

Donald County Park: the dream of two visionary women

Delma Donald Woodburn and Pat Hitchcock loved this special place. Thanks to them, others can now enjoy it in perpetuity.

*"There is strength in the hills
and peace in the valleys."*

— Delma Donald Woodburn

"We can do this!"
— Pat Hitchcock

WHO WAS DELMA DONALD WOODBURN?

HER CONTRIBUTION: In 1993, Delma Donald Woodburn inspired her family, through Vernon Valley Farms, Inc., to donate 105 acres to establish Donald County Park. This gift honors the Donald family's deep roots and history here, and fulfills Delma's desire that others experience this land and find their own sense of place among its hills, rocks, streams and valleys.

HER BACKGROUND: Born in 1899, Delma grew up on the Donald Farm, roaming lands farmed by her ancestors. From parents Vona and John Sweet Donald, she gleaned an appreciation for community, farming and progressive ideals.

Delma earned a University of Wisconsin economics degree and married UW civil engineering professor James Woodburn. While raising two sons, Delma completed the UW Farm Short Course. Philanthropic and civic minded, she led several community organizations. She frequently returned here, overseeing the family farms and enjoying outings until her death in 2001 at age 102.

▲ Like her parents before her, **Delma Donald Woodburn** was a civic leader and philanthropist. Her civic involvement began when she was a young woman.

▼ A tomboy, animal lover and avid hiker, **Delma** loved being outside with her father while growing up on the Donald Farm. Here she is at 16 with her horse Flash and dog Flossie.

▶ **Delma** in her grandmother's carriage, restored by her son Bob for the celebration of her 100th birthday, June 2, 1999, at the family homestead.



WHO WAS PAT HITCHCOCK?

HER CONTRIBUTION: In 1996, Pat Hitchcock sold her farm to Dane County Parks to help create Donald County Park. A founding member of the Friends of Donald Park and the inspirational leader for hundreds of park volunteers, Pat favored quiet, low-impact outdoor sports—hiking, camping, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. These activities can be enjoyed at Donald Park, thanks to Pat's influence and her belief that the park should be a place where visitors can "restore their soul."



HER BACKGROUND: Throughout her life, Pat was an energetic, forward-thinking woman. She worked with the Red Cross overseas after World War II, then promoted youth hostelry via a 12,000-mile North American bicycle trip. Later, Pat married anthropologist John Hitchcock and the couple had three children. Pat's original documentary films and photography in India and Nepal made pioneering contributions to anthropological research.

In 1967, John joined the University of Wisconsin faculty. Desiring to return to their respective rural roots, the Hitchcocks purchased the Springdale Township farm, where they practiced chemical-free farming. Deeply committed to outdoor education, Pat often invited youth groups to the farm for camping, hiking and maple sugaring.

A provision in the sale of her property allowed Pat to continue residing on the Hitchcock farm, and fulfill her dream of staying "as long as I can work." She helped lead the Friends of Donald Park until her death in 2009 at age 89.

▲ Independent and adventurous, loving the outdoors from her youth on a farm onward, **Pat Hitchcock** was among the first female Massachusetts state park rangers.

▼ **Pat** with her Model A, ready to work!

▶ **Pat** was a devoted environmentalist who brought people together to create Donald County Park, motivating them with her can-do spirit.

☐ Please visit the Friends website at donaldpark.org for more about Delma and Pat.

IMAGE CREDITS Delma Donald Woodburn: Mount Horeb Area Historical Society. Pat Hitchcock: Courtesy of Marion Clark.

