



A brief history of the founding of the Friends of Pleasant Bay adapted from a FOPB Presidential address given on July 21, 2005 by George Cooper:

I want to relate some of the history of FOPB's genesis and how it relates to our mission. The story begins the summer of 1984 when the Orleans Planning Board approved a subdivision proposal for 10 acres on the shores of Pleasant Bay in South Orleans. Kathryn Manson, the board's Chairman, was quoted in the Boston Globe (July 28, 1985) that she was spurred to action by the helplessness she felt when she was unable to stop this proposal when it met all town zoning requirements.



She went on to say that if the property's frontage on the bay had been in an Area of Environmental Concern (ACEC), the Planning Board could have scrutinized the developer's plans more closely to determine if any human or natural resources would have been adversely affected. The Globe article concluded by saying that a group "dubbed FOPB" would hold its first organizational meeting that week to outline goals and plot strategy.

Kathryn Manson had very specific objectives in mind for that July meeting based on discussions she had with the Cape Cod Commission's Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Advisory Committee. Introduced at their March 12, 1985 meeting as an Orleans resident interested in the protection of Pleasant Bay, she said she was seeking advice in her efforts to conserve human and natural resources around the bay. In particular, her concerns were the preservation of Native American archeological resources, wildlife habitat, water quality, acquisition of open space and public access to the bay's shoreline.

After discussing various options, including the possibility of designating the bay as a National Estuarine Sanctuary, the CZM Advisory Committee advised Ms. Manson to 1) form a 'Citizens for the Protection of Pleasant Bay' committee and 2) to then lobby to have the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency designate Pleasant Bay as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

On the evening of July 30, 1985, the first organizational meeting leading to the formation of the Friends of Pleasant Bay was held at the Snow Library. Chaired by Ms. Manson, 15 others attended: Richard Batchelder- the Friends of Chatham Waterways, State Representative Howard C. Cahoon, Jr., Martha Stone, Barbara Waters and Maureen Volkey., Chatham; Brenda Boleyn, Truro; Richard Burling, Esq. and Jack Clarke – CZM Coordinator, Barnstable; John Redfern, Harwich; Charles Thompson, Barna Sprague, Bill Sargent, Joseph Ryan, Edith Myers and the Rev. Gerald Gilmore , Orleans.

Richard Batchelder stated that an organization's objectives should be its first goals. Ms. Manson then proposed 7 objectives: 1) promoting public awareness using the ACEC designation as an instrument; 2) preserving open space with land acquisition; 3) retaining natural habitats; 4) land management; 5) retaining public access to shorelines; 6) preserving natural and historic sites and 7) making long range plans for the protection of the Bay. A nominating committee was then formed that met on August 6th to propose a slate of Officers and Directors. A second organizational meeting on August 12 considered such details as the drafting of bylaws, filing for tax exempt status, membership and dues.

The first formal meeting of provisional officers and directors occurred August 26, 1985 with Kathryn Manson presiding as President, Andrew Young as Vice-President and Barbara Waters as Secretary. This board organized the first public meeting announcing the formation of the Friends of Pleasant Bay at the Snow Library on September 23, 1985. The purpose of the meeting was to stimulate public interest in and understanding of the issues and problems facing Pleasant Bay.

FOPB's current bylaws state our mission is: "to promote education, research and public awareness of Pleasant Bay as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, to preserve open space and retain the visual quality of the area, to preserve the environmental integrity of the Bay's shoreline, to ensure habitat protection and retention of the rich biological diversity and productivity of the Bay, to retain and enhance public access to the shoreline, to preserve natural and historic sites and to promote public awareness of historic Indian culture." - George W. Cooper

Past Presidents

Special thanks to the many who have served on the FOPB Board since 1985 and under the leadership our Presidents:

Kathryn Manson
Andrew Young
Gerald Gilmore
William Dickson
John Kelsey
Carol Odell
Patricia Anthony Baron
Alan McClennen, Jr.
George W. Cooper

Mary Kelsey
Margaret Stenberg
Dolly Howell
Herb Heidt
Mon Cochran
Suzanne Leahy
Allison Coleman