



CLIMBFEST

Quincy Quarries America 2007

Sponsors' Information Packet

Sponsor Fact Sheet

What 11th Quincy Quarries ClimbFest, a rock climbing festival. Includes competitions, workshops, demonstrations, raffles, activities, food, and fun.

When Saturday, September 22, 2007, 9:00am to 4:30pm
(Rain Date: September 23, 2007)

Where Quincy Quarries in Quincy, Massachusetts, about a 15 minute drive from Boston

Why To introduce and present the sport of climbing to the general public

To provide a friendly competition among the regional and national climbing community

To provide an opportunity for climbers to develop and improve their skills through workshops and demonstrations

To raise funds to maintain the Quincy Quarries and keep them open for climbing and other recreational uses

To raise money for the Access Fund

Who The ClimbFest is coordinated jointly by the Quincy Quarries ClimbFest Committee, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and recreation, and the Boston Chapter Mountaineering Committee of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

The Quincy Quarries ClimbFest attracts over 100 competitors and more than 500 spectators. It is well publicized in the media — including specialized rock climbing publications, television, and newspapers.

The event depends on the support of the commercial underwriters, sponsors, and prize donors. For more information on how your organization can contribute, please contact:

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In 1990, two climbers walked across the Quincy Quarries after an evening of climbing. Looking back at the cirque of man-made granite walls reaching skyward, they envisioned a climbing competition and festival that would bring together local climbers and showcase the Quincy Quarries Historic Park to the climbing public.

The first Quincy Quarries ClimbFest was held that fall. It was a smashing success. As one of the first climbing competitions of any kind in the Boston area, and the only outdoor competition in the country, it attracted hundreds of competitors and visitors.

After a 6 year hiatus due to park closure, the ClimbFest committee came back with a bang in 2005 with on the order of 500 people in attendance including many from the general public. Once again, the Committee is working hard to plan ClimbFest '07.

Here's what the press has said about past ClimbFests:

"As is common at these kinds of get-togethers . . . the day's events were marked by a kind of good-natured chaos. In my 18 years' worth of bouldering contests, I'd never seen anything quite like this one. These AMC [Appalachian Mountain Club] types know how to party."
- Bob Van Belle, Climbing, April/May 1991

"Whether you are a rock climber, a nature lover or a history buff... [ClimbFest] will have something to interest you."
- Calendar Magazine of the Boston Sunday Globe, September 22, 1991

"Almost a hundred competitors and several times as many spectators . . . [attended] the second annual ClimbFest. The gathering of rock climbers attracted some of the best in the Northeast, as well as intermediates and newcomers to the vertical world."
- Michael O'Connor, Boston Sunday Herald, September 29, 1991



"A big event in Quincy is the sixth annual Quincy Quarries ClimbFest '95, a rock-climbing competition and outdoor festival."
- Bruce McCabe, Boston Globe, September 25, 1995

"For the volunteers, ClimbFest is a labor of love, a festival created to celebrate the acquisition of the quarry site by the MDC [Metropolitan District Commission]. . . . Each year about 400 people come to the festival, which is geared for adults and families."
- Cynthia Stanton, Boston Globe, September 15, 1996

"The seventh annual ClimbFest . . . [is] a rock-climbing competition/outdoor festival highlighting the fun and camaraderie of rock climbing."
- Bruce McCabe, Boston Globe, September 21, 1996



Organizing Bodies

The Quincy Quarries ClimbFest is a collaborative effort of three entities: the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Quincy Quarries ClimbFest Committee.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) (www.mass.gov/dcr) is a governmental agency created in July 2003 by the merger of the former Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) and the former Department of Environmental Management (DEM). Three divisions compose the DCR. They have broad management responsibilities that include the conservation and protection of the Commonwealth's natural, cultural, and recreational resources for all its citizens.

The DCR's Division of Urban Parks and Recreation oversees the Quincy Quarries Historical Site. This division emerged from the former MDC, formed in 1893 through the vision of Charles Eliot, a Boston landscape architect. Mr. Eliot saw the need for people living within a crowded urban area to connect with nature and open space, and to unwind and relax from life's daily pressures. His idea was to set aside miles of beachfront and riverbanks, and acreages of woods throughout metropolitan Boston to be used as regional parks and held in perpetuity for the public's use and enjoyment. At its inception, the MDC included over 9,000 acres of reservation, 13 miles of ocean frontage, 56 miles of riverbank, and seven parkways. Since then athletic fields, skating rinks, swimming pools, and thousands of additional acres of parkland, including the Quincy Quarries, have been incorporated into the system.



