

July 31, 2017

My name is John J. Andrews.

I live with my wife Lisa at 20 Deer Lane, Fayette, Maine. Lisa and I officially became full time residents about 3 years ago. I am a retired Fire Fighter/ Captain/ Paramedic. My wife is a retired elementary school teacher. My parents had the "camp" built around 1974. The reason my parents built on this land was because the land was given to them by my Aunt Laretta O'Brien. Laretta and my Uncle Harry O'Brien purchased a large tract of land on the east side of David Pond in approximately 1928. Harry had been coming up to Maine for years before and renting a farm house with other sportsman for hunting and fishing with co-workers. When the opportunity arose he purchased the land and farms on David Pond and land across the Sandy River Road. This included the cape with the white picket fence (now owned by the Stantons) and the house with the stockade fence (now owned by, I believe, the Frenchs). The land on David Pond went from the lot off of Deer Lane around the east side of the pond and into what we call the Narrows.

My Aunt and Uncle lived year round for a number of years, which was no easy feat . My Uncle Harry died in 1953, the year I was born. Laretta began living on the pond spring, summer and fall. In the early 1960's a Mr. Grebbs, of Parker Lake Shores Inc., contacted my Aunt about buying all of her land on the pond. He would put in roads and sell 50 foot lots on the pond. She refused. Instead she began giving lots to her brothers and sisters.

A total of 5 lots were given and built upon. These buildings were close to the water which was acceptable at the time. My aunt sold to John Kidd and Lief Peachy. Lief's family had owned the property that Lief built on. Lief was a carpenter and built most of my family's cottages. My sister Ellie Andrews built on a 5 acre lot in 2011. My sister Shelley built in 2016 on a 5 acre lot. My cousin Don Andrews lives in the cabin his father built on Hemlock Lane in the 1960's.

My Aunt died in 2000 at the age of 98.

I wanted to give a little background as to who we are and how long we have been on the pond. I have been here every one of my 64 years during the summer and most if not all of the winters over the last 15 years. All of my 5 siblings and their children have made the same summer trek to David Pond. Fayette and David Pond is more like home to us than where we had settled around the country.

My recollections of the outlet of David Pond are both personal observations and oral history. I have personally seen man made impediments since I was a young child. The yearly ritual with my Uncle Harry White, Bill Hinckly and others was to go down to the outlet in the spring and check to see what damage was done by the ice. What ever damage was done was fixed in 15-20 minutes and we went home. My earliest

recollections were of a wooden structure in the center with boards to control the water level. I am sure these were not the originals that were there when the mill was operating. I used to be able to walk across what we called the dam on solid ground. That is not the case today due to erosion, both natural and malicious vandalism, that has taken place.

I have aerial photographs from the 1940's -1950's of the whole pond that show the outlet, stream, Bachellor mill pond, and Parker Pond. The most dramatic difference between then and now is that the outlet was devoid of trees. Today the trees have been allowed to grow. None of those trees are more than 70 years old. The trees are now beginning to uproot. This is because of the root structure fanning out on the surface due to the water table being so high in that area. They don't send tap roots down to anchor the trees in place. The wind blows and the root system cannot support the tree and it uproots. When the tree uproots it creates a new route for water to flow and erode the soil. I learned about this while helping to maintain earthen dams in my home town. Ground cover: GOOD / Big trees: BAD. We now have our water filtering through partially uprooted trees and root systems and areas that have completely eroded due to uprooted trees. Through the recent years there have been attempts to stop and repair the erosion that has taken place. Rocks, sandbags, hay, branches, and beavers have been used to varying degrees of success. Unfortunately that hard work has been destroyed by other individuals with a different agenda.

This past June, I put my aluminum dock in. The water level was 1 inch below the bottom of the top extrusion. Two days later I found that the water had gone down 12 inches. This was after the loons had gone on nest. Loons are not land animals, they cannot walk on land. They nest at or near the waters edge to get into their nests. After numerous phone calls made and received I went down to see for myself. The rock, mud, and stick center of the outflow had been torn out by someone and then replaced by others. The Water was filtering through the new rock. The sediment and mud was washed down stream. Without the replacement we could have lost 2 more feet. Two days later the rocks were torn out again and replaced, again by others. The day before the meeting at the Fayette School I was told that someone had torn out 15 inches of the rocks. That was replaced by others. I do not know who is doing the damage. I thank those who are trying to maintain the level of the Pond.

The water level on the Pond has fluctuated through out the years. Wet seasons, dry seasons, beaver are among many factors that have had an impact on the water level. Now it seems to be man. The current level on July 31, 2017 is lower than normal. This level is about what I usually observe at the end of August, beginning of September.

Now that the State of Maine has gotten involved, we have a change as to how and what can be done to preserve our water at a reasonable level. I understand the constraints placed on government employees. Rules, regulations, and procedures must be followed. I truly hope that the State of Maine, Fayette, Chesterville, and the Landowners can give

us guidance and help us preserve this resource. It is truly unfortunate that the landowners have been placed in a terrible position. I am sorry that they have been stuck in the middle of this.

I am not a proponent of a major increase in the water level of David Pond. That being said, I am a proponent of a slight increase and maintaining a reasonable level throughout the year. I have experienced springs when the water was up to my garage and others on the Pond had water in their houses. This high water was extraordinary, probably due to beaver. An increase of a foot or so would be great. Maintaining that would be fantastic. We live in the first house at the bottom of the hill on Deer Lane. The area from our house to the end of Deer Lane used to be referred to as the Island. Both my Aunt Lauretta and Lief Peachy had told us as our camp was being built that the water levels were higher in the past and that the area was completely surrounded by water. In 1964 they built Deer Lane through the swamp. If you Google Earth Deer Lane today you can still see the difference in vegetation and outline of the Island. It was probably similar to the Island on the east section of the Pond today.

I was also told by my Aunt that my Uncle Harry didn't want to put a row boat on the other side of the pond to fish so he and some locals dynamited the narrow channel between the ponds. I know that Fred Jackman states that his grandfather opened the narrows to float logs to Jackman's Mill. That would also make sense. The only question I have to that is that if the water level is historically lower than it is today you would not be able to get anything through the narrows let alone logs that don't float as well as my pontoon boat. There is less than 2 and half feet of water in sections of the narrows today.

Concerning the existence of a dam or impediment I was also told by my Aunt, Lief and other old timers that the mill used to control the level of David Pond to ensure there was enough water in the mill pond to operate the water wheel for power. If the water was not recovering fast enough in the mill pond they would pull a batter board out at David Pond to fill the mill pond. Smart people!

Most people don't realize that what we see of David Pond and the land around it is not what was seen 100 years ago, 200 years ago. This was not natural Maine wilderness. This was a thriving farm and factory community with a lot more residents, houses and farms than today. I have pictures from 1928 of my Aunt's house taken from Sandy River Rd that show very few trees. This was all farm land. The trees had been cut at the mills, farmers moved in, the chimney at Rte 41 employed 100's of people. The Pond was a resource for power, watering animals, food, ice, and transportation. Other than a few Homestead Trees, our woodland is very young. Most less than 50 years. People worked, lived and died on this land.

We use the pond for recreation. We need to take care of it

