



**Friends
of
Baxter State Park**

Forever Wild

Newsletter of the Friends of Baxter State Park

Winter 2004

Vol. 3 No. 1

President's Column

*By Holly Dominie
President*

"As I get into the second half of my life, I ask myself, 'What have I left behind and what is my legacy?'" Roxanne Quimby recently told Phyllis Austin on the occasion of Quimby's purchase of a 24,000-acre township east of Baxter State Park.

Most of us don't have the \$12 million that Ms. Quimby invested in this significant conservation project, but we share her motivation.

For those of us with lesser means, The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Katahdin Forest Project offers an excellent opportunity to protect exceptional lands and the west buffer of Baxter State Park. The 241,000 acres also links together an impressive array of conservation lands, including Baxter, the State's Nahmakanta reserve, the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, and the Conservancy's Trout Mountain Preserve.

TNC must complete an \$18 million fundraising initiative by the first of March as part of the \$50 million project. They have been soliciting the larger donations that form the foundation for the project and are

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Start of Something New. A popular spot to begin one of the East's most famous canoe trips is below the dam at the foot of Matagamon Lake. Almost eight miles of the East Branch's shores will be protected by the Quimby purchase.

Quimby Purchase Brings Cheers and Jeers But Conserves Miles of Penobscot River

The year 2003 was one of major land transactions on the east side of Baxter State Park with the last, the sale of an entire township to a conservation buyer, being the most controversial.

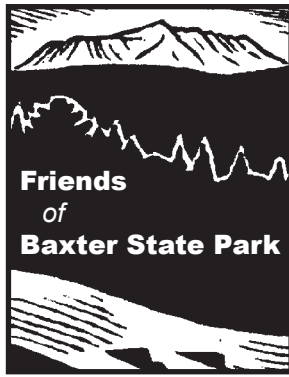
The central party in the multi-million-dollar sales was the Canadian firm, J.D. Irving, which owned the better part of three townships abutting the Park. The State of Maine tried to buy all of Irving's 70,000 acres at 60% of the asking price, but was turned down. Instead, the company sold 47,000 acres to logging firms and the remaining 24,083 acres to Roxanne Quimby, owner of Burt's Bees of Durham, NC.

For \$12,041,500, Quimby took possession of all of T5 R8 WELS, the township immediately south of Matagamon Lake that borders the Park and includes several miles of

both sides of the East Branch of the Penobscot. The new owner has sold 80% of her company, has set up a land trust in Maine to buy more forest land, and has said she will eventually give it to a north woods national park.

Millinocket Town Manager Gene Conlogue was quoted in the Bangor Daily News as calling the sale to Quimby "outrageous" and a "terrible mistake" because it could severely hurt the traditional wood products industry. Chuck Gadzik, manager of Irving's operations in Maine, said the company expected negative reaction and added that it was a no-win deal

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The Friends of Baxter State Park is an independent citizens' group working to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park, in the spirit of its founder, Governor Percival Baxter.

Friends of Baxter State Park
PO Box 1442
Bangor ME 04402-1442

Annual Meeting Will Head into the Wilderness

By Charlie Jacobi

Our board has been working on a keynote speaker for the 2004 annual meeting, and we are pleased to announce Maine's own Dean Bennett has agreed to address the membership.

We have asked Dean to talk about the meaning of wilderness; wilderness in Maine, New England and beyond; threats to wilderness; actions we and others can take against those threats; and the relative merits of pursuing the "wilderness within" concepts described by Baxter Park Director Buzz Caverly vs. pursuing land protection options along the boundary with park neighbors. Dean is well suited to this challenging task, having written and thought about Maine wilderness issues for many years.

He is also a member of the Friends of Baxter State Park. We are grateful for his willingness to step up to the plate for us. Mark April 10 on your calendars now so you don't miss this! A mid-state meeting location is still to be determined.

We are also looking at other speakers to respond or add to Dean's address. If you have suggestions, please contact me at 288-5782, although we may have already selected them by mid-January.

