



Fall 2006
Vol. 113, No. 2

AVIS Update

Deer Jump Bridge Repair

- Dave Doub

The winter ice and spring floods conspired to raise the foot-bridge on the Deer Jump Reservation east of the Fish Brook Pumping Station several feet above its supports. The repair crew, headed by warden Nick Orrick, had their handiwork tested a couple of weeks later when the bridge was under four to six feet of water during the mid-May flood. But the boardwalk reappeared intact after the water receded.

Helping with the Deer Jump boardwalk repair were Michael Stewart and brothers Max and Sam Ball; all three were starting defensemen on this past year's Andover Varsity Lacrosse team. That morning, while bammung the boardwalk columns, they were warming up for their afternoon game against Chelmsford. As the lacrosse team went on to play in the state quarterfinals, perhaps we could interest the lacrosse coach in making bammung a conditioning exercise for the entire lacrosse team. There's plenty to do.



Photo by Fred Snell

Michael Stewart, Max Ball and Dave Doub position a section of the Deer Jump boardwalk using a come-along.

From the President

- Fred Snell, AVIS President



A business trip recently took me to the suburban Seattle area. After work I explored some of the local recreational activities. In this area, the county maintains most of the trails and parks. King County, a huge 2134 square miles in area, has 175 miles of trails serving 1.8 million people. It's interesting to compare those numbers to Andover's 30 square miles and 31,200 people. AVIS alone has 30 miles of trails, and I assume other public access properties could easily double that. So doing the math, also assuming double the mileage is accessible on other Seattle area trails, we find that Andover residents have roughly 10 times the trail miles per person compared with King County residents. We are fortunate.

Over the course of several evenings, I walked about 10 miles of the Sammamish River Trail. This is a wide paved

trail with several substantial bridges that cross the river as needed. There are many bicycles, skateboarders, walkers, baby strollers, and joggers using the trail. The trail is a real asset to the community; I imagine that a lot of capital dollars went into the construction.

Back in Andover, one can dream of tying together some existing trails with other properties and making a long continuous trail along the Shawsheen River. Our current trails are rough and therefore more suitable for hikers than strollers or street bicycles. But we might consider, in certain areas, creating a diversity of trail types so that more people can enjoy the beauty of our lands.

I'd appreciate your thoughts on how we can improve our trail system and or any other ideas about how AVIS can better serve the public. Please contact me at 978-686-3647 or president@avisandover.org.

I hope you have many opportunities to get out and enjoy our AVIS properties in the beautiful fall weather.

New Accesses to Three AVIS Reservations

PA Students Connect with Stanley Reservation

- Mark Cutler

This spring, students from the Phillips Academy Search & Rescue program took part in a land stewardship project. The 'Trails' group built a new trail that connects the PA campus to the Stanley Reservation via one entrance from Hiddenfield Road and another from the Willoughby Estates neighborhood.

Led by PA faculty members Ada Fan and Clare Sisisky, the S&R Trails students designed a trail that is both visually appealing and offers a variety of terrain for the hiker. The most exciting part of the project for most was building the 32-foot boardwalk. The students studied other boardwalks in town and drew their own plans, ordered the lumber themselves and did all the manual labor. When the final nail was pounded they were proud of their accomplishments, yet sad that the season had come to an end.



Photo by Melanie Cutler

PA students build a boardwalk for the Stanley Reservation trail. Join us for a fall foliage walk on the new Stanley trail, Sun, Oct. 15, 1:30-3 p.m. Meet at the pavilion at Rec Park.

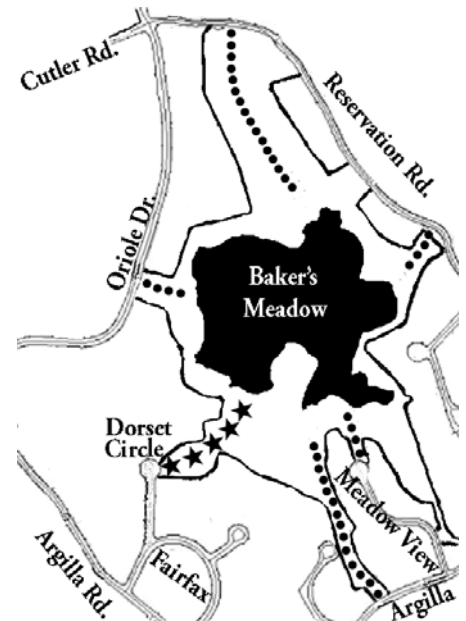
Harris Trail Provides Sixth Entrance to Baker's Meadow



Photo by Peggy Kruse

Suzie Devine and other neighbors build the Harris Trail on the land donated by Randy and Susan Harris.

