



CHEBACCO LAKE & WATERSHED ASSOCIATION *Newsletter*

A Quarterly Publication of the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

www.chebaccolake.org

February 2011

From the CLWA President's Chair

Happy New Year! After the very hot summer of 2010, this year seems to be starting off with more extreme weather of another type.

Last year was the anniversary of several important events around the lake - the first manned, motorized airplane flight in New England took off from Chebacco Lake 100 years ago, the Chebacco Lake Association was founded 25 years ago and longtime lakeside residents, Jack and Mary Akin, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

As we start a new year, CLWA board members have already spent a lot of time attending meetings about the future of Centennial Grove, keeping the lake outlet open to maintain an acceptable water level, getting out the newsletter and working on the new web site. Now is the time for membership renewals. We thank everyone who continues to support the CLWA. If you are not a member, please consider joining this year. The work of the board members is all volunteer but the web site, some of the work at the outlet and the printing and mailing of 250 newsletters four times a year costs \$\$\$\$\$. Your support helps these to continue along with water testing during the summer and setting aside some funds for things such as future water level and weed control work, if it becomes necessary. We attempt to send the newsletter to everyone around the lake. If you know of a resident who is not receiving it, please let us know. The newsletter is also sent to Town and State officials, dropped off at both Town halls and libraries and left in a box at the boat ramp kiosk. The CLWA continues to be a credible voice at the Town and State level on issues concerning the lake and watershed.

Sincerely,
Sue McLaughlin

President, Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

Designing With Nature Landscaping for a Healthy Lake

Winter on the Lake

This is a beautiful time of year to enjoy the lake. As I have been out cross-country skiing with the newly formed (and very casual) Chebacco Lake Ski Club, I have seen people ice fishing, snow shoeing, riding snowmobiles and just walking around the lake, taking in the beauty of the winter. As I skied around the perimeter the other day, I noticed how many birds were taking advantage of the natural buffers that people have created at the lakes edge.

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CLWA Annual Meeting

Quite a few people attended the annual meeting on October 21, 2010, at the American Legion Hall in Hamilton. The officers and board of directors were all voted in for another year along with two new board members from Essex - Kirk Fackre and Keith Symmes.

Arthur Crosbie, president of the Hamilton Historical Society, presented a nice slide show about "Lake Area History." He spoke about how the railroad came from the center of Hamilton and passed Chebacco Lake bringing many visitors to Centennial Grove and the lakeside hotels, took lumber to Essex to build the ships, and hauled the ice from the many ice houses next to the lake. The electric cars traveled down Route 22 and were a popular method of transportation for many years. Mr. Crosbie also discussed the ice industry on the lake. Keith Symmes brought along a lot of old pictures from his vast collection of lake history. Everyone learned something about the economic contributions that came from the Chebacco Lake area as well as how much more public transportation was available years ago.

Longtime and new lakeside residents had a chance to meet each other and ask questions. Several door prizes were given out.

CLWA Officers & Board of Directors for 2011-2012

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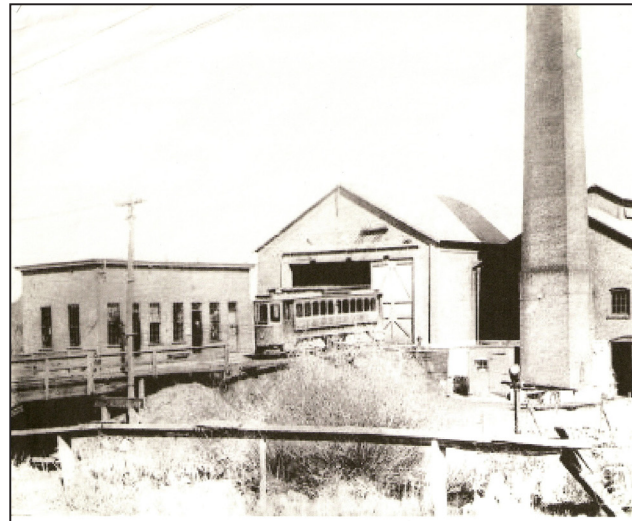
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A Brief History Around Chebacco Lake

