

Established 1948

**Burnham Park Trustee Board 2005-06:****Officers:**

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 267-1224
 Tina Bologna, 15 Jones Drive, 267-1976
 Paul /Marla Moster, 70 Burnham Parkway,
 292-3026

Meg Walters, newsletter layout artist, logo design

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

All Morris Township meetings are held at Township Hall, 50 Woodland Ave., Morris Township and begin at 7:30 pm or 8pm unless otherwise indicated. Check www.morristownship.org for agendas, details

Township Committee (at 8pm): February 1, 15, March 1, 15, April 5, 19, May 17

Planning Board (at 7:30pm): Feb. 6, March 6, 20, April 3, 17, May 1, 15

Bd. of Adjustment (at 7:30pm): Feb. 27, March 27, April 24, May 22

Environmental Commission (at 7:30pm)- March 14, May 9

Open Space Committee (at 7:30pm): March 16

Morristown Bd. of Adjustment (at 7:30pm): Feb. 1 & 8, (in Willow Hall), at Morristown Town Hall, 200 South St., Morristown

Next BPA Meeting, February 16 at 7:30pm – call Lynn Siebert for details.

Everything you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask about BPA

Want the scoop? Visit our website, www.burnhampark.org or attend one of our meetings held monthly (except June-August) at trustee's homes at 7:30 pm. All Burnham Park area residents are always welcome — please come and participate! Just call an officer for details.

Not your everyday neighborhood association

Unlike those groups that regulate your lawn watering or the color of your house, BPA has always been committed to the larger picture...From its inception in 1948, our group of neighborhood volunteers worked to preserve, protect and enhance our homes, streets, and parks as well as the environment that surrounds us and makes our area the

wonderful place it is. Committed to stewardship of the natural and historic resources of our area, we have worked hard to protect and preserve the trees, streams, ponds and land that provide clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment that support us and all living things.

Plantings, Restoration

Our neighborhood's crown jewel, Burnham Park, was preserved in 1911 because of the far-sighted vision of Frederick and Catherine Burnham, whose family continues their generous stewardship to this day. Every Arbor Day and once again in the fall, we neighbors joined by friends and organizations from other areas, plant trees, install geese resistant buffers, plant wildflower gardens, weed, rake and pick up litter. In



addition, each spring, we clean the preserved area between West and East Lake Boulevards. Since initiating Arbor Day celebrations 18 years ago, our members have installed over 2,000 plantings in Burnham Park – and worked with the Town of Morristown to restore the park from its former status as a dumping ground and drug users’ haven to a place where families can safely come for rest and relaxation.

To further these goals of stewardship, our members have not only installed plantings and cleaned, but have attended countless municipal, county and state level meetings to listen, learn and speak up when appropriate. We have written many letters, made calls, sent emails, and spent innumerable hours interacting with our neighbors as well as local, county and state representatives and it’s paid off!

Sampling of BPA efforts:

Over the years, our members and neighbors have done much to preserve the quality of life, clean water, clean air, woodlands and wild places which are part of the reason many of us choose to live here.



- Thanks to BPA efforts, there is dedicated open space in Jones Woods instead of 198 condominiums. These woods provide habitat for the endangered wood turtle, a scenic place for hikers, runners, birdwatchers, resources for several schools’ ecological studies, a pond for fishing and trails for cross country skiers.
- The BPA worked to enforce deed restrictions in Burnham Park, preserving wetlands and the residential character of the area. Honoring the intent of the park’s donors (see website quotes from original 1911 deed), BPA prevented the addition of large parking lots, lighted sports facilities, commercial signage and the use of the park for commercial carnivals.
- Working with veterans groups. BPA helped in the cleanup of monuments and in the design and installation of the beautiful Baldinger bench, set within a grove of river birch (designed by former BPA board member and landscape designer, Sarah Cavanaugh).
- Former resident, landscape architect Carolle Huber donated professional plans for the restoration of the park which had fallen into disrepair and, together with the Town of Morristown, BPA has spent decades restoring the park’s natural plantings and scenic vistas. BPA also helped the Town of Morristown secure grants for the rebuilding of the pond perimeter.
- BPA brought in guest speakers/films on topics such as “green” initiatives in industry, reducing pesticides on children’s playing fields, deer resistant plantings, and has planned neighborhood picnics, spearheaded Neighborhood Watch safety programs, sponsored T-ball teams and contributed funds to



neighborhood Olympic hopefuls.

- We have also joined with our Washington Valley neighbors to prevent siting a jail, a reservoir and a psychiatric hospital, as well as the extension of Rt. 24 through this historic, sensitive valley. And we are now standing with our neighbors, as well as with numerous local and statewide environmental groups to prevent sewerage, and further destructive development of Washington Valley. We do these things to preserve the natural beauty, peace and healthful environment that draw people to our area.
- Recognizing BPA’s efforts over the years, the Town of Morristown contacted us and offered to install a new playground. Our committee chose the equipment and worked with the Town Recreation Dept. to insure the wonderful results.

