

Friends of Greenwich Point



P.O. BOX 711 • OLD GREENWICH, CT 06870 • Fall 2023

2023 Accomplishments

Conservation Initiatives

- Water Garden construction
- Restoration of South Beach area by adding fencing, American beachgrass plugs, native roses, shrubs, and trees
- Fortifying dunes with fencing and recycled Christmas trees
- Volunteer workdays to cut back invasive vines/remove invasive plants
- Planting native trees, bushes, and ferns with help from school groups
- Developing a meadow with goldenrod, milkweed, and other native plants

(Cont'd on p. 3)



Patty Nizlek and Diana Klingner put up tree guards to protect tree bark from nibbling deer.

Summer Conservation Programs



Greenwich Academy students enjoy the view of the Sound after a busy morning of weeding, digging, and planting.

Restoration Efforts at South Beach

Our dedicated team embarked on a journey to restore the natural beauty of the South Beach area at the Point. We focused on adding essential plants to rejuvenate the ecosystem and abate erosion. American Beachgrass plugs, Bayberry, Groundsel, Virginia Rose, American Holly, and Eastern Red Cedars were all added to enhance the landscape and fight degradation of the shoreline.

Planting Native Trees, Bushes, and Ferns

We also focused on planting beautiful native trees, bushes, and ferns, creating a multi-tiered habitat. This proactive step is pivotal in maintaining ecological balance and restoring the Point to its natural, flourishing state. By building a native understory, we can give wildlife proper cover that will hopefully be used for nesting in the future. You can see new plantings at the Big Rock, South Beach, Holly Grove, and the Mansion.

Native Meadow

This vibrant space now features Goldenrod, Milkweed, and White Snakeroot. The meadow is beautiful and serves as a haven for local wildlife and pollinators. We are actively weeding to give these native species a better shot at thriving. This area is especially important for migrant birds. The meadow generates food for these birds to gain energy along their journey.

Fall 2023

Friends Builds A Fresh Water Supply for Wildlife at the Point



The new Water Garden: water cascades over the rock-based structure, seeps below ground, and then recirculates back to the surface.

For the first time in Greenwich Point Park's history, a continuous source of freshwater flows for birds and other wildlife. After years of planning, construction of a Water Garden in the western part of the Park is complete. The funding and management of this project was provided by the Friends of Greenwich Point, with the collaboration of the Town Parks and Recreation Department and the Conservation Commission.

The need for a year-round water source for Park wildlife has become more pressing. The 2019 Journal of Science reported that the bird population in North America has declined by almost 30% since 1970, particularly

among birds migrating along the Eastern U.S.

In 2021, after consulting with nearby coastal parks, Friends of Greenwich Point decided to take action to support bird migration, feeding and breeding territories by building a water garden. The project is in keeping with FoGP's commitment to responsible stewardship and protection of the Point's natural environment.

FoGP directors and Town officers identified a site 200 feet north of the former Tod mansion lawn in a clearing in the woods with little human foot traffic. Birds'-eye visibility and limited human presence were key criteria for attracting and retaining birds.

FoGP director Mark DeRiemer served as project manager for the water garden construction, which required meticulous planning at all stages. Loglisci Water Gardens created a rock-based structure that recirculates water continuously for as much of the year as weather permits.

With the help of the Conservation Commission, FoGP engaged an archaeology team to protect artifacts at the site. In one of the 20-inch deep test pits, the team discovered a fragment of clay pottery estimated to be over 500 years old. They also found an underground area of three cubic feet with numerous clam shells, likely discarded by early natives where they cooked and ate the island's abundant clams. These finds resulted in relocation of the water garden site.

The finished product is beautiful! Water cascades over ornamental rocks at different speeds to accommodate birds drinking or bathing. Once it flows off the edges of the platform boulders, the water percolates down past rock and a layer of gravel to the reservoir below. It then recirculates back up the three-foot tall central rock to produce the gently gurgling two-inch tall "fountain."

Come by and have a look!

Fall 2023

Thank you, Water Garden Planners and Builders!

It took dedication and expertise of many kinds to create the new Water Garden at Greenwich Point Park.

Heartfelt thanks go out to Water Garden project manager Mark DeRiemer and to those who worked hard on this project over the years, including FoGP board members, Town Parks and Recreation officers, including Tree Warden Dr. Gregory Kramer, and Darrin Wigglesworth. Special thanks to former Board members who promoted this project early on: past president Wendy Enelow, Matthew Popp, and Meredith Sampson and Cynthia Ehlinger, the founders and advisors of the First Sunday Bird Walk Program.



A robin bathes happily in the new Water Garden.



From left: Archeologist Dawn Louise Brown, FoGP President Jane Kuesel, Project Manager Mark DeRiemer, Builder Andrew Loglisci, and Archeologist Ernest Wiegand.

2023 Accomplishments (cont'd from p. 1)

Educational Programs:

- Winter Scavenger Hunt
- Mindfulness Classes
- Educational Tree Walk
- Baby Farm Animals Program
- Horseshoe Crabs Program
- Purple Martins Program
- Monthly First Sunday Bird Walks

Community Programs:

- 3rd annual Comedy Night
- 10th annual holiday ornament
- 4 summer concerts
- 2 Honorary Lifetime memberships awarded

- Art Show "Experience the Sound" featuring four local artists showing views of the Point
- Participating in beach cleanups and other outreach programs
- 25th year of Safe Road Sundays
- Annual Mary Raymond Scholarship awarded to a GHS Senior
- 11th Annual Thank-you Lunch for the Town Employees who help keep the Point so beautiful for all of us

For details on all of our work, check out our website for past copies of our newsletters.

