
4. Heritage Park

Heritage Park is part of a National Battlefield for the Battle of Rhode Island. The park is located on Turkey Hill where a battle skirmish took place. Hessian (German) troops pursued American Col. Laurens Regiment to Turkey Hill. Laurens men took up a strong defensive position at the top; American and Hessian units engaged on Turkey Hill before the Americans fell back.

Activities: Walk up the hill and you will find Nathan Minese's excellent display on the Battle of Rhode Island. Walk down into the valley and imagine how the Americans had to retreat. This large open area is good for dog walking, picnicking, kite flying.

Location: Heritage Park is located off of Hedley Street/High Point on the hill behind the Transfer Station.

5. Melville Park Recreation Area

The trails are considered "Easy." There are three miles of trails – designated as Blue, Green, Orange, Yellow and Red. The Blue Trail was first created by Boy Scouts and goes around Lower Melville Pond and takes you closest to the Narragansett Bay. It includes picnic tables. Before World War II the area was cleared agricultural land, but it was taken by the US Government for military purposes. There is a cellar hole by one of the trails from a 1670 home.

Activities: Hiking, birding, wildflower viewing. Dogs are welcome on leashes.

Location: 181 Bradford Avenue in Portsmouth. West Main Road to Bradford – go past the Camp Grounds and Dog Park to a small parking lot for the Trailhead.

6. Glen Farm

The Glen Farm area includes recreational fields, a polo field, Leonard Brown House (1850's Yankee Farm), stone barns (Gentleman Farm era), event fields with a picnic pavilion. The new Elmhurst Park offers parking and access to the area around Glen Manor House.

Activities: This is a great walking area through Linden Lane and around the barns to Glen Farm Road and back up Linden Lane. Bring a camera or sketch book to capture the stone walls or the barn complex. Bring a picnic basket to Glen Park. Park at Elmhurst Park and bring your fishing pole to the dock in back of the Manor House.

Location: The Glen area can be accessed from Glen Road and from East Main Road opposite Oakland Farm.

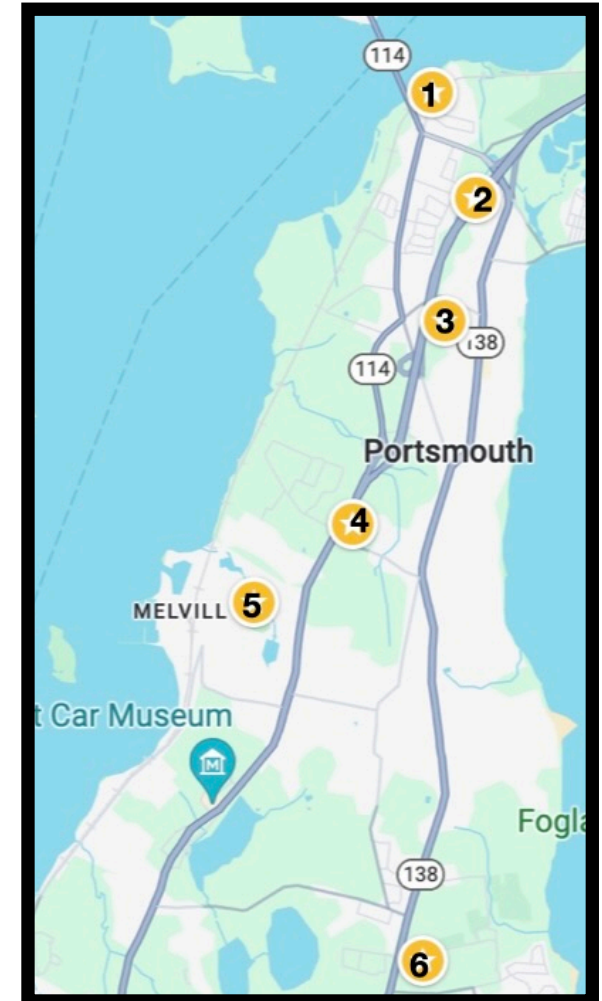


Melville Park Recreation Area

Discover Your Portsmouth

A Guide to Town Owned

Historical and Recreational Sites



Prepared by the Portsmouth
Conservation Commission
2024



Introduction: Portsmouth has preserved a variety of unique historical landscapes for families to enjoy.

1. Mt. Hope Park & Town Common

The old Bristol Ferry landing (now known as Mt. Hope Park) was once the transportation center for Portsmouth. Ferry boat service to Bristol and back began as early as the 1650s. The Old Colony Railway had a train station there and steamboats docked at that spot for travelers on the Fall River and Providence steam boat line. When the Mt. Hope Bridge opened in 1929 and the ferries stopped running, the area lost much of its importance as a transportation center. It is a beautiful open space with wonderful views of the water and the Mt. Hope Bridge.

Activities: This is a beautiful spot for a sunset picnic. Bring your camera for sunset photos with the Mt. Hope Bridge in the background. There is a fishing dock as well.

Location: End of Bristol Ferry Road. A gravel parking lot is available. Walk uphill to the Commons area.

Bristol Ferry Town Common

By the early 1700s the people of Portsmouth decided that there needed to be an area by the ferry where people could have their cattle, sheep, horses and goods stored until the ferry arrived;. The Bristol Ferry Town Common was created in 1714. This was town land and it was called a "common" because it was for the use of everyone. It is an acre and half in size and it originally included some shoreline.



Mt. Hope Park

2. Founder's Brook

In the early days of the town this site served as the "Watering Place." It was a center of activity for the small community of settlers who stayed in Portsmouth in 1639 instead of moving south to the Newport area. A spring here provided drinking water, a location for washing (both animals and clothing) and a central location around which the house lots of the town were laid out. As the townspeople abandoned the idea of house lots in a village and migrated to homes on their larger farm lots, the area lost importance. The small lots here were absorbed into bigger farms.

Activities: Today we come to Founder's Brook to honor the founders and to get a glimpse of the early roots of Portsmouth life. A copy of the Town Compact holds the names of the original settlers. Memorial stone benches can teach us about Anne Hutchinson, a founding mother.

Location: Off of Boyd's Lane near the intersection of Anthony Road.

3. Butts Hill Fort

The earthwork fort structure that can still be seen today was constructed by French and American forces in 1780-81. When the British Occupied Aquidneck Island they constructed fortifications on the North side to watch for Rebel movements from Tiverton and Bristol. During the Rhode Island Campaign, when Americans held Butts Hill. fortifications were constructed toward the south to watch for enemy movements along West an East Main Roads. The work done by the Americans under the guidance of the French completed Butts Hill as a real fort.

Activities: Hiking, dog walking, viewing the historical fort. The path circling the fort is being cleared so you can walk around the structure, view the moat (ditch) around it and appreciate the height of the fortifications to the south. Some temporary signage can provide information.

Location: From East Main Road: Take a left at Sprague Street. Turn left at Dyre Street and park



Memorial at Butts Hill Fort