



Old-Fashioned Field Day Huge Success

Inside this issue:

[Founder's Corner
by Oakes Plimpton](#)

[Town Meeting Results](#)

[Clean-Up Date Wrap Up](#)

[Around the Farm...](#)

[Fourth of July Bash](#)

Wow! What an exciting day we had! The Friends of Robbins Farm Field Day was held June 10 from 2-5 p.m. and was, by all accounts, a smashing success.

The weather was perfect—sunny and warm. Families were out in full force to enjoy our beautiful park and all it has to offer. The first sign for the kids that it was going to be a great afternoon was when the moonwalk was inflated, taking the shape of a pink and purple castle. Kids were lined up even before the Friends membership meeting drew to a close. Throughout the afternoon, ticket sales were brisk at a dollar each with big kids and little kids waiting on line for their chance to bounce around.



We had a plethora of baked goods donated by members—cookies and brownies, pies and cakes. We even had a tub of sky blue homemade lollipops. And more than one person was spotted buying back their own baked goods!

The races and games were great fun for the kids and the adults. Whoops of encouragement went up during the sack, spoon and hula-hoop races. Many people took up the scavenger hunt, searching the Farm high and low for clues. We even had a tug-of-war, pitting neighbor against neighbor, friend against friend! Cutthroat to the end!

Entertainment was provided by disc jockey Matt Ruffing who played everything from Grease favorites to “Who Let the Dogs Out?” The musical highlight was Arlington-based folk singer Margot Fox, who sang crowd-pleasers like “Puff the Magic Dragon” and other folk classics.

Special thanks goes out to organizers Marion Magill, Beth Girioni, Oakes Plimpton and Jack Rogers. Their hard work, dedication and attention to detail made the day go off without a hitch. Also, thanks to Suzanne Kaminski who ran the bake sale like clockwork. Carole Kasper pulled together the FORFP information booth and manned it throughout the afternoon. Susan Bernhard handled publicity. In addition to our dedicated Board members, we also had a host of volunteers who made the day fun for

everyone: Steve Pratt, Linda Ploude, Mary Anne Comeau, Mike Sacarny, Sharon Days, Jennifer Ouellette, Leslie Ouellette, Barbara Downey, Bettina Gentile, Chris Kasper, Banks Poor, Dorothy Lally, Anne Wynne, Mary Platt, John Ouellette, Michael Rothenberg, Karen Buetens, Stephanie Fransoza, Sally Chvany, Doris Lowey, Peter Aladjem, Annie Homza, Martha Parravano, Marianne White, Kaye Denny, Ken Reilly and Jean Hopkins. Special thanks also to Bill Jaeger, Arlington Youth Soccer, and Arlington Emergency Services. Thanks for coming out, having fun and helping bring the Robbins Farm community together. Enjoy the photos on the insert!

Fun Forecast for Robbins Farm

- Big Fourth of July Bash with refreshments, entertainment, and live simulcast of the Boston Pops.
- Movie Night planned for August. Watch bulletin boards and the newspaper for more info!
- Kite Day coming in the Fall!



Founder's Corner

by Oakes Plimpton

A Model Field Day at the Farm

As you may note elsewhere in the Almanac, Friends held an old fashioned field day June 10th, inspired by the description of a field day held 58 years ago at the Farm! Follows excerpts of the article: "The Ladies Shuffle Board Tournament, the first of its kind to be played in Arlington (see photo below!), was won by Mrs. I.M. Sholkin of 80 Grand View road. Mrs. Sholkin, despite having played the game frequently in Florida, had no easy time winning, and played four very close matches before disposing of Miss Lindy Osterlund in her fifth match, in which three games were necessary and the final outcome in doubt all the way. The horseshoe tournament for older boys was won by lanky, leisurely "Andy" Anderson who threw a high percentage of ringers in his final match with Paul McElligott, a dark horse and a coming champion. John Cadeiro won the tournament for boys 14 to 16 years old, but only after several close calls. Donald Kelley, last year's runner-up, carried the honors in the tournament of boys under 14. Donald, much smaller and younger than many of his competitors, found size and age no handicap and lost but a single game during the entire play. The crowd was highly amused by the field events. These included hoop races, potato races, balloon blowing and a snow shoe race. The feature field event was a tug-of-war between a dozen of the

older boys and a group of British and American sailors assisted by a few local men to make up the required number. On the first try the rope parted and the seafarers landed, but not in the manner to which they were accustomed and to the accompaniment of roars from the crowd. On the second try the hawser held and the navy nearly dragged the boys into the Brackett School yard. One of the quieter, but nevertheless popular, features of the day was an exhibit of garden produce and canned goods by the 66 Robbins Farm Victory Gardeners. Many different classes of produce were exhibited and ribbons were awarded for the exhibits judged to be the best. Many of the spectators were surprised to see a chart showing, among other things, that 5,365 pints of various vegetables have been canned by the hard-working Robbins Farmers, who also have many bushels of potatoes and other storable vegetables not shown on the chart. In addition, they have been eating their heads off to consume the things they could not can. Among the notables present were Chairman of the Board of Selectmen Harold Estabrook and Secretary of the Board James Golden, Jr.. Police Chief Archie Bullock was a contestant in the men's horseshoe tournament, but was eliminated in the second round by Mac McEllicott. Park Commissioner Henderson was also eliminated in the second round by Arthur Paresky. . . . Repre-

sentative Hollis M. Gott was a welcome guest and expressed admiration for the fine work done thus far in furnishing play facilities at the Farm. Board of Health member John Crosby acted as one of the judges of garden produce. One of the most popular of the entire gathering was none other than Nathan Robbins, former owner of the Farm, and a favorite of the children, several generations of them in fact. . . . The days activities wound up with a movie show with the screen set up near the barn. Though as the moon rose the air became chilly the crowd stayed on to the very end and was then reluctant to call it a day.

