



# Voice of the Wapack

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## President's Note

After celebrating significant anniversaries for the Friends of the Wapack, the Wapack Wildlife Refuge and the Wapack Trail in recent years, this has been a little more normal year for the Friends. On the trail, it seems the COVID crowds have diminished a little, but there continues to be significant use, especially by the running community. For the first time in many years, I was on a work day in the spring, on the Berry Pasture Trail. Openings for views of Monadnock were opened up. Keeping them open in the future will be my job as the adopter. Elsewhere on the trail, Matt Hillman, Refuge Manager for the Wapack Refuge is planning a visit there with some of his staff in October. They will be working on replacing missing signs. Mike reports that the rest of the trail is in good shape, but there is always more that can be done.

Off the trail, there are many things happening. My work with Corinne Chronopoulos, the Director at the Peterborough Library has led to a plan for digitizing and archival storage of the Friends collection. See the "FOW Archives Update" article about this elsewhere in the newsletter.

Discussions continue regarding additional right-of-way (ROW) protection for the trail. To support that, I've had a teleconference with a law firm about providing the necessary

expertise to assure proper protection for the trail. Anne has been good about having us budget for these expenses, like legal fees and any other payments related to ROW. Anne has also changed our investment manager to provide more choices for return. An investment committee of Anne, Rick and myself will be working on a guiding document.

Dwight Horan had originally been part of the investment committee, but Dwight has resigned from the board for health reasons. We appreciate all that Dwight did for the board, serving many years as vice-president. As a landowner along the trail, his opinion carried significance on matters regarding landowners. Other landowners are welcome to contact me by email at [president@wapack.org](mailto:president@wapack.org). I'd also be glad to hear from those who are not able to work on the trail, but would like to contribute in some way to the Friends.

Now we have the annual meeting coming soon. Swift Corwin, a local forester and surveyor will be presenting, and he may even have some poetry for us. Details about the annual meeting are on page 3.

*- Bruce Myrick, President*

## Friends of the Wapack Archives Update

Thanks to the efforts of Jeanette Baker over many years, the Friends has a significant archive of news items and other paper records about the Wapack Trail, starting in the 1920's. Many of these are photocopies, while some are the original paper or photos. Jeanette's recent retirement has brought the extent of these archives to my attention and their long term preservation and access is a new project for the Friends. With the assistance of Corinne Chronopoulos of the Peterborough Library, and Michelle Stahl of the Monadnock Center for History and Culture, we have a preservation plan. Part of this will be digitally scanning the documents to make them readily available, and provide an added level of preservation. For this, the Friends is seeking a volunteer, or maybe two, to do this scanning, at the library. As part of this effort, after the documents are scanned, they will be placed in new archival media. The long term archival storage will be at the Monadnock Center.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# 2024 Trail Work

*It is possible that events may change or that we will have additional workdays if something develops. Any announcements will be posted to the Friends website: [Wapack.org](http://Wapack.org). You may sign up for email events notices for news and workdays at [Wapack.org](http://Wapack.org). For further details on trail work days, contact Mike Przybyla: [mikep218@comcast.net](mailto:mikep218@comcast.net)*

## 2024 Spring Workday Report

On May 4th we had our first workday of 2024. A crew of seven showed up at the Berry Pasture trailhead. We opened up a number of view of Monadnock from the Berry Pasture which was clear cut a number of years ago by New England Forestry Foundation. Since then a lot of small maples have sprouted. We continued up the trail to the Burton Peak overlook where we opened up that view. Thanks to all who showed up including Bruce Myrick, Bob Saari, Alex Land, Breanna Glasgow, Molly Fince, Leah Lubetkin, and Phillip Ivannow.

Our September 21 workday was rained out.

## Next Work day: Saturday, October 12. The Wapack Trail at the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge, Greenfield, NH

The final scheduled workday for this year will be on October 12th. We will be installing water bars just below the summit of North Pack. We will also be doing the usual trail maintenance as we hike in. Bring lunch, water, work gloves and sturdy boots. We'll provide the tools.

