



FOREVER WILD



Newsletter of Friends of Baxter State Park

Winter 2015

Vol. 14 No. 1

Executive Director's Column

by Aaron Megquier

Friends has been enthusiastically supporting the Plants of Baxter State Park project since it began in 2012. This project is a collaborative, five-year effort to carry out a complete plant inventory of Baxter State Park.

One of the key goals of the project is publication of the *Plants of Baxter State Park* field guide. The field guide will be the culmination of three years of research by more than 80 volunteer and professional botanists, led by Glen Mittelhauser of the Maine Natural History Observatory. Field teams identified more than 800 plant species, including 260 that had never been recorded in the Park before. Team members took over 17,000 digital photos and GPS points, and contributed a staggering 4,256 hours to the project. Now, the task is to turn all of this information into a roughly 500-page field guide, which will be published by the University of Maine Press in late 2016 or early 2017.

On December 15, we launched our first-ever crowdfunding campaign to support the publication of the *Plants of Baxter State Park* field guide. Our goal was to raise \$7,500 to pay for writing species descriptions, selecting and formatting photos, layout, design, proofreading, and all of the work necessary to prepare the guide for publication. The response to our campaign was overwhelmingly positive. We raised \$11,300 from 112 donors, with an additional \$700 sent directly to the Maine Natural History Observatory.

Many individuals contributed to the success of this campaign. Matt Dickinson, summer intern for the Plants of Baxter State Park project in 2014, took hours of video footage during the 2014 field season. Using this footage, he edited and produced a campaign video about three minutes in length. John Greenman, former producer and



A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter flown by the Maine Army National Guard landing in Baxter State Park during a search and rescue operation. – Photo courtesy of BSP

Baxter State Park Seeks Search and Rescue Reimbursement

by Jensen Bissell

After entering the Park without registering, and camping for several nights at Roaring Brook and Chimney Pond without reservations, a group of two men from Ontario, Canada separated, with one man returning to a vehicle at Togue Pond and the other man heading up on Katahdin on Monday, December 8. The hiker had only a tent, light boots and minimal gear. Rangers became aware of the situation late in the day on Monday. They started fires and lit propane lights in Katahdin-access roadside camps in case the hiker found his way out Monday night.

On Tuesday, Rangers began actively searching for the hiker. The National Guard responded to our request with a Blackhawk helicopter equipped with Forward Looking Infrared sensors. The helicopter could only fly for two hours due to the worsening rain and snow storm forecast for Tuesday afternoon and evening. Later on Tuesday morning, Rangers located the hiker who had left the Helon Taylor trail, traveled down the slope and through the forest to eventually reach the Roaring Brook Road after falling through ice and

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Friends of Baxter State Park is a 501(c)(3) organization working to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park in the spirit of its founder, Percival P. Baxter.

Director's Column

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program moderator for the Maine Public Broadcasting Network, did a wonderful job narrating the video. Velocipede, a Maine band playing traditional fiddle and folk music, provided inspiring background music. If you haven't seen the video, you can check it out on our YouTube channel.

Many thanks to the generous donors who made this campaign a success! We are looking forward to sharing this new field guide with our members, and with the broader community of Park users, as soon as it is published.



Rose pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*), one of over 800 species of plants documented by the Plants of Baxter State Park project.

– Photo © Aaron Megquier



Save the Date
Annual Meeting of
Friends of Baxter State Park
Viles Arboretum,
Augusta, Maine
Saturday, April 11, 2015

Membership Matters

By Sarah Holland, Administrative Manager

Here we are in a brand new year, and it's time to announce some exciting developments in our membership program. First, we are happy to offer a new Student membership level with annual dues of only \$10! This is intended for young people who would like to stay informed about Baxter State Park and support our work. We hope this will attract and cultivate future BSP enthusiasts. We also encourage youth groups such as scouts, hiking clubs, outing clubs, and others to join as organizations. This way, through one contact, an organization can share the information with all their members. If you know of any young person or youth group that might be interested, please pass this along.

