

## Historic Railroad Artifacts Returned to the Northern Rail Trail

### Culvert marker and a whistle sign

By Ed Hiller, FNRT volunteer

I recently received a call from Andy Phelps of South Danbury regarding a marker that he found in the Danbury dump. He planned to use it as a decorative post in his yard. But then he read in August 2014 issue of The Andover Beacon about the recovery and restoration of the granite milepost in Lebanon and realized that the marker he had was probably from the rail trail. He wanted to see it restored to its original location, so he contacted the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail, which led him to me.

This post turned out to be a culvert marker, marked 106-40, indicating 106.40 miles from Boston. Its original position was clearly marked on the historic railroad map, 0.4 mile north of milepost B-106, a short distance north of Eagle Pond Road in Wilmot.

On August 16, Andy Phelps, Lee Ford of South Danbury, and I re-installed it at its original location.

Earlier this summer, the sign reading "One Long Whistle" was restored and returned to its historic location. This sign is a remnant of the times when the Winter Hill Ice Company was active in harvesting ice from Highland Lake (1911 through 1928). The sign ordered the locomotive engineer to blow his whistle as a warning to the workers who were loading blocks of ice into box cars positioned close by on the side track next to the main line.

This sign disappeared years ago, when the side track for the ice house was taken up. It eventually ended up in the cellar of a nearby farm house (the Smith Sanborn place). Recently Matt Langlais, a member of the family that presently owns the house, found the sign and re-installed it, although in a



Ed Hiller poses with the sign that FNRT volunteers restored on the Rail Trail.

very faded condition and on the wrong side of the post because of blockage caused by encroaching trees.

The restoration effort began with Ricker Miller removing the problem trees. Ralph Ressler then removed the sign, having to deal with rusted bolts. I then undertook to restore the faded lettering, having regained some confidence in my free-hand painting ability by restoring the mile markers for the Valley Street bridge.

The Friends of the Northern Rail Trail in Merrimack County wish to thank Ed Hiller and all those involved for their passion in restoring and returning these historical railroad artifacts to the rail trail.

### Andul from page 24

Primary to Andul's plan is looking for cost effective and creative ways to become more efficient. "For one, I'd like to find a more effective way to weed these carrots," she said jokingly.

In January she created a plan which took into account market demands, easiness to grow, and cold heartiness. She decided upon six different crops which met these criteria: kale, chard, scallions, beets, carrots, and basil. "These are my ideal crops," said Andul. "With the exception of basil, they are all really cold hearty, which is perfect for not having to worry so much in the spring and fall. The kale, chard, and basil you only have to plant once but can harvest them throughout the whole season."

These crops are the ones which Andul sells wholesale, because she feels she can rely on her supply. She also grows other crops, including tomatoes, lettuce, eggplant, peppers, and herbs, to sell to the general public.

"Just because a crop is easy to grow, doesn't mean that it's easy to sell," explained Andul. "On the contrary, some vegetables, like carrots, that require a lot of time weeding and replanting, are a staple and are worth putting in the extra time."

Andul regularly sells produce at the Market on the Green in New London every Wednesday from 3 to 6 PM. On Saturdays, Andul can be found at the Wilmot Farmers Market from 9 AM until noon. She has sold produce to local restaurants La Meridiana, the Pleasant Lake Inn, and Live Juice in Concord and is in the process of contacting more restaurants in the area. In addition, Andul has also sold produce to the Concord Co-op. "I'm merely experimenting with different avenues for selling my crops and seeing what works and what doesn't," said Andul.

Marketing through social media is a significant piece of her attempts to get her name to the public. "I have never been as active on Facebook as I am now." To get up-to-date information on Andul and her progress, you can "like" Two Mountain Farm at Facebook.com/TwoMountainFarm or stop by at 76 Shaw Hill Road.

While Andul loves being her own boss, she is looking for ways to incorporate more people on the farm. She sponsored a work party on July 13 which served as both a venue for establishing herself and encouraging cooperative efforts within the community. Andul was ecstatic with the enthusiasm and efforts of the 16 people who made a dent in her to-do list and worked tirelessly to weed the 100-foot, 5-row carrot crop. For their efforts, Sundamarthy fed them and topped off the day with ice cream. "Ice cream is a very important part of my life," explained Andul.

This coming winter, Andul is planning an apprenticeship under a horse logger. Her hopes lie in bringing draft power to the farm. "Horse power is a way to move away from fossil fuels. It's better for the land and less hard on the soil," said Andul. Tilling, or mechanically agitating the soil, pulverizes the organic matter, kills the worms, and compacts the soil. Drainage problems could arise in the soil from being over-compacted. "Horses have four points where they are touching the ground, which is great for distributing weight. Horses also weigh less and can't abuse the land the way you can with a tractor," said Andul.

It has been almost six months since Andul began working at the farm. She is still the boss and admittedly the rookie, but is very content with being both. She is optimistic about and grateful for her new life at Two Mountain Farm.



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