



The Milton Historical Society

More than a century of making History

Turner's Pond Quest

Created by Janet C. MacNeil
For the Milton Historical Society

STARTING POINT: The Turner's Pond Rules and Regulations sign adjacent to the parking lot on Central Ave.

WHAT TO BRING: Pencil, compass (optional), and clipboard (optional). Be sure to dress appropriately—Long pants and sturdy, waterproof shoes recommended.

TIME REQUIRED: At least 1 hour

QUESTING CAUTIONS:

- Children should be with an adult at all times.
- There is poison ivy at Turner's Pond, so remember: "Leaves of three, let them be!"
- Watch your step—there are uneven paths and roots.
- Please respect our plants and creatures.
- Help us keep Turner's Pond clean by packing out your litter and picking up after your dog.

WAIVER OF RESPONSIBILITY AND DISCLAIMER

Questing, like any outdoor activity, poses the risk of unforeseen hazards. This quest has been created in a manner that does not knowingly lead people into areas that will create undue risk. It is the responsibility of the questor to prepare for conditions that may arise in the outdoors and conduct themselves safely and responsibly with respect to those conditions. The Milton Historical Society, the town of Milton, and the quest creator assume no liability for events that may occur related directly or indirectly to this quest.

Welcome to the Turner's Pond Quest!

You'll travel back in time to find a "treasure" chest.
Follow the clues and use the map to trace,
The interesting history of this place.

Back in the late 1800's refrigerators were not around,
Because there was no electricity in town.
People kept their food in an icebox to keep it cold—
A wood cabinet that held ice to prevent mold.
Every week or so, they would buy a big hunk of ice,
From the iceman in his horse and wagon at a good price.
Where did the ice come from, you ask?
It was cut from GHEARE'F CBAQ¹—a very hard task.

Long ago, there was a large meadow/wetland here,
A brook ran through it—tinkling water you could hear.
A man named Jacob Turner enlarged a dam on the brook,
To make an ice pond and fatten his checkbook.
The pond was shallow (1-2 feet)
So it easily formed a thick ice sheet.
Men used big saws to cut blocks of ice so cold,
And put them in a huge ice house to hold.
Packed in sawdust they stayed,

Then in the summer months, the big blocks they made,
Were sold so folks could make lemonade.

A huge wooden ice house stood right here,
Filled with 4,500 tons of ice each year.
But, in the early 1900's electric refrigerators were in,
People no longer needed ice delivered—business was thin.
Turner stopped cutting ice
and the ice house sat empty—not very nice.
Until it supposedly burned down in a big blaze,
There is no evidence left of the olden days.

Now we need help sleuthing a mystery,
See the big, round granite stone, what can it be?
From old photos, we know that it used to be found,
Not far away, we think in a building surround.
Walk east² to find the old foundation or more,
Look for blocks that were part of the floor.
This is where the round stone did originally appear,
Any ideas on what it was or why it was here?³

Let's continue on our journey through time,
Retrace your steps back through the goose slime.

Look to the southwest with a keen eye,
The second house in from the parking lot, do spy.
Long ago, Jacob Turner's homestead used to stand there,⁴
With his son (Roger F. Turner), this house he did share.
Roger learned to skate on the pond⁵ and went on to
become famous—bravo!
Winning the U.S. Men's Ice Skating competition seven
years (1928-1934) in a row.
Check the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame,
For his illustrious name.

Walk southwest—keeping on your left, white pines,
Ten in a line,
Like sentries keeping guard,
To make sure the pond is not marred.
As you saunter, the fragrant piney scent do inhale,
With your nose in the air like an Airedale.
As the curve to the left after the pines you make,
You'll come to a "V"—either path you may take.
Soon in view, you'll see quite a treasure,
A tree that is valuable beyond measure.
This NZREVPNA ORRPU has guarded this spot.
For over a hundred years—that's a lot!
Feel its gray bark—smooth or rough?
See the shallow roots spread beneath it, very tough.
It's too bad that this tree by graffiti has been scarred,
People that harm it should be feathered and tarred!
It bears tear-shaped fruit⁶ (ORRPUAHGF),
For animals like squirrels, they're yummy loot.