Prior to 2014, all memberships expired on March 1. Now, your membership expires 12 months from the date you joined or renewed. You will receive a renewal reminder in the mail just a few weeks before your expiration date. Prompt renewals save time and money, with more of your membership dollars going to support Baxter State Park. To avoid your membership ever expiring and to reduce the cost of mailings, please read on...

We launched **Forever Friends**, our sustaining membership program, in the fall of 2014. The program is up and running smoothly, with several dozen members making automatic, recurring contributions via credit or debit card. To sign up or learn more about this program please visit www.friendsofbaxter.org/foreverfriends. You only have to sign up once, and then your membership in Friends – and your support of Baxter State Park – will always be current. It's the green approach and a great way to continue your support.

Finally, we have a great incentive for you to recruit supporters for Friends in 2015. For every new member who joins Friends and lists you as the recruiter, you will be entered in a raffle. Prizes include a full day of sailing on the coast of Maine, a weekend on the south shore of Nova Scotia, a weekend at an island cabin just outside Baxter State Park, and a handmade cedar garden bench. If you recruit ten new members, you will get ten entries in the raffle. We'll be sharing the raffle by email and Facebook this spring, with easy methods for referring people online. You'll also receive some extra materials with your membership renewal packet that you can use to recruit in person.

Once again thank you to all our members! We could not do our work without your support.



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spending an uncomfortable night in the woods.

The search, including helicopter and Ranger time, cost over \$10,000. In accordance with Park Rule 2.2, which states “The Baxter State Park Authority may request reimbursement of search and rescue costs in cases of reckless hikers,” we will be sending a letter to the rescued individual requesting reimbursement of costs.

Events can conspire at times to mess up even the most prepared and thoughtful hikers, but reckless and illegal actions needlessly endanger hikers and rescuers alike. We thank the huge majority of our visitors who treat the wilderness with respect and incorporate planning and safe decision making into their wilderness journey.

Our Readers Write...



East of the boundary of Baxter State Park, Wassataquoik Stream tumbles over remote and beautiful Orin Falls on the land proposed for a new National Park.

- Photo © Charlie Jacobi

A Proposal for a New National Park in the Maine Woods

The idea for creating a National Park in the Maine Woods has been advocated in one form or another since the early 1990s. Long before that, in *The Maine Woods*, Thoreau was one of the first Americans to advocate for the creation of national preserves:

“Why should not we, who have renounced the king’s authority, have our national preserves, where no villages need be destroyed, in which the bear and panther, and some even of the hunter race, may still exist, and not be “civilized off the face of the earth,” – our forests, not to hold the king’s game merely, but to hold and preserve the king himself also, the lord of creation, - not for idle sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true recreation?”

It is unfortunate that, in the more than 150 years since Thoreau’s forays into the Maine wilderness, not even a fraction of the ten million acres in the north woods has been set aside for a wilderness national park. The Maine Woods is one of the last frontiers in the United States, especially on

the east coast, home to the largest population concentration in the country. Unlike the American West, where huge swaths of land are owned by the federal government and have been for generations, the public domain in the Northeast passed into private control long ago, making it difficult to preserve significant amounts of acreage as wilderness.

In recent years a new proposal has appeared on the scene that has great possibilities. Philanthropist Roxanne Quimby of Maine has proposed to donate approximately 75,000 acres east of Baxter State Park to the National Park Service for a new National Park, as well as an additional 75,000 acres for a National Recreation Area. She has also made a commitment for the proposed park’s management and operations. The land includes portions of four major watersheds, including the wild & historic East Branch of the Penobscot River made famous by Henry David Thoreau and Theodore Roosevelt, among others. Twenty miles of one of the borders is shared with Baxter State Park. The combination of two contiguous wild areas offers great potential for the future.

