

OSSIPEE LAKE REPORT

MYSTERIES AND MILFOIL ON THE MENU OF SUMMER PROGRAMS

Key Dates:

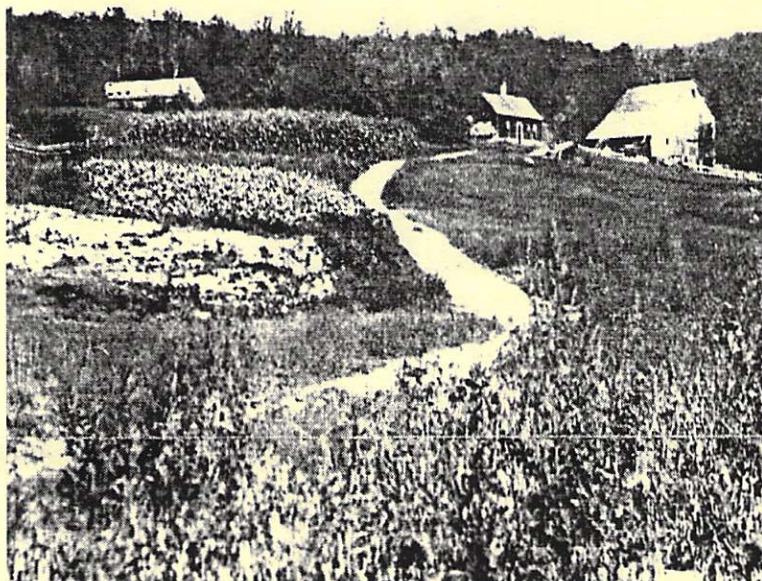
- **Saturday, July 17:** Boating Safety Course. Ossipee Town Hall, 9 AM-4:30. Other courses on **August 21** and **September 18**. Pre-register at 888-254-2125.
- **Friday, July 30:** Lawn Party to kick off Freedom Old Home Week. Freedom Gallery, 5 PM. Info @ 603-539-4587.
- **Saturday, August 7:** Ossipee Lake Alliance presents "Mysteries of Shawtown: Freedom's Lost Neighborhood." A Tales of Ossipee Lake event in association with Freedom Old Home Week. Calumet Conference Center, Freedom, 8 PM.

A new Tales of Ossipee Lake presentation and the first multi-community Weed Watchers initiative are among the highlights of Ossipee Lake Alliance's 2004 summer programs as the organization celebrates its first anniversary.

On August 7th the Alliance and Freedom Old Home Week will present "Mysteries of Shawtown: Freedom's Lost Neighborhood" at Calumet Conference Center in Freedom.

In the mid-1800s, Freedom's Shawtown district was a vibrant and growing area of families and farms. By the turn of the century, however, Shawtown had all but vanished; abandoned to time and the elements, its remains hidden by the encroaching forest.

What happened to Shawtown and why it was abandoned when all of Freedom's other



In 1910 this was the last farm standing in Freedom's Shawtown neighborhood. By the mid-1940s, it was gone. Shawtown will be the focus of a Tales of Ossipee Lake presentation on August 7th. Photo: Dick Pascoe

neighborhood districts remained intact will be the topic on August 7th when historian Carol Foord unravels the mysteries of Freedom's lost neighborhood in an evening of family entertainment that will cap the week-long festivities of the

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TAMWORTH TRACK'S IMPACT ON OSSEPEE LAKE STILL UNKNOWN

More than a year has passed since the investment group CMI announced plans to build a track for racing fast cars and motorcycles on historic Mount Whittier, yet the key questions for Ossipee Lake remain unanswered. Will the track be seen and heard from the lake? Will it benefit the tourism economy or damage the area's unique environment?

Don't expect answers anytime soon, because the public discussion has largely switched from the track's impact on the environment to the issue of who knew what and when about SB-458, the state law that stripped Tamworth of its ability to oversee the track. SB-458 was signed into law in March but was not known to the public until May

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ALLIANCE PRESENTS SUMMER MENU OF PROGRAMS

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106th annual Freedom Old Home Week. Check "Key Dates" on the front page for details. Ms. Foord is the co-author of "Riverlands," which is available from the Freedom Historical Society.

