



KEY DATES: ???

- Thursday, January 18: Night Sky Program. Calumet Conference Center, Freedom, 7PM. Info@603-539-1859.
- Tuesday, March 14: Ossipee elections. Town Hall, 10AM-7PM.
- Tuesday, March 14: Effingham elections. Town Hall, 11AM-7PM.
- Wednesday, March 15: Ossipee Town Meeting. Town Hall, 6:30PM.
- Saturday, March 18: Effingham Town

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OSSIPEE LAKE, BROAD BAY, LEAVITT
BAY, BERRY BAY, AND DANFORTH POND

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OSSIPEE LAKE REPORT

Volume 6, Issue 1 • January – March 2007

LAKE REPRESENTATIVES TO MEET IN SPRING

FREEDOM — The lake community will have an opportunity to voice its opinion and help shape future studies and programs when Ossipee Lake Alliance launches its Lake Representatives initiative this month.

The multi-part grassroots program starts with a survey, enclosed in this issue, on the state of the lake, covering issues from milfoil control to natural resource protection to communication with local officials. The survey is also available on the Internet at www.ossipeelake.org/2007.

The survey will be followed by a meeting in May in which representatives from all parts of the lake will set goals for programs that

can be implemented during the next three years.

Alliance program director Susan Marks says the Lake Representatives concept was formed two years ago with the launch of the Exotic Species Prevention (ESP) program, in which the lake's business and residential communities worked together to develop site-specific milfoil prevention plans for the lake's boat ramps.

It was the first effort of its type, and for most of the participants it was also the first time they had met people from other parts of the lake. What they found was that people on

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Dusted with snow, the rocky peak of Mount Chocorua is reflected in a break of open-water on the big lake as winter ushers in a new year on Ossipee Lake. *Photo: Jean Hansen*

LEE CASE VERDICT YEARS IN THE MAKING

OSSIPEE — After a Superior Court judge ruled in favor of the Bluffs Association in its lawsuit against neighboring property owner Donald Lee, the group's victory celebration was sweet but low-key.

As the members of this property owners association in the northwest quadrant of the big lake know all too well, the decision requiring Lee to remediate the environmental damage he caused to the lake is a milestone in a process rather than the end of the story.

It is a story that is now in its 19th year – a period of time that underscores the personal sacrifices and financial costs that are re-

quired to confront a determined environmental violator.

Documents from the Superior Court trial show that Lee began tampering with the flow of the Lovell River in 1988 when he constructed a breakwater consisting of 300 concrete blocks buttressed and backfilled with 108 cubic yards of sand and gravel. Running along the southern bank of the Lovell River, where Lee owns two lakefront lots, the wall extended some 50 ft. into the lake.

When it was finished, Lee applied for a retroactive permit from what was then known as the Wetlands Board, now part of the N.H.

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COURT VERDICT NOT THE END OF THE CASE



Overhead shot shows the sandbar a Superior Court judge says Donald Lee created by changing the course of the Lovell River. Lee has been ordered to remediate the damage. Photo: Bruce Beaman

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Department of Environmental Services (DES). As part of his filing with the agency, Lee included a sketch accompanied by a statement telling officials that the intended result of the wall was the formation of a natural point of land within two or three years.

After reviewing the application and visiting the site, the state rejected his application in June 1989 and ordered him to tear down the structure and remove the sand.

Back on the lake in August to check on progress, state inspectors reported that much of the wall appeared to have been dismantled and the concrete blocks were stacked on the shore above the high water mark. Sensing compliance, the agency decided not to impose a fine. Instead, it sent Lee a letter warning that any future work in the lake would require a state permit.

An Altered Landscape

Time passed and bit by bit the wall began to return. Residents of the adjacent 110-family Bluffs Association observed that what Lee had predicted would happen was in fact happening: a point of land was forming in the lake. They called DES, and state agents returned to the site in July 1994 to find a vastly altered landscape.

What had been a traditional fan-shaped delta at the terminus of the Lovell River had become a huge sandbar extending far into the lake and curving north to form a distinctive hook. Faced with this man-made impediment, the river had changed course. Instead of distributing its flow evenly in a delta as it entered the lake, the river was now dumping its spoils directly into

the Bluffs Association's beach and boat basin, which was starting to fill up.