This scenario is not new. Many national parks created within the last 100 years were the result of benefactors stepping forward to purchase lands and donate them to the public. The Rockefellers did this with Acadia and Grand Teton parks. The results have been spectacular. As in earlier cases, we now have a benefactor with a grand vision for a new national park who has stepped forward with a generous offer. After encountering some local opposition to the park idea, Lucas St. Clair, Roxanne Quimby’s son, stepped in and has been hard at work for the past several years campaigning to earn the trust and support of local constituents in the Katahdin region, meeting with them to establish

common ground regarding the proposed national park. It appears that progress is being made.

Initial local opposition to proposed national parks is nothing new. Beloved national parks such as Grand Teton, Grand Canyon, Olympic, Redwood, and Acadia in Maine, faced bitter opposition when they were first proposed, as did Baxter State Park. Today, even the one-time opponents of those popular parks acknowledge that they were mistaken. Hopefully, as with these other parks, the tide will turn on public opinion regarding a new park in the Maine Woods.

I say “thank you” to all who have stepped forward to support the national park idea, and to Roxanne Quimby for her vision and passion for creating a national park along the East Branch of the Penobscot River. I also commend Lucas St. Clair for his efforts to build a constituency for the park and recreation area proposal.

We have been presented with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and it is vital that we act upon it, with an eye towards creating a new park by 2016, the centennial year of the National Park Service. I am determined to assist in educating people about the positives related to preserving Ms. Quimby’s lands and the importance of the greater area in general and encourage others to do so as well. Together, we can help make good things happen.

Scot Miller
Dallas, Texas

(Editor’s note: Scot Miller’s photographs were recently published by Levenger Press in a new collector’s edition of Thoreau’s classic book The Maine Woods. The book is sold out at the publisher but a few signed copies are available from Miller’s Sun to Moon Gallery (www.suntomoon.com) in Dallas.)

President's Column

by Charlie Jacobi

Scrambling for an Endless Cascade

A few years ago I took a late afternoon walk in our favorite Park after a recent heavy rain. As I crossed a small stream I looked up the steep terrain it came from and thought, that looks like it might be interesting, and took a hard left. In no time a nice waterfall appeared. I scrambled farther up this tumbling oversized rivulet, and lo, another cataract filled my viewfinder. The scramble steepened. With every few yards of climbing yet another beautiful cascade revealed itself. Fall colors framed each one. I took pictures. I thought it would never end, and I hoped that too. I dubbed this delightful discovery the Endless Cascade. Dwindling daylight suggested that at least for now, it was ending for me, so I turned around and headed for camp.

For most nonprofit organizations, it's another kind of scramble every year to meet the annual budget and find additional funds to support Park needs like trails or a plant inventory. Even a few years ago, I had no idea what a challenge this would be. We would love an endless cascade of new members, grant awards, and other gifts. It doesn't just happen though. It takes a wealth of energy, passion, and commitment, and we have that.

One fruit of our labors is the recent development of a Gift Acceptance Policy. It followed closely on the heels of the receipt of the first planned gift from someone who shares our passion for Baxter State Park, and believes the work of Friends is worthwhile. This kind of generosity is humbling because it demonstrates trust. This donor has entrusted Friends with the stewardship of this gift, to use it wisely, just as Governor Baxter entrusted Park staff and all of us to steward the Park through the Deeds. Most of us can't match the scale of Percival Baxter's legacy, but we sure can make a difference, individually and collectively. I know I'm thinking about a planned gift for Friends, and I encourage you to do the same. Together, maybe we can create our own Endless Cascade.



