

Arboretum Notes



FRIENDS
of the ACTON
ARBORETUM

May 2013 | Volume V | Issue I

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 501c3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1984, as from time to time they are amended.

BECOME A MEMBER

FRIENDS of the ACTON
ARBORETUM, INC.

P.O. Box 2607
Acton, MA 01720

Boardwalk Revitalization

PHOTO right: The Wildflower Boardwalk is scheduled for replacement, thanks to Community Preservation Act funding approved this spring.



PHOTO above: Caution tape protects a painted turtle nest near the Lilac Collection, Fragrance Garden.

Some Arboretum hardscape is nearing the end of its useful life. Recently, Eagle Scout candidate Jonathan Che replaced the rotted split rail fence adjacent to the frog pond.

Using Community Preservation Act funds that were awarded to the Town of Acton, a local contractor will replace the nearby Wildflower Garden boardwalk late summer or early fall this year when many wildflowers are dormant. The Friends have also committed to help demolish the existing boardwalk and to donate \$5,000 towards the project.

The Friends are now accepting donations toward the refurbishment of the Bog Boardwalk. A check written to "Friends of the Acton Arboretum", memo "Boardwalk" will be set aside for this necessary and worthy project.

The present 220-foot long Bog Boardwalk was constructed by two Eagle Scouts in 1989. The elevated deck crosses the southwest corner of the bog, allowing for a superb opportunity to observe this unique wetlands landscape. For many years, school groups from nearby Conant Elementary School and others include study of this quaking bog in their curriculum. Details about the bog environment, including the pictured Northern Pitcher plant, may be found on the Acton Arboretum website www.actonarboratum.org under the heading "The Land—Wildlife."



PHOTO: Northern Pitcher plant, Sarracenia purpurea

Volunteers Hard at Work

"Adopt a Garden" Program, Landscape Improvements, Mary's Brook Dedication, Expansion of Arboretum Property at Wood Lane

Much work has been done at the Arboretum this past year. Volunteers have been busily renovating numerous areas and adding to various gardens. The results are impressive and as you walk through the property this spring and summer, note the improvements.

Adopt a Garden or a Trail

Wanted: Volunteers to Adopt Arboretum Garden Areas and Trails



We are looking for VOLUNTEERS to help and have fun. You can assemble and mobilize into:

- Teams
- Families
- Single Individuals
- Student Teams

Tasks will include weeding, mulching, and beautifying.

No experience necessary, just a desire to give to this special place your gift of time.

For more information, contact:
Bettina Abe
Natural Resources Assistant
Town of Acton, babe@acton-ma.gov



The Acton Garden Club



The Friends of the Acton Arboretum, Inc., the Acton Garden Club, and the Town of Acton Natural Resources Department combine resources and work together to keep this town treasure looking spiffy, healthy and accessible!

PHOTO: Bettina Abe, Natural Resources Assistant, babe@acton-ma.gov is looking for a few good volunteers to "Adopt a Garden" one hour or more a week.

During the past winter, Bettina Abe, FAA clerk and workday coordinator, initiated a program called "Adopt a Garden" for the Arboretum. As a result of that effort, a whole new set of volunteers have begun to work on various gardens. The Fragrance Garden and the Rhododendron Garden now have dedicated caretakers who receive guidance and support from Bettina and her experienced colleagues. Other new volunteers have been caring for the trails. Thank you to all who work so hard on the endless project list! If you'd like to join the effort, you'll find the team at the Arboretum Tuesday afternoons from 2:30 to 4:30 and Thursday mornings from 9:00 to noon.

One notable change at the Arboretum is the removal of invasive shrubs about the dug pond to the right of the main lawn. Hard work by volunteer crews opened up an overgrown area prone to misuse and created opportunities for new plantings. More work continued in the Swale Garden as volunteers removed more invasives and pruned shrubs damaged by fall and winter storms. We added plants to that garden that need a damper environment. In fact, volunteers have planted wildflowers and other native plants in the area next to the swale by the bridge creating a small garden of sorts there.

The Arboretum has seen a new set of challenges recently. For example, a magnolia by the Herb Garden was treated for a serious case of Magnolia Scale and crab apple trees are being monitored for Crab Apple Blight. Funds from the Friends paid for the arborist to treat the scale and monitor the blight. A very large white pine fell during a fall storm and its debris is very noticeable by the Fern Garden. Staff from the Natural Resources Department will try to move the logs to make them less visible.