The Beverly-Essex-Gloucester Trolley Line

The lake area has enjoyed a wonderful history that many are perhaps unaware of. One such moment was the existence of the Gloucester Division of the Boston & Northern Street Railway. The recent passing of the Junction Ice Cream harkens back to a time when this was actually the trolley junction of the Gloucester Branch from the Ipswich Branch. Included are photos of this



activity as well as the Power House and Car Barn which essentially still stands near Apple Street in Essex. When the web site for the CLWA is up we hope to load these and many other photos from the past. In its time power was provided at 600 volts by steam boilers heated by coal hauled in by the nearby railroad. What we now travel as Route 22 and

Route 133 was essentially the main route of the trolleys from roughly 1895 until about 1920. The system carried the workers to their jobs like the ice cutting jobs on Chebacco Lake in enclosed cars in the winter and tourists to many stops like Centennial Grove and the causeway in open cars in the summer. There were even luxury cars that could be hired with their plush velvet seats and car man to take small groups in the evening even all the way to the theatres in Boston crossing over through other street railway systems. This would be equivalent to hiring a long stretch limousine now a day.

The track was usually a single pair of rails, with turnouts along the way to allow cars to pass the other way. They timed the travel and if the opposing car had not appeared, would slowly proceed with a lookout leading the way on foot until the opposing car was observed. The cars started along their way from Ellis Square on Cabot Street in Beverly and crossed the railroad and had their first turnout near Montserrat station. It then passed through Wenham along Grapevine Road and into Hamilton and crossed the train from Wenham-Hamilton at Woodbury crossing. This was the second turnout and can be imagined looking down the gas line (train route down to the ice houses) at Forest Street. Next was the Junction (see picture on page 5) where it split continuing on to Ipswich past several turnouts along Candlewood, Essex St (Route 133), County Road, crossing the Choate Bridge into downtown Ipswich, then on Central Street and High Street to the Boston & Maine

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Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association

Membership Application/Renewal Form

For many years the Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association has been working hard to protect our most valuable asset – Chebacco Lake and its surrounding watershed. The CLWA continues to educate the community about our lake’s history and ways in which we can preserve, protect and continue to enjoy Chebacco Lake. The CLWA conducts water quality testing, works to maintain water flow at Alewife Brook, and supports conservation efforts to protect Chebacco Lake and its watershed. We coordinate lakeside clean-ups, we sponsor our annual July 4th boat parade, and we host our website, www.chebaccolake.org, which provides up-to-date information and bulletins.

Please join the CLWA. It’s an investment in the future good health and beauty of Chebacco Lake. All memberships expire annually on January 31. We hope you’ll join us.

New **Renewal** Member \$25 Patron \$50 Sponsor \$75

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Lake Address (if different) : _____

Phone: _____

E-mail Address(s): _____

Please circle all that apply to your household:

Lakeside resident / Property within 500’ of lake / Seasonal resident /

Non-resident property owner / Sport or recreational user of lake area /

Recreational user of Chebacco Woods

All memberships expire January 31.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Please send completed form and dues to:

Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association
P O Box 2344
So. Hamilton, MA 01982

Centennial Grove Committee Update

The committee has been meeting every few weeks since October and has spent the time gathering information about the Grove, including whether or not the Town can actually sell the cottage, the structural condition of the cottage and all the other existing buildings on the property, what would be needed for updates if the Town wanted to rent the cottage for events, and whether or not any environmental groups might be interested in leasing the Grove and/or the cottage. The committee has worked very hard collecting all of this information.

At present, The Town of Essex has put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to groups and organizations that might be interested in running the Town summer camp program at the Grove on a short-term basis. This would be instead of having the program run by the Essex Youth Commission, as it has been in the past. This move allows the committee more time to organize the data that we have been collecting and start to come up with proposals for the town to evaluate.

The Chebacco Lake and Watershed Association board is in favor of the Town of Essex holding on to both the Grove and the cottage, as we feel that any development of this property would have a large impact on the lake community. We feel that Centennial Grove is a wonderful natural resource that should be protected and preserved.