Howe Brook tumbles off the slopes of the Traveler in a series of spectacular cascades on its way to the South Branch Ponds. — Photo © Dick Klain

Looking back...

by John Neff, Author of *Katahdin: An Historic Journey*

The Abol Trail - Some Historical Reflections

Baxter State Park's Abol Trail is receiving more than the usual amount of attention these days because of last spring's avalanche along the slide and the necessary relocation of the trail. It seems appropriate to share a brief capsule of the history of that iconic trail to Katahdin's Tableland and summit. The earliest attempts to reach the summit, including its first ascent in 1804 by Charles Turner, Jr. were made along the southwest ridge now followed by the Hunt Trail. Then in 1816 the Abol Slide avalanche came roaring down the

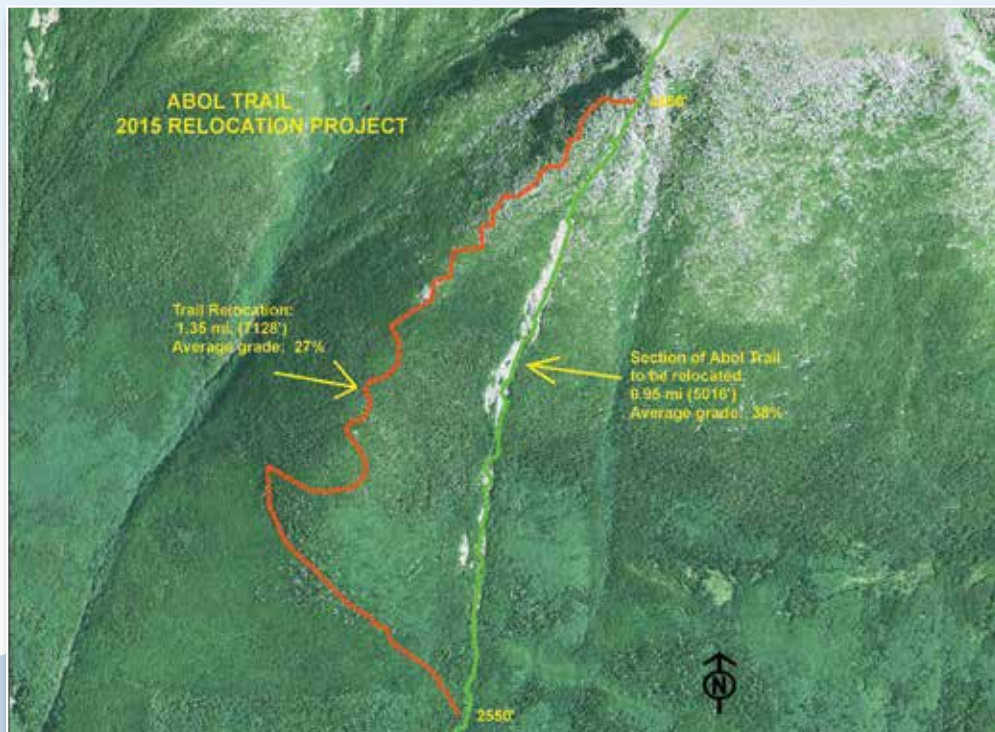
south side of the mountain along the area of the headwaters of Abol Stream. From that moment on, until the early 1900s when the Hunt Trail was built, the trail of choice to reach Katahdin was to follow Abol Stream from the West Branch of the Penobscot to the avalanche, then ascend the slide to its head, and finally climb up through the remaining more stable boulders to the Tableland.

This was the route of most of the early surveyors who came to map the Katahdin wilderness for the young State of Maine in the 1820s and 30s. In the early 1900s a fire warden's platform and cabin were built near the top of the slide though the Maine Forest Service soon abandoned the effort because Katahdin was too often "socked in" with fog and mist. Another time a cabin was built just off the slide to accommodate Debsconeag Lake Sporting Camp clients who spent the night there on their way to the summit.

Recent publicity has stated that Henry Thoreau ascended the slide in 1846. Not so. While it is true Thoreau began his ascent at the mouth of Abol Stream, he chose instead to follow a compass route from there that took him east of the slide.

Though the shortest route to the summit, the Abol Trail has never been quite as

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The Abol Trail relocation will move the trail to a more stable location on a ridge to the west of the slide.