That fall, DES wrote a letter to Lee saying his response to the agency's previous directive was insufficient, and it again demanded that he remove the wall and accumulated sand.

In a November 1995 follow-up inspection, however, state officials found no evidence of compliance. Six years after the first report of the violation, the agency was forced to concede that Donald Lee had continued to build walls and his walls had materially changed Ossipee Lake.

Financial Strains

Faced with a growing threat to its property and keenly aware of the complexities of environmental law, the Bluffs Association prepared for a protracted battle. Leisure time on the lake was replaced by hours of work, and for one long-time Bluffs resident the commitment included a three-month leave of absence from his job.

"It was the only way the basic research could be done," says Association officer Kent Robards, who spent the time rooting through files in Concord. "I promised my family that I would see this though so that one day my grandchildren could enjoy Bradford Cove the way it was before it was destroyed."

The question remained, however: was the damage being caused solely by the breakwaters or could a case be made that some of the damage was from natural causes as Lee claimed?

It was a question only a team of environmental specialists could answer, and ground-pene-

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OSSIPEE LAKE REPORT:

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The Alliance is a member of the
New Hampshire Lakes Association
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LAKE REPRESENTATIVES WILL MEET IN SPRING

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the lake have far more in common than they thought, setting the stage for further interaction.

"People will always have different concerns based on where they are on the lake," Marks says, "but when it comes to long-term preservation and protection, everyone is pretty much on the same page."

Diverse Communities

The state views Ossipee Lake as a single entity, but its configuration as multiple separate bodies of water has led many property owners to identify more with their immediate neighborhood than with the notion of being part of the state's sixth largest lake.

Since its inception, the Alliance has sought to bridge the divide by bringing property owner associations together to work on common issues, such as milfoil prevention.

Marks says the associations, conservation groups and businesses that participated in the ESP boat ramp program will form the core of the Lake Representatives organization and the forum will be expanded with additional invitees.

The most immediate challenge is recruiting people to represent parts of the lake that have a distinct identity but don't yet have a community association. Those areas include Hodgson Shore, Pauli Point, High Bluffs and Danforth Pond.

Recruiting Effort

That challenge falls to Long Sands residents Jean Hansen and George Eisner, who say there are only three criteria required to be a Lake Representative: enthusiasm, an interest in the future of the lake and a willingness to talk with neighbors.

Hansen and Eisner have first-hand experience. Two years ago they organized a 4th of July lunch for their neighborhood and got people talking about property taxes and the vandalism that has plagued their part of the lake.

By the end of lunch, the Long Sands Association – dormant for a quarter century – had come back to life with an objective of keeping a neighborhood line of communication open.

Since then, the group has used e-mail to keep members informed during times of floods and power outages, and has used its collective voice to establish visibility with state and local officials and negotiate a \$1 million reduction in their neighborhood's property taxes.

"It's been a small commitment of time for a big return," Hansen says, pointing out that she and Eisner had no previous experience in or-

ganizing such a group. "It's brought the whole neighborhood closer."

Hansen is also quick to point out that the immediate goal is not to form new associations but to recruit one or two Lake Representatives for areas where there is no current neighborhood association.

"We want to see new organizations form on the lake and we can help, but right now we want to make sure each part of the lake is represented at the spring meeting."

Those who are interested in the Lake Representatives program can contact Hansen by e-mail at jean@jeanhansen.com.

If your copy of the lake survey is missing from this issue of the newsletter, you may complete it online at www.ossipeelake.org/2007.5

MEMORIAL FUND ESTABLISHED FOR ARNOLD SAMMIS III

FREEDOM — Wendy Davis-Sammis has been a part of Ossipee Lake since she was seven and began camping at Camp Huckins. It was a time when campers could spend the whole summer at camp and she did, for eight years.

As a married woman she returned to the lake with her husband, Arnie, and they decided it was where they wanted to be.

"We purchased our home 11 years ago and there wasn't a time we spent there that we didn't marvel at the beauty and wonder of the area. We considered ourselves to be among the most fortunate to have such a perfect though modest retreat," she says.

After Arnie died last year, Wendy established a memorial in his name with Ossipee Lake Alliance. She says it was a way for his friends and family to express their affection for him while helping ensure the preservation of the lake he considered his true home.

