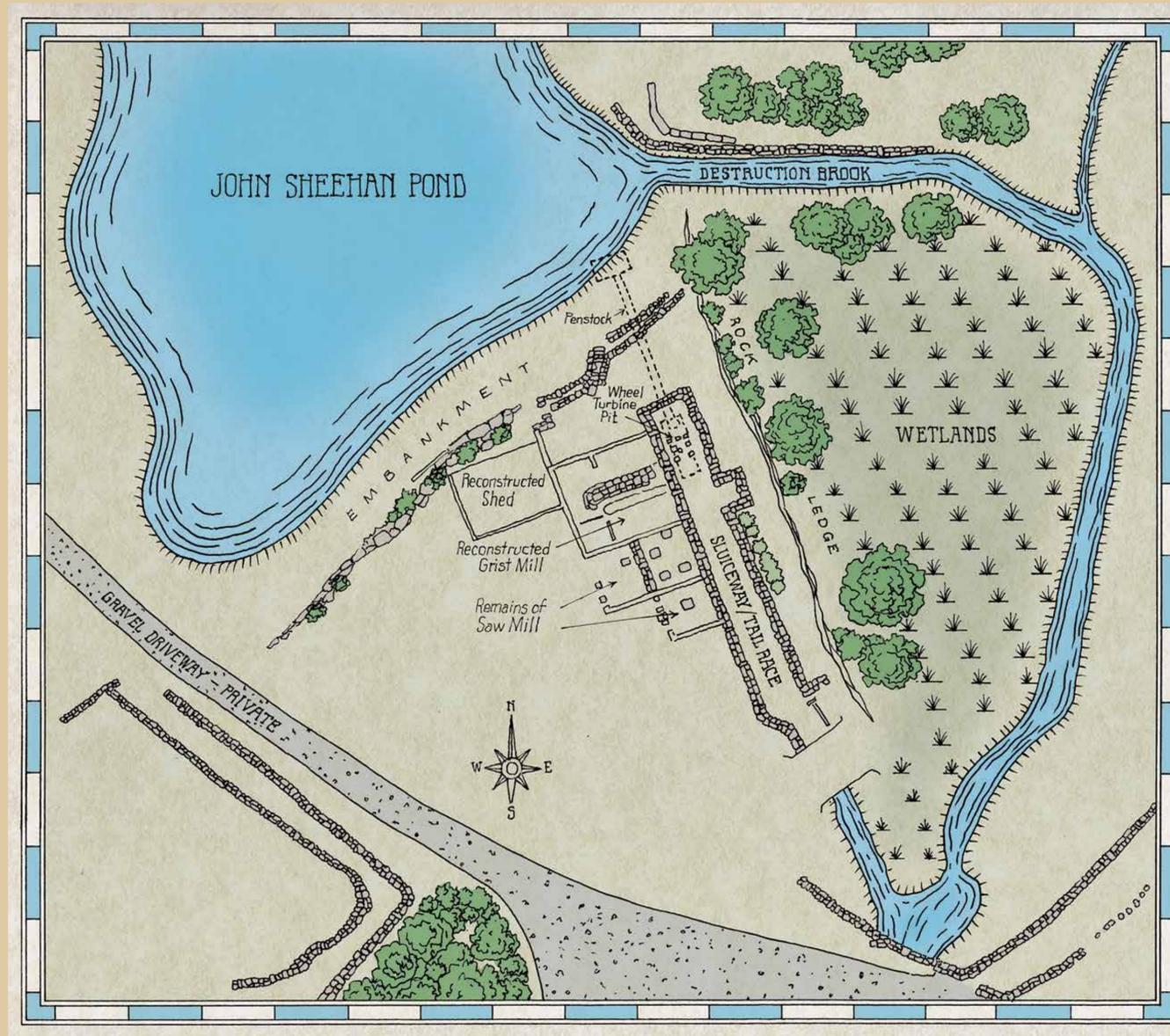


Allen's Mill

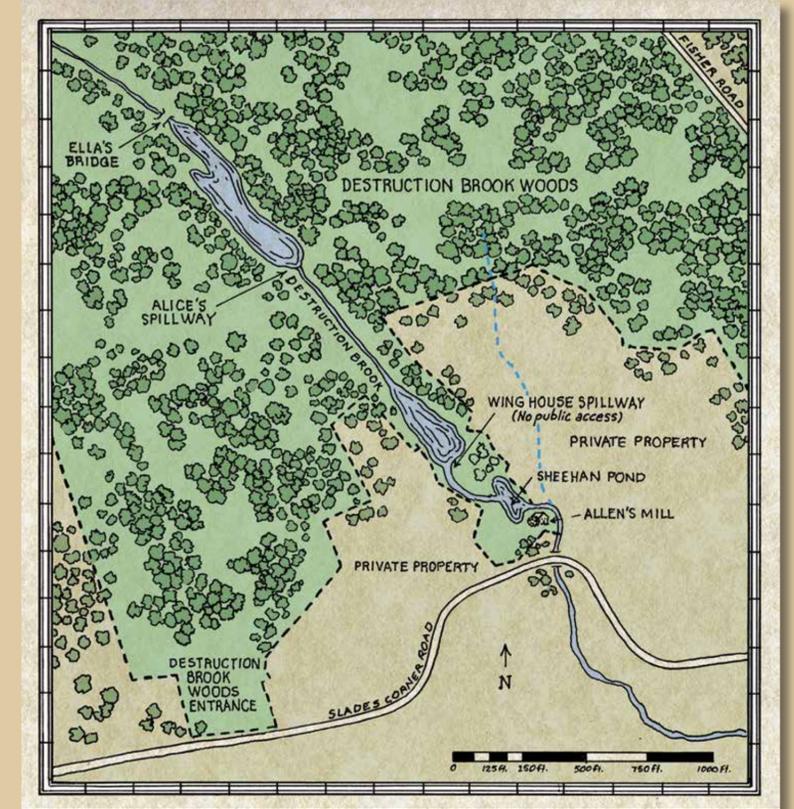
The Allen's Mill site is a rare surviving example of a commercial mill site that played a significant role in the historical development of the Town of Dartmouth. A mill has been located at this site for more than 300 years.

