

# BEAVER PARK



by Verla Brooks, Lisbon Park Ranger

# INTRODUCTION

This slide presentation will introduce you to Beaver Park one of Lisbon's natural treasures and perhaps the town's best kept secret. Beaver Park is a 337 acre natural recreation area nestled in the Town of Lisbon. The park provides a place where visitors can experience nature throughout the four seasons with outdoor activities such as: hiking, skiing, fishing, picnicking and swimming. Park visitors obtain a feel of the natural wilderness by doing these activities among impressive forest stands and observing the numerous species of wildlife that inhabit the park property. Thus, Beaver Park is managed to preserve its natural state while providing maximum access, so visitors can enjoy the many opportunities the park has to offer.

## BEAVER PARK HISTORY

The Beaver Park property was originally purchased by Robert Vachon in 1961. He developed portions of the property as a recreational area in 1963 by building the Middle and Upper Ponds and using them for swimming and fishing. He also managed a portion of the woodlot.

On December 23, 1971 the Maine Department of Parks and Recreation purchased the Beaver Park property from Mr. Vachon. At this time, the state did not maintain the park and as a result, the existing structures and the property was vandalized. In hope of restoring the property to a viable recreation area, the Maine Department of Parks and Recreation chose to lease the property to the Town of Lisbon for a period of twenty years. This agreement was signed in April of 1972 and the Town of Lisbon assumed all financial and administrative jurisdiction of the property.

In 1972, the Town of Lisbon had a new cement block bathhouse built with the help of the Army National Guard. Power was installed to the Middle Pond area and the park was used by the Lisbon Recreation Department for two summers. Due to the area not being supervised, vandalism continued to occur on the property and the town's people chose to discontinue funding repairs to the structures. As a result, during the period between 1974 and 1978 virtually no work was done in Beaver Park. The entire property was in disrepair. It was basically a local hang-out and a liability to the town.

Park History continued...

In 1979, the Lisbon Conservation Commission with Mr. Jack Arndt as Chairman took interest in the park and its future use. Thus, started the cleaning and development of Beaver Park as it is today. Mr. Arndt personally hauled pick-up truck loads of trash which had been dumped on the property. Remains of vandalized buildings were cleaned up. A Forest Management Plan was developed by a private forester hired by the Conservation Commission and work to improve the woodlot was started. Revenue from the forest harvest was used to improve the park. The Conservation Commission then submitted a five year plan for the park and proceeded to improve the road system and built a third pond to improve the water quality and flow of the existing two ponds. This work was completed by the Army National Guard with Mr. Arndt as the director of the project. The five year plan was completed in less then four years as a result of volunteer work.

In 1983, the Conservation Commission proposed the town hire a full-time Park Ranger to live and work in the park, so improvements could continue and be maintained. The Town's people agreed to hire a full-time Park Ranger at the 1983 Town Meeting.

On October 18, 1983, the first Park Ranger (Verla L. Brooks) was hired.

On May 2, 1985, the State Department of Parks and Recreation gave the Beaver Park property to the Town of Lisbon.

Since 1983, with the hiring of the Park Ranger and continued volunteer work and support from Jack Arndt as Chairman of the Lisbon Conservation Commission a vast amount of improvements have been completed at the park. Beaver Park has become a source of pride to the citizens of Lisbon. The State of Maine has many State Parks but very few Maine municipalities have their own BEAVER PARK.



Jack Arndt  
August 8, 1992 – August 19, 2009

Beaver Park would not exist as it does today without Jack Arndt's foresight and personnel commitment to make the project work without becoming a burden to the tax payers of Lisbon. He spent many hours of volunteer time and used his expert knowledge to teach Verla carpentry and forestry skills. His aim was to make Beaver Park as self-sufficient as possible. He worked with her cutting pine trees on the property which were milled into lumber. The lumber was used to build the park buildings and picnic tables. He often used his portable sawmill to mill the trees into the needed lumber. As you will see in the following slide presentation Beaver Park was built with an old fashion work ethic and a low budget.



The only structure that existed in the park in 1983 was the vandalized bath house at the Middle Pond. Vandals had used it for target practice and destroyed the internal plumbing facilities.

Doors donated by the Lisbon School Department were installed, the bullet holes patched and a fresh coat of paint made the building look more inviting.



Before structures could be built, trees had to be cut for lumber. Verla learned which trees to cut for lumber from Jack.