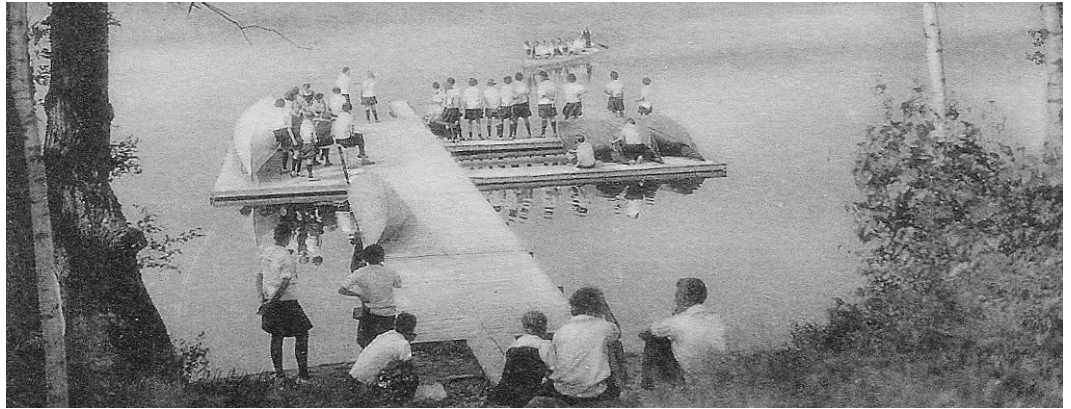
"Arnie's greatest joy was sharing this special refuge," Wendy says.

"He valued the tranquility, beauty and peace of this special place and there was truly no place on earth he would rather be. Being close to the water and the mountains was his safe harbor."

Donations to the Arnold F. Sammis III Memorial Fund are tax-deductible and may be sent to Ossipee Lake Alliance, P.O. Box 173, Freedom, N.H. 03836.

For information on establishing memorial funds, contact Susan Marks at smmarks@ossipeelake.org or call 914-588-3280.

VOLUNTEERS WILL PLAY KEY ROLE IN BOOK ON OSSIPEE LAKE'S HISTORY



Summer camps like long-vanished Camp Adeawonda, shown in this postcard, are part of the colorful history of Ossipee Lake to be chronicled in a new book. *Alliance Collection*

FREEDOM — When the history of Ossipee Lake is written, local historian Barry Hill hopes a lot of people will share the credit.

Speaking to a group of about a dozen local residents on a sunny fall weekend at Calumet Conference Center, Hill described how he and Ossipee Lake Alliance plan to mobilize volunteers to assemble the source material for the first book on the lake's history.

Preparation for the book will take several years at a minimum, Hill told the would-be researchers and archivists as he described the challenges of collecting and collating photographs and postcards, recording oral histories and tracing land records.

While a number of books, including the popular "Riverlands" by Carol Foord and Sheila Jones, touch on aspects of the lake's past, the new book will be the first publication devoted solely to the lake, according to the Alliance's executive director, David Smith.

He says he and Hill have been discussing a book project ever since Hill helped the lake organization launch the popular "Tales of Ossipee Lake" presentations in 2003.

"When more than 300 people showed up for our 'Ghost of Ossipee Lake' event on a cold night outdoors under a tent, we knew we were on to something," Smith says.

Colorful Past

The source material for a book on the lake is rich, and Hill says research on the project will cover the lake's human history from prehistoric times to the present; from early settlers to the construction of the dam and the advent of tourists, inns and camps.

Certain to be included are the details of several notable murders, the state's worst earthquake - a 5.0 trembler in 1940 - and the devastating

fires that swept through the bays in the 1940s and 1950s. Long-vanished resorts, camps and restaurants will be featured.

The lake's unique geology and environment will also be prominent, including evidence of the area's volcanic past found in the ring dyke geologic formation in the Ossipee Mountains.

Also likely to be included are the "quaking bog" at Heath Pond, which is a National Natural Landmark, the Ossipee Pine Barrens and the rare plants and ancient settlements of the Ossipee Lake Natural Area.

"There are many lakes in New Hampshire," Smith says, "but a project like this one reminds us of how unusual Ossipee Lake is and how much it contributes to making the surrounding towns great places to live."

