



FRIENDS OF Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park

1920 Eagle Drive, Baltimore, MD 21207
www.friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org

Winter 2019

Who Knew...All That Happens to Keep the Trains Running in GFLP!

Craig Close

Chesapeake & Allegheny Steam Preservation Society—call us CALS, C&A Live Steamers—works throughout the year to be able to provide the train rides on Second Sundays. During the winter, there are several standard jobs we have to perform.

We are responsible for mowing all of the grounds along our tracks. This job requires lawn mowers which have to be maintained over the winter. Whether referring to a yard tractor or a push mower, the oil has to be changed, the air filter cleaned, and the blades sharpened. General cleanup is also done. The blades of yard tractors are not easily accessed. Each manufacturer has its own method for attaching the deck and someone has to remember how it works. We also rebuilt the carburetor of one of the tractors.

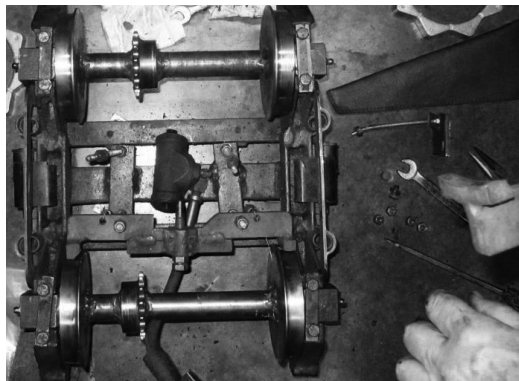
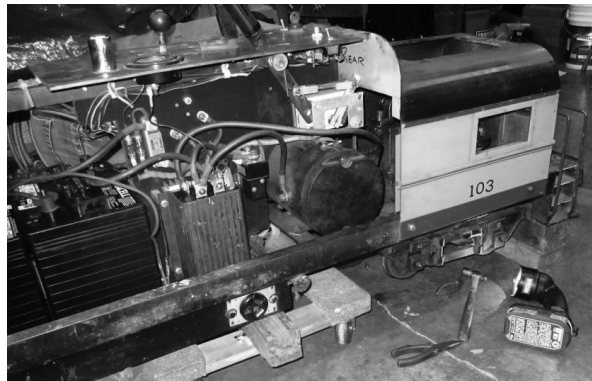
Because our activity in the warmer months involves interaction with the public, the State has an oversight activity performed by DLLR (Dept of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation). They inspect the boilers of the steam locomotives and examine our internal process of inspecting and maintaining the riding cars and the train vacuum brake systems. It is a major job to inspect each riding car. We are

always hoping for a nice day so that we can do the job outside.

This year there is a special maintenance job which we have been trying to perform for a few years. Our pair of electric locomotives is used to pull our work train when we maintain the tracks. They are also used as a switcher on Second Sundays to pull riding cars from the club house to the yard where passenger trains are assembled. These engines look like some of the old electric locomotives except that they are powered by six 6-volt golf cart batteries. They were hand-built in 1978 and have been maintained as necessary but some parts have been deteriorat-

ing over the years. This winter we have replaced the batteries (about \$90 each) and have taken the driving unit apart to make major fixes (the other unit just carries most of the batteries and has no driven wheels). The manually-operated brakes have been slightly out of alignment and have rubbed on the flanges of the wheels. Before the flanges are completely worn away, we have taken off the axles and the brake rigging. The wheels have been turned down on a lathe to make the flanges larger but

not so much that they are made "too small". The brake mechanism is being re-worked with a bit more machining so that the brake shoes do not contact the flanges. Also, the control panel had become quite grungy. It is a brass plate. After taking off all the control handles and switches, the plate had a scrubbing bath in Brasso (military readers may be familiar with that polisher). We should have this unit re-assembled and working well for the upcoming season.



2018 Black Friday Hike

Bridget McCusker

On November 23, 2018, a group of about 12 lovers of the great outdoors and NOT shopping malls showed up in Winans Meadow for the annual Black Friday Hike in GFLP. It was very cold so we cut the hike short and no one complained. It's always nice to meet new people in the park, share some of our treasured spots, and enjoy learning some park history provided by Ed Orser. In addition to the hikers, about 5 cyclists rode all the way downtown on the Gwynns Falls Trail and picked up the Jones Falls Trail in their travels. I heard that they had beer and pizza personally delivered at the end of the ride. We'll have to work on something for the hikers in 2019.