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Oakes' book, *Robbins Farm, a History*, is available at Robbins Library, the Historical Society, Jefferson Cutter House and the Town Barbershop or by email, robbins_farm@hotmail.com.

Town Meeting Addresses Parks and Rec Budget, Community Preservation

By Roly Chaput, Vice-President and Marc Dohan

This year Town Meeting appropriated \$323,000 to improve Robbins Farm Park. This approval followed a lengthy process that involved the Town's Park and Recreation Commission, the Town's Finance Committee, the Town's Capital Planning Committee, and the Town's Department of Planning and Community Development.

The Park and Recreation Commission had recommended that the Town appropriate \$1,000,000 to improve Robbins Farm Park over the course of several years. After reviewing all of the Town's capital needs, the Capital Planning Committee's proposal to Town Meeting included \$300,000 that was appropriated this year, and suggested spending an additional \$150,000 in Fiscal Year 2004. In recommending this \$450,000 financial blueprint

to Town Meeting, the Capital Planning Committee noted, "it was supporting the first phase of the project to address the play area which is falling apart and unsafe. The remaining phases of this project are being reviewed."

Town Meeting also approved spending \$23,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to provide for handicap accessibility to the park, including improving pathways and access to play equipment.

Now that Town Meeting has appropriated money to improve Robbins Farm Park, the Park and Recreation Commission will begin the process of deciding how that money will actually be spent. The Friends of Robbins Farm Park will work with the Park and Recreation Commission and other appropriate Town officials and committees as the Town completes its plans to improve the park.

The Community Preservation Act received a somewhat

positive start with the creation of a CPA Review Committee at the Annual Town Meeting.

Town Meeting had to deal with big financial hits this year and Town Council John Maher recommended we set up the study committee rather than join up right away. A study committee will keep us in the loop without actually committing too early.

Friends Marc Dohan and Roly Chaput are interested in working on the committee.

Farm Gets a Good Spring Cleaning

Thanks to the many volunteers who helped make our third annual Robbins Farm Clean-up Day a success. Over forty folks from toddlers to seniors spent a few hours raking, shoveling, cleaning, sweeping and spreading throughout several areas of the Farm.

Special thanks to Bill Jones,

Director of Natural Resources and to Dave, Ron, John and Mike for assisting us with trucks and materials. We could not have accomplished as much without them. We got five loads of new sand for the play area, a load of wood chips and a couple loads of loam which were spread on some troublesome bare spots

along with fifty pounds of grass seed. The town also donated two gallons of green paint for the picnic tables and benches around the play area and the ball field.

Again thanks to all and I know everyone will enjoy Robbins Farm Park that much more because it has had its Spring Cleaning!

Around the Farm...

- ⇒ **We need volunteers** for our July 4th event! Please, email FORFP at robbins_farm@hotmail.com or call 781-646-3378. Just one hour would help tremendously! We expect a big crowd and need lots of help.
- ⇒ **New membership forms** have been sent to all Friends of Robbins Farm. We are hoping to get everyone on the same

membership cycle so please send in your membership renewal. Your membership dues will help in our efforts to continue to work on behalf of the community to improve Robbins Farm. If you didn't get a form or would like to become a Friend of Robbins Farm, send an email to robbins_farm@hotmail.com or call 781-648-1998.

- ⇒ **Monthly meetings** of Friends of Robbins Farm Park are held on the second Wednesday at 7:30pm at the Jefferson-Cutter House, the white historical home on the corner of Mass. Ave. and Route 60 in Arlington Center. Park in the public lot behind the building and enter through the rear door. All are welcome!

- ⇒ FORFP will be hosting a **movie night** in August, likely either the 10th or the 17th. Watch for more information in the Advocate and around the neighborhood!
- ⇒ We hope to have our **web site** up soon so keep an eye out for it linked to your favorite town sites!



Friends of Robbins Farm Park

Home

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The Friends of Robbins Farm Park is a community organization formed to promote the beautification, restoration, improvement and maintenance of the Robbins Farm Park in Arlington Heights, Massachusetts. We sponsor and promote cultural, educational, recreational and other community activities throughout the year. We invite active membership in the organization and seek to represent the Robbins Farm Park community.

Fourth of July Bash at the Farm

With the Boston skyline as a backdrop, Robbins Farm will again be *the* place to be on the Fourth of July! About 3,000 people converged on the Farm last year to celebrate Independence Day. Organizers of this year's event expect it to be equally well attended.

The Robbins Farm Independence Day Celebration will begin at 7:00pm with a live performance by the John Penny Band. At around 9:00pm, a simulcast of the Boston Pops concert will be projected on a large screen and will culminate with the fireworks display over the Esplanade.

This event is being put on with the help of Jack Hurd, who chaired last year's Millennium events and several Arlington town departments. Corporate sponsors are Medford Bank,



The John Penny Band will perform.

NSTAR, and AT&T. The Friends of Robbins Farm Park will be selling refreshments. (Contact us if you can volunteer to help!)

So when you've had your fill of barbecue chicken and watermelon, grab a blanket and head over to Robbins Farm on the 4th!



Robbins Farm Almanac is a quarterly newsletter published by the Friends of Robbins Farm Park. Please submit any articles or suggestions to:
robbins_farm@hotmail.com

Friends of Robbins Farm Park Officers 2001-2002

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