

Dear Friends,

It was just two years ago that a group of us met under the elm on the lawn at Fairsted to talk about organizing an official friends group for Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site. We've come a long way since then, and this report outlines some of our accomplishments. But the numbers and dates can never tell the whole story, or even the most interesting part of the story. Because that part of the story is, of course, the people. It has been such a pleasure to meet so many of you—at our public events, on walks and tours with the Park Service rangers, even (dare I say it?) at meetings. It is heartening to see how much Olmsted and his legacy of urban parks and beautiful landscapes mean to people in this era of electronic entertainment, demanding jobs, and time deficits. And it is heartening to see how many of you care deeply about our greenspaces, and work to preserve them for future walkers, bikers, birders, artists, athletes, historians, and anyone who happens to need refreshment of body and spirit.

We need all of you and we need all of your passion. As you know, Fairsted is currently closed for a major construction project. Plans are underway to mark its reopening with a nationally significant education program, new interpretive exhibits and films, state-of-the-art archival access, and major public programming. The Friends of Fairsted is already involved in planning, raising awareness, and developing resources for these projects. Please join us—there's a lot to do — and help us expand the circle of Friends preserving Olmsted's legacy into the 21st century.

Olmsted was known as a pragmatic idealist; so I write with pragmatic idealism—our founding year has opened many possibilities. Join me in bringing them to fruition.

Pat Suhrcke



President

Friends of Fairsted
Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site
99 Warren Street
Brookline, MA 02445

Volunteers *continued from front page* to slow construction, but to insure that no unnecessary damage is done to this historic property.

Construction is scheduled to begin August 2007 and last 18 months. It will be another several months after that, however, before park staff is able to move both themselves and all the museum pieces that have moved offsite during construction back to their original, familiar homes.



Fairsted staff and Friends' Board members tour barn prior to construction start.
Photo by Jean Stringham



Friends of Fairsted

Advancing the mission of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

Annual Report

Summer 2007

Volunteers to help with Fairsted construction

by Dave England

With construction slated to begin in August 2007 at Fairsted, five volunteers are being trained to help park employees with monitoring the work of the contractor.

Frederick Law Olmsted's house was built in 1810 and, as with all old houses, periodically it needs major attention. Construction will include upgrading the fire-suppression system, new heating and air-conditioning ducts, improving the drainage system around the buildings, separation of sewage and storm-water runoff lines, and new electrical wiring, particularly for the barn behind the house, which is being transformed into a three-season educational facility for children. Hoped for, but not yet funded, will be an improved cooling system.

Fairsted is a museum house. Every shelf, board, brick and bolt is part of the historic fabric of the building. Only the minimum demolition necessary to accomplish the work is being allowed. All demolition and opening up of access to needed work areas is being done for the contractor by park service staff. In addition, every shelf and attached table, most of the beautiful cypress wall covering, and of course, the floors, have been sheathed or covered to prevent damage.

During construction, every contractor employee will be accompanied at all times by park service staff during their work. If the staffer sees the worker start to do something that may compromise, damage,

or destroy part of the building, s/he will notify the on-site project manager who will inspect the work and make a decision.

This is where the volunteers come in. The construction workers need to keep working, but can't unless a park service staffer is present. And we all need our lunch and rest-room breaks. So volunteers will fill in when staff have to be somewhere else. Dave England, Fred Kramer, Howard Mayberry, Will Roberts, and Len Weiss will all serve as monitors during those needed breaks.

To those familiar with construction management, this intense monitoring system may seem obsessive, but if something in a museum is lost, it's lost forever. The monitoring isn't intended

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Friends of Fairsted Elects Officers for 2007-08

At its April 17 meeting, the Board of Friends of Fairsted elected officers for the upcoming year.

Pat Suhrcke will continue as President; Henry Lukas is the new Vice President; Dave England was elected Clerk; and Caroline Loughlin will continue as Treasurer. Also continuing on the Board are: Frances Shedd Fisher, Allan Galper, Esq., Betsy Shure Gross, Lena Martikainen, Jean Stringham, and Carol Winkler.

Two members of Friends of Fairsted's founding Board of Directors stepped down at the April meeting: Deborah Rivers and Mitchell Drucker. Thanks to both of them and retiring Clerk Julie Arrison for valuable service during the Friends initial organizing year. All continue to be involved in the ongoing projects undertaken by the Friends. Deborah will continue to serve as a member of the Communications Committee.



Friends of Fairsted board and U.S. Park Service staff gather under the elm on the south lawn.
Photo by Jean Stringham