Meet at 8:30 at the Wapack National Wildlife Refuge parking lot on Mountain Road in Greenfield, NH.

*- Mike Przybyla, Trail Master*

Our thanks goes out to Marc Basti of Pepperell who volunteered to do additional clearing on the Berry Pasture Trail and install a new sign at the trailhead. The new sign is a lot better than the one we had nailed to a tree.

Also, a big thank-you to those who cleared a major trail blockage at Windblown due to a micro-burst that took down a large number of trees this summer. Thanks to Gerry Coffey, George Kocur and Mike Przybyla who also reblazed that section of the trail.

A special thanks to our 21 Section Captains. Their diligent trail maintenance and monitoring is the reason for the excellent condition of our trails — *Rick Blanchette, Trails Chair*



*New Berry Pasture Trail sign by Marc Basti*



*Part of the micro-burst rail blockage at Windblown before clean up*

## Friends of the Wapack Archives Update (continued from page 1)

If you are interested in doing this scanning and archival storage, I would be glad to discuss it with you. Corinne has an idea it could take 40 hours, and that would be at the Peterborough Library. The schedule would be during their open hours, and could be spread over a period of weeks, maybe months. If you wish to support the Friends in the cost of the archival storage material, you can donate online at [Wapack.org](http://Wapack.org) or send a check to PO Box 115, West Peterborough, NH 03468, in honor/memo of "Archives". — *Bruce Myrick, President [president@wapack.org](mailto:president@wapack.org)*





# **The Friends of the Wapack**

## **Invite you to join us at our Annual Meeting**

### **Saturday, October 19, 2024**

#### **Sharon Meeting House, Rte. 123, Sharon, NH**

### **Guest Speaker:**

## **Swift Corwin, Consulting Forester, Calhoun and Corwin Forestry, LLC**

### **“Revelations of Stone Walls in the Vicinity of the Wapack Trail”**



**Swift Corwin**

Swift moved to New Hampshire in the summer of 1982 after graduating from the University of Wisconsin forestry school. He has lived in the Monadnock region the whole time he has been in New Hampshire. All the while, he has worked for private landowners. He had little understanding of New Hampshire land use and the change that has gone on over the years. But over 43 years he has become fascinated by being out on the land and seeing the way the forest is, the lay out of stone walls, roads and cellar holes. The intense use that happened once, and then stopped.

Given the opportunity to present to the Friends of Wapack, he will explore the great changes that have taken place about the people that used the land -- The indigenous people who left barely a trace, the settlers who cleared the land and built the walls, the naturalists who learned to appreciate the land in its altered state, the recreationalists who built the Wapack Trail and the conservationists who have sought to protect the land. Their attitudes are starkly different. He will talk about this through the lens of American history that we are familiar with. Hopefully, bringing into focus our short time here and the incredible changes that have taken place over our history.

On display will be the guest books from the Wapack Lodge and photos from the early years of the trail. We will end with sharing a delicious cake.

***Please Note: We request that you register for this event soon at our website [Wapack.org](http://Wapack.org). We will monitor the number of registrations to help us plan for the event and to speed up check-in. Car pooling is encouraged.***

### **Agenda**

- **9:00 AM Hike (optional)** Join us on a morning hike on the Wapack Trail on the Sharon Ledges. Meet at 9:00 AM at the Sharon Meeting House. We will car-pool to the trail head from there. For details contact Mike Przybyla 603-878-3350 or email Mike at [mikep218@comcast.net](mailto: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** Friends of the Wapack Annual Meeting and presentation by Swift Corwin

## From the Friends of the Wapack Archives - Early Visitors to the Wapack Lodge by Marion Davis

*One of the unique items in our archives is the 33 page transcript of an interview with Marion (Buck) Davis. The interview was recorded shortly before her death in 1985. Marion Davis and Frank Robbins created the Wapack Trail in 1923. As soon as the trail was completed they began construction of the Wapack Lodge along the trail in New Ipswich. The trail was immediately popular and hikers and visitors needed a place to stay overnight and be fed, even before the lodge was finished! The following is Marion's story of the first visitors to the lodge, before it was completed. We pick up the story when Marion is installing windows in the Lodge.*