Recognition:

In 2005, BPA was one of only 5 organizations worldwide to receive the prestigious National Arbor Day Foundation Project and Program Award, whose recipients were competitively chosen and judged for “impact, quality, innovation and the degree to which the work serves as a worthy example for others to follow.” We are proud of that honor but equally proud of the respect our efforts have garnered from major organizations, fellow civic groups, elected officials, and from our neighbors – far and near. Many who moved away started their own associations modeled on BPA. Others developed careers in environmental conservation, historic preservation, and/ or community stewardship.

Join us:

BPA is a living, growing organization – with room for new ideas and additional activities. We invite you to join us! Here are some of the ways to get involved:

- Stop by the *Moms and Tots Group* (see article below)
- Come to one of our Monthly Meetings, held at our members’ homes — homemade refreshments are always served! (Call any of the officers to find where and when the next meeting is held.) Why guess? – find out firsthand about neighborhood issues, share your ideas, talk with and learn what our representatives are doing.
- Check out our website: www.burnhampark.org for a more extended history of the association. There you can be inspired by the visionary Burnhams, and see the sense of stewardship of the land in action in the photos of our work on building the Riparian Buffer zone and various Arbor Days projects.
- We want to establish a Neighborhood Social Committee to plan events such as a group trip to a sporting event, a progressive dinner, a concert in the park, a wine tasting, a jewelry party...If you’re interested, call Mary Ann Gazal or Jen Carcich (numbers above).

- And for your own pleasure, take a walk in Jones Woods (a little uphill in some parts), or around Burnham Park's ponds on a Saturday or Sunday—early morning or twilight is especially beautiful. Or simply stroll the neighborhood and talk, perhaps we'll see you!

If you can't come to meetings but have ideas or want to contribute, call us with your ideas, comments, questions or suggestions. We'll do our best to respond. We welcome and encourage your input—our addresses and phone numbers appear on the masthead. We look forward to hearing from you!

Moms & Tots Update:

The Burnham Park *Moms & Tots Group* is a great opportunity for families to meet and socialize at the park or at a neighbor's home. Parents and children meet for playdates weekly and the moms in the group go out to dinner each month. Both the playdates and the Moms' Nights Out have been very successful over the past year. I encourage both moms and dads to attend our playdates!

Moms and Tots had a great time together in January. For the month of February, we will meet at Jen Carcich's house, 34 Mendham Ave. (on Burnham Park). Sundays, February 5th and 19th at 10:00 a.m. and on Wednesday, February 22nd at 10:00 a.m. Dates in March will also be set so please call for the dates.



Moms went out on January 27th to the Sushi Lounge in Morristown. (We changed the date to accommodate more people.) What a GREAT place to eat! This month we will be going out on Friday, February 24th. Please call if you would like to join us or have a restaurant in town to recommend. Feel free to bring your friends! Jen Carcich (973) 451-9090

Won't you help? *The Moms and Tots Group* have found it very difficult to sit in close proximity to the new playground as the old benches were removed during construction. We are trying to acquire a bench near the playground in Burnham Park. We are collecting donations for the bench at this time. If you are able to donate any amount, please send it to Bill Claxton, Treasurer.



Mark Your Calendars NOW! Arbor Day and Earth Day: April 22nd -(raindate, April 29th)

As part of preserving the scenic vistas of the Park for generations to come, we will be installing several new trees which can serve as replacements for aging or ill trees. With generous help from Vince Molnar, head of the Morristown Department of Public Works and the County Shadetree Commission, we hope to have several trees ready to plant throughout the park.

Anyone interested in helping plan some special games for kids...with prizes (for helping cleanup



or watering efforts, etc.) should contact Joe Attamante, Lynn Siebert or Jen Carcich.

Gold in them thar hills? Knox (as in Fort) had roots in Burnham; now Revolutionary War Encampment Threatened

The Knox Artillery Camp, 1779-80, one mile west of the Morristown Green on Mendham Rd, Rt. 124 west (between Egbert Rd. and Kahdena), was occupied by the Artillery Brigade of the Continental Army under Brigadier General Henry Knox—the same Knox for whom Ft. Knox is named.

The site was occupied by three regiments of artillery, and a regiment of artificers, mechanics who operated forges and machine shops to service and repair the guns. The men and officers were camped on both sides of the road, and the horses grazed in what were once meadows, now Burnham Park and Pond. Burnham Park land was also used as a parade ground for the brigade.