Verla notching and cutting the selected pine tree.



**TIMBER!**



The logs were then hauled to the cutting area and sawed into lumber for park projects.



Jack sawing logs into clapboards for the Lone Pine Lodge.

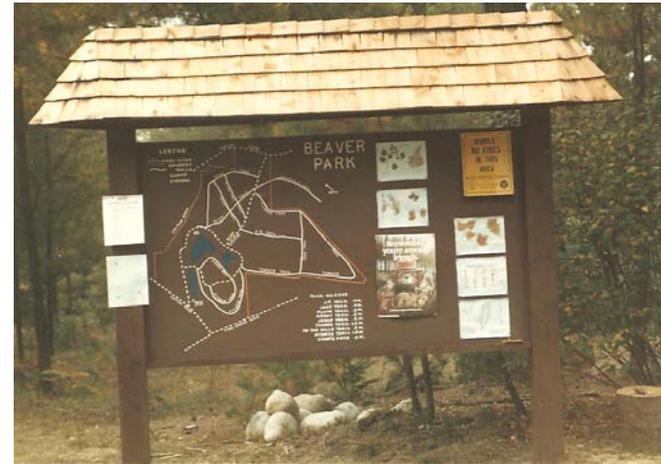


Lumber to build the picnic shelter, machine shed and picnic tables.

The original map board routed by Verla in 1984 and is still used today.



Bulletin board from 1994-2001.



The first structure built in the park was the bulletin board at the park entrance in 1984. In 2002, the original bulletin board was replaced with a more elaborate kiosk. The post had deteriorated, however the map board was in good condition and was used for the kiosk.

Construction continued with Jack and Verla building four outhouses throughout the Park.





Next the small picnic shelter at the New Pond was built.

Picnic tables were needed for the picnic shelter and the picnic areas at the Middle and New Pond. Jack quickly taught Verla how to build the picnic tables and to mix cement to construct cement anchors to bolt the picnic tables to. The tables had to be built and installed as vandal proof as possible due to the past history of vandalism at the park. In previous years when tables were placed in the Park they were either stolen or used to build bon-fires.



Park lumber cut and ready to build a picnic table.



Assembling the picnic table legs using a special jig built by a park volunteer to make the assembly easier.



Assembled picnic table legs.



Assembling the picnic table.

The table assembled and ready for a coat of stain.





Before the tables are placed in the park these cement forms are built and buried at the site where the table will be located. The table legs are bolted to the metal bars so that the tables stay where they are placed.

Picnic tables and grill ready for use at the Middle Pond picnic area.



Cutting park benches from logs with Jack's alaskan sawmill and installing them.



Cutting the bench board.



Finishing touches.



Benches are located along the Park Road, at the beach areas, and around the tot-lot at the Middle Pond.

## Building the Lone Pine Lodge.



The trusses and pressure treated post were purchased.



The remainder of the needed lumber came from the park forest.



Boarding up the Lodge.

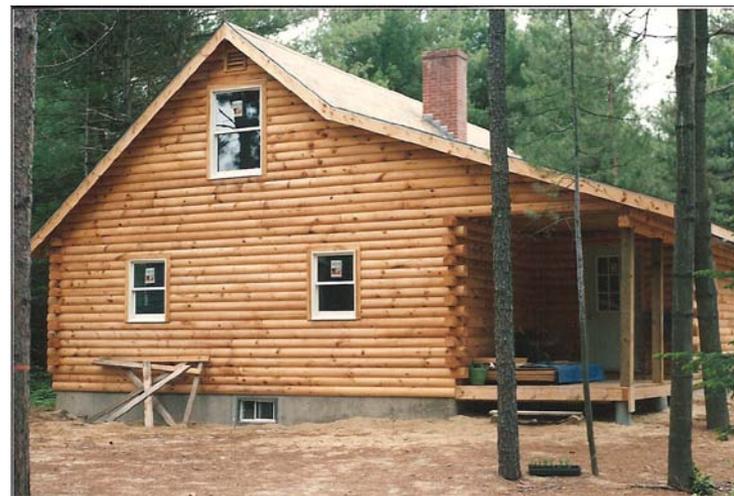


Live edge clapboard siding.



The completed Lone Pine Lodge. Half the lodge is used by the public for various meeting and public gatherings. The other half is used as the park workshop.