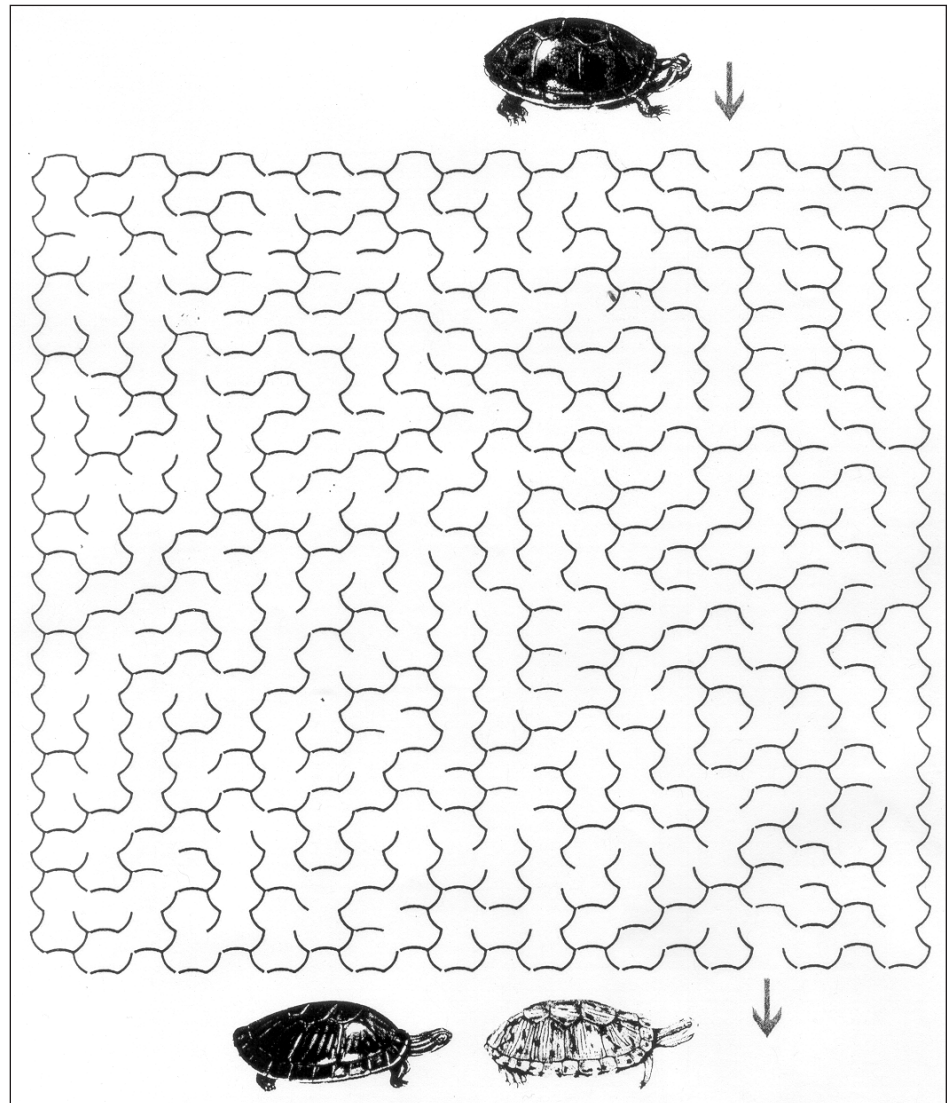
Do you have an idea, suggestion or concern about potential changes at the Grove? Please e-mail me at tripler3@comcast.net. I would like to hear from you. THANKS.

Robyn Kanter

Just for Fun

MAZES

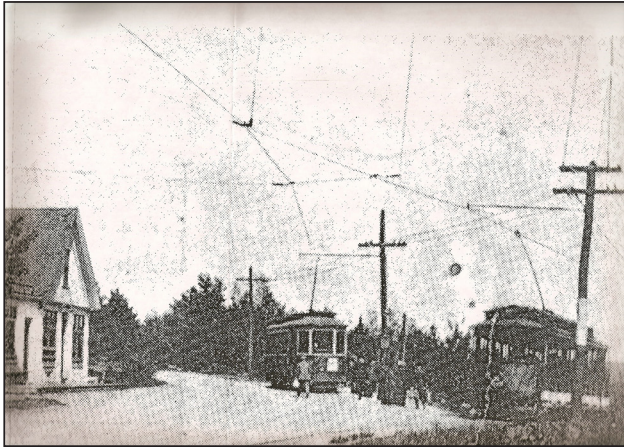
LEAD THE TURTLE TO HIS FRIENDS



The Beverly-Essex-Gloucester Trolley Line

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Railroad near their current high school. The railroad forbid the rails crossing here, so the passengers would disembark and walk across the B&M to then get on the Trolley to Newburyport.