Back to the path, keeping the pond on your left side.
Look for creatures in the wild roses where they hide,
You'll pass a trail to the right—don't go there,
Take the next trail—the one with more wear.
Go down the path, of poison ivy beware.
The first big tree (FVYIRE ZNCYR) has soft wood that
provides many a lair,
It grows in wet places like along stream banks—so
what's it doing there?
Continue along the trail to look for clues, if you dare.

Soon, you'll see a cluster of three trees on your right,
The trail goes up a slight rise and there's a row of
boulders -a pretty sight.
Walk west until you see on the right, another parallel row
of granite boulders in the distance,
(Between the two lines of boulders, the land is lower.)
What's going on in this instance?
Pine Tree Brook once flowed through here—on your map
take a look.
The boulders mark the edges of the old brook.
So the silver maple you saw before,
Was once right on the brook's shore.

This area, once meadow, became forest over the years.
First red cedars, maples, & others made their premiers.

Some of the older trees (like the cedars) are dying—other
trees are taking their sunlight,
But the dead trees provide food and homes for
woodpeckers and other creatures—to their delight.
If you explore, you'll also find dead trees that are being
eaten by fungus to form soil,
Please look, but don't touch—so they don't spoil.

This is a good place to quietly listen with eyes closed,
What do you hear, hidden where you're not exposed?
Bet you have guessed from the chorus,
That many different kinds of birds live in this forest.
When you're ready to continue, go back out the trail,
To the main trail by the pond, go east thru the vale.

You'll pass a bench and then a culvert as you stroll,
Lucky for you it isn't guarded by a troll.
Up ahead, a large tree you'll see,
Standing there quite nobly.
Look at its leaves and see if its name you can guess,
Hint: it produces a nut that makes the squirrels obsess.
(ERQ BNX)

Just behind is a magnificent tree that will make you gape,
Beautiful and tall with a thick trunk and V-shape.
It's probably over 100 years old,
With many stories to be told.
Have a seat on the bench to rest and admire.
Once the most popular tree, its situation is now dire.
Beetles carrying a fungus disease came over the seas,
To wipe out most (100 million) of these.
Aren't we lucky to have one survivor here?
This NZREVPNA RYZ we must revere.
Especially since it happens to be . . .
Our state tree!

Continue along the water's edge with a keen eye,
A favorite sunning place for turtles you might spy.
As you meander along the narrow trail,
A steep hill you will travail.
This once was the old pond bank.
The water level has since sank.
Past three red oaks you go,
Low lying evergreen juniper all in a row.
To a place where fishermen like to catch trout,
And you can sit and listen to this tale as you look about.

In the 1950's, a developer this land did buy,
He planned to turn it into 88 house lots—oh my!
People agreed that this would be a disgrace,
To ruin such a beautiful place.
The town was convinced to make its mark,
And took over the land to create a park.

But the swampy pond wasn't very inviting,
And the mosquitoes, they were biting.

So a contractor dug out the pond very deep,
So that the sand and gravel he could keep.⁷
But the pond was too deep
And the banks were too steep,
Too eagerly, the contractor had bulldozed,
And so, the park was closed.

The Parks Department stepped in,
To make the place safe for everyone and their kin.
With the Boy Scouts, they planted shrub and tree,
Most of the ones you now see.
The willows, birch, crabapples, and red oaks
Are here for us to enjoy because of those folks.
The pond was stocked with trout and ducks were set free,
The park was opened, that was the key.
Thank you to all who worked to save the pond,
Of it we are quite fond.

Now that you have had a rest,
Journey through the gates to school on your quest,
If you were at recess, you couldn't help but see,
In front of you, an amazing tree.
The wise spirit full of beauty and grace,
Loves the water near its base.
You can see more of these around the pond,
With drooping branches and narrow leaves like a frond.
As the wind blows, they dance and twirl.
Do you know what this tree is? Or is your mind awirl?
(JRRCVAT JVYYBJ)

Back thru the gate, go left where people over water do go.
The water source for the willow (CVAR GERR OEBBX)!
Under School Street and past Tino's Pizza it flows,
To the Neponset River and then Boston Harbor it goes.⁸
This is the brook that used to run through Turner's Pond.
(Remember finding its old stream bed beyond?)
What's happened since then, can you guess?
The brook used to flood and make quite a mess,
So the town deepened and re-routed it, at some cost.
The flooding was fixed, but lots of wetland was lost,
And bob-o-links & pheasants lost homes and withdrew.
The water level in the pond dropped too.
Near the bridge where you stand,
Is where the old dam once spanned.

