



50th Anniversary of the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge

This year our annual meeting is dedicated to the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge. We will be honoring the generous gift of land by Laurence and Lorna Marshall that created the Refuge. Joining us will be their daughter, Elizabeth “Liz” Thomas, and her son Ramsay Thomas. Also, Matt Hillman and Graham Taylor from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will speak about the Refuge and management. (See page 3 for details about this event). The Refuge protects 1,625 acres of forest and wildlife habitat on North Pack, a beautiful section of the Wapack Trail and the Cliff Trail, as well as sections of Ted’s and Caroline’s Trails.

The Refuge provides a large tract of protected habitat for wildlife, and a place where people can experience and learn to appreciate a protected mountain forest. I’ve heard many stories from hikers who tell me how much the Refuge



View from Cliff Trail, Wapack National Wildlife Refuge

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North Pack by Elizabeth Thomas

My father’s name was Laurence Marshall. He ran a large successful company in the Boston area of Massachusetts, and we lived nearby so he could get to work easily. But in 1935, if I remember correctly, he bought a large piece of land on the east side of Peterborough on which he built a house.

That land was our home forever after. On weekdays we had to live near Boston, but we spent those weekdays waiting for the weekends when we could visit Dad’s wonderful land.

The view was spectacular. A hayfield ran from the road (then a sand road) to the woods. Beyond it we could see the Wapack Range.

Many people, probably once including the Abenaki Indians, had lived in that area for a very long time, and both sides of North Pack had been farmland. Many stone walls that were built there by farmers are still in the woods. The tops of North Pack and its neighbor, South Pack, were part of a trail on which farmers moved their cattle, walking them along, surely for several miles, to where they’d be killed for their meat. Why was their pathway on mountain tops? Probably because the mountainsides belonged to privately owned farmlands.

Plenty of people had lived there and not all of them were farmers. The place where we built our house was once

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50th Anniversary, Wapack National Wildlife Refuge (cont. from page 1)

and the trails mean to them. Here is one example. This year while I was at the Refuge searching for an appropriate location to install the new plaque, a member of a multigenerational hiking group noticed my Friends of the Wapack patch and walked up to speak with me. He wanted me to know how much this place meant to his family. His father had taken him and his siblings there every year to climb the mountain when they were children. They still climb once every year, now with their children, in memory of their father.

The trails provide a deep-forest immersive experience. Visitors will notice that the forest is comprised of mostly mature spruce-fir and mixed hardwoods, providing wildlife habitat and safe passage for migratory birds across the Wapack Range. The open summit is a great place to watch hawk migrations.

Many species of birds have been observed at the refuge, including ovenbirds, yellow bellied sapsuckers, many varieties of warblers, and many others including birds identi-

fied as species of concern. Mammals include white tailed deer, bobcat, red and grey fox, black bear, coyote, and many rodent species including porcupines.

Increasingly, society is understanding the importance of protected forests for carbon sequestration to reduce global warming. As more land is developed around us, permanent refuges like this become more important for our future.

Since the creation of the Friends of the Wapack in 1980, we have worked in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in maintaining the Wapack and Cliff Trails on the Refuge, improving signage, and helping to monitor the property.

For the past 50 years, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has protected this land and will continue to do so into the future. The generous gift of this land by Laurence and Lorna Marshall has made this all possible. It is fitting that we celebrate the 50 year anniversary of this priceless gift.

-Rick Blanchette, President

North Pack (continued from page 1)

owned by a prostitute. The area had been known as Caper Corner (and still was when we moved to our house) and the ruins of her house are still there.