Collecting Memories

Since the lake is bounded by three towns, the project is an opportunity for people from different communities to connect, according to the Alliance's director of programs, Susan Marks.

"It is also a way for newcomers to get acquainted with long-time residents," she says. "Everyone can participate whether their interest is collecting photographs or researching deeds."

Marks says one of the immediate aims of the project is to start recording the oral histories of local residents, especially the elderly.

"It's exciting to talk with people who remember the period from the 1920s through the 1940s. Now is the time to make sure these memories are preserved."

Smith says the book will be a charitable project, with details on how it will be published and which organizations will benefit to be announced in the coming year.

THE CIVIL WAR COMES TO FREEDOM'S 'LOST' SHAWTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

By Carol Foord

Courtesy of the Carroll County Independent.

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series on the history of the former community of Shawtown, located in what is now the Freedom Town Forest. Shawtown was settled in the early 1830s, but was abandoned by 1900. All that remains are cellar holes and a graveyard.

FREEDOM — The Civil War had just begun, and bounties were offered to encourage a new wave of "volunteers." Shawtown menfolk and their Goe Hill relatives enlisted. Many were gone more than a year; some re-enlisted.

In their absence, an illness took the lives of several of their children and grandchildren. When the men returned, they struggled with their old ways of living off the land.

When railroad depots were built in both Madison and Ossipee about 1870, it was too late. The little neighborhood had already begun a steady decline, as people found new ways of living elsewhere.

School Records

Shawtown's school enrollment record offers a window to the neighborhood's intriguing story. By 1865 there were 21 "scholars" enrolled in the school. There might have been more had not several children died of an illness, perhaps small pox, in 1862.

After 1865, enrollment dwindled rapidly, and only six pupils are listed in the district's last record of 1880.

After that, a small schoolhouse located on the Plains served children of that area. (The fieldstone cellar hole hidden at the western corner of Pequawket Trail North and the Ossipee Lake Road was that school, and it deserves to be protected and noted with signage.)

So what precipitated the Shawtown's demise? Not surprisingly, answers lie in military records buried deep in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

When it looked like the war would be protracted, Lincoln called for more volunteers between the ages of 18 and 45. In the fall of 1861, with recruiters stationed in nearby towns, Shawtown men responded.

Older men lied about their ages, saying they were 44 when they were many years older. Nearly every Shawtown family sent one soldier, including Stacy relations from neighboring Goe Hill Road.

Enlistees left their mothers, wives and daughters to cope with raising needy children and

weedy crops, mending fences and broken hearts, healing sick children - and burying those they could not nurse back to health.

The men of Shawtown served ably at Fair Oaks, Antietam, South Mountain and on the sea. While in the South these soldiers faced privations, foul water, southern heat, mosquitoes, sickness and serious wounds and lack of proper medical care.

Returning Home

Those who came home faced new challenges: how to farm with one arm, how to walk behind a plow with one good leg, how to eat with a partial jaw, how to chop wood with a lead ball embedded in the chest.

Within ten years after the war, Shawtown's inhabitants began selling their farms to land traders, the precursors of real estate agents. These land traders sold to lumbermen desirous of the oak, birch, beech and hemlock that had taken root once again in Shawtown and its rocky environs, natural resources vital to many industries of the time.

Interestingly, the land most sought after in the 1880s was the 150 acres of Mary's Mountain, described in several deeds as "the mountain pasture." These deeds also mention the Treadwell House (still a mystery) and cooper shops.

A farm community that endured a mere 40 years slowly gave way to a year-round mill village with bunkhouse, "popple church" (made of aspen), numerous workshops and drying sheds for the mass production of oak barrels and shook (barrel parts) for the ambitious shipping trades out of Boston and Portland ports.

Portable Mills Introduced

This industry was all made possible by the introduction of portable steam-powered mills. The boilers of these mills were fed bark and slab wood, the wastes of logging operations. Moveable mills allowed logging camps to be set up anywhere good wood was found and product made on site.

Most notable among the first wave of entrepreneurial inhabitants was Walter Ridlon and his wife, Carrie. (Born in a humble "cabin" in Shawtown, son Magnus T. Ridlon would later become a well-known physician in Kezar Falls.)

