

The Watershed

Vol. 2, No. 1

The Oyster Pond Environmental Trust Newsletter

Summer, 1997

Third Annual Meeting- July 12th

In the meeting we will discuss OPET's activities over the last year, including our efforts on behalf of the Oyster Pond weir construction, land conservation and the publication by OPET of the updated book on Oyster Pond by K.O. Emery. We shall hear a talk by Dave Aubrey of WHOI and Aubrey Consulting, Inc. (who designed the weir after studying and modelling the Oyster Pond/Trunk River water flow), entitled "Oyster Pond in 100 Years and More: the Importance of Wise Stewardship".

Where: Sea Education Association (Thank you, SEAI)

When: July 12th 4:00 to 6:00 PM

Hurricane? We hope not this year!

It's election time

At the Annual Meeting, OPET members will be electing officers and board members for the 1997 - 1998 year. If you have suggestions or would like to be nominated, please contact Robert Livingstone, 66 Landfall, Falmouth, MA 02540-1632, phone 457-0936, or any other board member.

Please help OPET serve the interests of the entire Oyster Pond watershed! One look at the addresses of the board of directors, and you can see a very strong representation from Ransom Rd and Treetops. We need your help no matter where you live, but it is particularly important for OPET to have active representation from all parts of the Pond.

OPET Officers and Directors

John Dowling	President	106 Ransom Rd
Cecily Selby	V. President	100 Ransom Rd
Lon Hocker	Treasurer	74 Ransom Rd
Wendy L. Gabriel	Clerk	104 Ransom Rd
Duncan Aspinwall		408 Elm Rd
William Brewer		4 Landfall
Stanley Hart		53 Quonset Rd
William Kerfoot		49 Ransom Rd
Robert Livingstone, Jr		66 Landfall
Werner Loewenstein		102 Ransom Rd
Barry Norris		52 Landfall
Dana Rodin		5 Sheeps Crossing Ln
Birgit Rose		102 Ransom Rd

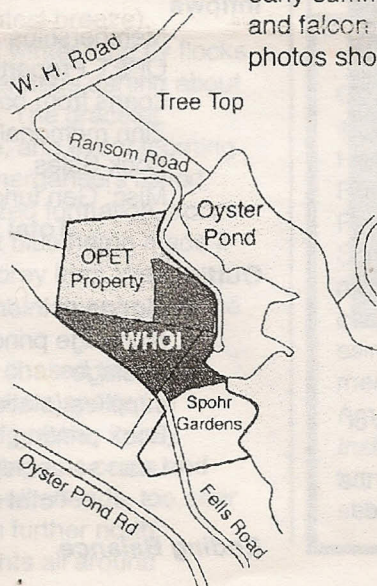
Three Major OPET Projects

1

OPET's conservation land

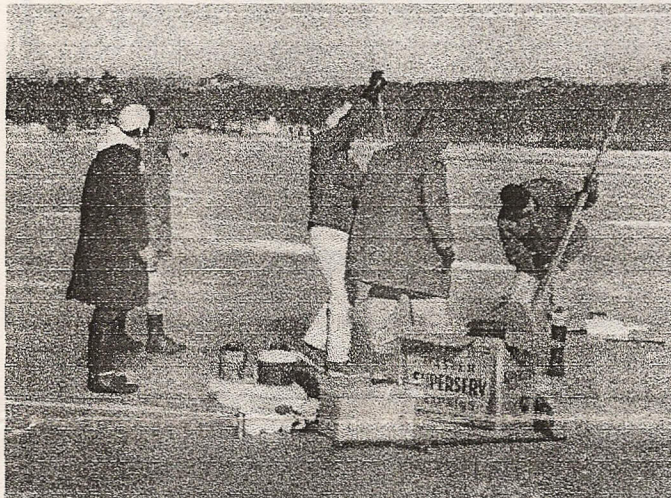
Last year, OPET assumed ownership of the parcel marked OPET Property in the drawing above. OPET owns about one half of the property outright and took out a mortgage to cover the cost of the other half of the parcel.

This beautiful property is one of the last undeveloped parcels near the Pond and contains wetlands as well as upland. Take time to walk on its trails and enjoy the unspoiled nature. In the spring and early summer you'll find many ladyslippers in bloom. Owl, hawk and falcon can be seen or heard there in the fall and winter. The photos shown were taken there by Birgit Rose in the early spring.