Founded in 1876, the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) (www.outdoors.org) is the country's oldest conservation and outdoor recreation organization. 90,000 members strong, the AMC promotes the protection, enjoyment, and wise use of the mountains, rivers, and trails of the Appalachian region. Through its regional chapters, from Washington D.C. to Maine, the AMC's volunteers and professional staff provide a wide range of services including conservation programs, outdoor and environmental educational programs, and outdoor recreational activities.

The AMC's Boston Chapter Mountaineering Committee (www.amcboston.org/mountaineering) offers instructional programs for rock and ice climbing, rescue, avalanche and wilderness first aid workshops, as well as social events. All are open to AMC members and the general climbing community.

The Quincy Quarries ClimbFest Committee (www.climbfest.com) is the functional body that has come together on an annual basis since 1990 to produce the QQ ClimbFest. It is composed of volunteers drawn from members of the AMC's Boston Chapter Mountaineering Committee and the local Boston climbing community.

Sponsorship Opportunities

In order to subsidize costs of the 11th Quincy Quarries ClimbFest and provide maximum exposure for our sponsors, the following sponsorship levels have been set. They are linked to the dollar value of your company's donation, whether in cash or in retail value of donated goods. Underwriters (sponsors who donate upwards of \$500 in cash) will receive the more prominent display of their company name or logo on printed materials.

Elite 5.14 Sponsor – \$600.00 or more

1. V.I.P. display table for your products and/or services at the ClimbFest
2. Opportunity to display promotional banners at the ClimbFest
3. Prominent display of your logo on the ClimbFest event program
4. Your company name or logo printed on the ClimbFest '07 T-shirts
5. Your company name included in The Crux (a quarterly newsletter that reaches more than 500 Boston area climbers)
6. Your company materials included in each climbing competitor's registration packet
7. Three free competition entries for your company staff
8. Three free ClimbFest '07 T-shirts
9. Internet link from the ClimbFest webpage to your site

Sport 5.9 Sponsor – \$300.00

1. Your company name included in The Crux (a quarterly newsletter that reaches more than 500 Boston area climbers)
2. Your company name or logo printed on the ClimbFest '07 T-shirts
3. Three free competition entries for your company staff
4. One free ClimbFest '07 T-shirt
5. Internet link from the ClimbFest webpage to your site
6. Inclusion in the ClimbFest event program
7. Your company material in each competitor's registration packet

Recreational 5.6 Sponsor – \$150.00

1. Inclusion in the ClimbFest event program
2. Your company material in each competitor's registration packet
3. Internet link from the ClimbFest webpage to your site

Welcome to the Quincy Quarries Reservation.

These days, when one first visits the Quincy Quarries Reservation, a person encounters a unique urban park — vertical granite walls, some tall, some small, encircling a flat lawn at one end and what appears to be a pond at the other. Walking paths and hiking trails wander through, into, and to the top of either of two quarry sites.

Of the two sites, the Granite Railway Quarry is larger. Its wide entrance affords a view of granite blocks, gathered in clusters and serving as benches near several distinct rock faces — at a sensible distance from the steep or overhanging walls. Standing at the center of a spacious lawn (admittedly not kept to country club standards), the visitor can take in the entire quarry simply by turning 360 degrees.

The smaller Little Granite Railway Quarry is a bit less accessible, a steep rocky crescent filled with water and surrounded by the quarry's marshy bank. At summer's peak the water teems with fish, frogs, and fowl. Granite block stepping-stones allow passage across the wetlands to the base of this quarry's guardian-like rock buttress. Larger granite blocks flank this side of the quarry, providing an adventurous access to its innermost faces. Those wishing to return from this miniature cirque without retracing their steps have the option of either scrambling up the corners at its farthest end or scaling its seemingly featureless rock faces.

Given the seemingly limitless variety in climbing areas, on any given day of decent weather — regardless of the season — one is likely to see a number of multicolored ropes dangling down the various faces of either quarry. Usually, each end of the rope is tied to a climber, one being at some distance above the ground, making use of the larger or the microscopically small features the granite walls offer to gain further height. Sometimes this climber slips off the face, to be saved by the rope and partner attached to the other end. Other times, the climber ascends the steep walls effortlessly — as if the laws of gravity were not enforced at that particular moment.

Although rock climbers make the most use of the Quarries, frequently families, groups of friends, and other curious individuals explore its unique landscape, take in the antics of the omnipresent climbers, and enjoy the vistas from atop the rock walls. To the west one can see the forested Blue Hills; to the south, wooded suburbs. Below one's feet lies the city of Quincy; beyond it, the outer reaches of Boston Harbor and the beginnings of the Atlantic Ocean. To the north lies the city of Boston, its skyscrapers appearing puny

in the distance. Sunsets often create an urban alpenglow off their glass faces.