In 2005, Randy and Susan Harris donated 1½ acres of land on Dorset Circle to AVIS; this land abuts Baker's Meadow. In November, a volunteer crew created a trail connecting this land to the reservation. In the spring, John Wragg added much needed stepping stones over a brook and also a bench near the rhododendrons at the entrance.



The new Harris Trail shown as stars, existing access trails shown as dots.

Chester St. Access to Burns Reservation

When AVIS enlarged the Burns Reservation in 2004, we acquired additional frontage on Chester St. This frontage was not immediately usable, however, as it came with a 4 ft. drop over a stone wall. This past summer, warden Allan Smeltzer built an earthen ramp from Chester Street into the Burns Reservation, opening up a new access for the public.

Reservation Courtesy

Parking: If you park your car on a residential street while hiking in an AVIS reservation, please do not block the neighbors' mailboxes. Postal carriers are not required to deliver mail to blocked mailboxes, so please park considerately.

The Bammer

-David Dargie

The Bammer is AVIS' secret to boardwalk construction. The Bammer is a hollow cylinder that is closed on the top and fits over a 4-by-4 support post (see picture at right). The Bammer's job is to sink support posts for the boardwalk through 3 to 16 feet of muck until it hits solid ground. Its 70 pound weight does the trick, that and the muscle-power of two or three people.

To determine how long a given support post should be, a long metal rod is used to probe the depth of the muck. The necessary length differs for each boardwalk and even along an individual boardwalk. The average below-ground length is 3 to 6 ft, but 16 ft. lengths are not unheard of. An additional 2 ft length extends above ground to support the boardwalk itself. After putting a rough point on one end of the support post, the Bammer is placed on the other end. In the beginning, each bam drives the support post six inches into the ground, but by the end each bam drives the post only a 1/4 inch. So there are between 20 and 100 bams for each post until it reaches solid earth. At that point the Bammer drivers are completely worn out and rest while planning the next post to set.

The Saga of the Bammer's First Boardwalk

-Nat Smith

The Bammer's first use was in the early 80's for the creation of our first big boardwalk, the one behind the High School joining Indian Ridge to the West Parish Meadow. I had approached some contractors to see what it might cost to construct the same. They said it was impossible; machines couldn't get in there and any man would refuse to stand in gunk such that you sink a foot at your first step. But I had seen these lovely boardwalks in National Parks in Florida and thought that there has got to be a way. Shortly thereafter, I was on the trails on Plum Island. They were gorgeous, built on quicksand-like land and just what I wanted. So I asked around and found the local guy who had made the boardwalks. I met with him and he suggested that I just take his Bammer, use it and copy it if I wanted. Wow.

Al Koch arranged to have a copy of the bammer made for AVIS. Now we were set to make the boardwalk. For human power I turned to my 21-year-old son Scott and we hired another young guy from town. David Dargie and I suggested the lay-out through the swamp with plenty of turns for strength and interest. We bought treated 4-by-4s about 10 feet long and



Photo by Mark Cutler

PA students Hank Williams, Ian Wollman and Wolfgang Siewert lift the Bammer to drop it on a support post for the new Stanley Reservation boardwalk.

showed the boys how to use the Bammer to get them down in the ground. Use an axe to make a point on one end, then put the Bammer on the other end and bam a lot. It worked beautifully for about eight posts. They hung the cross pieces and then nailed on the joists above

those cross pieces. Piece of cake. Until one day the Bammer sunk a ten-footer all the way into the ground, all ten feet of it. We had told these bammer boys to bam each vertical 4-by-4 down until it hard-panned and couldn't go down any more.

