

**Friends
of
Baxter State Park**

Forever Wild

Newsletter of the Friends of Baxter State Park

Summer 2004

Vol. 3 No. 3

President's Column

*By Charles Jacobi
President*

As our organization changes presidents, I can't help but think of change in a larger context. Whether change is good or bad, of course, depends on your perspective.

Park Director Buzz Caverly often speaks of how much the Park has changed over the past 50 years. Areas once logged are now forested. Park entrances have been closed. Buildings have been removed. Dams, too. New trails have been built; others have been abandoned. The list goes on. Some would have preferred that none of those changes was made; others are more selective. We believe many (perhaps most) of these changes have enhanced wilderness values.

In his insightful address at our annual meeting, Dean Bennett told us these changes have moved Baxter Park more towards the wilderness end of an urban-wilderness landscape continuum. How much farther along this continuum should Baxter Park move and what changes should be made to help make this happen? For which ones should our Friends group advocate? How much of a wilderness purist are you?

(Continued on page 4)



Through the Funnel. With only North and South entrances to the Park, lines of autos frequently form at the gatehouses as visitors sign in and ask questions. Traffic handling is a major consideration of the Park Management Plan, which will be updated next year.

Photo by Bill Silliker, Jr.

Management Plan to be Updated in '05

At our annual meeting in April, Park Director Irvin Buzz Caverly indicated in his "State of the Park" address that one of the activities planned for 2005 is an update of the Park's Management Plan.

The first plan was adopted in the early 1970's, and it is revised every five years. The most recent plan is dated May 2000.

The revision of this plan will be a public process, in which a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee will be directly involved.

For those who have never taken a

look at the plan, here is an overview of its contents. The plan provides policy guidelines and a conceptual framework for managing the Park. The introductory portion of the plan provides an overview of the recreational carrying capacity concept, which is an important element in Park management. Recreational carrying capacity considerations include (a) excessive disturbance to the biological system, (b) deterioration of the physical environment, and (c) the quality of

(Continued on page 4)



Board of Directors

Charles Jacobi, President
David Getchell, Sr., Vice President
Sally Daggett, Secretary
Don Hudson, Treasurer
William Bentley
Holly Dominie
Clint Dyer
Sandra Johnson
Howard Lake
John Loyd
Linda McKee
Pat Murtagh
John Neff
Ken Spalding
Jon Tierney

Honorary Directors

Eric Baxter
Alexandra Conover
Donn Fendler
Leon Gorman
Jon Lund
Elizabeth (Libby) Mitchell
Chellie Pingree
Kay Rand
Neil Rolde

Administrative Manager

Barbara Bentley
Newsletter Editor
David R. Getchell, Sr.

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



New Officers of the Friends Board of Directors include Charles Jacobi, left, president; Don Hudson, lower left, treasurer; Sally Daggett, center, secretary; and David Getchell, Sr., right, vice president. -Photos by Bill Bentley



Modern Threats to Park Listed at Annual Meeting by Wilderness Advocate

By Sally Daggett

More than 40 members attended this year's annual meeting to hear Dr. Dean Bennett, professor Emeritus at the University of Maine in Farmington and longtime advocate for the preservation of wilderness in Maine, present the keynote address entitled "Wilderness, Preservation and Baxter State Park."

Dr. Bennett talked about the meaning of wilderness, the competing values a diverse society places on our natural resources and wilderness areas, and Baxter State Park's place on the "wilderness continuum" of land uses today. He outlined threats to wilderness in general and threats to Baxter State Park as seen now by Park Director Buzz Caverly.

These threats include air pollution; aircraft noise; the introduction of invasive plants; communication devices, and other technology that has affected the Park's primitive nature. Following Dr. Bennett's address, Board Member Don Hudson facilitated a lively audience discussion on wilderness values.

Park Director Caverly also provided members with a State-of-the-Park

update, highlighting recent activities of Advisory Committee subcommittees, reviewing gatehouse statistics for the 2003 season, describing the two-year trial reservation system that begins January 2005, and discussing the financial state of the Park. He also indicated that he has asked the Chief Ranger for a report on the use of snowmobiles in the Park over the past five years.

Members also received reports on current Friends of Baxter projects, membership activities, and our financial condition.

Elected to the Friends' Board were John Loyd and Linda McKee.

How About Taking a Walk in the Park?

Interested in meeting Friends and exploring a bit of the Park? We have room for several more at Chimney Pond on July 9 & 10. (This one is short notice!). Some folks may climb the mountain; others will explore Hamlin Ridge or North Basin. For August 13 & 14, we have space for a few more at South Branch Pond. Those who aren't fishing will take a look at the new loop trail on the Traveler. Call Barbara at 763-3014.

In the Mail

Kerivan Urges Greater Debate on Wilder Within

Dear Friends,

At the annual meeting of the Friends of Baxter State Park in Waterville, keynote speaker Dean Bennett made the case for a "wilder within Park." It appears that this is the direction that Baxter Park is taking and the public will soon be hearing about—hopefully before it becomes policy.

If this mind-set prevails, we can look forward to the closing of the road to Roaring Brook, an end to the road through the Park, and making access to Kidney Pond a mile walk from Foster Field with full packs. We have already witnessed the demise of the 100-year-old "Guides Camp" at Daicey Pond. All the camps are now clearly vulnerable.