No Rest for the Weary - FOGFLP Volunteers Keep on Keepin on

George Farrant

Although the Tuesday work crew is off for the winter, when an opportunity knocks, the crew will jump into action. On a mild January Tuesday, Baltimore City Rec and Parks asked for some volunteers to help out with a quick cleaning of Windsor Mill Road as it goes through the park. Rec and Parks closed off Windsor Mill road between the Crimea parking lot and the Clifton Road bridge for two hours on January 13, 2019. FOGFLP volunteers combined forces with Rec and Parks and some prisoners to do a deep cleaning of both the sides of Windsor Mill Road. In the space of two hours, five FOGFLP volunteers collected 23 fifty-five-gallon plastic bags and left them on the side of the road to be collected by DPW trucks. It took two truckloads to remove all of the bags of trash. FOGFLP volunteers included Peggy Cummings, Janet Westcott, Jack Latimore, Bridget McCusker, and George Farrant. Unfortunately, the trash that is visible from the road is just a small amount of what accumulates. On the north side of Windsor Mill Road, just over the hill and out of sight to drivers, there are layers of trash in the wooded areas. Maybe it's time to make trash reduction a priority in 2019.

On Saturday January 26, 10 volunteers under the leadership of Joel Conde from Rec and Parks, picked up eight bags of trash on the Gwynns Falls Trail in Winans Meadow. As always, we are grateful to the volunteers who showed up on a cold and dreary day to collect trash and make our park look better.

Website Update

Bridget McCusker

Work on the new and improved website continues and it is our hope that it will be up and running very soon. Among other things, we hope to be able to enhance the newsletter's appearance with improved images and photos in color for the online version.



BGE Pipeline Update

Bridget McCusker

The good news is that the machinery and most of the equipment is gone from the park. What a relief to no longer hear the loud drilling and operation of heavy equipment. What's left is the visible aftermath of approximately 10 months of heavy construction and loss of hundreds of trees. The excessive rain that we had last year only added to the despairing appearance of many areas in the park. But let's not lose hope, Spring is just around the corner! When temperatures begin to warm up and it's time to plant, BGE will return to the park for restoration work to begin in areas that were damaged during the construction. The new pipeline is not yet operational and that will take place when BGE returns in the Spring for the final phase of the project when the new line is tied in with the old one and testing and gassing up takes place.

WHAT'S GOING ON... WHAT'S COMING UP...

Parkrun - 5k timed run/walk in Winans Meadow, Saturdays at 9:00am, rain or shine. 4500 N. Franklinton Rd, parkrun.us/leakinpark

Gentle Walks - Weekly Gentle Walk - contact Heide, (410) 499-2314

Tuesday Trail Work, 9 - 11am - contact George, (443) 986-8994 (weather permitting)

FOGFLP Annual Meeting - Date to be determined (March or April). You will receive a notice.

Second Sundays begin on April 14, 11:00 - 3:00

Baltimore Herb Festival - May 25, 2019

National Trails Day - June 1, 2019

Tour dem Parks - June 9, 2019

Visit our website at friendsofgwynnsfallsleakinpark.org and on Facebook

For info about more activities and events in the park, check out the Carrie Murray Nature Center website, carriemurraynaturecenter.org

Baltimore City Recreation and Parks - bcrp.baltimorecity.gov

GwynnsFallsTrail.org

GwynnsFallsTrailAdvocates on Facebook



Follow The Friends of Gwynns Falls Leakin Park on Twitter (@FOGFLPMEDIA or @FOGFLP) or on Instagram (FOGFLPMEDIA)

Windsor Hills Conservation Trail Celebration

Windsor Hills Conservation Trail Festival - Saturday, June 1st - 1:00 - 5:00pm

Location: Clifton and Fairfax Rds Trailhead -

(Rain date: Sunday, June 2nd)

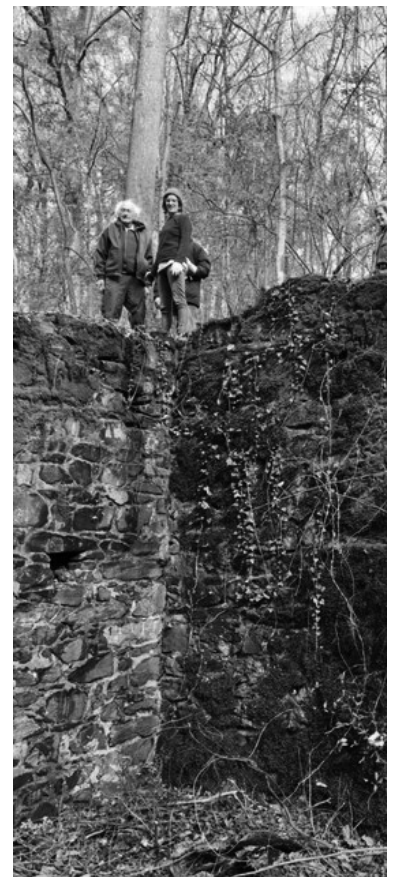
Over the past 20 years, Windsor Hills Neighbors, Inc., in cooperation with Baltimore City and FOGFLF, has developed and maintained the Conservation Trail, part of which follows the old "Walbrook - Lorraine Cemetery" street-car trolley line, from the Trailhead at Clifton and Fairfax Roads to the Windsor Mill Rd Bridge over the Gwynns Falls.

