioned, but could negatively impact the resource. Our review process is meant to guide the process to prevent such occurrences.

Any work on DRED lands is subject to review. Sometimes users of our Trail system feel as if it is okay to make significant trail relocations without State review. Again, our responsibility is to insure that all State agencies have a chance to review proposed activities. State agencies have laws to follow and taking a comprehensive view of planned activities at Pisgah as we are now doing helps all of us to preserve the historical treasures and to preserve the property for future generations.

I can't thank the FOP enough for your generous contributions over the years. We would be at a loss without your help. I hope you will understand that setting up a process for future work at the Park is intended to insure we are all moving in the same direction.

Again, thank you very much for your help. I hope to see you this summer!

George Bald, Commissioner