

Walks & Talks Spring 2010

“I would have you decline any business that would stand in the way of doing the best for Boston all the time...”

—Frederick Law Olmsted to his partners, 1893

Bold in vision, and complex in execution, the park system known today as the Emerald Necklace is considered one of Frederick Law Olmsted’s greatest achievements and most influential designs. Olmsted spent his career working out the interdependent relationship between city and suburb. Here in Boston and Brookline he was able to realize his vision of city and suburb, by weaving a 5-mile greensward of linked parks, ponds and parkways into the very fabric of the city.



Sunday, April 25, 1:00–2:30 pm

Riverway: Ribbon of Green

“Twenty years hence you will be looking back to Muddy River as I do to Central Park,” Frederick Law Olmsted told his partners in 1893. This 90-minute walk examines the thoughtful marriage of art and engineering to create a space that was both a “sanitary improvement” and a beautiful, fresh water promenade. *Meets at the Longwood “T” stop, D branch of the Green Line, Chapel Street, Brookline.*

Sunday, May 2, 7:30–9:00 am

Franklin Park: A Spring Bird Walk

Join us for our annual commemoration of International Migratory Bird Day. Look for warblers and other migrating species on this bird walk geared to beginners and novices. Bring binoculars and a field guide. *Meets at the Resting Place Picnic Area off Circuit Drive, inside the Forest Hills Entrance (Walk from Forest Hills “T” Station.)* Co-Sponsors: Brookline Bird Club and Franklin Park Coalition.

Sunday, May 23, 1:00–2:30 pm

Jamaica Pond: Genius of the Place

Stroll with us around this pond of “flickering half-lights” on this always 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 6, 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 at the Hunnewell Building located at the main entrance to the Arboretum, Route 203/Arborway in Jamaica Plain. (Walk from Forest Hills “T” Station.)*

Monday, June 21, 6:00–8:00 pm

A Short Walk on a Long Day: The Back Bay Fens

Celebrate the summer solstice with us as we explore the landscape Olmsted transformed from the “foulest marsh and muddy flats ... anywhere in Massachusetts” into an urban oasis. Enjoy a Boston early evening on the longest day of the year. *Meets at the John Boyle O’Reilly Statue, corner of Boylston Street Bridge and the Fenway. (Walk from Hynes Convention Center “T” Station.)*

Sunday, June 27, 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Ponds, Pastures and Parkway: A Walk Along the Emerald Necklace

Come join us on a 5-mile walk from the marshes of the Back Bay Fens to the meadows and woodlands of Franklin Park. This six-hour tour will explore the diverse landscapes of Olmsted’s masterpiece of park design. *Space is limited. Please call 617-566-1689 ext. 221 for information and reservations.*

Please call 617-566-1689 for more information on any of these programs.