On June 1, we will celebrate the Trail's 21st Anniversary with an afternoon of fun, food, music, and activities for all ages. A special feature of the event will be interpretive activities focusing on the ruins of a mid-1800's flour mill which was uncovered last year by Windsor Hills and FOGFLP volunteers.

So mark your calendars and join us for an afternoon of fun and casual learning which will include:

- Guided trail walks, Creative art opportunities for children and adults,
- Music and dance from the Windsor Hills Elementary-Middle School,
- Children's activities led by youth from Shiloh African Methodist Episcopal Church.
- Yoga-in-the-meadow led by experienced teachers.
- A display of rescued wildlife from the the Carrie Murray Nature Center
- Weed Warrior advice on dealing with invasive weeds.

The Festival is co-sponsored by Windsor Hills Neighbors, Inc., Shiloh AME Church and Windsor Hills Elementary-Middle School. Special thanks to MECU, Baltimore's Credit Union and the Baltimore Office of Promotion & the Arts for helping to make this event possible.



Check at www.whneighbors.weebly.com in May/June for the updated program and rain date information.

The Mushroom City Art Festival

Heide Grundmann

Mushroom City Art Festival is going into its 7th year on Saturday, October 5, 2019. Since 2015, this festival has been brought to Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park collaboration with Nature Art in the Park (NAP), the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park and the Department of Recreation and Parks. Robi Gunkel, an environmental educator and enthusiast, created this event and has recruited committed artist and volunteer who help her raise funds and plan each year's event to highlight the increasing importance of mushrooms. Foraging for mushrooms in Leakin Park has revealed an amazing variety of species which are displayed for visitor education and lectures. Over 300 annual attendees have learned of the medicinal, ecological value, history and growing knowledge of mushrooms. The Festival offers participatory craft workshops, art walking tours and guided foraging tours. All day you will hear your creative musicians playing their instruments. You will learn how the arts and nature are connected like a mycelial network. Follow Mushroom City Art Festival on Facebook for 2019 and watch Vimeo short videos.



Artist Ursula Populoh uses her Cranky to tell her story of how she grew up gathering mushrooms to supplement the family's WW II diet.



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Winans Chapel's Historic Colors

Ed Orser

Those of us who have gotten used to the faded olive greenish tint of Leakin Park's Winans Chapel are about to get a history lesson when we see the paint tones of the finished preservation project. The historic colors were determined with painstaking tests by an expert paint analyst who found that samples from the walls revealed a "light brown," while the window frames and sills and decorative highlights tested as a "darker brown." Since the chapel is designated a Baltimore City Historic Landmark, and structural work is monitored by the Maryland Historic Trust, getting the colors and other features historically accurate has been essential.

As to the history lesson, the chapel was built at the very time when American architectural tastes were changing. Passing was the era of classically-inspired motifs for wooden structures, whose features mimicked stone, with white as the favorite color—think classic New England village churches and houses. Mid-nineteenth-century tastes were beginning to be influenced by the romantic movement, whose leading proponent, Andrew Jackson Downing, championed harmony with nature and therefore called for "natural colors." As Roger Moss writes in *Century of Color* (1981), the new fashion featured "soft and quiet shades . . . , such as fawn, drab, grey, brown"—a trend very much in evidence

by the late 1850s when the chapel was erected. In the new fashion the softer colors often were applied to the walls, the deeper ones used for architectural highlights—features now much more distinct in the appearance of Winans Chapel as a result of the preservation work. Technological innovations for paint mixing, distribution of pattern books, and the transportation networks resulting from railroad expansion helped to spread the new fashion throughout the country. The result of this combination of factors, Ross writes, was that the second half of the 19th century experienced a widespread "browning of America."

Keep this rich history in mind as you view the result of this major preservation project—the "reddish undertones" of the mid-tone brown on the board and batten walls blending with the chocolatey dark brown highlighting the structure's Carpenter Gothic features.

Winans Chapel Project Completion

Celebration of the completion of the project for the preservation of the exterior of the Winans Chapel in Leakin Park will take place during this year's Baltimore Herb Festival on Saturday, May 25 with special recognition of the donors. The work has been a project of the Baltimore Herb Festival, which, since its origin in 1987, has devoted proceeds from its annual event to support the maintenance and preservation of the park structure.