Park Use Down in 2003

Some interesting statistics as of Dec. 2, 2003:

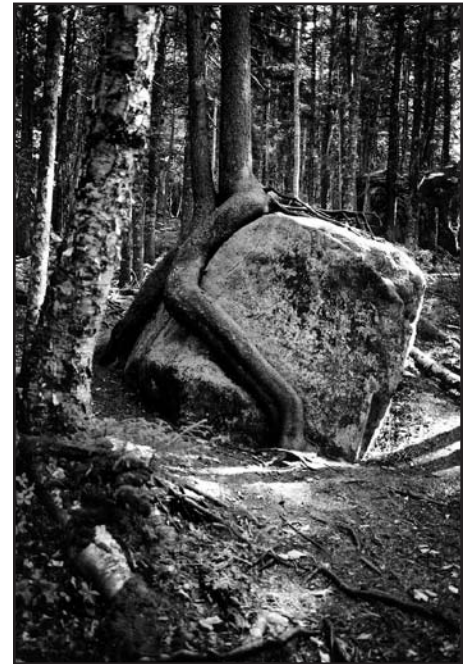
A total of 85,519 hikers was registered in 2003, a 7% decrease from '02 and the first to go below 90,000 since 1989.

Camper nights totaled 57,915, a 6% decrease and the lowest since 1986.

Vacancy rates were 33% for campgrounds and 68% for outlying sites. This may mean it will be easier for the public to get camping sites in 2004.

A Popular Friend Passes

The Friends lost another of our own on Oct. 23, 2003, when William L. Silliker, Jr., died of a heart attack while leading a photography workshop in Baxter State Park. Bill's magnificent photos of the Katahdin country and its wildlife (moose were his favorite subject) are a lasting memorial to this well-liked man and his skill with a camera.



Where is it? This tree sitting on a boulder is close by a popular trail in the Park. Can you identify the trail? (Hint: It's a short one.)

President's Column

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now turning to smaller donors to meet the deadline.

The Board of Directors of the Friends of Baxter encourages you to make a donation to the Katahdin Forest Project by sending a check to: The Nature Conservancy, 14 Maine St., Suite 401, Brunswick ME 04011. Phone: (207) 729-5181, e-mail: naturemaine@tnc.org.

I earnestly believe we can make a difference and boost our sense of hope for the planet in the bargain.

Baxter's Nephew Recalls Critical Political Action

*From a letter to the Friends from
John (Jack) Baxter, Jr.*

Enclosed is my membership check and a story you might find interesting.

On Feb. 16, 1961, when I was Majority Leader of the Maine House of Representatives, at about 6 a.m. in my room at the Senator Hotel I got a call from Gov. John Reed.

The Governor said, "I have just received a call from your uncle saying that he is worried about the Legislature not supporting the Park adequately from the General Fund, and wishes to give the Park a dedicated fund of \$500,000 (note these are '61 \$). I reminded him that to give the state money required a statute, which would take many days, and anyway we had already voted cloture after which no new bills can be introduced. He said, 'You tell my nephew what I want and he will get it done. I will be leaving for the State House in half an hour.' So, if you can get it to me I'll sign it forthwith."

So I had my marching orders. I went to Senate President Earl Hillman, Speaker of the House Vinal Good, Clerk of the House Harvey Pease (a strict disciplinarian, particularly about cloture), and House Minority Leader Irving Fogg. I also contacted Sam Schlossberg, who did all the writing, engrossing, and routing of bills; my assistant Gil Williams; and finally to my friend Dick Berry, who often did my dirty work for me.

A new bill could only be introduced in the House after cloture under unanimous consent of the 150 members, because if we let one bill in we would be inundated with bills and never get to adjourn. Somebody had to object, and that was I as House leader.