So now we order 12 and 14 footers. Some of them went all the way down too, but more seriously the increasing length of the 4-by-4s meant the bammer placed on top of the vertical

4-by-4 was now so high up in the air that only 10-foot-tall humans could reach the Bammer handles to do the bamming. I recall vividly the day when I went out there to watch these guys in muck nearly up to their knees with a very long 4-by-4, pointed at one end with a Bammer on the other end so high up that you couldn't touch the bottom of the 4-foot-longer bammer. "So what do

They said it was impossible ... any man would refuse to stand in gunk such that you sink a foot at your first step.

we do now, dad?" I took pictures and said something like, "This is your problem" and wandered off with some fascinating photos.

The boys, of course, were marvelously inventive. They manage to get an 18-foot 4-by-4 vertical with the Bammer on top. Getting it vertical looks like the famous Iwo Jima flag raising photo. They then poke the Bammer from below with a 2-by-4, pushing the Bammer up and then letting its own weight come down and drive the 18-footer into the earth an inch at best. Then do it again, one guy popping the Bammer up, the other guy holding the 18-footer vertical. Both guys are directly under the Bammer and one always wants to be sure that the 70-lb Bammer is NOT pushed so high that it comes down on you instead of down on the 4-by-4 18-footer. Slow and

dangerous work, but they did it, one 4-by-4 after another, two driven deep into the ground every 8 or 10 feet. A month of work, then put the nice cross pieces on the top and you barely see the hard work underneath.

And the AVIS Bammer went on to other boardwalks. And now, over 20 years later, I found myself thinking about Bammers while on a hiking trip to the French Pyrenees this July. 'Cilla and I joined this same son Scott, his wife and two children on a spectacular 5-day hike/climb. And what do we see in our first hut, the Refuge de la Breche, but a BAMMER. They use it every evening for the mundane and easy job of crushing coke cans flat so that they can be carried out to civilization more efficiently. Just lower that Bammer on a can and WHAM.



Photo by Nat Smith

Nat Smith's granddaughters Sarah and Hannah operate a Bammer in the Pyrenees.

Calling all brainstormers: How to sink a 16 ft post?

When the dinner table conversation gets slow, or to entertain your friends at your next cookout, try posing the Bammer problem – how to operate a 70-lb Bammer whose handles start off 12 feet in the air – and see how inventive you can be. Remember, you and the Bammer are knee deep in muck.

Or ditch the Bammer altogether and suggest a new way to sink a 16 ft. support post. Or maybe you have a way to float a boardwalk?

We will publish creative solutions in an upcoming Update. Practical suggestions may even get field tested. Please send ideas by email to update@avisandover.org or by US mail to: AVIS Update, PO Box 5097, Andover MA 01810.



Photo by Peggy Kruse

Helping at the April Fools Day cleanup at Lupine Reservation were Dick Dillon, Mark Cutler, Jeff LaFountain, John Wragg, Dave Doub.

AVIS Welcomes Our New Wardens

Emily Trespas: Stanley Reservation
Jerry Witt: Sunset Rock Reservation

Keck Boardwalk Repairs

Ten volunteers, led by Andy Girdwood, repaired the boardwalk on the Keck Reservation this spring.

Can You Help at AVIS Work Parties?

Many work parties on AVIS reservations are planned on short notice. If you'd like to be notified about these impromptu work parties, please sign up for the AVIS volunteer email list via the AVIS website (www.avisandover.org, click on *Volunteer*) or AVIS' volunteer coordinator, Libby Poland, at wolcott5@comcast.net or 978-475-6159.