A resident recalled that “bayonets, firelocks and other evidences of the years of “mad war” were found in the “park”, which originally extended for one third of a mile along the slope of the hill. At present, the site is marked by a boulder with a plaque, two benches, a flagpole and a sign placed by the Morris County Heritage Commission. .

The plaque, placed by Morristown American Legion Post 59 in 1932, reads:

*Continental Army Encampment at Morristown
1777-1781
The Artillery Park*

Gen. Henry Knox and the officers under Col. Jeduthan Baldwin were encamped on the hillside during 1779-80.

The soldiers were housed in huts. The guns were parked along this road. The horses were pastured on what is now Burnham Park.

Erected by Morristown Post No. 59- American Legion, November 11, 1932

More information on the history of the park can be found in “Historic Morristown, New Jersey: the Story of Its First Century”, by Andrew M. Sherman, published in 1905.

General Knox, chief artillery officer of the Continental Army, a friend and confidante of General Washington, directed the American forces in surprising the Hessians at Trenton; received a commendation for his aggressive service at the Battle of Princeton; led troops at Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth and Yorktown, and helped to fortify Valley Forge. While at Morristown, he established an artillery academy at Pluckemin, the forerunner of that established at West Point, which post he commanded in 1782. Knox and Alexander Hamilton recommended the establishment of a military school at West Point, which became a reality in 1802.

In 1785, Congress elected Knox the nation's first Secretary of

War, a post to which he was appointed as a member of President Washington's cabinet in 1789.

All of the 4+ acre site, with more than 500' frontage, except for a 12' x 35' portion-proposed for a conservation easement (enclosing the boulder and benches) is now slated for a two home development. Morris Township says that it is sufficient to preserve a 12' by 35' portion of the encampment that once stretched for 1/3 of a mile along Mendham Road and along a portion of Burnham Park.

We wonder why only this portion will be protected, when the "Park of the Artillery" had a much greater length and breadth at the time of its dedication in 1932, and certainly during the time of its use. We believe that a thorough cultural and archaeological assessment should have been undertaken prior to any development-and can still be done- and ask Morris Township officials to do whatever is necessary to assess what lies beneath a site clearly much larger and richer than what they propose be preserved. We also hope that, in the future, the Township will be more vigilant about protecting our historical heritage.

CCRC Update

On January 5th, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection took testimony from the public on St. Mary's Abbey's site specific wastewater management plan for its proposed CCRC, as well as Morris Township's wastewater management plan.



During the afternoon and evening sessions, close to 70 individuals offered their comments. Individuals with ties to Delbarton spoke in favor of the Abbey's site specific wastewater management plan. Representatives from approximately 25 major state and federal organization representatives spoke against this plan, including the Rutgers Environmental Law Clinic, the former Jockey Hollow National Park Superintendent, Great Swamp Watershed Association, NJ Audubon Society, Association of NJ Environmental Commissions, The Sierra Club, The Highlands Coalition, The Morris County Visitors Center, the Morristown Historic Preservation Commission, The New Jersey Conservation Foundation, among others. Many, many concerned individuals and neighborhood groups, such as Jockey Hollow Historic Preservation Association, also voiced their objections. Following the extended comment period (to March 31), the state will either accept or reject the Abbey's plan.

We agree with the consensus of many experts that the extension of sewers into the Washington Valley Historic District will bring disastrous consequences for that area's historical, cultural and environmental resources: secondary development, increased taxes, removal of thousands of trees, increased run-off and siltation, degraded water quality of category one streams and primary drinking water sources, destruction/fragmentation of threatened/endangered species habitat, increased noise and traffic, and despoiled and degraded historic and natural resources, including the

nation's first national historic park-Jockey Hollow-and Washington Valley Historic District. In short, it would inflict permanent harm on residents, taxpayers, and the historical and natural resources that make this a desirable place to live and raise children.

Additionally, there are concerns about Morris Township's Wastewater Management Plan (which, according to NJDEP, incorrectly includes the entire St. Mary's Abbey property as part of its sewer service area) and the Township's efforts to downgrade Washington Valley's Planning Area designation from a Planning Area 5, the most environmentally sensitive and protected, to a Planning Area 3 which would permit commercial and light industrial development (akin to the city of Flemington) in Washington Valley.

An Ill Wind in the Willows?

At a stormy meeting before the Morristown Board of Adjustment on January 25, developers who hope to build 26 town homes around Willow Hall, the former home of George Vail, sparred with a member of the Morristown's Environmental Commission, as well as with residents who believe the proposal would cause irreparable harm to the National and State Historic Registered property and surrounding area.

At issue was whether Don Kissil, a member of the Board of Adjustment, who also sits on Morristown's Environmental Commission, should recuse himself from the Board of Adjustment vote on the application. The developers maintain Kissil's vote is tainted by the fact the Environmental Commission, which has made no formal recommendation to date, has informally expressed opposition to the project, saying it would like the area preserved as open space.