— Photo courtesy BSP photo files



Update from the Park by BSP Director Jensen Bissell

2014 Park Use:

Baxter State Park has been keeping consistent Park use statistics for more than 50 years.

Park statistics are a valuable tool in planning.

After a rainy spring and mid-summer in the Park, the weather once again turned sunnier for August and the months of autumn. Park summer use volumes were similar to the previous four years with the exception of 2010, when a wet summer led to slightly lower overall Park use.

New Ranger Camp at Kidney Pond

Park visitors to Kidney Pond Campground in 2015 should expect some construction activity as we prepare to build a new Ranger Camp. The new camp will be in the woods behind the current trail crew camp. When the camp is completed, we will finalize our plans for several other buildings in the campground including the current Ranger Camp and Office, the "Cook Camp" and the Trail Crew Camp. It is likely that some or most of these buildings will be removed as we continue to work toward the most efficient and economical use of Park facilities.

Search and Rescue Analysis

Baxter State Park works with Drs. Steven Diaz and Matt Sholl who volunteer as Medical Directors for the Park. These conscientious doctors work with Park Ranger staff to determine acceptable protocols for treatment. They also participate in post-incident reviews of search and rescue incidents. Dr. Sholl steered Chris Welker, a medical student at Tufts University, to us in early 2014. Chris was interested in reviewing and analyzing our search and rescue data. We provided Chris with our incident records back to 1991. He included more than 750 incidents in his study. The analysis he provided codifies the characteristics of the hiking population in the Park and the types of incidents most likely to take place with our demographic. Not surprisingly, fatigue emerged as a major factor in search and rescue incidents. One factor to take heart in: only about 7 visitors out of every 100,000 end up needing some form of evacuation by litter, helicopter, or a combination of the two.



Chris Welker, a medical student at Tufts University, was instrumental in completing an analysis of search and rescue data in Baxter State Park.

- Photo courtesy BSP photo files

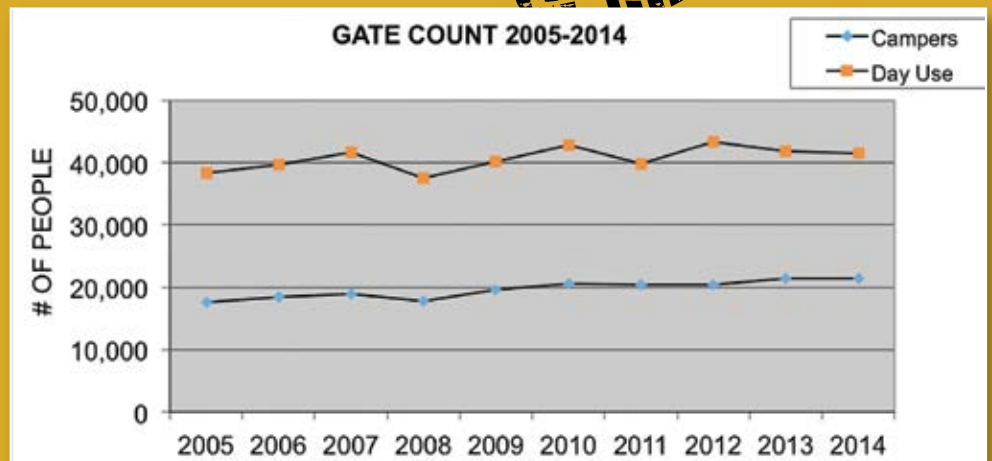
Alpine Stewardship Conference

We are excited to partner with Friends of Baxter State Park and The Waterman Fund to host the Northeast Alpine Managers Gathering at Twin Pines Resort on Millinocket Lake, November 6 - 8, 2015. Preliminary planning has already started for this event, which typically draws professionals and practitioners from the White Mountains, Green Mountains, Acadia, the Adirondacks, the Maritime Provinces, and Quebec. The Park has participated in Gatherings since the first

one was held in the 1990s in Vermont, but this will be our first time acting as host. These weekends offer a chance for everyone to share what they have been learning and doing related to alpine and sub-alpine settings.

