

Woods Hole Historical Collection
P.O. Box 185
Woods Hole, MA 02543

REGISTER
The Shining Sea Bicycle Path
1960 – 2002

1 box

SHINING SEA BICYCLE PATH

HISTORY

The railroad right-of-way from Falmouth to Woods Hole was formerly the location of tracks of the Old Colony Railroad and its successor, the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad from 1872 to 1965. A protracted battle ensued between a private investor, who bought the property from the Penn Central Railroad, and the Town of Falmouth, which wished to use the land for public purposes. In 1973 the court ruled in favor of the Town of Falmouth. It took an additional two years to determine the financial settlement. The bicycle path opened in 1975. In 2008-2009 the path was extended from Falmouth to North Falmouth.

The name of the path, “Shining Sea”, originated in the lyrics of “America the Beautiful” written by Falmouth native and Wellesley College professor, Katharine Lee Bates. The original section of the bicycle path follows the shoreline of Vineyard Sound from Falmouth to Woods Hole. The sea is visible from many parts of the path.

A detailed history is found in *Sprintsail*, A Journal of the History of Falmouth and Vicinity, published by the Woods Hole Historical Collection, Vol. 16, Number 1, Winter 2002.

(See item 10 below).

SCOPE NOTE

The collection contains local newspaper clippings about the path from its proposal to its completion. The controversy over ownership of the land is mentioned. Barbara Burwell’s files are included, along with audio tapes and writings of Joan Kanwisher and Redwood Wright.

BOX LIST

1. Article. *Falmouth Enterprise* (newspaper) articles, 1960 – 1973 and 2002.
2. Town Conservation Commission Minutes, 1961 – 1975.
3. Falmouth Town Reports, 1965 – 1976.
4. Barbara Burwell’s files on bike path, 1972 – 1975.
5. Shining Sea Bikeway Guide, 1987, 1988.
6. Woods Hole Memories by David Burwell, 1991.
7. Booklet. “Building Better Bicycling” by Karen-Jayne Dodge and Chris Skelly, February 1994, Commonwealth of Massachusetts publication.
9. Recollections, Joan Kanwisher, November 1996.
10. Audio tape. Conversation: Joan Kanwisher, Redwood Wright, Barbara Burwell, July

25,

2001.

11. Redwood Wright, Fall 2001; later published in *Sprintsail*, Vol. 16, Number 1.

12. *Sprintsail*, Vol. 16, Number 1, Winter 2002.

13. "From the Shining Sea to the Golden Gate", Introduction and Title, David Burwell, ca. 2002.

14. Newsclippings. Opening of Extension to Bikepath, 2009.

a. "Dedication Ceremony Officially Opens Bikepath Extension", Falmouth *Enterprise*, June 30, 2009.

b. "Bikepath Officially Opens To Cyclists". Falmouth *Enterprise*, July 3, 2009.
Includes map.