Organizational Development

June 20, 2005	First General Organizational Meeting, Fairsted NAOP sponsors as fiscal agent
October 20, 2005	Community Meeting, Arnold Arboretum, Boston
March 14, 2006	Officers and Board elected
April 26, 2006	“Democracy and the Press” panel discussion with Victor Navasky, Jack Beatty, Robert Kuttner and Mark Jurkowitz, Boston Public Library (co-sponsored with Cambridge Forum and Brookline Adult and Community Education)
April 30, 2006	“Olmsted’s Brookline Neighborhood” NPS walk and Olmsted birthday celebration, Fairsted, (co-sponsored with Frederick Law Olmsted NHS)
May 8, 2006	Incorporated in Massachusetts
May 9, 2006	By-laws approved
June 13, 2006	Progress Meeting, Brookline High School, Brookline
September 2006	Friends of Fairsted joins Brookline Greenspace Alliance
November 2, 2006	Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Volunteer Recognition Event, Museum of Transportation, Brookline
November 18, 2006	Board Retreat, Brookline Public Library, Brookline
January 16, 2007	Selected first two major programs for sponsorship: Good Neighbors Education Program and Olmsted Lecture Series
March 15, 2007	Public Testimony at National Park Service Public Meeting for the Northeast Region on the 2016 Park Service Centennial Initiative, Fanueil Hall, Boston
Spring 2007	Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site Spring Program Schedule (co-sponsored with Frederick Law Olmsted NHS, Boston Nature Center, Brookline Bird Club, Forest Hills Educational Trust, Franklin Park Coalition, Studios Without Walls, and Zoo New England)
May 15, 2007	“The Cemetery and the Park: Nature, the Designed Landscape and Urban Planning,” (co-sponsored with Mount Auburn Cemetery and Frederick Law Olmsted NHS), Boston Public Library, Boston
June 9, 2007	“Partners in Parks” Conference (organized by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation), Worcester Technical High School, Worcester
In process	General Operating and Fund-raising Agreements with NPS, Application for 501 c 3 status as a tax-exempt organization

Good Neighbors: Landscape Design and Community Building

In January 2007 the Friends of Fairsted reviewed a number of projects underway or on the drawing board at Fairsted. Two major undertakings were selected for the Friends’ first large-scale fund-raising and community outreach efforts: a lecture series still in the early planning phase and Good Neighbors, an educational program about to enter its pilot phase.

Good Neighbors is a curriculum-based program that focuses on the art, science, history, and civics of landscape design. The third grade students who take part in the program are introduced to the work and legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted and the Olmsted firm. They learn that thoughtfully designed landscapes strengthen communities, and that the future of public parks depends on the stewardship of both the public sector and private citizens. Pre-visit classroom activities, a field trip to Fairsted, and a post-visit field trip to a public park or landscape architecture firm provide students a range of opportunities to experience the impact of landscape in their communities.

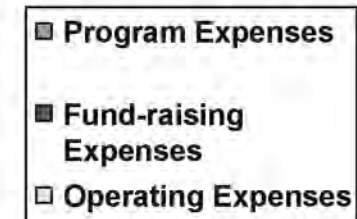
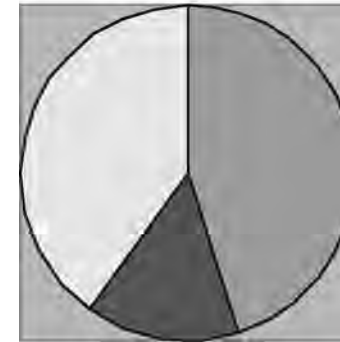
During its pilot phase, the program will be tested in selected Boston and Brookline schools. When fully implemented, it will reach 600 third graders each year. The program also has the potential to become a model for similar inter-disciplinary programming in communities around the nation.



Students from the O’Hearn School in Dorchester explore the Fairsted landscape. Photo by Joel Veak

Financial Report - October 2005 – May 2007

Expenditures



Income			
Giving Level	Number of donors		
\$25-\$49	16		
\$50-\$99	23		
\$100-\$249	17		
\$250-\$499	6		
\$500+	3		
Total Revenue	65	\$7,751.96	
Expenditures			
	Operating Expenses		\$1,003.14
	Program Expenses		150.00
Total Expenditures			\$1,153.14
Cash Balance		\$6,598.82	
Funds Committed			
	Operations		750.00
	Programming		1,300.00
Total Liabilities			\$2,050.00
Net Worth		\$4,548.82	



The barn at Fairsted will become a focal point for Good Neighbors activity. Photo by Jean Stringham



Program Committee members Pat Suhrcke, Dave England, and Caroline Loughlin meeting in January. Photo by Frances Shedd Fisher

Founding Contributors

M. Lee Albright
M. Harriet Allen
Charlton H. and Eleanor G. Ames
Phyllis Anderson
Julie Arrison
Simone Auster
Marjorie Bakken
Jane Barna
Jane and Ken Barna
Mimi Batchelder-Brown
Morton J. Baum
Ethan Carr
Brit J d’Arbeloff
Mary Ann Daily
Mary and Murray Dewart
Evelyn H and Robert W Doran
Mitchell Drucker
Emerald Necklace Conservancy
Dave England
Cynthia C. Finney
Frances Shedd Fisher
John F. Furlong
Betsy Shure Gross
Betsy Shure and Gary H. Gross
Saundra J. Haley
Miriam G. Jost
Sally H. Kahn
Jane Holtz Kay
Melvin Klayman
James A. Koll
Bernard Lebow
Newton and Arleyn Levee
Brenda Lew
Louis Loeb
Caroline Loughlin
Henry Lukas
Helena Martikainen
Hugh and Arlene Mattison
Howard A. Mayberry
Robert Mayer
Laurel & John McConnell
Alta McDonald
Doug Mink
Susan West Montgomery
Veronica Nanagas-Devon, MD
Patricia O’Donnell
Antonia Pollak
Thomas A. Reed
Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc.
June Richardson
Deborah Rivers
Tom Robinson and Susan Silverberg
Earle & Norma Rosenberg
Diane Tarmy Rudnick
Anne G. St. Goar
Fred Smith
Jean Stringham
Patricia Suhrcke
Tupper Thomas
Erin Vanspeybroeck
Elizabeth Vizza
Leonard A. Weiss
Andree Desiree Wilson
Carol M. Winkler
John Woodard and Bianca Pulitzer