Mr. Kissil refused to recuse himself, saying that "doing so would negate the validity of the liaison." (Many municipalities specifically appoint individuals to act, as Mr. Kissil does, as liaisons between commissions and boards). The Environmental Commission will make official recommendations on the project when testimony is completed.

The developer also attempted to "cast aspersions on the neighborhood group that is objecting to the plan." (*Daily Record*, 1/26). Resident Carolle Huber submitted to questions from developer's and board's attorney about an email she had sent to neighbors and friends which allegedly discussed whether to bring signs and whether Thomas Brunelli, who was not reappointed to the zoning board this year, was a sure "no" vote on the application.

We understand the legal necessity to avoid the taint of favoritism or prejudgments. However, we don't believe either side should intimidate or try to muzzle the other, and we urge the board and all parties, supporting or opposing this project, to take a more tolerant view and not try to limit or shut down disagreement.

More testimony on the application is scheduled for February 1 and Feb.8, 7:30 pm, at Morristown Town Hall, 200 South St., Morristown.

Cell Tower Decision

Despite the public's well reasoned requests for Verizon to consider another less intrusive style and location for its cell tower, on December 19, 2005, the Morris Township Board of Adjustment voted 5 to 1 in favor of allowing Verizon to build a "stealth tree" cell tower adjacent to Mendham Rd./ Rt. 124. The height was reduced from 125' to 113' (110' + 3' additional for a tree "canopy"). Three variances were granted to permit this: allowing construction of this cell tower a) in a front yard of a property b) in an OSGU (open space government use) zone and c) allowing a tower without flush mounted antennae. 62 mature pine trees will be removed for this construction.



We thank Board Member Thomas Zelante, the sole dissenter, who felt very strongly that the tower's visibility from Jockey Hollow National Park was a violation of our national heritage. He cited the State Historic Preservation Office's finding this tower's location would have an "adverse effect" and indicated the Park at Jockey Hollow was "sacred ground." He wanted a less intrusive location.

Sadly the Board was not firm on this issue and did not require Verizon to explore other, less intrusive locations on the Delbarton property. Despite documentation of Delbarton's willingness to consider alternatives, Verizon's attorney maintained this particular site was the ONLY one permitted.

Two conditions remain before construction can proceed: 1) satisfaction of mitigation requirements with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding the "adverse" finding and 2) Verizon's attorney is required to furnish a sworn affidavit from Delbarton's representative, Adolph Schimpf, indicating this was indeed the only location Delbarton would allow for the Verizon tower.

Cell Tower Tree – (with apologies to Joyce Kilmer & thanks to Josephine Laitman)

By Dr. Lynn L. Siebert, 1/30/06

*I think that I shall never see
A thing as ugly as a tree*

*With branches made of steel and wire
Above the treeline, standing higher*

*Than all the living trees which sway
And shade us from the heat of day.*

*This tree is just a poor excuse
A counterfeit, a tragic ruse*

*Designed and built to signal phones
But built upon some real trees' bones.*

*No nest of robins in its hair,
No seasons' changes would it wear,*

*A metal trunk, fake branch and leaf
It mocks us all – who look with grief*

*And wonder why another way
Could not be found to save the day.*

*Poems are made by fools like me,
But there's no God who'd make this tree.*

Board News:

Recent elections brought several new Trustees to BPA:

Kay Kribs, Laura Bolson, Ed Villhauer (a former alternate), Cindy and Jay Li, and New Alternate, Tina Bologna. Our hearty welcome to all!! Our thanks to Rick Bye, former VP of BPA, who has moved to Alternate status...for his long years of service and to Sarah Cavanaugh, whose exceptional guidance in the Riparian Buffer Zone effort and multiple Arbor Days is an enduring gift to us all.

Donation towards new park bench

We are trying to acquire a bench near the playground in Burnham Park. We are collecting donations for the bench at this time. If you are able to donate any amount, please send it to Bill Claxton, Treasurer, 32 Dorothy Drive



Membership/Dues Payment

I/We enclose our 2006 Burnham Park Association dues of:

\$10 Basic/Pine \$25 Sponsor/Maple \$50 Patron/Beech \$100 Benefactor/Oak \$250 Thomas Paine Club

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

If making additional contribution, please indicate amount and purpose (e.g. plantings for Arbor Day, etc.)

Amount: _____ Purpose: _____

Fill in your name, address and telephone number on this stub. Make checks payable to the Burnham Park Association.

Sent to our treasurer, Bill Claxton at 32 Dorothy Drive, Morristown, NJ 07960. Thanks to those neighbors who have supported BPA so generously.

DUES PAID IN THE THE LAST 3 MONTHS OF 2006 GET CREDITED TO CALENDAR YEAR 2007

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