Fall 2023

Photos from Paige Davis, Old Greenwich Photographer

Comedy Night a Hit!



The third annual Comedy Night extravaganza under the big tent took place on September 9th. The annual fundraiser for the Friends of Greenwich Point, held at the Clambake Pavilion, drew 350 people, who shared in the festivities by bringing their own food, drink, and table decorations. The audience was delighted by an MC and four talented comedians, direct from comedy clubs in NYC. Many thanks to organizers Kerri Kinsella and Stephanie and Jeff Norton!

Safe Roads Sundays Returns to the Point

The popular Safe Roads Sundays program returns to the Point for its 26th year under the continued sponsorship of the Friends of Greenwich Point. Safe Roads provides traffic-restricted use of the main loop road at Greenwich Point for the benefit of pedestrians, joggers, strollers, and bikers.

This year's season will run every Sunday from Nov. 19 to Sunday, April 14 from 9 AM to 12:30 PM. Greenwich Parks and Recreation monitors the entry point just past the main parking lot, including restricting non-essential vehicles.

Certain sanctioned vehicles will continue to access all roadways, including emergency vehicles, boat owners, drivers with handicaps, and Park employees, so visitors should continue to exercise caution and grant sanctioned vehicles the right of way.

Sunday Concert Series

The 2023 Friends of Greenwich Point Summer Concert Series enjoyed another successful season, with four well-attended live outdoor music performances at Founders Rock on Sunday afternoons.

Listeners gathered on the lawn, with its sweeping views of the Sound, to enjoy a range of musical genres. In July, The Carolina Gents played bluegrass, Americana, and country music. Our August concert presented The Oh Là Là jazz band, featuring a swing sound with French chanteuse Marie Michèle. In September, Pete Francis and the Dragoncrest Collective performed alternative rock. And in October, Kings Highway played classic rock and Motown.



The Oh Là Là Jazz Band performed at our August concert near Founders Rock.

First Sunday Bird Walks

Dec. 3, Jan. 7, Feb 4, March 3, April 7

Join knowledgeable guides for fun family-friendly and informative bird watching at the Point. Bring binoculars and meet at the main concession stand at the south end of the beach. All ages welcome.

Fall 2023

Our 2023 Ornament Has Arrived!



Our 2023 ornament features a beloved sight...



Blaise Anello driving his four-wheeled buggy at the Point.

The winner of our sixth FoGP holiday ornament photo contest is not just one individual! We dug into the archives and found a horse and buggy image submitted in the past and created an autumn scene with other photos taken at the Point.

The horse and buggy is a familiar sight to locals who see buggy driver Blaise Anello, his restored antique four-wheeled buggy, and his horse "Dutch" steadily clopping through the streets of Old Greenwich. He circles Greenwich Point several times a week. It's an arresting sight and sound: a reminder of the slower pace of the past. Anello said, "Horse

and buggy used to be the only way to get around, so I try to keep that tradition alive." Anello is very pleased to be featured on this year's ornament!

Due to the popularity of last year's ornament, we brought it back in limited quantities. The 2022 ornament features a summer scene of the four Adirondack chairs on the bluff, with sailboats and the NYC skyline in the background. The ornaments are a limited edition for \$25 each and come in a festive silk box. You may purchase either ornament online at www.friendsofgreenwichpoint.org.

Thank You, Board Members!

Friends of Greenwich Point is fortunate to have talented community members provide time and skills as Board members to create and lead our many projects.

At our September Board meeting, we said goodbye and thank you to Gena Prastos Linhart and Margaret Morrison, retiring from the Board after serving six years. Gena ran our amazing concert series, and Margaret was the leader of our newsletter and website.

We are lucky to have five new Board members joining this fall: Deborah Smith, Lisa Lipschutz, Katie Heimbold, Alec Bandzes, and Evelyn Wilson.



Thank you to our "Experience the Sound" Art Show exhibitors: Gail Bell, Zili Zhang, Chet Saur, and Ilse Gordon.

Friends of Greenwich Point

P.O. Box 711
Old Greenwich, CT 06870



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www.FriendsofGreenwichPoint.org

**Join the Friends of
Greenwich Point!
This year, your
membership will
support:**

- Habitat Restoration
- Dune Planting
- Tree and Shrub Planting
- Safe Roads Sundays
- Nature Education
- Summer Concert Series
- Winter Bird Feeding
- Newsletter

**Please help preserve and
enhance the beauty and
enjoyment of
Greenwich Point!**

You can also join on our website,
www.friendsofgreenwichpoint.org



@ friendsofgreenwichpoint

Membership Form



Become a member of The Friends of Greenwich Point and join us in preserving and protecting Greenwich Point and promoting safe recreation. Please make your tax-deductible check payable to: Friends of Greenwich Point and mail to P.O. Box 711, Old Greenwich, CT 06870. Or you can use PayPal – www.friendsofgreenwichpoint.org - membership section.

Annual Family Memberships

\$25.....	EGRET
\$50.....	HOODED MERGANSER
\$100.....	OSPREY
\$250.....	EAGLE

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