Exotic Species

Volunteer observers will be out on the lake all summer and fall looking for destructive weeds as part of the area's first community Weed Watchers program.

The program began on Memorial Day weekend when people representing the big lake, the bays, Loon Lake, and Ossipee River attended the Alliance's exotic species information session with Amy Smagula from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Afterward, they fanned out to spread the word to neighbors and friends and to enlist other volunteers.

Exotic weeds, including variable milfoil and hydrilla, are among the biggest threats to lake recreation and property values. While they cannot be eradicated, they can be controlled if discovered and treated in time. That makes it important to have as many people as possible looking for them while swimming and boating.

June D'Andrea of Leavitt Bay was among those who heeded the call. After learning what to look for at the meeting, she and her daughter, Laura, turned a day-long kayak trip to Huckins Pond into a weed-watching event. Among their observations was what appears to be a new growth spurt of the milfoil in Danforth Pond. The duo also made a mental note to return for a second look at a patch of suspicious-looking weeds north of upper Danforth Pond. "The weed watching made the day productive as well as fun," D'Andrea proclaimed after the trip.

Anyone who missed the May meeting who would like to participate in Weed Watchers should send an e-mail to weedwatchers@ossipeelake.org.

Water and Boats

Water quality monitoring on all five bodies of water in the lake system will enter its second year when samples are collected and

analyzed this month as part of the state's Volunteer Lake Assessment Program. In the program, volunteers help state water specialists collect samples from three different depths at the lake's deepest spots so they can be analyzed for chlorophyll, turbidity, and other parameters that will track changes in the lake from year to year. Last summer's test results have been summarized in an easy to read report that is available at www.ossipeelake.org.

Also continuing this year is LEAP, the Lake Environment Assessment Program, which is developing a database of information on boat density on the lake.

Many lake organizations have conducted annual boat counts for years, but their work has taken on new importance as state lakes have become crowded, creating safety issues and diminishing the quality of recreation. Both the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and the New Hampshire Lakes Association have been working on studies to determine the boat carrying capacity of the state's lakes.

In May, the directors of the Alliance met with state officials and members of the boating committee of the Squam Lakes Association to align the organizations' data collection methods. The result for the LEAP initiative is a more streamlined process for collecting data and for making it public. Those who are interested in participating in this year's program should send an e-mail to LEAP@ossipeelake.org.

Special Places

In its first major publication, the Alliance has issued "The Special Places of Ossipee Lake," celebrating four important parcels of land on and near the lake that are being preserved for future generations through state and private resources. Among the four sites is a federally designated National Natural Landmark.

The pamphlet was sent to lake property owners, elected officials, and conservation organizations to create awareness of the importance of the preserves in the lake environment. Anyone who did not receive a copy may request one by sending an e-mail to brochure@ossipeelake.org.



TO OUR READERS

- **Ossipee Lake Report** is available in color on the web at: www.ossipeelake.org.
- **Ossipee Lake e-News** delivers up to the minute information about the lake by e-mail, as events warrant. Contact: suscribe@ossipeelake.org.
- Report mail address changes to: info@ossipeelake.org or send to P.O. Box 173, Freedom, NH 03836.
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 New England Grassroots
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The Alliance is a member of the New Hampshire Lakes Association.