By the late 1880s, however, the oak was used up and the mill people left. A paper company, followed by New England Box Company, eventually bought the land and skimmed the

"The men of Shawtown served ably in the war. When they returned, they struggled with their old ways of living off the land."

CHANGES COME TO THE SHAWTOWN COMMUNITY AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

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white pines that had grown back since the river-driving era of the 1820s to the 1850s. Here in the shadow of Mary's Mountain, Huckins Hill, Stacy and Blazo Mountains, clues left by entrepreneurs and major industrialists linger on the land once known as Shawtown.

Sawdust piles from the mill operations of the 1880s hide in the woods. Near the border with Madison are charred tree trunks, indicating a fire caused, perhaps, by a portable mill.

According to town records, a fire in 1902 destroyed some of the mill buildings in Shawtown itself. A decaying truck landing (a Lincoln log-type ramp visible only to the most discerning eye) is all that remains of the 1950s era, when New England Box owned the land.

Changes In Shawtown

Ira Shaw and his son, Noah, and their wives moved to the bustling village of Effingham Falls about 1872.

Lois and Eldridge Ward moved to the corner of Bennett Road and Eaton Road (occupied today by the state highway department). Ebenezer Eldridge moved to Durgin Hill and used the old town hall on Moulton Road as a barn.

Widow Betsey Dana became a housekeeper and caused a stir in Bartlett. Miles Huckins' sons became prominent lumber dealers; a grandson donated land for Camp Huckins and a trout-rearing preserve.

Mary Shaw - granddaughter of the pioneer, daughter of Ira and Lovey Shaw and the youngest of the six Shaw sisters - remained in Shawtown through the 1890s, raising a daughter and marrying four times.

Mary Shaw-Laughton-Stokes-Durgin-Jenness bought, sold and bought back land in old Shawtown, passing it to her daughter, Annie O. Laughton, grandmother of local aviator Richard Pascoe. For now, little is known about Mary's four husbands.

Meanwhile, Shawtown veterans and their widows fought hard for the war pensions they deserved. It was yet another challenge that these indomitable, pragmatic and good-hearted folks faced. Their depositions reveal an extraordinary persistence and hardiness at the core of their souls.

Shawtown Time Capsules

Each Shawtown cellar hole is a time capsule hidden in the woods in the shadow of Mary's Mountain. These fieldstone foundations once kept milk, butter, cheese and eggs cool in

summer and cold in winter; now they sprout sizable oak, birch, ash and maple trees that camouflage their unique underground architecture.

It is in winter when these stone cavities stand in stark contrast with the white snow that carpets the dirt floors but not the stone-faced walls.

May these lichen-encrusted artifacts remain cradled in the landscape as a tangible tribute and permanent memorial to the personal sacrifices of the men, women and children whose lives were so dramatically changed by the Civil War, a war between states that cost Abraham Lincoln his life, a war to ensure that we remained "...one nation, under God, indivisible..."

Over the years, Shawtown's farmhouses were either moved off their foundations or left to decay. The last standing house, the one built atop Towle's Knoll, fell in during the 1940s.

Preserving Our Past

The neighborhood was intact until recently when two of Shawtown's cellars were filled in - an invaluable record erased from the land. It is a loss to our common history when these special places are destroyed.

Without these stonework clues, there is nothing for anyone to be curious about. It takes wondering "Who lived here?" and "What happened to them?" to make someone (like me) spend 18 years searching for answers and making sense of the hidden clues left by people who lived and died long before I crossed their same paths.

To stand at the edge of a fieldstone foundation, to look down into a hand-dug cellar and observe its one-over-two, two-over-one stoneworks laid up more than 150 years ago, can be an inspiring experience.

I imagine Noah Shaw, a pioneer educating his young son Ira: "See, stonewall buildin' is workin' with what you have, creatin' somethin' ya didn't have."

"A rock all by itself is nothin' special. But stone by heavy stone, hauled and hoisted, assembled and aligned, now that's quite an accomplishment."

Next Issue: In part three of this series, an abandoned Shawtown returns to forest.

Historian, naturalist and author Carol Foord lives in Freedom where she is writing a book on the history of Shawtown.

"These remains are a permanent memorial to the personal sacrifices of the men, women and children whose lives were changed so dramatically by the Civil War."