2

OPET reprinted "A Coastal Pond..." by K.O. Emery



OPET's reprinting of "A Coastal Pond Studied by Oceanographic Methods", the classical study on Oyster Pond by K. O. Emery, first published in 1969, with an update by Falmouth Pond Watchers Program Director Brian Howes and OPET board member Stanley Hart, has stirred interest far beyond the reaches of Falmouth and Cape Cod. OPET has received book orders from as far away as Florida and California, as well as from New York and Rhode Island. The printing was financed by OPET and by loans from board members. Sales so far have brought in \$1118. After loan repayment, proceeds will go to other OPET projects.

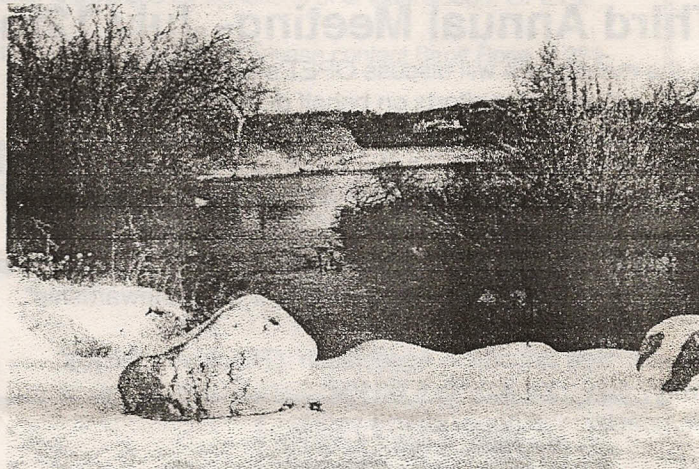


Order your copies now!

We hope the book will help inform OPET members and others of the history of this coastal pond and of the changes that have occurred during the past 30 years. To order your copy, fill out the enclosed order form and send it to OPET, P.O. Box 496, Woods Hole, MA 02543. You can also purchase the book from the Market Bookshop.

3

The Oyster Pond Weir Gets Closer!



The design of the Oyster Pond Weir (to be placed at the outlet of the pond, shown in the picture above) is now completed and we can move on to the installation phase. Mr. Owen of the Falmouth Dept. Public Works was quoted in the April 22, 1997 issue of The Enterprise as saying that "The estimate is about \$33,000 and we expect to file an article for the money at the fall town meeting."

There is the remote possibility that the Town may be able to get \$10,000 from the State of Massachusetts -- money originally slated for a project in Sandwich but which has fallen through. This money would suffice to get the weir project started and then, per a conversation with Town Manager Peter Boyer, Town employees would complete it. In any case, the work could not begin until October, after the fish migration season has ended.

-- Barry Norris

OPET Cash flow for 5/96 - 5/97

Starting Balance	3700.69
Inflows	
Memberships	5435.00
OPET Property contributions	13839.35
Loans from board members (book)	4650.00
Zinn memorial	1200.00
Book Sales	1141.90
Misc: Gen fund, pond mngmt	1230.00
Total Inflows	28440.11
Outflows	
Mortgage interest	11178.92
Mortgage principal	4767.49
Postage	320.00
supplies (stationary, etc.)	1056.67
Book printing	7158.64
Loan setup, legal fees, misc.	3958.39
Total outflows	28170.66
Ending Balance	2756.83

POND Samplings

Water level

With the abundant rainfall of the past year, groundwater levels are at a 20/30 year high, and so are pond levels. The good news is that Falmouth's water reservoir Long Pond is 4 ft above average!. The bad news is that many septic tank systems are backing up as the waste water has a difficult time dissipating into the water-saturated ground. Therefore it is very important to keep your septic tanks pumped on a regular basis, every 2-3 years!

We had a sort of test for the effect of the planned weir this past three-quarter year: Trunk River was allowed to stay silted in, effectively cutting down the salt water inflow to OYSTER POND. This made for a considerable freshening of the Pond's water and for a high level as well. In fact it was so high that docks submerged and some Pond abutters feared for their basements.

With OPET's prodding and the close co-operation between DPW's George Calese and SEA GRANT's Brian Howes, Trunk River was hand-shovelled out gradually and carefully after each storm, lowering the Pond level to about 6" above that of preceding years. Once the weir is in place, not only will the proper pond height be maintained, but also Trunk River can be dredged deeply enough to allow thorough flushing with each tide of the lower Pond -- and no more foul smells (we hope!).

Winter on the Pond.

