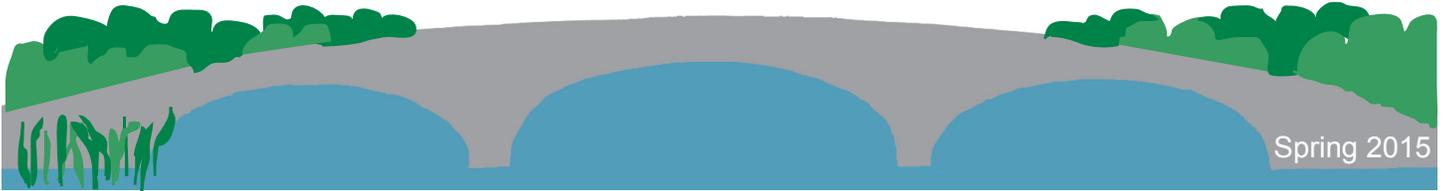


Watershed Watch

Friends of Gorham's Pond



Dear Friends of Gorham's Pond,

It is with great pleasure that I look forward this fall to the dredging and restoration of the northern section of Gorham's Pond; the "Upper Pond," north of Goodwives River Road. Your diligent efforts have achieved concrete progress toward the restoration of our important and historic watershed. I want to thank each volunteer who has dedicated so much time and energy to this project. Special thanks and appreciation go to Lucia Zachowski and John Lundeen who have worked tirelessly with the town and state on this important project. I congratulate you on your persistence and success in this endeavor and I look forward to working with you on the restoration of the balance of one of Darien's greatest treasures.



Best Regards,

Jayme Stevenson

Our high priority project on the "Upper Pond" of the Goodwives River can be safely said to be moving forward, having received a solid vote of approval at Darien's Planning and Zoning Commission on March 24th. As you will all remember, when we reported to you all at our Annual Meeting by the water in late October, we had been forced by difficult logistical issues to revise our plans to now approach the Upper Pond from the downstream side. You will have a great view from Goodwives River Road of our work rebuilding the dam, installing a fish ladder, and dredging as much sediment from that upstream pond as our budget will allow. With all local permits now in hand, we hope to be permitted at the State and Federal levels by mid-May, with contract bidding and construction to follow in the late summer months.

At the same time, we have continued to work on our longstanding maintenance projects around Gorham's Pond. We are hoping to put together volunteers as in the past, to take part in the Town-wide Cleanup, on Saturday, April 25th. Come out and help us keep our Pond and neighborhood looking picked up and loved.

Bird and mammal sightings around the Pond have included eagles, minks, otters, and more hawks than can be counted. As life returns to our historic estuary and original center of Town, I hope you will take the opportunity to get involved. This promises to be an unusual and interesting year. So as you are out in the Spring air, stretching your legs by the water, I hope we will run into each other, old friends and new, in and around our richly and beautifully featured part of Darien.

Fondly,

John Lundeen,
President, Friends of Gorham's Pond

Dear Friends of the Gorham's Pond Watershed,

As the deep snow and thick ice of a long hard winter finally fade away, I bring you greetings from the Friends of Gorham's Pond. We have had a fabulous winter of long dark December days of ice skating, followed by a surfeit of January, February and March snow. In my 30 years living here, I cannot remember a winter of more consistent cold and lasting heavy snow. With ice dams and broken snow shovels, we have made it through. I hope the coming Spring season is promising for all of you.

Dear Friends,

Amidst the gloom of yet another snow, sleet, ice event, I looked out our back windows recently and viewed the pristine beauty of Gorham's Pond. The snow lies on the frozen pond, with tiny paw prints of animals that have traversed the surface.

Yet in that peaceful scene, this winter there has been something we have not seen before. Even in the coldest weather of a cold winter, there was a tidal flow visible. At first, I feared something was leaking into the pond. Board of Works checked and confirmed that there were no leaks. Then, we realized it was the result of silt build-up that had caused the water to be mixed into a mud. This muck was not freezing; it still oozed with the tides.

Our section of Gorham Pond, used to be much deeper. A recent survey suggested it was up to 6' to 8' deep. Where kayaks and skulls used to go by our house and we used to walk on solid ice in times of a freeze, there are now islands of accumulated silt and very shallow muddy water. When we moved here, less than 10 years ago, the silt islands did not exist. This shallow, muddy water apparently can

no longer freeze. How long will it take for this area of Gorham's Pond to fill in, stopping the tidal flow and destroying the beautiful waterway ecosystem. If islands of silt turn to land mass that fills in the waterway, will we still see the egrets, herons, cormorants, swans, the little ducklings and geese? Or will they leave once their fish diet can no longer swim up the pond?

I can't think of that right now. It is too sad a thought. Right now, I am looking forward to spring and the wonderful delights that Gorham Pond still has to offer. What new nature treats will we see this year?

Your Neighbor,
Jeff Marston

Goodwives River? Where Did This Name Come From?

Another name of interest to Friends of Gorham's Pond is Goodwives River. The Goodwives River was originally called Pine Brook and the road was Bell Avenue. The reason for the name change is a mystery. Interestingly, no other street, place or waterway in the world has the

name Goodwives. We have two possibilities both from the common form of address for married woman in Colonial New England, Goodwif:

1. Natives may have referred to a conflict over the ownership of the waterway long used by the Indians. The Indians may have started to refer to it as the Goodwifs River because they were no longer granted access to the water. (* Page 25)

2. Local lore, however, has another interpretation. The Indians continued to use the river after settlement by the "Goodwifs." Three families settled the area by the upper pond. This water had been used by the Indians to wash their clothes, which they continued to do. The "Goodwifs" nearby offered food to the Indians. Consequently, the Indians began to refer to the Goodwifs River in recognition of these helpful "Goodwifs."

