



# Friends of Salt Springs Park

January 2013

[www.friendsofsaltspringspark.org](http://www.friendsofsaltspringspark.org)

570-967-7275

## Happy New Year!

It's a new year, with a new project underway.

A number of grants over the years have allowed us to keep the dairy barn intact and make some improvements. A recent Growing Greener grant will now let us take a couple more steps.

We've hired **John McNamara** and his crew to do some critical stabilization work this year, beginning with replacing the rotten sill beams. Work began this week.

## Our Historic Barn

John McNamara, owner of McNamara Construction in Friendsville, PA (and key force in founding the Friends), can, and has, read the local history of this region as reflected in the Wheaton family's buildings.

The barn we have today is not exactly the original structure. The original structure was a 30 x 40 timber framed threshing barn. Sometime after 1900 it was moved, put on a stone foundation, and rebuilt to be much wider and much higher—40 x 60 and nearly 40 feet high—with a full basement underneath.



Circa 1996. We had to hack through the Japanese knotweed to get in the front door.



2013. The occasional knotweed shoot can still be found (and pulled).

Why go to all that trouble? As John explained it in a past program, the building is a "culmination of agricultural progress and the need for bigger and bigger farming." Dairying became the cash crop in the region. In the 1830s and 1840s, wool and grain crops were industry staples. But then farming "slowly morphed away from grain crops and into dairying, which would have been, early on, butter and then later on cream and then later on fresh milk."

The current barn was put together because the Wheatons needed a lot of cattle and a lot of horses and a lot of hay. Said John, "At that time it wasn't King Oil like we have now. It was King Hay. The more hay you had, the more power you had. You didn't go down to the gas station, you went to the hay barn to feed your animals that did the burden work, as well as provide your sustenance."

It was also typical, according to John, to place the sills directly on the ground instead of a stone foundation. Such sills will inevitably rot. With rot, the foundations will shift, and the entire building becomes unstable. So, the first task in our new project is to raise the walls, replace the rotten beams, and place them on a repaired stone base. Pictured is where the crew, **Bill Cokely** and **Brandon Pipher**, began.



## Mark Your Calendars

**Who Goes There? Sunday, February 24, 2-4 p.m.** Most of the mammals that reside in our woods lead largely secretive lives. Learn about the natural history of mammals common to Salt Springs. Take a hike to follow their tracks and discover other signs of their activity. Dress for being outside and walking through snow. Led by **Nancy Wottrich**. Meet at the Wheaton House. **No fee.**

**Apple Tree Pruning Class. Saturday, March 23, 9 a.m. to Noon.** March is the perfect time in the north to prune your apple trees. Snow cover has lessened, but it's still cold enough to deter bugs and disease from infecting the cut wound. **Jim Kessler** will discuss and demonstrate the why, where, how, what, and when to cut. Meet at the Wheaton House. **\$5, members; \$15, nonmembers.**

## April Volunteer Workdays

**Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m. Chainsaw Day.** We need volunteers with chainsaws to cut and clear up winter debris. And we still have a fair amount of downed trees from a couple high-wind storms last fall. **Free food, drinks, and t-shirts provided to all volunteers. Pre-register** ([info@friendsofsaltspringspark.org](mailto:info@friendsofsaltspringspark.org); 570-967-7275) so we have sufficient supplies on hand.

**Saturday, April 20, 11 a.m. Trail Day.** After the trails have been cleared of major obstructions, it's time to remove the lesser debris, pick up garbage, and make note of any remaining problems. **Free food, drinks, and t-shirts provided to all volunteers. Pre-register** ([info@friendsofsaltspringspark.org](mailto:info@friendsofsaltspringspark.org); 570-967-7275) so we have sufficient supplies on hand.

**Cycle & Recycle to Celebrate Earth Day. Sunday, April 21 (Rain date: April 28). Various activities run from 12:30-5 p.m. — appropriate for all ages.** Come out to Salt Springs Park and Celebrate Earth Day on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. **Events start at 12:30 p.m.,** with an introduction to the park and schedule of activities. Find out how nature recycles, so you can too. Learn more about household recycling, find out how to compost, and participate in the recycling relay or bike rides. **Fee: \$5, members; \$10, nonmembers; free, 12 and under. Pre-registration appreciated for Composting Workshop** ([info@friendsofsaltspringspark.org](mailto:info@friendsofsaltspringspark.org); 570-967-7275).

12:30 p.m. — **Greeting** at the Carriage Barn  
1:00 p.m. — **Recycling:** Talk and demos for household goods; **Recycling Jeopardy and Relay Races**  
2:00 p.m. — **Composting Workshop**  
2:15 p.m. — **Kids Bike Ride**  
3:00 p.m. — **Build a Simple Compost Bin**  
4:00 p.m. — **Bike rides** on roads around Salt Springs