Unlike 1995, this year's was a very mild winter here, with temperatures rarely dipping into the teens and snowfall deep enough to shovel only twice -- the last snow was so late in the season I for one did not bother to clear my driveway, letting the rising temperatures of the following days do the work. Oyster Pond thus never froze over completely or solidly enough to tempt any ice skaters (although some intrepid ice sailors did venture out one chilly weekend, zipping across the Pond with surprising speed in front of the slightest breeze).

The Pond was graced almost all winter long by flocks of the pretty but cantankerous buffleheads darting about above and below the water surface. The graceful hooded mergansers also were here, and every morning a troupe of red-breasted common mergansers fished the length of the Pond in synchronized formation, accompanied by gulls overhead. A great blue heron made it through the winter, too, stalking its prey from Wendy Gabriel's dock and resting in the picturesque tree on the end of the Dowling's peninsula.

Aahh, but not just feathered folk chased the under-water prey -- two otters also were spotted in February, climbing onto the ice's edge while loudly munching away on their catch. Spring has come and the mergansers have left, and the buffleheads, too, after pairing up for their breeding season further north. Peepers were singing away the nights all around

the Pond as soon as the ground had thawed. But only few were heard this year in OPET's Zinn Park region. Ospreys are back and three can often be seen fishing Oyster Pond and heard announcing their frequent catches with a plaintive, beautiful, high-pitched call. (Shouldn't we have an osprey nesting platform on Oyster Pond?)

-BR

How YOU can help Oyster Pond

If you have to use fertilizer in your garden / lawn/yard, use slow- release fertilizer. It is much more expensive pound per pound, but you get much more out of it as there is basically no waste in the form of unused fertilizer run-off. Plants can only absorb so much after a fertilizer application, the rest runs off with the next rain or watering cycle. Slow-release on the other hand, releases only a bit each time it gets wet -- one application lasts up to three months, and the Pond does not get loaded with unwanted extra nitrates and phosphates!

Be careful about what you wash down the drain -- some of it other than water may wind up in the pond! Avoid using bleach -- it kills not only the organisms you are aiming to get rid of, but also the good microbes doing the important work in your septic tank! Bleach is not readily biodegraded into components harmless for the environment. Use the least amount of detergents -- experiment with how little you can get by.

Don't ever pour paint solvents, paint, fuel or engine oil down the drain or on the ground! Just a little can poison a lot of groundwater and cause a huge problem for the pond.

Lastly, please get involved, join OPET, volunteer for a committee or for nomination to the board!

In Memoriam - Ruth Sager

OPET lost a distinguished, enthusiastic and generous supporter this Spring. Ruth Sager, a Professor at the Harvard Medical School succumbed to cancer in April. Ruth resided on Fells Road with her husband Arthur Pardee, also a Professor at the Harvard Medical School. Ruth was a world-renowned geneticist who most recently was investigating the genetic basis of cancer and in particular genes known as tumor-suppressing genes. Honors Ruth received included election to membership in the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Institute of Medicine. In 1994, she was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Chicago where she had received her undergraduate S.B. degree.

From the Membership Desk

May 23, 1997

We are a young organization and we don't necessarily get everything right the first time around. So, we goofed in the membership listing in the last Watershed: only those were listed who had checked off the Membership category on the membership renewal/donation forms. Others who made contributions to OPET but failed to mark "Membership" were not included in that list. We should, of course, have listed them as donors, and we apologize to all of you who had been omitted from that list. OPET from now on considers anyone who makes a contribution of \$25 - \$ 99 as a Regular Member, and anyone who makes a contribution of at least \$100 as a Supporting Member. Life Membership is awarded for donations of at least \$5000. OPET is most grateful to each and every donor for their generous contributions!

If you have contributed in the past year but your name is still missing from our list, please contact Birgit Rose at 289-7258 so that we may correct our database!

Reminder: Annual Memberships expire May 31!

We are pleased that our membership grew to about 150 in 1996/1997. We hope to continue to grow in order to further improve Oyster Pond. Please renew your membership and ask your friends to join, too. All donations are fully tax deductible!

