

Walks & Talks

Spring 2011

“I enjoy this suburban country beyond expression...”

– Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. on his Brookline neighborhood, 1882

Frederick Law Olmsted made a complete break from New York City when he purchased an 1810 farmhouse on Warren Street in Brookline. At “Fairsted” he would make a home for his family and establish the first large scale professional office of landscape architecture. Here, he and his partners would labor for over a decade to create a true masterwork in park design – The Emerald Necklace. Our walks will offer a variety of tours throughout this 5-mile system of ponds, paths and parkways and will include tours of Olmsted’s own neighborhood of Green Hill and the nearby Town Green.

Join our Email List!

To receive an occasional email notice about site news and events, please send your email address to Mark_Swartz@nps.gov.

Remembering our Elm

Sadly we had to bid farewell to our Olmsted Elm this spring. Please help us memorialize it, by visiting our Elm Facebook page via a link at www.nps.gov/frla.



Sunday, May 1, 1:00–3:00 pm

The Arnold Arboretum: The Ideas Behind the Design

This two-hour tour will focus on the history and landscape design of our nation’s first public arboretum. A careful blending of art and science is evident as the walk highlights the Arboretum’s many distinctive design features. *Meets inside the main entrance to the Arboretum, Route 203/Arborway in Jamaica Plain. (Walk from Forest Hills “T” Station.)*

Sunday, May 15, 7:00–8:30 am

Fairsted: A Spring Bird Walk

Join us for our annual commemoration of International Migratory Bird Day as we look for warblers and other migrating species on and near our own Fairsted grounds. This bird walk is geared to beginners and novices. Bring binoculars and a field guide. *Meets at the front circular drive of Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, 99 Warren Street, Brookline. (Walk from Brookline Hills “T” Station.)*

Sunday, May 22, 1:00–2:30 pm

Jamaica Pond: Genius of the Place

Stroll with us around this pond of “flickering half-lights” on this popular walk. Learn about the pond’s history and natural features, as well as Frederick Law Olmsted’s design. *Meets at the Jamaica Pond Boathouse, corner of Pond Street and the Jamaica way. (Walk from #39 Bus Stop at Centre and Pond Streets.)*

Sunday, June 5, 10:00–12:00 pm

Frederick Law Olmsted’s Brookline Neighborhood

Explore the history of Frederick Law Olmsted’s Brookline neighborhood during this leisurely two-hour walk through two historic districts, Green Hill and Town Green. Stops will include: the Brookline Reservoir, First Parish Church and the Old Burying Ground on Walnut Street. *Meets at Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, 99 Warren Street, Brookline.*

Tuesday, June 21, 6:00–8:00 pm

A Short Walk on a Long Day: Olmsted Park

Celebrate the summer solstice with us at Olmsted Park, located on the border of Boston’s Mission Hill and Brookline’s Pill Hill neighborhoods. We will experience this lesser-known Emerald Necklace park that features three ponds, a babbling brook, and one of the Necklace’s recent restoration efforts. *Meets at corner of Pond Avenue and Willow Pond Road, Brookline.*

Saturday, June 25, 5:00 pm–7:00 pm

Back Bay Fens: Vision and Revisions

Explore the landscape Olmsted transformed from the “foulest march and muddy flats . . . anywhere in Massachusetts” to an urban oasis. Learn about this landscape that has evolved over the years and is an integral part of the adjoining Fenway neighborhood. *To register and find out where to meet go to: www.commonboston.org/fenway. Walk is co-sponsored by Common Boston.*

Please go to www.nps.gov/frla or call 617.566.1689 for information on Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site and public programs.