PHOTO: Dedication of Mary's Brook on October 27, 2012 at the Arboretum Fern boardwalk.

Last year the Friends of the Acton Arboretum, with support from Tom Michelman, proposed to the Select



men that we honor Mary Michelman, a local environmentalist and advocate of clean water for Acton, by naming the brook that flows under the boardwalk by the Fern Garden "Mary's Brook."

For the dedication, a large group gathered at the Arboretum to remember Mary. A small sign is now installed on the boardwalk's railing and the Highway Department placed Acton Stream Team signs labeled "Mary's Brook" on Minot Ave where the brook crosses under the road.

In 2012, the Friends also helped the Acton Conservation Trust purchase the wooded back lot of 81 Wood Lane, which was surrounded by the Arboretum on three sides. It is a key part of the viewscape of the Arboretum. Our funds paid for the survey needed prior to the purchase. At the 2013 Town meeting, voters approved funds to purchase the land from the ACT and to reimburse the Friends for its expenses.

The charm of a woodland road lies not only in its beauty but in anticipation.

Around each bend may be a discovery, an adventure.

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Membership Application

Friends of the Acton Arboretum

WHO ARE THE FRIENDS?

We are a group of citizens who care about the natural world and share a vision of preserving and enhancing our natural resources for educational purposes. Friends contribute time, money, plants and other gifts and talents in support of the Acton Arboretum in order to achieve these goals.

Membership benefits for Friends include: a biannual newsletter, seasonal walks, talks and workshops, and civic pride in a special gift of land used for enjoyment and education.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ I am a NEW MEMBER RETURNING MEMBER

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP (CHECK ONE)

INDIVIDUAL | \$15 FAMILY | \$25 SUPPORTING | \$40 CORPORATE | \$100

CONTACT ME FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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

PLEASE DETACH AND MAIL TO: FRIENDS OF THE ACTON ARBORETUM, INC. | P.O. BOX 2607 | ACTON, MA 01720

President's Message

Join us on Thursday, June 27th for the Friends Annual Meeting

Dear Members,

Thanks again to everyone who has donated time and effort to help make the Arboretum the wonderful place it is. From the Town staff who mow the lawn, clear overgrown areas, and remove problem plants to the Acton Garden Club members who maintain the Hosta, Herb, and Butterfly Garden – the Arboretum would not be the sanctuary it has become for so many without your help. We also have a cadre of regular volunteers who don't belong to either group – from those whose avocation is gardening to those who watch over things when walking their dogs. High school crews work after school and during the summer months

Thanks too to a special group of people, the folks who agree to serve on the Board of the Friends of the Acton Arboretum. Not only do they attend the meetings that provide the framework within which this group operates, but they also spend many hours helping at the Arboretum, doing everything from staining bridges, repairing boardwalks, setting up sprinklers and watering plants, to supervising at work days and getting down and dirty when something just needs to be done.

We are especially grateful for the time and effort of Tom Tidman, the Natural Resources Director in Acton. It is his crew who help maintain the property and it's his vision that inspires many new projects. The property would not be what it is without Tom's influence and leadership.

We hope you can join us at the upcoming annual meeting.

Thanks to all for helping make this a bit of paradise in Acton Center!

Catherine Hatfield, President



PHOTO Before and After: The Fragrance Garden Lilac Collection. The work that the many dedicated volunteers do at the Arboretum is unpaid labor and makes a dramatic contribution to the maintenance of this Town treasure.





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What's Happening



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Mary's Brook is Dedicated

*Membership Application and
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PHOTO: New Grape Arbor

*Join us for our Annual Meeting on
Thursday, June 27, 4pm, Arbore-
tum Reading Circle. Rain location
is Town Hall; room will be posted
at entrance.*

*Volunteer Opportunities
Can you and a friend spare an
hour per week lending a hand at
one of the Acton Arboretum gar-
dens? Tasks will include basic
gardening techniques, mulching,*

*weeding, and adding compost. It is
helpful if you can supply your own
tools. There are several gardens at
the Arboretum that could benefit
from your TLC!*

*If interested please email:
babe@acton-ma.gov*

*Arboretum Notes was produced by
Cathy Fochtman; contributions by
Bettina Abe and Cathy Hatfield.*