MUCH REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED AFTER BLUFFS VICTORY IN LEE CASE

Continued from page 2

trating radar reports, aerial photos and bathymetric surveys began to accumulate like the debris from the river that continued to fill the Association's swimming hole.

Hanging over the process was the issue of money. Association members were used to paying annual dues for essential expenses like road repairs, but now they were being asked to cover thousands of dollars in additional costs with no clear idea of the outcome or the final bill.

In a neighborhood saddled with high local taxes where more than half the residents are retired, the pain of the additional debt was palpable according to Bluffs Association president Steve Foley. Still, the neighborhood stuck together and pressed ahead.

The Building Continues

As 1999 came to a close and the country celebrated the new millennium, Lee continued to build breakwaters without permits.

DES documented two new walls in May 2001 including a 70-ft. behemoth made of concrete and stone. The agency responded with a Letter of Deficiency, a missive mandating that he remove the structure by October 15 and document the process in photographs. Lee ignored the letter and 2001 passed into 2002.

Plainly as exasperated as the members of the Bluffs Association, DES followed up with a stronger directive in April 2002. In an Administrative Order it set a deadline for Lee to remove the walls by June 1st and hire a hydrologist to create a restoration plan. Lee appealed, and another summer passed.

DES heard the appeal in December 2002 and rejected it in June 2003, following up with another letter to Lee reiterating the terms of the Administrative Order requiring him to remove the wall and hire a hydrologist.

This time, however, the state added several additional requirements, including paying the hydrologist to monitor the site for five years and removing enough material from the sandbar to re-establish the river's original flow. The agency set a deadline for having a sand removal plan in place before the 2003 lake drawdown.

In November 2003 Lee sent a letter to DES agreeing to comply, but he never did. The wall remained, the hydrologist was never hired and the plan to breach the sandbar never materialized.

It was the final straw. The officers of the Bluffs Association filed suit against Donald Lee in

Superior Court. Right behind them at the courthouse was the New Hampshire Attorney General's office with a similar filing on behalf of DES.

The Trial

During the four-day trial Lee admitted to the court that he had built, dismantled and re-built numerous breakwaters on the lake and that he had failed to comply with the state's 2003 Administrative Order to tear down the walls, hire a hydrologist and breach the sandbar.

He also conceded that his walls had contributed to the environmental damage in Bradford Cove, but he objected to being held accountable for all of it. Some of the debris, he said, was the result of shoreline erosion and other natural processes. In addition, he established that the Bluffs' boat basin had historically required periodic dredging.

Lee, whose permanent residence is Beverly, Massachusetts, told the court he had spent 48 years at the lakeside vacation property his father purchased decades ago. He called the Bluffs Association a well-financed bully that had defamed him.

On September 27, 2006 Judge James O'Neill ruled in favor of the Association and directed Lee to remove the sandbar and re-establish the original flow of the Lovell River. If implemented, it will be the largest-ever environmental remediation on Ossipee Lake and could cost close to \$1 million. Lee did not appeal the verdict.

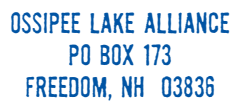
Next Steps

When Donald Lee was first cited for changing the flow of the Lovell River, Ronald Reagan was president and "Die Hard" was playing in local movie theatres. Nineteen years later the damage remains but Bluffs Association spokesman Foley is optimistic, saying his organization is working closely with DES to ensure Lee's compliance.

As always, however, money continues to hover over the process. Foley says his organization has already spent more than \$200,000 in research and legal expenses and he expects there will be more bills, including one to dredge Bradford Cove once the river returns to its natural flow.

As for Lee, who says he is financially strapped, he faces a new trial in the spring against the State Attorney General's office. A loss in that trial could subject him to fines of up to \$10,000 a day for the period of time during which he ignored the state's Administrative Order. §

"When Donald Lee was first cited for changing the flow of the Lovell River, Ronald Reagan was president and 'Die Hard' was playing at local movie theatres."



OSSIPEE LAKE REPORT - WINTER 2007



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- Verdict in Bluffs vs. Lee Trial
- Lake History In the Works
- Sammis Memorial Fund Established
- Part Two in Shawtown Series

Preserve. Protect. Educate.

