

Welcome to the Blue Trail Historic Features at the Elementary School Trails.

Along the eastern portion of the Blue Trail are four historic items and features. The letters on the trail map correspond to the information presented below. We hope you enjoy the walk and encourage you to investigate the rest of the Elementary School Trail system.

Old Gravel Pits

Image: 1934 State aerial photo annotated by NTSC

There are several old gravel pits or excavation areas along the eastern portion of the blue trail. The purpose of these pits and where the soil was used is not known. The large northernmost pit (shown here with blue trail superimposed) was already excavated in the 1934 aerial photo of this area. Most of the other pits apparently were done at an unknown later date and medium size trees have grown up within all of them.



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Stone Wall with Wolf Trees

Image: 1934 State aerial photo annotated by NTSC

While this area is forest today, it was mostly fields/meadows in 1934. The stone wall (shown in yellow), that is visible from portions of the blue trail (shown in blue), had several large trees growing along it. Some of these trees are still standing today and are known as "wolf trees." They can be distinguished from their forest cousins by their large horizontal branches that indicate the wolf tree once grew in an open area.

J. W. Day Cotton Mill Ruins

Image: Photograph by NTSC

These stone ruins are believed to be the location of the J. W. Day Cotton Mill. Water from the old dam travelled to the mill's waterwheel in an earth channel or raceway that is still visible in places in the woods. The mill was depicted as a "saw mill" on an 1855 map, and as the "J. W. Day Cotton Mill" on an 1869 map of Marlborough (Day owned the land from 1864 to 1873). By the time of the 1934 aerial photos the mill buildings were gone.



Old Dam

Image: Photograph by NTSC

This old dam is believed to have been the water source for the downstream J. W. Day Cotton Mill. The dam is currently breached with the brook travelling thru the dam unimpeded. Just upstream of the dam is the remnant of a beaver dam from around 2016 that caused the pond to partially refill for a few years. While the trees are all gone from the former beaver pond area, low vegetation is beginning to restore the area.

