



## Wapack News Spring 2021

The transition from winter to spring has rarely been more anticipated. Last year was a long slog as concerns about the pandemic continued through the winter with many disruptions and challenges. Fortunately many found escape in nature, to which the increased popularity of the Wapack Trail attests. The Wapack provides a welcome and healthful experience of nature to thousands of people each year. This is a testament to our important work of maintaining and protecting the trails.

This past winter saw the successful completion of two significant campaigns to protect land along the Wapack Trail. North County Land Trust, in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game, conserved 200 acres which includes the south peak and south slope of Mt. Watatic, completing the preservation of Watatic's summit.

And Northeast Wilderness Trust completed their campaign to purchase the 15 acre Steel Addition to their Binney Hill Wilderness Preserve. The Friends of the Wapack supported both efforts with financial donations and publicity. The trail benefits from the increase in conserved land along the trail, helping to protect the wilderness experience of the Wapack that we all love.

Spring trail cleanup is being done by our Section Captain trail adopters, with general trail workdays hopefully to follow later this year. We are also hoping for an in person annual meeting. You can sign up for email newsletters and event notices at our website [wapack.org](http://wapack.org).

We hope to see you at events this year and out on the trails.

- Rick Blanchette, President

## How Did Binney Hill Get Its Name?

What got me researching this question is the Friends of the Wapack received an email from poet David Crews, asking if we knew how Binney Hill got its name. David was writing poems for Northeast Wilderness Trust's (NEWT) four Ambassador Preserves, and Writing the Land, a partnership between the environmental and creative communities. One of the Ambassador Preserves is the Binney Hill Wilderness Preserve, which NEWT protected in 2016, with the Friends of the Wapack as an important partner in the effort. The short answer to David's question is Binney Hill, Binney Hill Road, and



*Grave of John and Dinah Binney*

Binney Pond are named for John and Dinah Binney, who settled there and established a farm in 1781. John died three years later in 1784 at age 56. Dinah died in 1791, age 63. They had six children. One of their sons, also named John, succeeded to their farm. This son must have moved away at some point, because he died in New York state in 1844. The Binneys liked the name John, because there were at least 6 generations of John Binneys from the 1600's to the 1800's! The John who settled in New Ipswich was the 4th generation John Binney in America.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Events

### Annual End to End Hike, August 28.

Hike the entire trail in one day! Group will meet at 6:00 AM at the trail head on Mountain Road in Greenfield. Please call leader Tom Brumaghim to register and for details (603) 233-7791. *Please note: This is a strenuous hike with over 3800 feet of vertical gain and covers 21.5 miles. It is recommended that participants be in good physical condition and have conditioned themselves by doing frequent hikes leading up to the End to End hike.*

### Annual meeting, October 16

Save the date! Hopefully we'll hold an in person meeting this year, following guidance from the State and CDC. We'll have details in early fall.

### Trail Work Days

Plans are to resume work days in the Fall. Check our website Events page for updates.

You can signup to receive email workday and event notices and newsletters at Wapack.org.

## Trail Maintenance This Year

The past year was certainly different. The trail has seen a record number of users, and there have been many snow/ice/wind events which brought down numerous branches and trees. And there was that COVID thing.

We were unable to have workdays last year, and I would like to thank all of our Section Captain trail adopters who put in the extra effort to take up the slack and keep up with the work needed due to the increased use and weather events. With the increased use it is especially important for adopters to report any issues such as downed trees, increased erosion or drainage issues. If you notice something critical on the trails let us know and we can put a small crew together to address the issue. Hikers are welcome to help by picking up branches that have fallen on the trails. Do not try to clear a tree, just send an email to [info@wapack.org](mailto:info@wapack.org) to let us know the location, a photo is also helpful.

We hope to resume workdays this year in the fall depending on circumstances. We will post the dates on our website [Wapack.org](http://Wapack.org), and notify by e-mail.