Let's get back on the trail and leave this spot,
Heading northwest toward the Central Ave. parking lot.
Scout out tall evergreens on the right, near the gate,
With short needles, they are quite sedate.
But these URZYBPXF too are plagued by pests.
A tiny insect called the woolly adelgid digests,
The needles and causes them to die.
And then to the tree, we say goodbye.
These trees unfortunately are in danger now,
See the white cottony adelgid egg sacs on each bough?

Past wild roses and silver maples by the pond,
Peek thru bushes at water's edge for a delight beyond.
PNGGNVYF, named after the appendages of felines,
Brown spikes where some birds nest and dine.
Pioneers ate the leaves as salad,
And used them as torches when no other light they had.

Now continue your trek until the end of the fence.
Way back before Jacob Turner and his ice pond hence,
All the land that you see John Glover did own--
An Englishman who came to Milton in 1631 when King
Charles I was on the throne.
He set up a tannery on the Neponset River,
Where raw hides were made into leather.
Glover had a large farm here for cows and sheep.
A small dam he built to make a pond—it wasn't deep.

Skip ahead to the 1800s—200 years we have spanned,
William Davis ("Pickle Davis") now owns the land.
Exactly where Glover School now stands,
Were wool shops⁹—not croplands.
During the War of 1812, the price of wool was high,
Because the armies needed wool uniforms to buy.

Later, a man named Robert Herrick bought this place.
At that time, the original Glover School on School St. the
town wanted to replace.
Mr. Herrick donated the land for the new school,
Which was opened in 1953—isn't that cool?

Turn to the pond and at the water's edge you'll find,
Some beautiful water plants that cannot be outshined.
Yellow iris shoots with spiky broad flat leaves,
Flower in summer and are pollinated by bumblebees.
Further along floating platforms upon the water crest,
Upon which dragonflies like to rest.
The LRYBYJ CBAQ YVYL has roots far below,
Buried deep in the mud they grow.
The leaves they do provide,
A great place for frogs and turtles to hide.

Onward we go on our quest to find the treasure box,
At the bench, scan the skies for red-tailed hawks.
In front of you will be, a very large and graceful tree,
Where lots of birds and small mammals like to be.
It (like its cousin on the playground) likes wet and marshy
places,
And has narrow-lanced shaped leaves in all cases.
A chemical from the OYNPX JVYYBJ bark,
Is the original source of aspirin—quite a trademark!

You're very close to your ultimate goal,
The treasure box is within a short stroll.
A big drainage pipe you'll find,

Through which stormwater is confined.
Then go over a wet spot,
Making sure you're shoes don't get caught!
In this area, you may see a black-capped chickadee¹⁰
Listen for its call: "Chick-a-dee dee dee."
They like to eat and nest in a certain type of tree,
It's a conifer¹¹ that grows very tall and strong,
The needles are in clumps of 5 and 4-5 inches long.

Can you spy JUVGR CVAR twins nearby?
(One has been injured—we hope it doesn't die.)
If you were a chickadee after a day hunting for food,
Wouldn't you want to go home to your brood?
That's where you'll find the box—can you see it
through the hole?
Remember do not tell a soul!

CODE DECRYPTION KEY:

The letter above equals the letter below and vice versa.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

For example, TBBQ YHPX equals GOOD LUCK!

FOOTNOTES:

¹Use the Code Decryption Key.

²To find which direction to go, use the map or a compass.

³Please write ideas in the book at the end of the quest.

⁴It was torn down and another house built since then.

⁵It's no longer safe to skate on the pond. Notice the "Danger:
Thin Ice—Keep Off" signs.

⁶Look for some on the ground underneath the tree.