These changes are in keeping with Mr. Bennett's belief that there is a major threat to the environment from guests who come year after year. The only tangible evidence that can be offered to support this contention is that too many people want to be at the base of Mount Katahdin. This problem, as the Authorities must know, can readily be solved by instituting control permit access.

At the spring (annual) meeting, I urged the assembled 40 or so Friends to provide a forum where these ideas of a radically different Park can be discussed and debated. I would argue that by continuing to allow all kinds of people to enjoy the spiritual, emotional, and physical pleasure the Park provides, we can spread the word for the need of more wilderness activism far more effectively than limiting access to a chosen few.

If we truly want to make preservation of pristine natural places real, then education and inclusion are the key.

George Kerivan, Harvard, MA

Mt. Katahdin Inspired Artist Marsden Hartley

As adventurous in his art as in his life, Marsden Hartley (1877-1945) created expressive paintings, both abstract and figurative, that have had a profound impact on 20th century art.

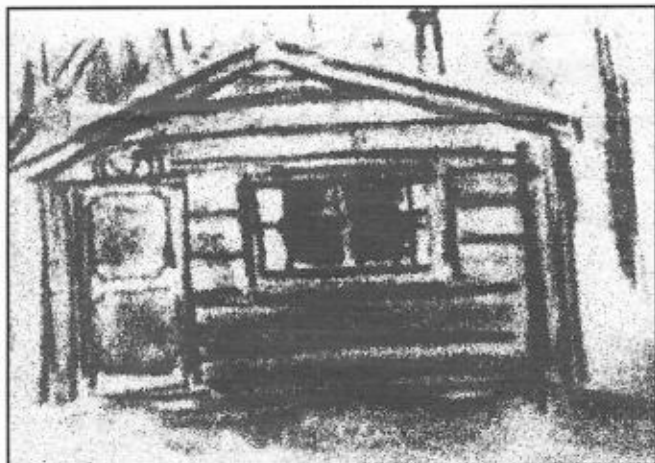
Hartley's life was one dedicated to exploring and experimenting, a life spent moving restlessly from place to place and style to style. A native of Lewiston, Maine, he often returned to the mountains to paint, discovering inspiration in the American Southwest, southern France, the Alps, and Mexico. While in New York on an art scholarship, he eventually encountered Alfred Stieglitz and became a part of the small cadre of avant garde artists that included John Marin, Arthur Dove, and Georgia O'Keefe.

In September 1939, he settled in Bangor, selecting it as the stepping off point for the realization of his dream—a long-planned pilgrimage to Mount Katahdin. Hartley's voracious reading and rereading of the great literary works of New England authors such as Henry David Thoreau, Sara Orne Jewett, and Fannie Hardy Eckstorm captured his imaginative vision. He made elaborate plans for the difficult journey ahead, anxious to paint a distinctive "portrait" of Katahdin.

During September, through his oldest and dearest friend, Carl Sprinchorn, he was able to contact the chief game warden for the northern wilderness area, Caleb Scribner, and arranged to be picked up in Bangor and driven 80 miles north to the base of the mountain. There Scribner himself led Hartley on a strenuous, nearly four-mile hike into Cobbs Camp on the shores of Katahdin

Lake, the only location in the wilderness area where the artist would be able to capture the mountain's precise pyramidal form.

Once there, Hartley settled into Farrington Cabin (see sketch), one of two rough-hewn wooden huts fashioned with dry bark and twigs and heated by a single wood stove.



Hartley sketch of Farrington Cabin.

Totally absorbed by the mighty presence of Katahdin, Hartley spent eight days sketching and painting. At the end of the journey, he exalted to a friend: "I have achieved the 'sacred' pilgrimage to Ktaadn Mt—exceeding all my expectations so far that I am sort of helpless with words—I feel as if I had seen God for the first time—and find Him so nonchalantly solemn."

During the remaining three years of his life, Hartley continued to paint Mount Katahdin, executing a series of approximately 18 canvases, culminating his lifelong obsession with the theme of the mountain.

The Bates College Museum of Art houses a collection of 99 drawings by the artist, including two of Katahdin. The museum is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please contact Education Coordinator Anthony Shostak at (207) 786-6158 for more information.

— Sally Daggett

President's Column

(Continued from page 1)

These are not easy questions, and even reasonable people can disagree. In my closing remarks at our annual meeting, I suggested our role was to "nudge" the Authority further along this continuum in the wilderness direction. But we will give careful thought to all proposed "changes" and advocate for those that help meet our primary mission. And we will continue to urge that "changes" be collected into a unified vision, a long range Park plan, developed with much public involvement.

Bob Marshall, founder of the

Wilderness Society, once said: "There is just one hope of repulsing the tyrannical ambition of civilization to conquer every niche on the whole earth. That hope is the organization of spirited people who will fight for the freedom of the wilderness."

Whatever the differences among ourselves or with the Authority, we all share a passion for the Park. Hang on to that passion, and thank you for being one of those spirited people.

Management Plan

(Continued from page 1)

visitor experience.

The second portion of the plan relates to the Park transportation system and sets specific management guidelines related to road maintenance, gravel pits, roadside trailhead design, road system signage, roadside picnic sites, and beach picnic areas.

The third portion of the plan relates to recreational use of the Park and deals primarily with the management of visitors and activities associated with their use of Park resources.

Please contact us if you would like to learn more about obtaining a copy of the current plan.

We're looking for New Friends!

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

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

Please make checks payable to
Friends of Baxter State Park