

# Notes from the Field

Over the summer and fall, many Friends groups have moved the open space cause forward by cleaning up local green spaces, educating children and neighbors, advocating for policy change, and sponsoring events. Brookline GreenSpace Alliance offers support services to parks friends groups through small grants, fiscal agent services, startup assistance, publicity, technological innovations and more. Please visit or call BGSA Executive Director, Edward Hsieh, at 617-277-4777 or visit our website at [www.brooklinegreenspace.org](http://www.brooklinegreenspace.org) for more information.

## Friends of Monmouth Park



Selectman Betsy DeWitt speaks to those gathered to celebrate the Grand Opening of the refurbished Monmouth Park. Photo by Judy



Children captivated by the innovative new playground installation in Monmouth Park. Photo by Judy Wong

On September 24, the Friends of Monmouth Park gathered with neighbors and Town Officials to celebrate the completion of the park's renovation. Over 100 people enjoyed the food and drink provided by local merchants, listened to the Brookline Band play festive music, and admired the park. The Brookline Fire Department sent a fire engine, always thrilling to children, and Selectman Betsy DeWitt and Park and Recreation Commission Chair John Bain spoke on behalf of the Town. This event marked the end of five years of advocacy, discussion, and construction. Working together, neighbors Adele Goldstein, Mike Leavitt, Cathleen Cavell and Town staff Erin Chute Gallentine and Annie Blair, among others, have transformed a tired patch of grass known as the "dog park" into an inviting space for the whole community.

The renovation of Monmouth Park, the site of Longwood School until 1939, started in 2005 and was completed in 2006. The landscaping now integrates the adjacent Brookline Arts Center, formerly a historic fire house, providing logical avenues for pedestrians while protecting the shrubs, flowers, and trees. New



Virginia Speitel looks on as revelers of all ages enjoy refreshments as they celebrate the new park. Photo by Judy Wong



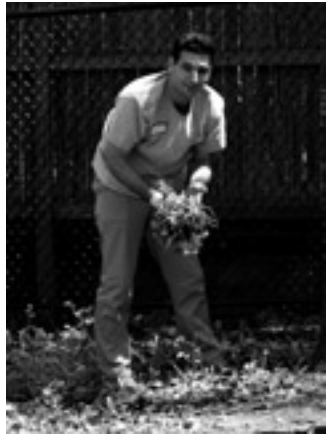
Stone wall at the newly refurbished Monmouth Park, with the innovative playground in the background. Photo by Judy Wong

signature features include an elegant stone wall and a fire station-themed play structure. Although the highly-regarded old wrought-iron fence was erroneously sold as scrap, the fence has been replaced by an attractive new fence of a similar design.

Over the past five years, many neighbors have given their time, energy, advice and donations for memorial benches. The Friends of Monmouth Park is delighted with the result and will work to assure the beautiful renovation continues to brighten the neighborhood.

### Friends of Hall's Pond

The Friends of Hall's Pond continues to lovingly maintain the hidden gem that is Hall's Pond Sanctuary, right off Beacon Street near Coolidge Corner. This year marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Friends of Hall's Pond, a milestone reached due to the devotion of the many Friends and volunteers who donated their time, money, and expertise to help maintain the sanctuary for the entire community to enjoy throughout the year:



(left to right) Mrs. Nan St. Goar, open space advocate and Friends of Hall's Pond board member, works to beautify the formal garden. Tommy Vitolo, local parks advocate, removing garlic mustard during the Spring Community Work Day. Ellen Forrester, co-president of the Friends of Hall's Pond, carts in some new plantings. BGSA Executive Director, Edward Hsieh, weeding out garlic mustard, an invasive species, at Hall's Pond. All photos by Judy Wong.

The Friends of Hall's Pond invites the community at large to join them for the annual Fall Community Work Day, co-sponsored by the Brookline Conservation Commission, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm on Sunday, November 19, 2006, rain or shine. Volunteers can help continue the Friends tradition of loving care of the sanctuary by helping remove trash, leaves, and invasive plants, and by preparing the formal garden for the winter. Gloves, tools, supplies, and refreshments are provided. For more information please contact the Brookline Conservation Commission at 617-730-2088 or Friends of Hall's Pond at 617-731-6919.

Also save the date: Hall's Pond Nature Sanctuary, Spring Work Day, Sunday, April 29, 2007



Roses in their second year climb the trellis and blanket the Minot Rose Garden in a splash of color. Photo courtesy Linda Olson Pehlke.

### Friends of the Minot Rose Garden

The Friends of the Minot Rose Garden continue their inspiring revival of the rose garden. The highlight of their season was the hugely successful "Rose Stroll," held on June 11. After an interminable stretch of rainy days, the sun finally broke through to reveal nature's brilliant reward! Over 150 people came from all over Brookline and beyond to enjoy the refreshments, music, and, of course, the glorious roses. In their second season, the young rose bushes are getting larger and more established, filling the beds and covering the trellis. The Rose Stroll was a true community event made possible with donations from many area businesses and individuals. The Friends hope to make it an annual event.

In addition to the Rose Stroll, the Friends, assisted by the Brookline Garden Club, held a spring pruning seminar led by rosarian David Cannistraro. The Friends were awarded a \$10,000 matching grant from the Brookline Community Foundation to go towards an iron fence



to enclose the garden. The Friends have so far raised \$7,000. The campaign ends in November, so the countdown is on! As a part of this effort, the Friends continue to sell photo note cards (\$10) at Brookline Booksmith, Mint Julep and Unique Simchas. Anyone wishing to make a donation or volunteer please contact BGS.

