

5# Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve

The forest in front of you is known as Bill's Woods—though no one really knows who Bill was! In the late 1990s the understory here consisted of a tangle of invasive shrubs growing beneath a canopy of mature oaks and hickories. The invasives had crowded out many of the native plants. But now, due to nearly 10 years of hard work by dedicated volunteers from the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, the understory of native shrubs and groundlayer plants flourishes.

Dedicated Friends volunteers and students, led by Glenda Denniston and Mary Trewartha, continue to spend hundreds of hours each year working in Bill's Woods removing invasive shrubs like buckthorn and honeysuckle and nasty weeds like garlic mustard.

Removing undesirable plants is only part of the job though. Friends work parties have purchased and planted thousands of wild flowers and other ground layer plants, including trillium, bloodroot, and anemone, as well as native understory shrubs like pagoda dogwood, viburnum, and hazelnut.

In spite of all the progress, the job is never done! Buckthorn is still a major problem and Garlic mustard persists. Restoration is a long-term commitment. Working on a restoration project such as this can be challenging, but when you see the results it is extremely satisfying.

The Friends group is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the Preserve through volunteer stewardship, educational activities, and fundraising. Friend's activities provide a chance to get your hands dirty, learn about native and invasive plants, and gain insights about the natural world through field trips, and newsletters. Check out the Friends web site for the most current information on work parties and field trips.

Everyone is welcome to all Friends activities whether a member or not. Consider joining the organization anytime. Hope to see you soon in the Preserve!

For more stories about the cultural and natural history of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve, check out our website and interactive map. And be sure to look for other audio tour signposts throughout the Preserve. Happy trails!