

ABINGTON, 1882
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ISLAND GROVE PARK

Site of Pre-Civil War Abolitionist Meetings
Town of Abington Recreation Area

In 1882, Bela Wilkes of Abington and Warren Wilkes of Rockland transferred land they had acquired from the heirs of Ezekiel Reed to the Town of Abington for what is the “Crown Jewel” of the town’s public parks. Island Grove was used as the meeting place for the famous “August First” meeting of the abolitionists led by William Lloyd Garrison beginning on August 1, 1846 and held annually leading up to the Civil War. Many of the abolitionists arrived at Island Grove Park from Boston by special train on the newly built railroad which abuts the Park on the east. There is a monument recognizing those meetings at the center of the park.

In 1912, as part of Abington’s Bicentennial Celebration, the Abington Sons of Union Veterans built the majestic Memorial Arch and Bridge in memory of the service and sacrifices of the Civil War soldiers and sailors from Abington. This bridge created an entrance to the Park from west of Island Grove Pond.

Since the days when Ezekiel Reed erected an amusement area at the park, it has been constantly used and enjoyed by the residents of Abington and the South Shore for many different types of recreation. Island Grove Park remains in active use today including swimming, children’s summer vacation programs, boating, fishing, ice skating, concerts and as a quiet place to walk.

On March 6, 2002, Island Grove Park was named to the National Register of Historical Places.

Courtesy of Register of Deeds John R. Buckley, Jr. and
Joseph D. Shea and John R. Buckley, Citizens of Abington
From the “Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Notable Land Records Collection”