Continuing on from “Essex Junction” (along what is now Route 22) the trolley would descend the hill crossing into Essex where there were several turnouts to a gravel pit (now Ice House Lane), then to Centennial Grove, then the Car Barn / Power House and then following along Martin Street where there was a turn-

out before Prospect Street. It then turned as it passed a waiting station at a drug store (where 22 and 133 meet today) and went across the causeway past the Conomo Train Station (still exists) where the shoe factory was on the corner of Southern and Addison, then on to an extensive loop through Gloucester, Rockport, including several granite factories near Pigeon Cove, with a split to go past another Trolley Car Barn, and on to Long Beach and Rock Neck.

There is a chart of times and fares showing the 8.8 miles from “Essex Junction” to Beverly. It took 45 minutes and cost a dime. The trip from “Essex Junction” to Gloucester was 7.6 miles and took 45 minutes and was also a dime. The third piece from “Essex Junction” to Ipswich was 4.9 miles, took 20 minutes, and also cost a dime. Putting into context the lack of automobiles and the popularity of coming to the shores of the lake at Centennial Grove (opened in 1876) and also the ocean stops made this quite popular in the summer. The ice business around the lake kept the trolleys busy in the winters, particularly during the prime cutting time from mid-December until late February. There were small electric heaters to attempt to keep occupants warm and occasionally they would get stuck in the snow and have to be shoveled out by hand. There are even pictures showing the plowed path of the trolley tracks along the causeway, as other wagon traffic would be diverted to sleighs. With the train covering many of the same stops and then the advent of the automobile and the decrease of traffic to Centennial Grove, the trolleys were no longer considered cost effective and were stopped around 1920. There is a wonderful definitive book on the Essex Trolleys compiled by S.R. Mears, with Curtis Haley and John Amlaw in the library as well as sometimes being available at the Ship Museum in Essex. It is also mentioned from page 95 on in the *Daily except Sundays* book on the local railroad by Dana Adams Story also similarly available.

Designing With Nature

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With all of this snow, the seed heads of a clethra (summer sweet) or the grassy flower of a panicum (twitch grass) are very important elements to the survival of birds at this time of year.

I have also been skiing over to The Sally Lord Soucy Nature Trail at Centennial Grove. It is a short trail through the woods that points out the history of the vegetation and geology of the area around the lake. It can be done on snowshoes or skis and is a great way to appreciate one of the aspects of the Grove that the CLWA would like to see maintained and preserved.

You may be sick of the snow, but the heavy snow cover is excellent insulation for plants such as perennials, herbs and roses. It is also good for broadleaf evergreens, such as Ilex, as it protects these plants from the wind, which is their worst enemy in the winter. However, you have to be on alert for broken limbs and leaning plants. As soon as you can safely get to a plant, carefully shake off any snow or ice and try to upright the plant as best you can. There will be a LOT of pruning and staking this spring to help reshape plants damaged by this heavy snow! However, there is not much we can do about it now, so get out and enjoy the rest of the winter. Spring is around the corner.

See you on the Lake!

Robyn Kanter

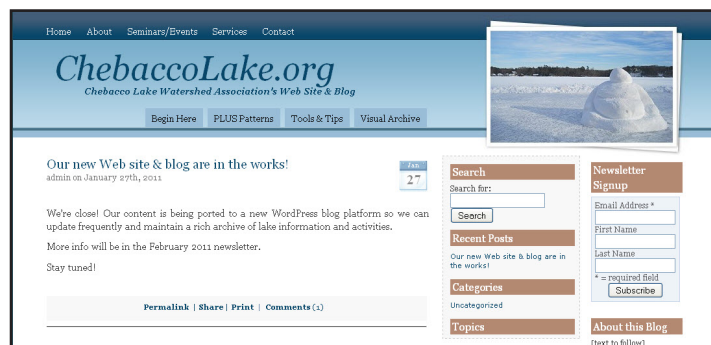


Chebacco Lake & Watershed Association
P.O. Box 2344
South Hamilton, MA 01982

Our new Web site & blog is here!

Our new online presence offers these new features:

- Blog posts on lake news and events
- Signup option to get updates delivered right to your email
- Community discussion threads on lake issues
- A library of maps, reports and photos
- Links to lake-related resources
- Archive of past newsletters and CLWA activity



We hope you enjoy our new information platform and visit the site often. Leave us comments and suggestions for improving the site. Sign up for email updates!

www.chebaccolake.org