



March, 2020 Volume 1, Issue 1

From the Board

This Issue is Dedicated to the Memory of Deborah Moore Williams, September 11, 1948 - March 17, 2019

Deborah Moore Williams founded CPWB together with Winnie Woods in 1981. Deb grew up summering on Hamblin Pond, learning to sail, spending lots of time exploring Washburns Island and around the Bay, just as many of us have done. All of her life she was a dedicated naturalist, always interested in preserving natural places and knowing the people who lived there. When, in 1981, she learned that a partnership was presenting plans to develop a large residential community on Washburns Island tied to a mainland terminal at the Swift Estate, she joined with Winnie Woods to organize opposition to the proposal. Together they founded CPWB and, against all odds, put together a citizens' coalition that resulted in the State's purchase of Washburns Island, The Swift Estate, and South Cape Beach, and the establishment of the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR). (See Baywatch: vol. 9, issue 1, January 2006 and vol. 11 issue 1, January 2008 on our website protectwaquoitbay.org for a more complete account.)

Deborah and Winnie carried out a truly major task. They faced an immediate threat, recognized it for what it was, and mounted a successful grass-roots campaign that saved land vital to the character of Waquoit Bay as a public resource for all citizens. In the years that followed, under their leadership and following their example, CPWB was instrumental in protecting several other major parcels from development. In the words of Winnie Woods on the 10th anniversary of the founding of CPWB: "We began with the hope that

Waquoit Bay could somehow be protected from the destructive forces of greed, ignorance and apathy; that our governmental bodies could be made to be truly responsive to the needs and will of the people. ... Unfortunately, the ultimate question of whether Waquoit Bay will survive environmental destruction is still not answered." (Reprinted in Baywatch, Vol 10 issue 1, January 2008.)

What, then, would Deb and Winnie say today? I cannot know, but I think they would agree with me that our problem has changed its form. Today we, living our ordinary lives, are the problem. Certainly we must continue to support WBNERR and the managers of other protected lands around Waquoit Bay. But our most difficult new task is to get ordinary people to change their ideas and habits: to dispose of our dog's poop properly, to change our fertilization of lawns, to vote the money in town meeting to stop damaging road runoff, to realize that just by eating and living we are loading our waters with too many nutrients and then to accept the effort and expense of wastewater management systems. And looming on the horizon is sea-level rise, a consequence of our recklessness as human beings everywhere, but a special problem for us on Waquoit Bay.

We would like to thank the many member Deborah's family and her friends who made generous contributions to the Citizens for the Protection of Waquoit Bay in her memory.



CITIZENS FOR THE PROTECTION OF WAQUOIT BAY

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Citizens for the Protection of Waquoit Bay has good news to share. It is currently at an exciting new place in its history. Last summer, long time member and environmental activist, Win Munro, started an initiative to recruit a group of new volunteers to help with CPWB's objective: improving the Waquoit Bay watershed based on what is feasible in terms of time and money. This fall, President Matt Patrick led the Board and members to fine tune the Action items, implementing long-standing ones and formulating new ones. In January, WBNERR's Stewardship Coordinator Jim Rassman attended the Board meeting to discuss common goals, needs, and actions. Planning will take place this winter that will enable CPWB to start in late spring with matching our resources and help with WBNERR's goals. It truly is an exciting time!

One of the first areas in improving the Waquoit Bay watershed is the installation of dog waste bag dispensers. This problem is worse than people would think. Several diseases from the waste can contaminate nearby streams and tributaries especially when left on hard surfaces like pavement. It's one of the reasons there are many shellfish bed closures after a heavy rain. This Action item will be started with the Quashnet Trail off Martin Road and will be followed up with Abigail's Brook Trail off Great Neck Road South.

Signs will be placed at the sites, along with the dispensers asking people to dispose of the bags at home in their trash. We will need volunteers to pick up the bags that are left there every so often. For a very small time commitment, this could result in an improvement in our local waters, so please think about helping out with this.