So I had to stand before the assembled members and ask consent to "introduce a bill by unanimous



Funding the Park. In this 1961 photo, State Treasurer Frank Carpenter accepts a check for \$500,000 from Park Donor Percival P. Baxter in the Governor's office after a hectic day of political maneuvering in the State Legislature. From left are Speaker of the House Vinal Good, State Treasurer Carpenter, Gov. John Reed, "Uncle Percy" Baxter, House Majority Leader Jack Baxter, and Senate President Earl Hillman.

consent, notwithstanding the cloture rule."

By then, there was general knowledge as to what this was all about, and so after a few catcalls the bill was introduced. The rules of the House and Senate were suspended at the proper time and the bill moved back and forth across the Statehouse, arriving back in the House for final enactment about 4 p.m.

All this time, my "Uncle Percy" was sitting in the Governor's office. The Governor was coming to the House for the final enactment vote and asked

Uncle Percy to accompany him to sit on the dias with the assembled dignitaries. In what was the most touching and perhaps ironic part of the whole "saga of the Bill," was my uncle's answer to the invitation: "No, I'd better not; I might unduly influence the vote."

So the bill was enacted without him, and subsequently we gathered in the Governor's office while PPB handed the State Treasurer a check for \$500,000. The names of the participants are listed on the back of the enclosed picture.

Fin and Feather Club Airs Complaints

The night before the fall meeting (Oct. 17) of the BSP Advisory and Authority, the Fin and Feather Club of Millinocket invited the Authority and Park Director Buzz Caverly to meet with members of the club. They accepted—and got an earful.

Two Authority members, Dan Martin and Alec Giffen, were there to listen, along with Director Caverly and SFMA Director Jensen Bissell. Complaints centered around access to hunting grounds in the SFMA, where unused roads were closed to vehicles

although major arteries remained open. Foot traffic and hunting are permitted throughout the SFMA. Club members said that at one time access was much broader, that Gov. Baxter did not want roads closed, that if anything more roads were needed, and that decisions affecting use should be more widely publicized.

Members were polite but firm with their complaints, arguing that older persons and those with infirmities needed their vehicles to access the hunting areas.

Quimby Purchase

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"in terms of public opinion," but the land was no longer needed by Irving.

Writing in Maine Environmental News, Phyllis Austin reported that Quimby asserted her own property rights. "Irving didn't give me this land," she said. "I didn't inherit it. I didn't win the lottery. I sweated and worked for years, and I earned the privilege of being the steward."

"In light of this [purchase] announcement by Roxanne Quimby, the state continues a high level of interest in lands east of Baxter and Irving's land around the Allagash," said Ralph

Knoll, supervisor of planning and land acquisition for the Maine Dept. of Conservation's Bureau of Parks and Lands. The state is exploring the possibility of purchasing conservation easements from other new owners to protect some areas, such as the Wassataquoik watershed.

Buzz Caverly, director of Baxter Park, said that Quimby's purchase and that of businessman Charles FitzGerald earlier this year "is most interesting. I'm pleased that conservationists like them have been successful in their negotiations. My congratulations to those who are

deeply involved in the preservation of our natural resources for generations to come," he said. Caverly added that Percival Baxter "set an example during difficult times from 1931 to 1962. Conservationists today are truly challenged as well, and their commitments and successes are admirable."

"It seems the people of Maine have a reverence for Baxter for what he accomplished," Quimby said. "He did something wonderful, and it lives on forever. I want to do something worth doing. . . If I can be an inspiration for others, I'd love to do that."

**Friends of Baxter State Park
PO Box 1442
Bangor ME 04402-1442**

We're looking for New Friends!

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Do you know someone who might be interested in the Friends of Baxter State Park? Their membership will add another voice supporting Governor Baxter's wilderness.

I'd like to be a Friend. Sign me up!

Name

Street

City, State and Zip Code

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| _____ \$1,000 | Gov. Baxter Society |
| _____ \$500 | Katahdin Club |
| _____ \$250 | Knife Edger |
| _____ \$100 | Hamlin Peaker |
| _____ \$50 | Sponsor |
| _____ \$30 | Family |
| _____ \$25 | Individual |

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Friends of Baxter State Park**