Abol Trail Relocation

Significant movement of soil, rocks and debris down the Abol Slide early in 2014 prompted the closure of the trail due to safety concerns for the 2014 summer hiking season. Based on our evaluation of the situation, including the record of previous slide movement and the likelihood for additional movement of soil and rocks in the future, we decided to relocate the Abol Trail to the more stable ridge to the west of the slide. The trail location was scouted early in the summer and relocation work began in earnest in August. Presently, the lower half of the relocation is flagged. The upper half will be completed early in the 2015 season. The grade of the relocated trail will be lower (easier) than the current fall-line grade of the slide path and will provide panoramic views including opportunities to view hikers cresting the tableland as they pass the "Gateway" on the Hunt Trail. The trail construction project is a big one and the Park will be employing two Maine Conservation Corps crews to work on the trail for most of the summer season. This relocation will mark an important change in one of the Park's historic routes to Baxter Peak.



Visitor use of Baxter State Park during 2005 - 2014.

- Photo courtesy BSP photo files

Sleuthing About Baxter

By Howard R. Whitcomb, FBSP Historian

Percival Baxter and the Run-up to WWII

While sorting through family memorabilia, my wife, Annie Merrill, recently found a postcard from Percival Baxter to her maternal grandfather, Joseph E. Parker, of the Milliken-Tomlinson Company of Portland. It was sent during one of a number of trips that Baxter took to Europe. The postcard was mailed from Prague and the card's photographic image was of The Bridge Tower of the Old City. Governor Baxter's message was brief and distressing:

Prague, 11 March 39

Dear Mr. Parker,

*Germany is interesting but disturbing:
military power is in evidence on all sides.
We must be careful to keep out of trouble.
Hope you are well.*

My best regards,

P.P. Baxter

Afterword: German troops occupied Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939 and the following day Hitler proclaimed, from Prague's Hradcany Castle, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. This was the first non-Germanic territory annexed by the Nazis. The German invasion of Poland six months later would trigger the outbreak of WWII.

Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program

Friends recently finished accepting applications for the 7th Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program. This annual program is open to Maine high school sophomores and juniors. Participants spend nine days backpacking from one end of the Park to the other, working with a variety of specialists and Park staff to understand wilderness through science, art, storytelling, photography, writing, and recreation. Participants have described this program as "life-changing" and "the best learning experience I've ever had."

Friends transitioned to an entirely online application process this year. Participants will be selected from a competitive pool of applicants in late February, and notified in March. The program begins in April with reading



Participants in the 2013 Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program hiking on the open ridgeline of North Traveler. – Photo © Will Greene

materials and other assignments. The trip is scheduled for August 8 - 16, 2015. After returning home, participants will give public presentations in their schools and communities. Thanks to generous support from an anonymous donor, Friends is able to offer this program at no direct cost to the students.

Opening Day 2015

With temperatures hovering around -15 F, several dozen hardy souls waited in line to secure opening day reservations on January 14, 2015. Once inside, the heat, coffee and baked goods provided by Baxter State Park staff were most welcome. Friends was there to secure reservations for the 2015 Maine Youth Wilderness Leadership Program. Opening Day reservations may be made in person only, and only 20% of each campground may be reserved. Reservations are limited to two per person or camp group.



Baxter devotees hoping for a prime reservation on Opening Day 2015. – Photo © Aaron Megquier



Baxter State Park headquarters in Millinocket, January 2015. – Photo courtesy BSP photo files

Save the Date for Volunteer Programs in 2015

Friends has scheduled a series of volunteer work sessions in Baxter State Park during 2015. While the dates are set, the specific locations and tasks are yet to be determined. In the meantime, please mark your calendars if you are interested in volunteering in the Park this summer!