2005 AVIS Annual Appeal Donors Raise \$105,700

Leadership Gifts (\$1000+)

Anonymous
Joan Canterbury
Carole & Alex Chanler
Matthew Dallett & Mary Pritchard
David & Kate Doub
Alix & John Driscoll
Foundation M
Andy & Tina Girdwood
Jim & Peggy Keck
Alfred Koch
Stephen & Hilary Loring
George MacNaughton & Deborah Warren
John J. McArdle III & Joan C. McArdle Foundation
John Murphy
Marjorie & Frederick Snell
Alfred A. Spatola
Abbot & Dorothy H. Stevens Foundation
Nathaniel & Elizabeth P. Stevens Foundation
Susan & Fred Stott
Mike & Judy Timko
John Wragg

Gifts (Under \$1000)

David & Louise Abbot
Jeff Perrone & Cynthia Ade
Anciello Family
Joyce Andrews
Mike Arthur
Alexander Asch & Rhonda S. Fogle
Cynthia Barakatt & Richard Bizzozero
Daniel J. Bernstein
Ruth Berthold
Grace & Jerry Bird
Daniel Bloom
Eric & Judy Braude
Don & Jane Brickman
Mrs. Carl L. Brooks
Nancy A. Brown
Fred & Diane Butler

Andrew Caffrey
Stephen & Paula Cahow
Carriuolo Family
Brother John J. Del Casale, OSA
Frank & Hanne Castle
David & Barbara Chase
Rich Cloutier & Peggy Kruse
Maureen & Billy Collins
Kevin & Cynthia Conley
Jim & Sue Conway
Evan & Dee Dee Coravos
Christopher Corbett
Daniel Cote
Charles E. & Margaret B. Crockett
Kate Miller & Paul Cronin
Anne M. Cussen
Kathleen Dalton & Dr. Wayne Wivell
David Dargie
Susan Feindt & Michael DeLaus
Cathryn & David Delude
Susan & Dan Dennett
Patrick & Pam Denny
Andrew L. Schirmer & Susan M. Devine
Katherine & David Dietz
Susan Dietzel
Richard F. Dillon
Lee Doherty
Ruth Doyle
David Dreyfus
Brigitte R. Duborg
Rusty & Doug Dunbar
Bruce & Nancy Earnley
Lynn & David Eikenberry
Richard & Shirley Eldred
Don Ellsworth
Joel Blumstein & Judy Eskin
Carolyn & George Fantini
Justin Fay
Cornelia Fitts
Alan French
Kay Berthold Frishman
Dr. Albert M. Galaburda
Sheila & Bill Galvin
Stephen Gates Family
Kathy & Ted Gilmore
Harriet Goldman

Martha & Chris Grant
Paul & Judi Guerard
Arnold Hanawalt
Patricia Holdsworth
Dick & Marta Hornidge
Dick & Judy Howe
Fred Anne Hurwitz & John S. Wessler
Fred Iannazzi
Ted & Holly Jenkins
Steven & Joan Jennings
Tom & Laura Jordan
Diana & Howard Kassler
John & Margaret Kimball
Paul Kleven
Robert & Sara Knapp
Wilhelm Kremer
Jeffrey & Nancy LaFountain
Kenneth Lamontagne
Kenneth C. Levis
Dr. & Mrs. Richard D. Lindsay
Frederic B. Lowrie, Jr.
John & Louise MacMillan
Philip & Susan Malloy
Robert & Ellen Marcus
Robert & Claudia Marsh
Paul & Anne Martellucci
Greg & Debbie Martin
Casper Martin
Arlene Mason
Daniel B. McDuffie
Todd & Debra Merrill
Joe Messina & Dawn Metcalf
Mrs. Dudley L. Milliken
Barbara & Dick Moody
Robert Morrison
R. A. Muggia
Molly S. Mugler
Richard & Gail Nichols
Peter Nordbloom
John & Linda O'Connell
Deb Olander & Joe Ferguson
Ethel A. Olsen
Paul & Sue O'Neill
Rod & Martha Owen
Vincent Paolino
David & Rachel Penner