I remember Dad came up one day. I was trying to get a window in, and the studding was too close together, and I'd gotten a little bit fretty about it, and he said "You just leave off, and I'll fix that for you." And he did it so quick and easy. It was right after that that I was to have a couple of women come to stay overnight. And, goodness, how could you take folks in when you hadn't got the building done. Well, my Dad and Frank had to make a little outhouse. Besides that I had to have water. There was a well at the NE corner of the foundation, and we could lower a pail down into that to get water, but that came quite some time after. We went down to the spring and got water for this purpose. Of course the women came, and in order to have water to wash we had to use an old basin; we didn't even have a sink drain so the water had to be thrown out. We had just cleated in the big front door with just a board across it to hold it in place when the woman grabbed a hold of the door — and out came the door! I had to run and grab it to keep it from falling. The rest of that summer I worked on the house...

The first dinner party I had was 12 women from Ashby; Mrs. Foster and 2 of the Bricks girls, Ethel Lawrence (she's now Ethel Brewer) - I can't remember them all. But, you know, I didn't have but 8 chairs to seat anybody in, and I had to go down to Mrs. Koski's and lug up 4 chairs, 2 at a time — made two trips down there to get 4 chairs, — and she laughed about it, but anyway I had something to seat them in. Besides getting a chicken dinner for them — Oh, I was nervous — but you know when it was all over they praised me so that was all I needed. I had courage to go on with it after that.



*Early photo of the Wapack Lodge, before the addition of a second story*



*The Ashby ladies on the front porch of the Wapack Lodge*



*Marion drawing water from the well at the Wapack Lodge*



# First Day of Fall Hike on Beebe to Wapack Trail- Temple Mt



Friends of the Wapack (FOW) and the Harris Center co-sponsored a fall hike on the Wapack Trail on September 22nd. Gerry Coffey and I led the hike up the Beebe Trail to Temple Mountain and then along the Wapack to the Stone Chairs area just off the trail. We maintain the Beebe Trail for FOW. At the summit of Temple Mountain, we spent a few minutes looking for hawks since it is the time of year many migrate south along the Wapack Mt ridge line. The hawks and other raptors use the rising warm air off the mountain ridges to aid their flight down to Central and South America. We were rewarded with a female American Kestrel flying around us at the summit and distant views of a Bald Eagle.



Several people were interested in the history of the Temple Mt ski area after seeing the cement remains of the old chair lift. I explained that the Beebe Trail was named after Charlie and Lucie Beebe of Peterborough who opened the ski area in 1937. We reached the Stone Chairs and had a snack. A group of Ravens flew above us and several Turkey Vultures while we ate. It was a great way to enjoy the first day of fall.

- Gail Coffey, Director

## Wapack Trail Mail

We greatly appreciate all the email we regularly receive from hikers thanking us for the work we do maintaining the trails, sending photos or asking questions about the trails. Some will include reports of downed trees with photos and locations, which helps us respond quickly to clear the trail. Here is a recent example.

“Hi Friends,

I just wanted to drop a quick line and say that my fiancée and I (and our dog) thru-hiked the Wapack Trail northbound this weekend and it was amazing. The trail was so well-maintained and well-blazed. We had such a great time, and I just wanted to thank you for the work that you do on this trail.” - James O’Boyle

## Help Wanted

We are looking for Volunteers for our Website Refresh committee. We are looking to update and refresh our website [Wapack.org](http://Wapack.org). Do you have marketing, website design or just a passion for the Wapack Trail?

We are looking for 2 people to join our committee. We use WordPress and WooCommerce to run our site.

Please contact Anne Reed at [Treasurer@Wapack.org](mailto:Treasurer@Wapack.org)

Thank you!

- Anne Reed, Treasurer

### Seen on the Trail...

Murtle the Turtle, long time resident of Binney Pond.





Friends of the Wapack, Inc.  
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www.wapack.org

Annual Meeting Details  
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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*Sunset over the Wapack Range from Frye Field in Wilton. - Gail Coffey*



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