May 2: Earth Day Roadside Cleanup

May 11 – 16: Campground Opening (weather dependent)

June 19 – 20: FBSP Volunteer Weekend

July 10 – 12: FBSP Volunteer Weekend

July 24 – 26: FBSP Volunteer Weekend

Aug. 28 – 29: FBSP Volunteer Weekend

Sept. 25 – 27: FBSP Volunteer Weekend

Oct. 16 – 31: Campground Closing

(weather dependent)

Looking Back – Continued from pg.4

popular a path as the Hunt Trail or the routes that begin at Roaring Brook Campground. I have heard across the years many mixed feelings about the trail and its slippery granite sand and "ankle-buster" loose rocks. Now we know how unstable the slide can become over the years. It is a blessing that no one was on the trail at the time of this new movement. The recently announced route that the relocation will follow still provides the outstanding views seen from the upper part of the old trail, along with much better footing than many of us have experienced in the past.



Answer: Trivia Question in Fall Newsletter

In our fall issue, we asked:
"The name 'South Branch Pond' refers to the south branch of what?"

The answer was D, Trout Brook.

Sleuthing About Katahdin

by David Little, author of *Art of Katahdin*

Sketching in the Maine Woods with Ellen T. Vaughan

"Camping in our family line was something entirely apart from sport-shooting or fishing. It was a canoe journey that brought people in close contact with very beautiful wild scenery." (1)



Ellen T. Vaughan in canoe

Ellen Twisleton Vaughan (1853–1934), born Ellen Parkman of Boston, MA, met her future husband William Vaughan through her brother Henry, a classmate at Harvard. Friends as teenagers, Ellen and William got to know each other on group camping trips to Maine's North Woods almost annually with Boston/Harvard acquaintances starting in 1873 and culminating in their marriage in 1882. (2)

On these trips, Ellen sketched in watercolor and pencil and wrote in her diary during periods of rest. Her color palette and attention to detail brings to mind the Adirondack watercolors of Winslow Homer. Her watercolor "Ktaadn" is reminiscent of the Phillips



Portrait of a woman fishing

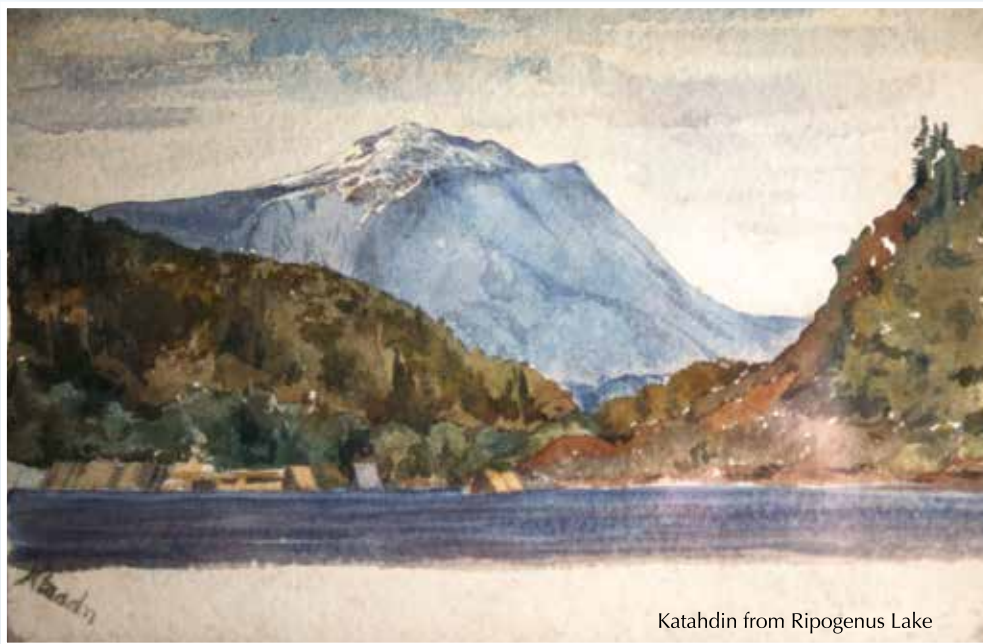
Academy Addison Gallery of American Art's small Frederic Church oil painting of the same subject: the mountain looming up over the West Branch of the Penobscot River. (3)