Mary Ann Perry
Phillip & Patrice Pierce
Scott & Paula Preller
Hal Rabbino
Reghitto Family
Albert R. Retelle
Philip Retelle
Michael & Judy Rich
Maureen & Thomas Rickenbacker
Jane E. Risch
Anthony Risitano
Dean & Nancy Risseuw
Andrew Rouse
Janet Francis Russell
Odd & Molly Ryden
Donald Sagaser
Anthony & Gladys Sakowich
Don & Kathy Schroeder
Anne Gemmell Schwind
James & Helen Sellers
Marcia & Larry Sharp
Lance & Donna Shaw
Shawsheen Rubber Co.
Thyra & Andy Sherman
William E. Shimer
Dr. Curtis A. Siller
David & Leslie Silverstein
Nat & 'Cilla Smith
Arthur R. Spencer & Sarah B. Young
David & Dorothy Starkweather
William Steffancin
Muriel Sullivan
Carter Tallman
William & Christine Tebbetts
Cathy Tremblay
Lewis Trumbore
Roy D. Umanzio, Sr.
John & Joyce Van Drie
Frank Van Laethem
Geoffrey & Gloria Wager
Roger & Ann Wiehe
John Woolsey
Mrs. Ernest Young
John & Ellen Zipeto
Alan & Jessica Zucchinn

AVIS also thanks ...

- The **Boston Foundation** for their contribution of \$5000 in 2006 for maintenance of the Goldsmith Reservation.
- **Pam Eaton** who has stepped forward to take on the data entry job for our membership records.
- **John Wragg** for lending a helping hand whenever needed, including trimming trees and spraying poison ivy on the Shawsheen River Reservation.
- **Dick Dillon** for a clearing the Argilla Road entrance to Baker's Meadow and for a new bridge on the Collins Reservation.
- The law firm of Anderson & Krieger, particularly **George Hall** and Andover resident **Steve Anderson**, who are advising us on dealings with the MA Dept. of Environmental Protection on a *pro bono* basis.

The *AVIS Update* is a biannual publication of the Andover Village Improvement Society.

Fred Snell, President
Marcia Sharp, Membership
Peggy Kruse, Editor

The Andover Village Improvement Society (AVIS) is a non-profit land trust. Founded in 1894, AVIS is one of the oldest land trusts in the United States. AVIS' mission is to acquire and preserve Andover land in its natural state. More than 1,000 acres of land are managed by AVIS and are open to all for passive recreation.



Photo by Mark Cutler

Ian Wollman lends a muddy hand at the PA students' trail building on the Stanley Reservation.

AVIS Calendar

Sun, Sept. 10, noon-3 pm: **Warden's Party.** Barbecue and discussion of reservations. Location: Log cabin at PA.

Sun, Oct. 15, 1:30-3 pm. **Stanley Reservation Hike** on the new trail. Meet under the pavilion at Rec Park. Led by Mark Cutler, 978-749-4896.

Sun, Oct. 29, 1:30 pm: **Deer Jump and Rafton Reservations Hike.** Five mile walk from Deer Jump to Rafton. Meet at the leaf composting area on High Plain Rd; we will shuttle people to the beginning of the hike. Led by Dennis Crispo, 978-858-0394, highpt@cliffhanger.com.

Sat, Nov. 11, 9 am: **Free Christian Church's Community Service Day.** Work party on an AVIS reservation.

Sun, Jan. 28, 10 am: **37th Annual Rafton Cross-Country Ski/Hike.** Park on High Plain Rd. at leaf disposal area. Beginners welcome. No pets. Rain cancels. Led by Burt Batcheller, 978-475-3665, and David Dargie, 978-475-1149, david@dargie.com.

Sun, Feb. 11, 6 pm: **Family Moonlight Ski/Hike** at Goldsmith Woodlands for all ages and abilities. Bring a headlamp or flashlight. Park in front of #491 S. Main at Goldsmith entrance. No pets. Rain cancels. Led by Burt Batcheller, 978-475-3665, and David Dargie, 978-475-1149, david@dargie.com.

Tues, Mar 13, 6 pm: **AVIS Annual Dinner.** Andover Country Club.

AMC walks, see www.amcboston.org/andover

AVIS New Member Signup

(Current members will receive dues notice)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

_____ \$15 Individual Membership

_____ \$30 Family Membership

_____ \$100 Sustaining Membership

_____ \$500 Life Membership

_____ Additional Donation: \$ _____

_____ To Land Acquisition Fund

_____ To Land Stewardship Fund

_____ Unrestricted

Make check payable to "AVIS" and mail to:
AVIS, PO Box 5097, Andover, MA 01810

Thanks!

AVIS

PO Box 5097

Andover, MA 01810

www.avisandover.org

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

Paid

Permit No. 344

Andover, MA 01810