



WOMPATUCK NEWS

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Friends of Wompatuck State Park

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Five Kiosks and Two Docks are Completed

By Eric Oddleifson, FOW Secretary

Recently, two large projects demonstrating the beneficial nature of the relationship between The Friends of Wompatuck State Park and the Department of Conservation and Recreation came to fruition: the completion of the five kiosks with brochure holders throughout the park and the launching of one of the two docks that will be situated in Holly Pond.

This past spring at one of the FOW chapter meetings, the group learned from Bill Boles, FOW president, of a \$10,000 grant that REI was willing to make to the park. REI wanted something added to the park that would benefit its customer base (camping, kayaking, fishing, biking, etc). The Department of Conservation and Recreation stipulated that the money needed to be spent on a capital project. The challenge was to identify a project that would meet both of these criteria. Bill Boles, working with Wompatuck ranger Steve Gammon, developed the idea of putting a dock in Holly Pond that people could use for launching kayaks, fishing, birdwatching, and resting place for hikers.



FOW member Jim Dillon lends a hand.

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Bunker N9 in 1995 prior to its recent painting by the Kingston Boy Scouts.

Bunker N9 and Nuclear ASROC

By Jim Rose, FOW Historian

Bunker N9 is the most historic of the 108 concrete bunkers in the park. In the 1950s, the U.S. Navy stored its first nuclear depth charge there named RUR-5 ASROC (Anti-Submarine Rocket). Prior to the park's creation in 1967, the area functioned as a Navy ammunition depot called "Cohasset Annex" from 1941 to 1962. War ships carried the ASROC with either a nuclear depth charge that used a W-44 nuclear warhead or the Mk-44 or Mk-46 conventional acoustic torpedo.

The ASROC missiles were relatively small devices designed to fit inside an eight-cell box launcher found on most of the cruisers and destroyers of that period. The rockets

were about fifteen feet long, thirteen inches in diameter and weighed about a ton.

The ASROC weapons were transported to the Annex from the Navy base at Quonset Point, Rhode Island in a six-vehicle convoy. A staff car with a warrant officer led the procession of five trucks. U.S. Marines guarded all the vehicles. A guard tower manned by the Marines overlooked the bunker. From the Annex, the missiles were transported two miles east to the Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot (now, Bare Cove Park) and then shipped by ammunition barge called a "lighter" to a waiting war ship off Boston Harbor.

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A view of one of the new kiosks.



Two docks on Holly Pond will be used by kayakers, fishermen, birdwatchers and hikers.



Five Kiosks and Two Docks are Completed (cont.)

Holly Pond is not too far from a road, so REI could come and do canoeing and kayaking demos. Steve Gammon acted as the DCR liaison and acquired approval for the project and then secured contractors to begin fabrication during the summer. At the December FOW meeting, Steve informed the group that the docks were finished and one of the two docks would be temporarily installed in Holly Pond for the public to view and use before the onset of winter.

Another FOW project was also recently completed. Over the past several

months, FOW members have donated their time and work on five new kiosks installed throughout the park. Ranger Steve Gammon and his crew installed the kiosks during the summer. Afterwards, FOW members installed stained molding and Plexiglass over the kiosks to protect the information sheets and site map of the park, and most recently, fabricated and installed custom made brochure holders that will be stocked with park maps and FOW brochures. During the different phases of the project, we would frequently hear from park visitors how glad they were

to see that these resources were being put in place and how it would positively impact their experience and use of the park. Many thanks go to FOW members Andy Mills and Jim Dillon for their hours of work creating the custom brochure holders and installing them throughout the park!

Both of these completed projects demonstrate how the tireless efforts of many volunteers with the assistance of a committed park ranger, Steve Gammon, can lead to substantial improvements to this beautiful park. Enjoy! ■

Bunker N-9 and Nuclear ASROC (cont.)

By 2000, almost all RUR-5 rockets were replaced by the RUM-139 VL-ASROC (Vertical Launch ASROC). Besides ASROC, the Annex also produced the Navy's first surface-to-air guided missiles, "Terrier" and "Tartar," and first air-to-surface rocket, "Tiny Tim."

During World War II, the Hingham Naval Ammunition Depot and the Annex supplied ordnance to the Atlantic fleet to help win the "Battle of the Atlantic" and bring victory to Europe. At its peak in June 1945, the Depot and the Annex work force numbered 2,091 civilians along with 721 naval officers and sailors

and 375 Marine guards. Ordnance was also produced for the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The last military activity at the Annex took place when the U.S. Army Reserve 187th Infantry Brigade was stationed there from 1971 to 1982.

Currently, the Kingston Boy Scouts are refurbishing the bunker as a future memorial dedicated to the former civilians and military who worked at the Annex.

When the project is complete, there will be a dedication ceremony with active duty military, former employees, the public and the local media present. ■



ASROC and other missiles were tested here at Building 83 (now, half demolished and graffiti tagged).