When Verla started working at Beaver Park in 1983, she lived in a mobile home that she and her husband purchased and the Town placed on the park property. In 1992, the log cabin was completed and the mobile home removed. The log cabin was built from a purchased log home kit and over a period of 3 years, Jack and Verla built the cabin.





The log cabin kit included the logs and lumber to complete the exterior structure. The interior was completed with purchased tongue and groove boards and lumber cut in the park. All the cabin interior doors and cabinets were built on site by Verla via Jack's instructions.

Knee wall cabinets and drawers built in the upstairs bedroom.

Jack taught Verla how to build the interior doors from park lumber to keep the cost down.



The completed log cabin serves as the rangers home and park office.

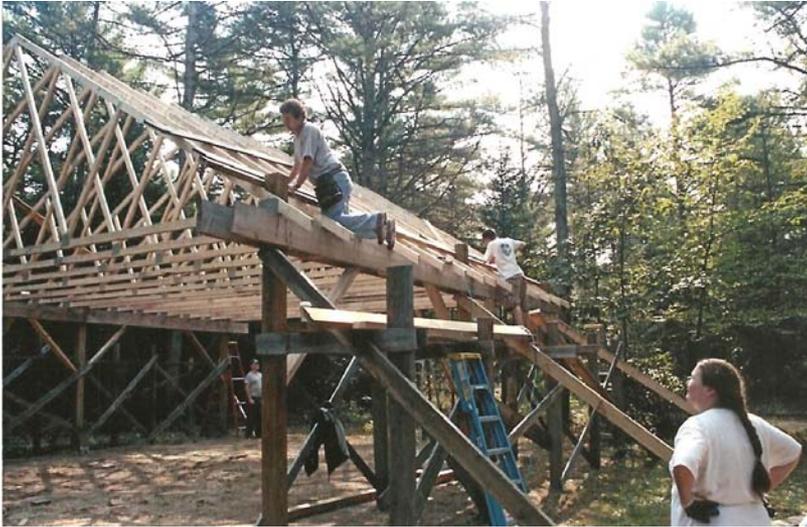




In 2006, the park was awarded a grant from the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund to build a machine shed and a large group picnic shelter with 9 tables. Although Jack was now legally blind, he still directed Verla and volunteers on the construction of both structures. Manufactured trusses and pressure treated post were used along with lumber cut from the site to construct the buildings.

Building the machine shed.





Construction of the Middle Pond Picnic Shelter.

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE BEAVER PARK ROAD SIGN



With the exception of the flower trail signs, all the park signs are made at the park by Verla from Beaver Park lumber.



New sign completed.

# PARK ACTIVITIES

## TRAILS:

Hiking

Fitness Trail

Cross-country running

Self-guided wildflower Trail

Cross-country skiing

Snowshoeing

Picnicking

Swimming

Tot-Lot

Fishing

School Outings

Summer Camp

Boy and Girl Scout Activities

Ice Skating

Wreath Classes

Miscellaneous Park Programs

## HIKING TRAILS



The park trails all have trail head signs and paint blazes.



Enjoying a fall walk.



Dogs are welcomed on park trails.



Town employees during a lunch and learn program at the park.



The park road and a majority of the trails are excellent for horseback riding or a carriage.



Dogs are welcomed on the park hiking trails and the park road but not at the picnic or beach areas.