WBNERR will also be looking for Trail Stewards who will choose one trail and hike it on a regular basis. Volunteers will meet with Jim Rassman, receive instructions on being a Trail Steward, and report their findings back; the information would then be communicated to the different organizations. Some of the items might be the condition of the trail, need for clearing of brush and

fallen trees, wildlife sightings, and possible trail erosion. This would be a wonderful way of enjoying the beauty of our area as well as providing useful monitoring and information to local organizations. Another area of concern is the abandoned cranberry bog on Red Brook that crosses Red Brook Road between Falmouth and Mashpee. During the summer it becomes eutrophic with heavy algal blooms. It can't be very pleasant if you live in the area, so we are hoping to involve the residents in helping to improve the situation. Currently, sea run eels, Herring, and trout are blocked from the upper reaches and the spawning areas along the stream. Two other major freshwater tributaries to Waquoit Bay, the Quashnet, and the Childs, are being restored to their original state of deep narrow spring fed streams. All of these streams are noted historically as prolific spawning grounds for sea run brook trout, herring, and eels before they were dammed up to grow cranberries. It's Red Brook's turn so we are looking for volunteers to help Jim finish the testing and devise a multistep plan for its restoration. It's a very good project so let us know if you are interested.

Another Action item, road run-off that flows directly into Waquoit Bay or its tributaries is another source of nitrogen, phosphorus, and pathogens that contribute significantly to the pollution of our Bay and freshwater ponds and streams. Some of them are mapped, but there is more work needed both in identification and solutions. The local towns need to be alerted to these sources of pollution, and a case must be made to systematically fix them; volunteers are needed to attend local town meetings about the issue. Some of the areas of run-off can be controlled with retention basins, but the better solution for removal of pathogens, nitrogen, and phosphorus are vegetated swales. These are engineered wetlands with native plants that consume the chemicals in their root system. They take up space and can't be used in all locations, but the remedies must be prioritized and then pursued with the Boards of Selectmen in both Falmouth and Mashpee to add this important item to their road projects.

You are the best person to locate these direct runoffs into the watershed. The best way to do this is to take a walk after rain and note any areas of run-off at a pond or river in your neighborhood. Let CPWB know of the site and perhaps take a video of it. We can then add it to the map of other sources going into the Waquoit Bay watershed.

Lawn Fertilizer is a significant source of nitrogen and phosphorus in our waters. For over 20 years, our towns and environmentalists have urged homeowners to reduce their lawns, to fertilize sparingly and carefully, or to establish a "Cape Cod Lawn." At the same time slick home and garden publications and lawn company ads encourage us to do the opposite. This spring and summer CPWB will be mounting an effort to educate homeowners on the importance of limiting lawns and lawn fertilizer use, with special attention to those near water bodies. We will be holding training sessions for volunteers and sending them out to talk with their neighbors and organize houseparties. Please consider joining us in this effort. It may be the most important single thing you can do to improve our water quality.

So what have we learned? There are a lot of problems but there are a lot of solutions, short of sewerage, to positively affect the condition of Waquoit Bay and its watershed. Please step forward and volunteer to be a part of the solution.





The Doggie-Bag Dispenser is Up at the Quashnet River Trail!

We are pleased to announce that our donors may now make contributions to our new Agency Fund with the Cape Cod Foundation, the Citizens for Protection of Waquoit Bay Fund. This fund provides long-term stability for CPWB. To contribute to our Agency Fund please indicate clearly on your donation envelope that you wish your contribution to be credited to the Citizens for Protection of Waquoit Bay Agency Fund. The Cape Cod Foundation also provides donors with opportunities for planned giving for the benefit of CPWB and/or other Cape non-profits.

The Cape Cod Foundation has assets of over \$60 million and made grants of over \$5.5 million in 2019, including over \$1 million in scholarships to individual students. It can provide professional money management for larger planned gifts and the pooled funds of many small donors and small non-profits who could not otherwise obtain it. Perhaps more important, it can take a wide view of the community and respond to needs for small grants that are targeted by and for the community to the needs of its small non-profits in a way that federal, state and large national non-profit organizations cannot.

For more information on donations to CPWB contact 508-540-0981. For information on making donations and planned gifts through the Cape Cod Foundation contact Kristin O'Malley, 508-790-3040 or you can email her at komalley@capecodfoundation.org

Profile: Jayne Abbott, Local Activist



Jayne Abbott holds a special place in the organization of CPWB and in the hearts of its members. A long-time member herself and the keeper of CPWB's organizational memory, she served as a Board member and Secretary for many years and remains an active voice for us today. We recently had the opportunity to sit down with Jayne in her beautiful home on Metoxit Point overlooking Waquoit Bay and to learn about her life and her thoughts about CPWB's past and future.