My dad loved the wildlands. He already owned the west side of North Pack so he bought the top of North Pack and also some of the east side, which he arranged to be protected land. He had foreseen two probable disasters. The first was that people would kill many of the animals who lived in the large forest area on and around the Wapack Range...the people of that area had quite literally killed all the deer for miles around so that once when a local person saw a deer, it was reported on the front page of our newspaper, then known as the Peterborough Transcript. The other disaster foreseen by my father was that a ski slope could appear on our side of North Pack, and all we would see during daylight in winter would be skiers whizzing downhill. But now, except for the trail that was once used by cattle farmers and is now used by human hikers, wild animals live there safely, including coyotes. In most other places, coyotes can be hunted and killed for any reason at any time of year.

Eighty years ago when I was young, the sides of North Pack were forested with elderly trees but the top was covered with nothing more than bushes, plenty of which were



Forest Scene, Wapack National Wildlife Refuge

blueberry bushes. Someone, I don't know who, had made it that way. But the trees have grown back, and most of the mountainside is as it was a long time ago, a large, quiet woodland where our animal neighbors live in peace.

And because it's protected by law, it will stay that way. We who love the natural world will be grateful.

- Liz Thomas



The Friends of the Wapack & U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Celebrating 50 Years of the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge *Saturday, October 15, Sharon Meeting House, Rte. 123, Sharon, NH*

Special Guests Elizabeth Thomas and Ramsay Thomas
**Presentations by Matthew Hillman and Graham Taylor from the
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

You're invited! Join us on October 15 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge at the Sharon Meeting House. The Wapack National Wildlife Refuge protects 1,625 acres of forest and wildlife habitat on North Pack, a beautiful section of the Wapack Trail and the Cliff Trail, as well as sections of Ted's and Caroline's Trails.

Our special guests will be Elizabeth "Liz" Thomas and her son Ramsay Thomas. Liz's parents, Laurence and Lorna Marshall, donated the land on North Pack to create the refuge in 1972. Liz is a long time resident of Peterborough and is a popular author of numerous books on wildlife, pets, anthropology and fiction. She served on the town Select Board for 15 years, and donated land for Peterborough's first town beach on Cunningham Pond. Her son Ramsay has enjoyed living on his family land under North Pack his entire life. He first climbed North Pack with his grandfather at four or five years of age. Though he has experienced mountain climbing on four continents he says "My soul lives right here, on North Pack."

The gathering will include remarks by Liz and Ramsay with Q&A, followed by presentations by Matt Hillman and Graham Taylor from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Graham is the FWS Regional Refuge Supervisor. As Refuge Manager he developed the current refuge management plan and the trail head parking lot. Matt is the Project Leader for the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge Complex and present Refuge Manager. He has improved signage and kiosks at the refuge and supported all of our work on the trails. We will be unveiling a bronze plaque to be installed at the Refuge, honoring the Marshall's gift on it's 50th anniversary. A brief Friends of the Wapack Annual Meeting will follow.

Please Note:

We request that you register for this event soon at our website Wapack.org. We will monitor the number of registrations to help ensure that we do not exceed the capacity of the hall.

Agenda

- **9:00 AM Hike (optional)** Join us on a morning hike on North Pack, the highest mountain on the Wapack Range. Meet at 9:00 AM at the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge parking lot on Mountain Road in Greenfield. For details contact Mike Przybyla 603-878-3350 or email Mike at mikep218@comcast.net
- **12:00 Noon (optional)** Informal "bring-your-own" lunch at Sharon Meeting House.
- **12:30 PM** Gathering and sign-in.
- **1:00 PM** 50th Anniversary celebration of the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge, followed by a brief Friends of the Wapack annual meeting with election of officers for 2023.

Who were Laurence and Lorna Marshall?



There is so much that could be said about the remarkable lives, and the many accomplishments of Laurence and Lorna Marshall. Laurence was a founder of Raytheon Corporation, and served as its president for 38 years. He was a man of many interests: physicist, entrepreneur, anthropologist, lover of wildlife and protector of wildlife habitat.