## FITNESS TRAIL

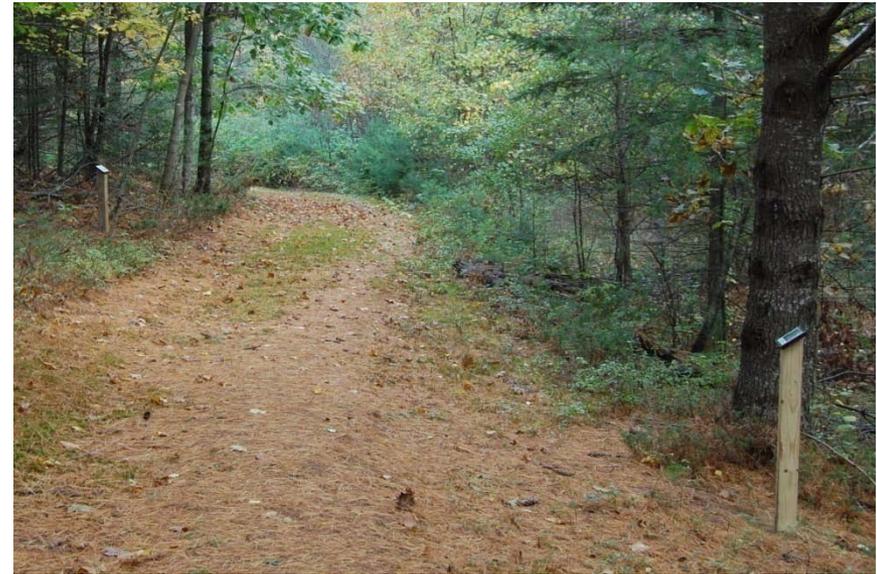


The Fitness Trail is one mile long and has 25 signed exercise stations.



The Lisbon Cross-Country Team often boast that the Beaver Park cross-country course is the best in the state. A true cross-country course meandering through the Beaver Park forest.

## SELF-GUIDED WILDFLOWER TRAIL



## CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING



The summer hiking trails are groomed for traditional cross-country skiing once the snow is deep enough.



Winter storms often cause trees to fall across the trails which need to be removed before the trails can be groomed for skiing.



The chainsaw always accompanies the groomer.



The snowmobile hauls the groomer which sets the ski track.

The groomed trails are used by:



Cross-Country Skiers



Snowshoers



Wildlife



A wonderful winter wonderland day of skiing at Beaver Park.



Snowshoeing off the beaten path is always fun.

## PICKNICING



Middle Pond and New Pond both have picnic areas with tables, charcoal grills and shelters.



Middle Pond group picnic shelter.



New Pond picnic area with grill and table.



# TOT - LOT AT THE MIDDLE POND



## Middle and New Pond Swimming Areas





## ICE SKATING AT THE MIDDLE POND

When ice conditions are good a skating area is maintained at the Middle Pond.



## FISHING



The park ponds are stocked with brook trout.



Stocking the ponds with brook trout.

The Annual Beaver Park Fishing Derby is now a 24 year tradition.



The Beaver Park Fishing Derby is GREAT FUN!



Early lessons learned, last a lifetime.



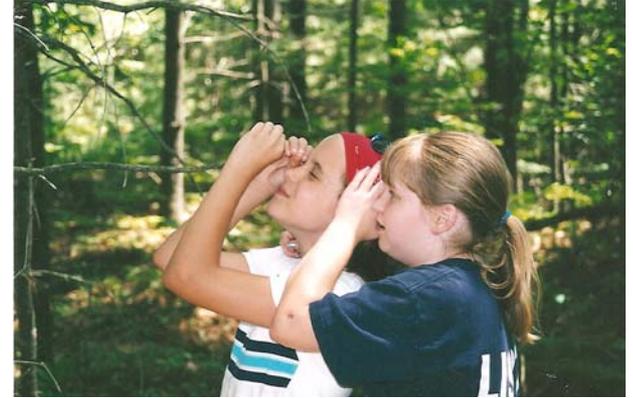
A perfect day of fishing at Beaver Park.





Bubbles the fish enjoys greeting the children.

## Beaver Park Summer Camp



A fun time had by all.



Lisbon and surrounding area schools use the park for field trips.



Third graders enjoying a pond study field trip.

Lisbon High School Physics Class at the Middle Pond Beach.





Lisbon High School Physics class building boats using cardboard, duct tape and plastic.

Success!!



## SCOUTING ACTIVITY



Local Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troops use Beaver Park for various activities including camping.

## FIELD ACTIVITIES



Schooner Fare Concert



Kite Flying



Mowing



Softball Games

GPS Classes are taught in the Lone Pine Lodge by the Maine Forest Service.





CHAINSAW SAFETY CLASS



Lisbon Crazy Quilters meet at the Lone Pine Lodge every Monday for quilting.



The Lisbon Conservation Commission meets at the Lone Pine Lodge the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month to discuss environmental issues and Beaver Park projects.



Wreath Classes taught in November at the park by Verla have become a Christmas tradition that many participants look forward to each year. Verla cuts all the fir boughs from park trees.



BEAVER PARK WORKING DOG



Wreath Classes are always a lot of fun and participants enjoy displaying their beautiful wreaths which they made at Beaver Park.

Beaver Park became a certified Tree Farm in 1988



Beaver Park hosted an annual tree farm program and Jack Arndt was the guest speaker.

