Over the Bridge and Through the Years Quest
BIRD PARK, WALPOLE

THE TRUSTEES
Bird Park is owned and cared for by The Trustees. We are more than 100,000 people like you who want to protect the places we love or who simply like to be outdoors. Since 1891, we have been committed to preserving and sharing the landmarks and landscapes of Massachusetts – a conservation effort funded solely through private support like yours.

Together with our neighbors, we protect the distinct character of our communities and inspire a commitment to special places like Bird Park across the Commonwealth. Our passion is to share with everyone the irreplaceable natural and cultural treasures that we care for. Visit us at www.thetrustees.org.

DIRECTIONS
From the Route 128 (I-95) split in Canton, take I-95 South towards Providence. Take Exit 10 and turn right onto Coney St. heading towards Walpole. Follow for 0.8 miles (crossing over Route 1 at the traffic light) and proceed to one of three parking areas: Polley Ln. (60 cars), Pleasant St. (10 cars), or Rhoades Ave. (25 cars).

HOW TO QUEST
Use the clues and map that follow to find a hidden treasure box and discover facts about Bird Park. Along the way, you’ll have fun and learn to see (and read) land-use clues. At the end of this Quest, you’ll find a hidden treasure box where you can sign in, collect a copy of our Quest’s stamp, and then replace the notebook and stamp for the next visitor. We recommend you take 1 to 1.5 hours to enjoy this adventure. Happy trails!
A BRIEF HISTORY

Welcome to Francis William Bird Park, better known as Bird Park. East Walpole was known as a mill community in the 1800s. The Bird family provided housing and employment for as many 2,000 citizens in the heyday of their mill operation, nearby on the banks of the Neponset River. In 1927 this property was set aside by Charles Sumner Bird, Senior, and his wife Anna, in memory of their son Francis William. The park was designed to serve as a “sequestered breathing space” for the community.

LET’S GET STARTED!

You’ll be searching for letters as you journey on this Quest. To find our hidden treasure, you will have to do your best.

Stroll down the “allée” to the first big tree on your right. Beech bark looks like an elephant’s leg, and offers a sight. In the distance see a smokestack still in Walpole today; Reminds us of the Birds, who left us this place to play.

What’s the name of the family that gave us this park?

(1)

Their business employed 2,000 we have learned, 
And the workers’ welfare was The Birds’ key concern. 
Ahead, there’s rolling grass as far as you can see; 
Cross the fields to the walkway – that’s where you should be!

John Nolen, a Planner, had vision and designed this land. 
This “Vista Field” hosted parades, and a blimp – how grand! 
Now, hear swings squeak, kids laugh, and dogs bark, 
But one thing is unchanged: it’s the heart of the park.

What is the third letter of the planner’s first name?

(5)

Circle left to stone buildings, with pillars in-between, 
The carved eyes of cherubs watch over this scene. 
In the beginning, theater and music filled these stages; 
Now it’s ice cream and Shakespeare – fun for all ages.

How many dancing figures dance on the frieze?

(3)

Pass through the pillars out the back of this place,

Take the left-hand trail; then straight, keep your pace. 
The trail gently bends around a tall pine tree; 
You’ll see our first bridge quite easily.

A log bench on the left is a place you can rest. 
Straight ahead is a stream – when rain pours, it may crest. 
Bridge One takes you over the sparkling stream, 
Now you’re deep in the woods, or so it may seem.

This is the first of our bridges you’ll cross; 
Keep them in sight and you’ll never get lost! 
When you go over, lean and take a look... 
What babbles below is called Pickerel Brook.

This first bridge is made out of...?

(4)

Take the path west under an old leaning tree; 
Straight ahead and Bridge Two is what you will see. 
This bridge was created by workers quite strong. 
With bare hands and mortar, how could they go wrong?

This old bridge is made of...?

(6)

Now follow the stream down to Bridge Three; 
Try to discover the spot where the bathhouse used to be. 
And the path that meandered through earth and pine, 
Now turns “granolithic,” part of Mr. Nolen’s design.

Concrete tiles in groups of seven are found. 
Wheels bumping over them make a rhythmic sound. 
Cross the handsome stone bridge with its short granite towers, 
Then turn left to the place where kids once took showers.

Just the foundation – that’s all that remains; 
On the floor you will find some old shower drains.

What’s the company name that appears on some of the old metal drains?

(7)

Back on the path, continue northbound. 
To the left up ahead, Bridge Four’s waterfall may sound. 
Some falls are natural, but this one was built; 
Once a swimming hole, now filling with silt.
Many folks say that when they were little
They swam out to three frogs on the rock in the middle.
Snack bar, movies, and swimming-pool shouts;
Sunbathers, beach sand, and three frogs with spouts!

From this bridge, go back to where the paths meet,
Go left onto the walkway with its pattern so neat.
Keep the stream on your left and the hill on your right;
Soon you'll have the next bridge in your sight.

Some openings on this bridge are what shape?

A park for the workers, family, and friends,
The path to the mill here comes to an end.
The tall stand of hemlocks you have to admire;
A disease is invading that’s really quite dire.

Flat needles and tiny cones define this evergreen.
As white fuzz underneath, the adelgid is seen.
These conifers were planted to enclose the park space;
If they disappear, this will change the park's face!

Once over the bridge, to the right you will go,
Follow the current and go with the flow.
Walk 'round Willow Pond keeping Bridge Six in sight.
You'll find your next clue when the bridge is to your right.

Tall willows once circled this pond, it’s been told,
Now’s left only a pair – one young and one old.
You can see a waterfall over the bridge’s rail –
But don’t cross over to stay on this Quest’s trail.

Face the church that is painted in white,
Then follow the path – this goes off to the right.
As you wind through the trees, Bridge Seven’s a bit hidden.
To solve the Quest, crossing over’s forbidden.

Next Bridge Eight will come into view,
But before you go over, here’s your next clue.
The shelter gate stands guard across the way.
The “spruce room” once held a court made of clay,
and a playground once stood where the stream overflows.
Say goodbye to our brook – under Wolcott Street it goes!
With Bridge Eight at your back, bird boxes to your right,
Bridge Nine’s dead ahead – a plumber’s delight!
But don’t cross it now, since we’re almost done;
Don’t head to the street, or you’ll miss all the fun.

Take the path to the right – see the post with a house on top?

Just near Bridge Ten; that is where you should stop.
This relic once glowed every night in the dark,
Though now, come the dusk, we must vacate the park.

What used to sit on top of this post?

Back on the main path, head through the trees;
Before Bridge Eleven, halt if you will please.
Take the path to your left and reach down to the ground,
Along the trail, old black cinders can be found.
You don’t need to dig to find in place
Leavings from the mill, once dumped in this space.

How many bridges in Bird Park? Do your math,
Then solve this puzzle by following the path!

The number of bridges in the park is...?

(If you see Willow Pond, you’ve gone the wrong way.
On the shady path is where you should stay.)
Follow the path to get to your prize,
On this straight trail is where your treasure lies.

Using all the letters that you’ve collected,
The Bird Park treasure box will be detected!

Inside you will find a treasure waiting for you.
You’ve done a wonderful job of finding each clue.
When you're done with the treasure and ready to rest
Please put it back so others can enjoy Bird Park’s Quest.

The Trustees would like to thank all the volunteers
and staff that helped make the quest a success. Their
teamwork along with Steve Glazer’s leadership made
this project a great learning experience and a lot of fun!