Beyond these skyscrapers, hidden from view, stand the very reasons why these quarries exist, Boston's stately granite structures — for example, the Customs House near Boston's waterfront. This and various other landmark buildings, here and around the nation, find Quincy granite adorning their façades and supporting their very structures. Quincy granite was historically highly valued not only for being some of the hardest in the world, but also for its dark color and its ability to take a fine polish.

The Heyday of Quincy Granite

Although Quincy granite played a major role in the building of early Boston's houses, streets and important buildings (King's Chapel, for example, was built with granite taken from the Quincy hills), it was the building of the Bunker Hill Monument (1825 – 1842) that brought large-scale quarrying operations into existence. The building of this 221-foot monument required many hundreds of large granite blocks, totaling in excess of 3,000 tons!

In order to cut, extract and then transport massive stone blocks in such large quantities, many technological innovations and fundamental changes in granite quarrying were set in place. These included the introduction of innovative lifting, pulling and hoisting jacks, the application of the Holmes Derrick (precursor of modern construction cranes), and the utilization of one of the first railways in America to transport the cut granite to barges waiting on the Neponset River three miles to the north. For over 140 years, Quincy granite was transported for use throughout the world. Quarrying operations became so extensive that Quincy was known as the Granite City. In total there were 54 different quarries operating at one time or another within Quincy. The men who worked the quarries were usually immigrants from Italy, Ireland, Finland, and Sweden.

Despite its early popularity, the high demand for Quincy granite let up somewhat by the late 19th century, as concrete and steel proved to be less expensive building materials. Furthermore, quarrying was dangerous work. With the rise of the labor movement of the 1920s and '30s, skilled laborers — immigrant or otherwise — became unwilling to work in dangerous conditions for low wages. The Great Depression and WWII furthered the demise of the industry. The Granite Railway Quarry, described above, closed in the early 1940s; the deepest of the quarries, Swingles Quarry, closed in the early 1960s following the death of three quarrymen.

Post-Commercial Quarry Use

As the granite industry was failing, adventurous Bostonians found a new use for the steep rock faces carved from the Quincy hills. Vacations in the Alps left early climbers yearning for local opportunities to refine their skills. With their close proximity to Boston and Cambridge, the various quarries provided an ideal setting. Quincy once again became the site of an important social innovation — it is among the very first places in America where rock climbing was pursued as a sport. Early members of the Appalachian Mountain (AMC) and Harvard Mountaineering Clubs frequented these and other nearby outcrops.

The first climbing guide to Greater Boston, written in 1922, included a description of the Quarries. The names of many early Quarries climbers read like a roster of American mountaineering. Women and men like Miriam O'Brien, Ken Henderson, and Robert Underhill, among others, not content with establishing routes around Boston and New England, made numerous landmark ascents throughout the world including the Tetons, Alaska, the Alps, and the Himalayas.

Ensuing generations brought forth countless climbers who, after learning their craft at the Quarries, ventured off to wherever crags and mountains are found. Most have been and continue to be active recreational climbers. Some, like Henry Barber for example, have become their own generation's standard-bearer.

When the Quarries were effectively abandoned for commercial use, others outside the climbing community found them an attractive place for recreation. Self-expressive individuals found the rock faces to be an excellent canvas for their graffiti. The deep open quarry pits, whose bottoms fell hundreds of feet below the water table, eventually filled with the kids; however, every few years or so, someone's child did not come home from their big jump.

Development of the Modern Reservation

Within the past two decades, the combination of several developments have brought the Quarries to their present

In 1985 the Metropolitan District Commission (now the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation) was persuaded to purchase the Quarries as recreational land, securing them for climbers and, inadvertently, for jumpers and graffiti artists. Soon after, the Quincy Quarries were incorporated into the adjacent Blues Hills Reservation.

In the late 1990s a missing person's investigation led to the draining of Granite Railway Quarry. The operation closed

this portion of the Quarries to climbers for several years. The drained quarry, nearly the width of a football field, soon became a dangerous gaping hole several hundred feet deep. At this time the Central Artery/Tunnel Project (also known with varying degrees of affection as the Big Dig) was in full swing. Millions of tons of dirt needed a new home. With the Granite Railway Quarry now being a large and dangerous hole in the ground, a heavenly match was made for much of that dirt. Nearly 800,000 tons of dirt filled Granite Railway Quarry, bringing the ground surface to just above its former water level. Since then, the Little Granite Railway Quarry, capped decades ago, and other parts of the Quincy Quarries Reservation refilled with water. Wetlands redeveloped soon after. Subsequent landscaping, engineering efforts, and volunteer trail work have made the Quarries into a multi-use urban park. With proper stewardship and effort there remains potential for an even better Quincy Quarries for generations to come.

- Bill Boyle and Richard Doucette



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