Lorna worked as an English instructor at Mount Holyoke in the 1920's. Later she took anthropology courses at Harvard University and had a second career as an ethnographer. After Laurence retired from Raytheon in 1950, their lives changed course. Between 1950 and 1961, the couple and their two teenage children, Elizabeth and John, conducted ethnographic expeditions to study the !Kung of Nyae Nyae (also known as Bushmen) in the Kalahari region of Southwest Africa, in what is now Namibia. The ancient way of life of these people would soon disappear, and the Marshalls wanted to capture it in photographs and observations. * Lorna published numerous articles on the !Kung, and a book titled "The !Kung of Nyae Nyae," in 1976. Her final book on this topic was published in 1999 when she was 101 years old.

Today we celebrate the Marshalls' generosity. It was due to Laurence's desire to protect wildlife and to permanently protect their land on North Pack that the Marshalls donated 1,625 acres 50 years ago to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, creating the first National Wildlife Refuge in N.H, the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge.

** For photos from the Marshall's research in the Kalahari, see the Harvard Gazette story at the following link: <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2018/10/familys-photos-from-50s-capture-fading-way-of-life-in-kalahari-desert/> Many of the Marshall's Kalahari photos can also be viewed on the website of Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archeology and Ethnology.*

Elizabeth Thomas has also written on this topic, including her book "The Harmless People." She also relates many of her observations on the Bushmen and Kalahari wildlife in "The Tribe of Tiger," and in several of her other books.

Events

Annual meeting, October 15

See page 3 for details.

Trail Work Day, October 22

The last workday will be on October 22 on the section of the Wapack between Nashua Road in Sharon and Chapman Road in New Ipswich. This is a flat section on or adjacent to an old colonial road. We will be doing general clearing, blazing, and drainage work.

We will meet at 8:30 AM at the Newest Mall in New Ipswich and then car pool over. Bring a lunch and water.

For further details, contact Mike Przybyla: mikep218@comcast.net

Check our website for updates or changes.

You can signup to receive email work-day and event notices and newsletters at Wapack.org.

Trail Maintenance Report

We had our second workday of 2022 on Saturday, September 24th. We installed bog bridges on a wet section of the Raymond Trail that had previously had logs laid down which were rotting and extremely slippery. Luckily, this section is a short distance from the trailhead which minimized the work of carrying in the wood. The drought conditions also helped as the area had no standing water, so we didn't get wet. After much digging and setting of sleepers for the bridge we ended up with something that is an improvement over what was there and will last longer.

With that done we continued up the trail to do some general maintenance on the section of the Cranberry Meadow Pond Trail connecting their parking lot with the Raymond Trail. This included some brush trimming and drainage work.

We had five participants. Thanks goes out to Rick Blanchette, Tom Brumaghim, Kelly Dodge, and Bob Saari.

- Mike Przybyla, Trail Master

**Right: removing
the old logs, far
right, the new
bridge.**



Remembering David Weir Jr.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of David Weir this past July. David was one of the founders of the Friends of the Wapack and our first president. He was one of the small group of founders who set up the organization structure with our constitution and bylaws, and who shepherded the group in our early years.. David also chaired our right-of-way committee in those years.

At the time of our founding over 40 years ago, David sent a letter to prospective members. In it he stated: "Did you know that one of the most important recreational resources in the Monadnock Region is endangered? The Wapack Trail ... is suffering from erosion and threatened by development. Like so many of our natural resources, it simply cannot survive in our urbanizing area without thoughtful protection and upkeep. To protect the trail, a new organization has come into being. The 'Friends of the Wapack' seek to improve, maintain and, where possible, obtain a permanent right-of-way for the trail....We want your participation in our effort to protect the trail. We will have some fun along the way so please join us."

We have certainly had some fun along the way! At our annual meeting last year, I asked David what his expectations were for this organization at it's founding. He said that it has exceeded his expectations. Our condolences go out to David's family and friends.

- Rick Blanchette, President



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**Wapack National Wild-
life Refuge Celebration
/ Annual Meeting
Notice Enclosed**

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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