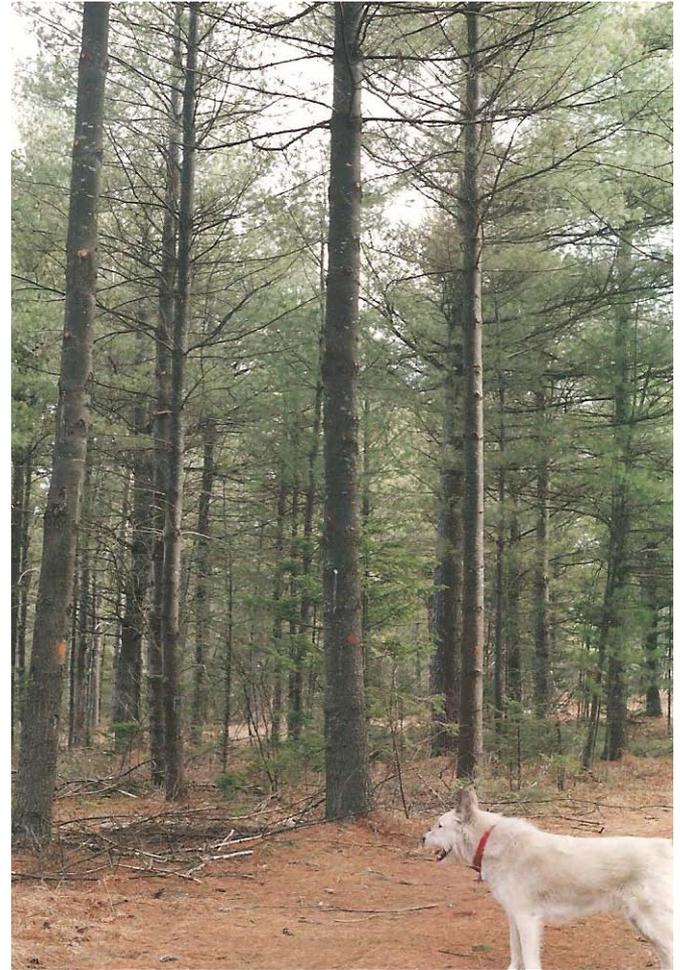
## Implementing the Park's Forest Management Plan



Forester marking trees to be harvested.



Trees being harvested.



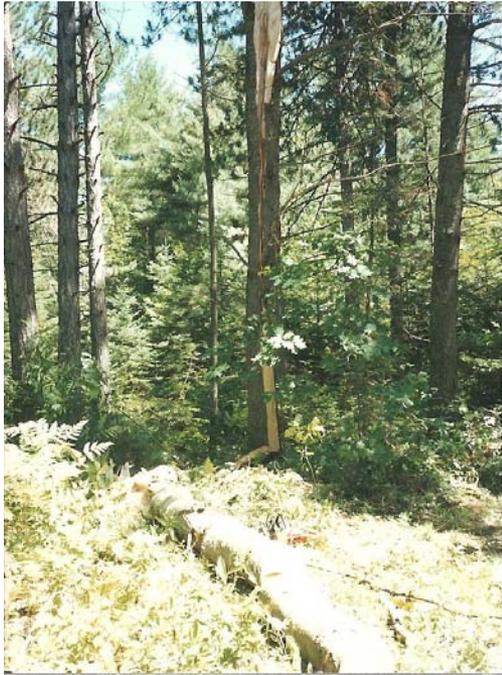
Forest area after thinning and brush removed.



After each harvest Verla and Jack would plant 1000's of white and red pine trees in the thinned area. At the time the state would reimburse the town one dollar for every tree planted.

Verla planted these red pine trees in 1984 as plug seedlings and they are now at least 15 to 20 feet tall and have been pruned at least once.





A white pine tree struck by lightning.



Wildlife you may encounter on a visit to Beaver Park



Red Fox



Skunk



Whitetail Deer



Porcupine



Robins



Scarlet Tanager

Many bird species enjoy the Beaver Park pine -oak forest.



Great Blue Heron

## WILDFLOWERS



Touch-me-not



Bluets



Teaberry



Bunchberry Blossoms



Milkweed



Painted Trillium



Pink Lady Slipper

Partridge Berry



See the two eyes looking at you!



Red Pine Tree Blossom



The park offers a peaceful get away in your own back yard.



The 'Park Working Dog' and I thank you for taking the time to view this program. I hope to see you enjoying Beaver Park.



**THE  
END**