Once again, thanks to all eighteen of our Section Captain trail adopters for all their hard work. - Mike Przybyla, Trail Master



**It's been a busy Spring  
clearing fallen trees on  
the trails!**

## Timely Chain Saw Safety Training for Wapack Trail Crew



Several members of the Friends of the Wapack Trail Crew attended the Division of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) Chainsaw Safety Class in November at Bear Brook State Park. The one day class was conducted by AJ Dupere. AJ is the Urban Forester with the New Hampshire Division of Forest and Lands. He is a Certified Arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture and a certified logger in NH. Students learned the important aspects of personal safety equipment, saw maintenance and techniques. The afternoon portion was hands on instruction with their own saws covering notch technique, awareness of basic tree felling hazards, bucking methods and approaches to cutting sprung saplings. - Sean McInerney, Section Captain

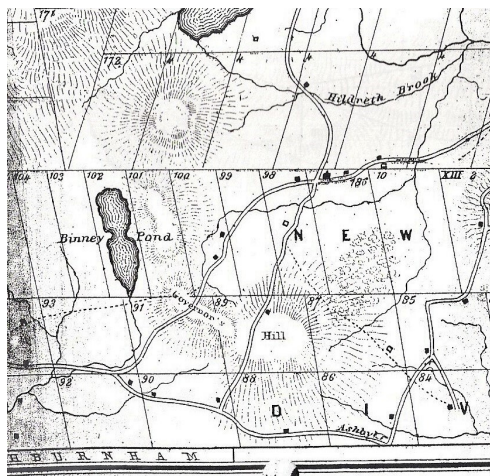
# Binney Hill (continued)

(Continued from page 1)

The first John Binney who arrived in America lived from 1656 to 1698, and is buried in Hull, Mass. His grave can be found on the Find a Grave website. This John is the ancestor to everyone with the Binney name in America.

John and Dinah left their farm in Marlboro Mass. in their early 50's, with presumably at least one of their adult children, to start a new farm here. I recently wandered the Old Burial Ground in New Ipswich and found the grave of John and Dinah Binney in the far corner of the cemetery. They are the only Binneys I could find that are buried in town.

So now the question arises, where exactly was the Binney farm, and is it now part of NEWT's Binney Hill Wilderness Preserve? "The History of New Ipswich New Hampshire, 1735-1914" by Charles Henry Chandler, referring to John Binney, states that "He lived up on the summit of the hill which took his name, on lot 100." On this page is a section of the map of New Ipswich from 1851, showing some of the original granted lots in the southwest corner of town. You can see that Binney Hill Road goes through lot 100, and there were two structures on the lot at that time. Note that where the map shows Governor's Hill, the word "Governor's" is on Binney Hill, the word "Hill" is now Emerson Hill. This area around lot 100 is now part of NEWT's



Binney Hill Wilderness Preserve.

Visiting the website NH Stone Wall Mapper, you can zoom in on the satellite image of the Binney Pond area and see that many of the original lots still have their boundary stone walls, including lot 100. The satellite image shows that the south west corner of lot 100, the Binney farm, is across Binney Hill Road from the NEWT kiosk and gate, which is the intersection of the Wapack Trail heading south and Binney Hill Road. You can identify the large clearing behind the gate to confirm the location.

With the farm site identified, my next thought was to wander lot 100 to see if there is any remaining evidence of the Binney farm. I found that stone walls abound on the

property, including an interesting run of two parallel walls, perhaps marking a narrow farm road. There is also what appears to be a stone foundation, but if it had a cellar hole it is now filled in.

Knowing something of it's history increases one's sense of connection to this land, a place where nature can now take it's natural course as a forever wild preserve. At some point in the future, the land will look the way John and Dinah found it 240 years ago.

- Rick Blanchette, President

You can read David Crews Binney Hill poem at:  
[www.writingtheland.org/newt-david-crews](http://www.writingtheland.org/newt-david-crews)

## Stone walls abound at the Binney Farm site.

Left photo: a wall with an interesting large pine, left behind during many past timber harvests.

Right photo: a possible foundation with a tree growing out of one corner.





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Founded in 1980, the Friends of the Wapack are an all volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to the maintenance and permanent projection of the Wapack Trail and certain side trails.

The Friends of the Wapack, Inc. is recognized as a charitable corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the US IRS code.

The Wapack Trail is a 21 mile hiking trail that traverses the Wapack Range from Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham MA to North Pack in Greenfield NH. Completed in 1923, it is the oldest interstate hiking trail in the Northeast.

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