To ensure a constant flow of water to power Allen's Mill, four water-control structures were built to create four ponds along Destruction Brook. To power the mill, a wooden "penstock" (now gone) carried water from Sheehan Pond to a waterwheel (and later a turbine). The site was particularly valuable for a mill because of its large "head" of water (the 17-foot fall from the top of the dam to the stream below).



Allen's Mill in the early 20th century.

photo courtesy of the
New Bedford Whaling Museum

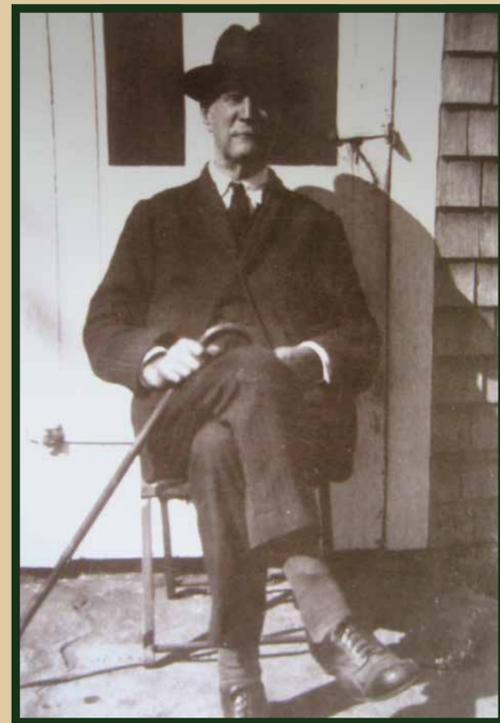


The mill site was purchased by DNRT as part of its 283-acre Destruction Brook Woods acquisition in 2000.

Allen's Mill History

Dartmouth, in its early history, was a regional center of commerce containing many farms, several shipyards, saltworks, and numerous water-powered mill sites. In the mid-19th century, more than 25 mills were in Dartmouth, with at least 11 in the Russells Mills area alone, making Russells Mills a major hub of activity. At different times, five of these mills were located along the banks of Destruction Brook, including Allen's Mill.

Although the site was probably used much earlier, the earliest documented use of the Allen's Mill site appears to date to 1711, when the property belonged to Jonathan Ricketson. The mill changed



Mill owner, James Allen 2nd

photo courtesy of Kenneth E. Morrison

hands a number of times and in 1876, became the property of James Allen 2nd, whose name is associated with the mill. Over the years the mill primarily served as a grist mill, grinding wheat, oats, and corn, including the famous Rhode Island Johnnycake meal. Originally, a wheel powered by the falling water turned a series of smaller wheels connected by gear teeth, which ultimately turned the large mill stones that ground the seeds and kernels. Later the mill was powered by a turbine that replaced the traditional wheel and produced more power with less water usage. A sawmill also operated on the site as early as 1830.

In 1939 a fire destroyed the majority of the sawmill and a portion of the gristmill building. The mill ceased operation in the 1950s and eventually fell into decay. The mill was abandoned until 2000, when it was purchased by DNRT as part of its Destruction Brook Woods acquisition.



Allen's Mill, circa 1942. The sawmill is visible in the middle of the photo.

photo courtesy of Kenneth E. Morrison

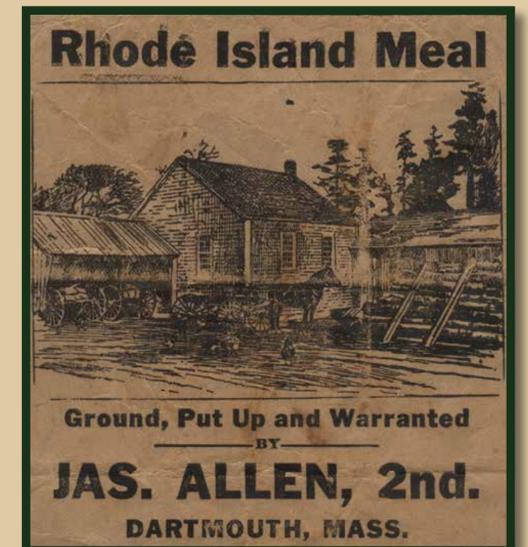


photo courtesy of Burney Gifford