Judy Mason, Linda Olson Pehlke and Caroline Hoppin reading a hand drawn family tree diagram John Sears had prepared for the Friends of the Minot Rose Garden. An ancestor of John Sears was the original donor of the land on which the Rose Garden was created. Photo by Jean Stringham

### Campaign to Preserve St. Aidan's

After a year's delay to settle a lawsuit, the developer now has to re-bid the project before proceeding. The design for converting the historic church to mixed income housing is essentially unchanged, with a projected 59 units.

Meanwhile, the site remains fenced off. Neighbors have seen foxes and turkeys that seem to have found a home there--so there is temporarily a new open space, however inaccessible it may be to people.



From North Brookline to Brookline Village to Pill Hill to Chestnut Hill, turkeys are all over Brookline! The turkeys above were spotted in Chestnut Hill. Photo by Jean Stringham

### Friends of the Old Burying Ground

On September 10, Friends of the Old Burying Ground hosted a tour of the historic site on Walnut Street with remarks by Tom Elwertowski, a Pill Hill resident. The Old Burying Ground, established in 1717, was the Town's first official graveyard and served as its only one until 1875 when Walnut Hills Cemetery was created. As Brookline was formally established in 1705, many of the Town's founding families are represented: Aspinwall, Boylston, Clark, Corey, Devotion, Gardner, Goddard, Griggs, Heath, White, Winchester and many others. The picturesque



Attendees at the Friends of the Old Burying Ground sponsored tour of the site learning about Brookline history from Tom Elwertowski, a Pill Hill resident. Photo by Frances Shedd Fisher

graveyard is now in need of repair to preserve its historic gravestones and monuments.

Friends President, Dorothy Baldini, said "We have hired MinXie and Jim Fannin, preservation

consultants, to work with us. The work will be on-going for several more years, but we hope to begin some work before there is any more deterioration. We are grateful to those who attended our fundraiser and grateful to our speaker, Tom Elwertowski, and to the Brookline Music School for providing such a gracious setting for our reception." For additional information about the Old Burying Ground see [highstreethill.org](http://highstreethill.org). To join the Friends, call 617-566-5876.



Friends of the Old Burying Ground President, Dorothy Baldini, with guest speaker, Tom Elwertowski, in the graveyard the day of the September fundraiser tour. Photo by Frances Shedd Fisher.



A group of volunteers at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site in Brookline have collaborated with the Site staff to form Friends of Fairsted. Members of the Friends Board and Site staff are depicted above on the South Lawn at Fairsted; from left to right, Lee Farrow Cook, Deborah Rivers, Liza Stearns, Lena Martikainen, Pat Suhrcke, Frances Shedd Fisher, Mitch Drucker, Carol Winkler, Myra Harrison, Alan Banks, Julie Arrison, Betsy Shure Gross, Henry Lukas, Jean Stringham, Mark Swartz. Missing from photo, Board members David England, Allan Galper and Caroline Loughlin. Photo by Jean Stringham

## Friends of Fairsted

Friends of Fairsted has recently been formed to advance the mission of Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, 99 Warren Street, Brookline. Olmsted, widely viewed as the father of landscape architecture, was the designer of the Emerald Necklace parks, Central Park and the U.S. Capitol grounds, among many landmark sites. He moved to a house on Warren Street in Brookline in 1883 while he was working on the Emerald Necklace. It was at the Brookline location, which he called 'Fairsted,' that his landscape firm grew and prospered. The Olmsted home and office is now a National Historic Site housing more than 5,000 plans and drawings of the Olmsted firm's designs of parks, campuses, residential estates, suburban developments and other landscapes.

It is Olmsted's vision and legacy and wide-ranging accomplishments that Friends of Fairsted has been formed to celebrate and preserve. The Friends are working with National Park Service staff to determine their first

educational or cultural project in support of the Olmsted National Historic Site and its mission. Their collaborative efforts are aimed at enhancing the Site's programming and broadening its reach. The Friends expect to announce our first collaborative project soon.

Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, normally open to visitors, is currently closed for important infrastructure renovations. The Friends will take advantage of this hiatus to build awareness of the Olmsted vision and to develop a broader, more diverse base of support for the Site. To join Friends of Fairsted or to receive our mailings, please contact Patricia Suhrcke, President of the Friends, at 617 495-2727, or email [friendsoffairsted@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoffairsted@gmail.com) for additional information about our organization. For more information about Olmsted and his firm or Fairsted visit [www.nps.gov/frla](http://www.nps.gov/frla).

## Brookline Community Foundation Volunteer Food Pantry Garden

Tucked in behind a driveway, a patch of un-used green space at 40 Webster Place has been transformed in a small, but meaningful way to support our community. The Greenside Out Garden, coordinated by Brookline Community Foundation and staffed entirely by volunteers, donates all produce to the Brookline Emergency Food Pantry at St. Paul's Episcopal Church for distribution to low-income Brookline residents.

The project began in September 2001 when a group of Brookline 7th graders created the garden with a lot of hard work. In April 2002 BCF received a start-up grant from the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance for tools, compost and seeds. Each year from late June through September the garden produces strawberries, lettuce, radishes, tomatoes, beans, carrots, and cucumbers, all of which are donated to the Food Pantry.

Five years after the initiative began, the garden still flourishes, giving to the community, and to those who tend it; teaching us all that like our garden, if we tend our community with the same care and attention, it too will continue to thrive and grow.

For more information on the Brookline Community Foundation and the volunteer garden, please call 617-566-4442, or visit [www.brooklinecommunity.org](http://www.brooklinecommunity.org)



Bounty from the Brookline Community Foundation volunteer food pantry garden. Photo courtesy of Sara Dassel