As Jayne sits with us in her quiet living room, we listen to her talk about her active and meaningful life. Her words reveal a person who is all about taking local action to improve her home, her community and her town: always the concerned citizen, always interested in others and their doings, always willing to pitch in and get things done. Both individually and in working together with her husband Tom until his death in 2011, she has used her interest in and knowledge of local government to actualize her ideas on keeping the public environment clean, beautiful and safe. As a Falmouth Town Meeting member, a long-time Board member and Secretary of CPWB, and an energetic activist, she has used her quiet persistence and gotten a great deal done. It is not surprising that she has earned the title of unofficial "Mayor of Waquoit."

It is also not surprising that she and Tom raised three community minded environmentally active children; her eldest, Kathy Abbott, has been a well-known and well-respected leader of public and non-profit environmental organizations in Massachusetts for over 40 years.

In Jayne's own words:

"I was born in Philadelphia, the oldest of six children (five girls: Jayne, Joan, June, Joy, Jill; and one boy: Carlos.) My grandfather was from Panama, but took his family to live in France when my father was young. My mother was from Philadelphia and the family settled in Wynnewood, in the suburbs. In Wynnewood I went to school at Agnes Irwin with Sandy Abbott (McLean), my future sister-in-law, whose family own a summer home on Metoxit Point. In the summer of 1946 Sandy's mother invited me, Joan and June to visit Waquoit. Sandy Abbott's older brother Tom was there, of course, but he did not pay attention to me. But then, eventually he did. We were married in 1952, just before Tom left for two years with the US Army in Hokkaido, Japan, during the Korean War. When he returned he got a job as a buyer in a major department store in Boston through an army buddy whose family owned Conrad and Chandlers. We had an apartment in Cambridge, and later moved to Dedham. In the summers we lived in the "Little House" on Metoxit Point. This was originally the shop and art studio of Tom's grandfather. It was converted to a house

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for his grandmother after his grandfather died. Finally, in 1972, Tom and I tore down the "Little House" and built our house on Metoxit Point. I put 10 solar panels on the house about five years ago. So far they have produced more than 12,000 KWH of electricity and I seldom have to pay an electric bill.

"I worked for many years as office manager at Marine Research, which is now Normandeau Associates, a national science-based environmental consulting firm with an office in Falmouth. I bicycled to work on Route 28, sometimes down Central Avenue to Menauhant and then along Shore Road to avoid traffic. The traffic then was not as bad as it is now, and I went in early in the morning (7:30 or so) to avoid the worst of it.

"Tom and I were always active in the life of the Town after we moved here. We were both members of Falmouth Town Meeting. I was a member of the Town Solid Waste Committee. As a member of the Beautification Council I started an annual town-wide clean up which continues today. For years I organized a monthly clean-up of Route 28 from the Waquoit Cemetery next to WBNERR east to the Mashpee Town Line. We did our first clean-up in the Spring and continued to late Fall. After the work we met at the Moonakis Café. We had to stop a number of years ago by order of the Town after one of the prisoners from the County Jail who was cleaning up along another highway was killed by a passing car.

"For many years I also organized a late Spring clean-up of Washburn's Island to supplement the national Coastsweep clean-up event. More importantly I started a town wide cleanup in late April with each village organization, sponsored by the Beautification Council. The annual spring cleanup is still happening with support

fallen tree

from the Falmouth Chamber of Commerce. In recent years, I have composted my kitchen scraps for many years and have always enjoyed gardening.

"I have been trying for years to get the State to lower the speed limit on Route 28 as it passes through Waquoit. So far this has been unsuccessful. But just recently the State appears to be moving in that direction."

Jayne became an early member of CPWB and was on the Board as Secretary for many years until 2016. Today she is still vitally interested in the future of CPWB, and gave us her ideas for the future of the organization; as always, they were simple, direct and practical.

"We need to get more people who care about the Bay interested.

"The Moonakis River needs more attention.

"What Trout Unlimited, under the leadership of Fran Smith, has done in recreating a trout stream in the upper Moonakis has been very good.

"We should write more articles for the Enterprise. When Sandy Abbott McLean was involved there was a regular series of articles.

"Talk with the towns to get them to do more to restore the Bay.

"Enlist more members and join with other organizations."

Jayne Abbott epitomizes the best kind of civic leadership – collaborative, caring, and always working for her community, town, and environment. CPWB has been and continues to be blessed to have her involved.