Local lore is, of course, my preferred explanation of the Goodwives name's origin, but no one knows, so select your favorite.

By Maureen Marston

Source: **The Story of Darien** by Kenneth M. Reiss, The Darien Historical Society, 2009.

Snapshot: Eighty years ago on Gorham's Pond

Imagine Route 1 as only two-lane road and no I95 cutting the Town in half. The Post Road was the only highway of the day and all the trucks that now go on I95 went right thru the center of Darien.

Imagine a quarter as many houses dotting the landscape as do today. Horses, sheep and cows still roam neighbor's fields. There was no TV; radio was the only mode of mass communication.

Imagine downtown as a few small Victorian storefronts with bar rooms and gas stations lining the road. Noroton Heights was the commercial center. Darien eighty years ago was a small town in the country outside of New York. Not the bustling suburb it is today.



There were many poor people in Town—Social Security was not yet dreamed of. But for the well to do, in the late 1930's and early 40's, the social life in Darien centered around grand parties that would last for days. One of the centers of social activity was number 30 Goodwives River road.

As you can see from these photographs, the owners of this house at the time, the Crimmins, built an elaborate party facility on their property, a fake tugboat that had a pool with a retractable cover that then served as a dance floor.

Help Find Darien's Ospreys



Ospreys have returned to Connecticut for the season. These large raptors are common along the state's coast, ponds and rivers, nesting on prominent platforms and diving for the fish that they feed on almost exclusively. We're sure you've seen them near Gorham's Pond.

Last year, Connecticut Audubon Society launched Osprey Nation, a volunteer citizen science partnership to monitor the health of

our state's Ospreys. The goal of Osprey Nation is to create a long-term record of data that will give the conservation community a better understanding of the health of Connecticut's Osprey population.

Four decades ago, Ospreys were near extinction because of the effects of the pesticide DDT. Fewer than 10 nested in the entire state. Last year 160 Osprey Nation volunteers located 414 nests in five counties and 42 towns, and monitored 174 of those nests.

We plotted all the nests and the data on an interactive map (ctaudubon.org/osprey-nation). The stewards confirmed that 78 young Ospreys were successfully fledged in 2014, a number that we're confident is low.

Unfortunately none of our volunteer stewards are from Darien, even though we strongly suspect that there are Osprey nests in town.

If you know of a nest and are interested in helping, please email our project coordinator, Lindsay Tomaszewski, at osprey@ctaudubon.org. We estimate that each volunteer will spend no more than an hour a week, through August, observing, recording information and sending it to us (although stewards find that the project is rewarding enough to warrant more time). We'll provide instructions and training, if you need it. -- Tom Andersen, Communications Director, Connecticut Audubon Society tandersen@ctaudubon.org

Ring's End? Where Did This Name Come From?

When we moved to Darien, we were happy to learn that we now lived near the iconic Ring's End. First, a little history. With a little digging, I learned that in 1708, Richard Scofield and Thomas Youngs were granted permission to construct a grist mill at the head of the harbor, which they quickly did. Scofield later conveyed the property to his Dutch son-in-law, John Klock, causing the name to change from Scofield's Mill to Clock's Mill. Clock's Mill and Landing quickly developed into a commercial hub to serve the needs of those coming to or living near the mill landing. In 1740, the land was bought by Captain George Gorham. In 1814, Alfred Gorham addressed a letter to his friend Abram Clock at Ringsend, Middlesex, Stamford. (*Page 28) Now, what is really curious is that no one named Ring ever lived in the area and never was the Gorham name used as a name for the mill or the landing.

So, what are possible sources of the name? Three hypotheses are given in a history book on Darien (* Pages 124-125):

1. Ireland had an area named Ringsend, which was the main port of Dublin.
2. In fenland north of Cambridge, England, there is a tiny hamlet called Ring's End.
3. In Danish, ring is frequently used in names.

Did any of these options appeal to you? Well, I am Irish, so I opt for the first origin of the name Ring's End. Among experts, however, there seems to be no consensus.

By Maureen Marston

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Breaking News about your
Gorham's Pond Watershed

NOW IS THE TIME — WE HAVE APPROVAL! JOIN OUR EFFORT!

This fall, we will begin the dredging of Gorham's Pond using a combination of state, town, and private funds. How much sediment we are able to remove from the Pond will be directly related to the amount of donations we receive. State grants will allow us to repair the dam and install the mandatory fish ladder. However, those items will absorb the lion's share of our funding.

We ask you to join in our effort to restore this watershed, which is vital to flood control efforts throughout Darien. The funds you donate will go directly to the removal of sediment, unclogging the northern portion of the Pond, which sits on high ground and flows downward into the heart of the Pond. Once this is completed and the downward flow of sediment has been eliminated, we will be in a position to dredge and restore the main Pond.

Let's work together to make this longstanding effort a complete success and show the state that further investment in this restoration is money well spent.

How many truckloads of sediment removal can you subsidize? Each truckload costs \$200.

Yes, I want to help!

I want to remove _____ truckloads of sediment from the Upper Pond. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

All donations are fully tax deductible as allowed by law.



www.friendsofgorhamspond.org