Today Ellen T. Vaughan is perhaps best known for her conservation ethic and advocacy for the preservation of her summer



Camp guide frying bacon

home and property in Hallowell (Vaughan Homestead and Woods). As perhaps one of the earliest women "from away" to sketch in the Katahdin region, Ellen T. Vaughan the artist and her superb watercolors deserve to be



Katahdin from Ripogenus Lake

better known.

Ellen T. Vaughan's watercolors, sketchbook, and diary are on view as part of the traveling exhibition "Inspired by Katahdin", curated by brothers David and Carl Little. The exhibition will be at Sotheby's in Damariscotta through April 2015. For more info, contact Kathy Leeman at Legacy Properties Sotheby's International Realty, 170 Main Street, Damariscotta, Maine 04543.

Cell: (207) 504-6866.

Office: (207) 512-5985.

All imagery courtesy of the Vaughan Homestead Foundation, Hallowell, ME. Thanks to Kate Tremblay, Program Coordinator for the foundation. Thanks also to Bill Bentley for his help with digital media.

1. Mary Vaughan Marvin. "Bits and Pieces of Recollections" 1960. Daughter of Ellen T. Vaughan, Mary grew up hearing intimate stories of her mother's camping trips to the Moose, West Branch of the Penobscot, and Allagash rivers of Maine.

2. "Every man of the party paddled his own canoe with a lady passenger in the bow and the duffle in the middle. The cook has his own canoe, filled with provender, and usually there was a single guide, often an Indian, to help in every angle of work from cooking to setting up tents to poling up stream." Mary Vaughan Marvin, p. 51

3. In another watercolor of "Ktaadn" dated Sept. 11, 1875, Ellen writes that they had a three-hour layover where they had "a fine view of Katahdin." This spot may well have been near Black Cat beach on Millinocket Lake.

Baxter State Park Trivia

— Puzzle Master Al Howlett

As you head west on Route 157 towards Millinocket and Katahdin you cross over Dolby Pond. Its former name was:

- a) Dolby Stoppage
- b) Dolby Flowage
- c) Dolby Sound
- d) Somes Sound

Send Trivia answers to

admin@friendsofbaxter.org



Friends of Baxter State Park

PO Box 322

Belfast, ME 04915

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We're looking for new Friends!

_____ \$1,000 Governor Baxter Society

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_____ \$100 Hamlin Peaker

_____ \$50 Sponsor

_____ \$30 Family

_____ \$25 Individual

_____ \$10 Student

Please make checks payable to Friends of Baxter State Park.

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Thank you!

Join us for Warm Winter Weekend!

We invite you to join other Friends of Baxter State Park members for a weekend of fun at New England Outdoor Center this winter. On the weekend of March 19 - 22, we've rented two cabins with total capacity for 18 people. New England Outdoor Center's Twin Pine Camps are located on the shore of Millinocket Lake, about eight miles south of the Togue Pond gate of Baxter State Park. The accommodations include beautiful heated cabins with full kitchens, groomed cross-country ski trails, an inviting lodge and restaurant, and wonderful views of Katahdin.

The cost for the weekend is \$128.40 per person, regardless of whether you spend one, two, or three nights. This trip is open to all members of Friends of Baxter State Park. To reserve a space, call NEOC at 1-800-634-7238 and mention you are with the Friends of Baxter State Park group. This trip usually fills very quickly – call to make your reservations today!



Friends Board member Jill Ippoliti and Executive Director Aaron Megquier enjoying the trails at New England Outdoor Center during Warm Winter Weekend 2014.

– Photo © Anne Huntington