POLITICS DERAILS DEBATE ON TRACK'S IMPACT ON LAKE

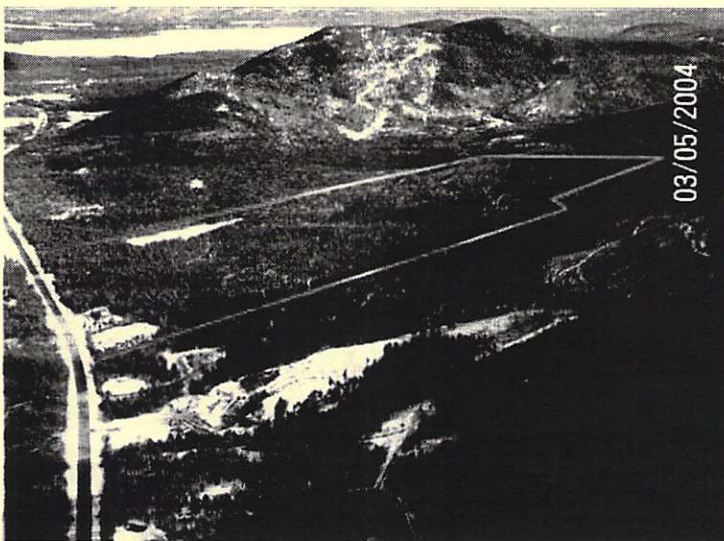
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when it went into effect. After its impact on Tamworth became clear, things turned ugly.

Last year Tamworth voters rejected zoning for the third time, opting instead to create a racetrack ordinance to oversee CMI's noise levels, hours of operation, and the like. Hearings were held and CMI was closely involved as the ordinance was crafted. As is now clear, however, behind the scenes they were directing their lobbyists to develop a law that would exempt them from the ordinance.

The desired legislation was written and found a willing sponsor in Senator John Gallus of Berlin, who has made it clear he would like a similar track in his part of the state. With Gallus in the driver's seat, the bill began its legislative road trip in the Senate Transportation Committee in January. Described creatively as a law to regulate "private driving instruction and exhibition facilities," it attracted little notice as it raced its way to the Governor, who signed it in March, exempting operations like CMI's from racetrack ordinances like Tamworth's. Five days later, 84% of Tamworth's voters approved an ordinance that they did not know was dead on arrival.

As word of the new law leaked out, state representatives David Babson and Harry Merrow were the first to cry foul, fuming over the bill's misleading title and language and apologizing to their constituents for not seeing its now obvious impact. Said Babson: the bill "was very skillfully handled, and it came in under the radar and we missed it." Merrow called it a violation of home-rule traditions, saying it "in effect renames the track as something other than a racetrack and then goes on to remove any authority of the Selectmen to provide any control over it." Both vowed to undo the damage in the next legislative session. Also caught unaware



The outline to the left of the date stamp shows the site of CMI's proposed track for fast cars and motorcycles and its proximity to Ossipee Lake, at the top. State Route 25 is at the left. Photo: William Farnum

was the usually vigilant New Hampshire Municipal Association, which issued a scathing statement calling the law "a dangerous precedent."

Attention then turned to Senator Joseph Kenney, who represents Tamworth and the surrounding towns affected by the track. Kenney is chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, where SB-458 was introduced by its sponsors.

Why didn't he alert his constituents and political colleagues so that the bill's merits could be discussed publicly? Kenney told a Conway Sun reporter that he thought the bill was "innocuous" and was unaware of its impact and fortuitous timing.

While politics is front and center for the moment, the significant issues presented by the track have not gone away, remaining to be debated on another day.

As South Tamworth resident Kate Vachon recently wrote in a letter to the editors of the local newspapers, "there is a long, complex process at the federal, state and local levels that holds the development to very stringent standards...and it is the regulatory agencies that will ultimately decide what happens." That makes CMI's announced plan to open the track in the late summer or early fall ambitious indeed.

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OSSIPEE LAKE REPORT - SUMMER, 2004

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Ossipee Lake, Broad Bay,
Leavitt Bay, Berry Bay, and
Danforth Pond.

Officers:
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www.ossipeelake.org
webmaster: host@taylorsmith.net

It's New Hampshire's best north country lake for fishing, boating, and swimming. Home of the state's finest remaining examples of unique environmental habitats. The location of one of your most important real estate investments. It's Ossipee Lake, and there's only one organization dedicated to preserving and protecting it: Ossipee Lake Alliance. Please invest today in the future of your lake by joining us.

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