Supporting Members (June 1996 - May 1997)

\$ 1000 - \$ 4999

Kurt and Margot Bloch/ Leo H. Bendit Foundation
Elizabeth Davis
James and Pat Ferguson
Eleanor Garfield
Werner Loewenstein and Birgit Rose
Arthur Pardee and Ruth Sager
Harold and Kristin Sears
Marjorie Whittemore
Don and Marge Zinn

\$ 500 to \$ 999

John and Judith Dowling
Mindy Hall and Lawrence J. Pratt
Robert & Jean Milliken
Henry G. Behrens

\$ 100 to \$ 499

William & Van Brewer
Catherine B. Carlson
Mr. and Mrs. Norman C. Cross
Mark & Sandra Challant
The Cunnick Family
Kevin and Jeanne Dunn
The Falmouth Associates
Richard and Cynthia Haigh
Stanley & Pamela Hart
Lon and Carol Hocker
Dorothy Jenney
Bill and Pat Kerfoot
Mr. and Mrs. William H. Klimm
Chet & Farla Krentzman
Melvin & Maxine Kutchin
William Lawrence

\$ 100 to \$ 499 (continued)

Ermine W. Lovell
Pete and Vicky Lowell
Eduardo Macagno
Marilyn M. MacLeod
Mr. & Mrs. Frank L. Nickerson
Barry & Barbara Norris
Joel and Sue Peterson
Mr. & Mrs. John S. Price
Daniel Reagan
Dana Rodin
Cecily Selby
John and Evelyn Steele
Geoffrey G. Whitney
Robert and Constance Wilsterman
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Zimmerli

Regular Members (June 1996 - May 1997)

\$ 25 - \$ 99

Act1 Real Estate:
(Ms. Carol O'Loughlin
and Mr. C. Edward Kemp)
H. Alfred Allenby
Nadine Athearn
Mr. and Mrs. Victor J. Aresty
Duncan & Dorothy Aspinwall
Proctor H. Avon
Janice Bacon
Robert G. and Harriet Baker
David & Rhea Banker
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard F. Beford
Jodee Bishop
Continuation of Regular Members
Carl Breivogel
Mr. & Mrs. William Burke
Arnold and Ruth Burrough
Arthur D. Calfee Insurance
Virginia Carlson
William & Barbara Carr
Carolyn Cate
Ema Chalmers
Richard P. Chase
Mr. and Mrs. Peter L. Clark
Tom & Evelyn Clements
Maynard M. and Doris Vidaver Cohen
Ethel Ann Conley
John S. Cook
Mr. and Mrs. Edgar H. Craig
Sterling & Mary Crandall
Paul and Mavis Crocker
Franklin A. Davis
Jonathan H. Davis
Kate Davis
Edward & Nancy DeWitt

\$ 25 - \$ 99 (continued)

Dennis and Sally Dinan
Mr. & Mrs. Richard S. Edwards
Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Edwards
Herman N. Eisen
Harvey & Marcia Fleishman
James & Deb Foley Harold & Charlotte Frank
George W. Goehl
Mr. & Mrs. Richard M. Goody
Marian Heath
Frank & Ann Heger
Frederic H. Hilton
Alan & Louise Hoblitzell
Mr. & Mrs. David S. Hosom
Mr. & Mrs. Holger Jannasch
Thomas Warner and Frances Johnson
Thomas and Amelie Johnson
Mary Jane Kelley
Kenneth & Marilyn Levey
Peter & Henriette Kien
Robert & Patricia Klath
Mr. & Mrs. Albert S. Knowles
Robert M. and Laura Livingstone
James & Maryann Lydon
Mr. and Mrs. Hector E. Lynch
Mr. and Mrs. Charles K. Mann
Mr. & Mrs. David Mauzerall
Edward & Gene McAuliffe
Jane McCormack
Walter & Frances McLean
Michael & Lyn McNaught
Otto & Jane Morningstar
Freelon Morris
Pete and Barrie Murray
Col. and Mrs. Paul Murray

\$ 25 - \$ 99 (continued)

Cortland & Nancy Perkins
John R. and Beatrice Peterson
Mildred I. Pike
John and Adelaide Quebman
Julia S. Rankin
Jeanne Remick
Monica Riley
Harris & Jeanne Rippis
Mary Louise Ross
Bernard & Erma Ruskey
Lillian Sanders
Irving & Muriel Saver
Milton G. Schroepel
Deborah Gates Senft
John Sexeney
Mr. & Mrs. Frank C. Shephard
Mr. & Mrs. G. Heulings Sherrerd
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Silverstein
Dorothy Skinner
William & Phoebe Speck
William & Helene Spurrier
Albert H. Swain
Emil & Eleanor Tietje
Eric Turkington
Claude & Dorothy Vilee
E. Graham Ward
Bernard C. Welch
Philip & Arlene Weiner
Drs. Donald & Myrna Weiss
Drs. Martin and Tanya White
Nelson Whitman
Arnold & Charlotte Wolf
Harold P. Woods
Laura Wolszon