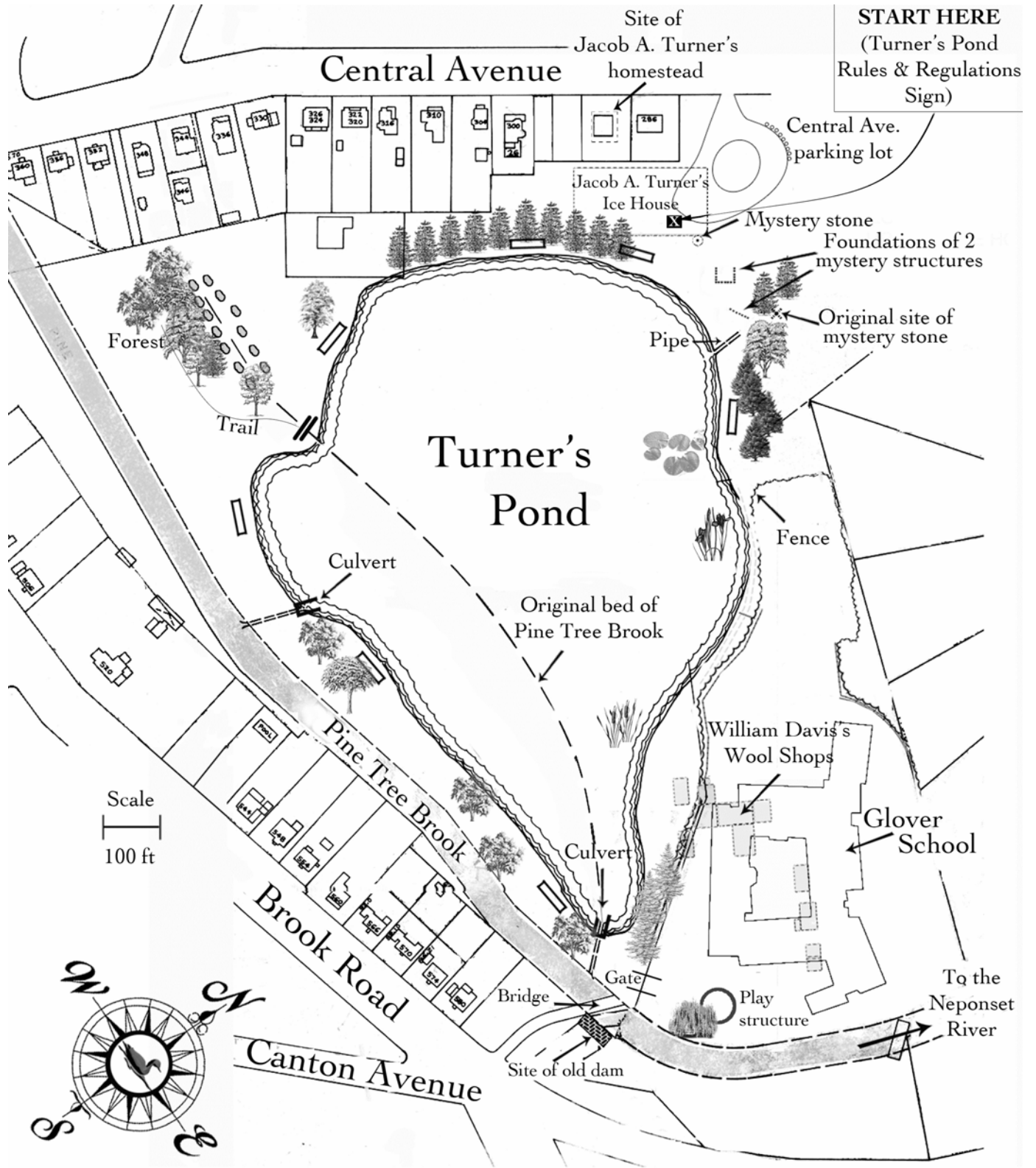
⁷The sand and gravel was used for the Southeast Expressway.

⁸Can you figure out which way it is flowing? How?

⁹Wool was removed from the pelts of slaughtered sheep.

¹⁰The state bird of Massachusetts.



¹¹A conifer is a tree that is usually evergreen (keeps its leaves
year round), has cones, and needle-shaped leaves.



START HERE
 (Turner's Pond
 Rules & Regulations
 Sign)

Scale
 100 ft



Legend	
	bench
	boulder

**TURNER'S POND
 QUEST MAP**
 MAY 2006
 ©Janet MacNeil