

2024 Maine Chapter Annual Report

Maine continues to have a largely abandoned, aging tower inventory. This year, there were no tower losses. At a minimum, we keep track of the inventory on a yearly basis. In that effort, we continue to have a large number of members, followers, and friends of the chapter do site visits all over the state.

Despite this, we continued with research and archive collection. We continued to keep the Maine tower inventory up to date as there were changes, new discoveries and updates. The findings are below –

2024 Tower Survey

Data as of 12/31/2024

Summary:

Total Known Tower Sites – 144
Total Towers Still Standing – 55
Total Towers Gone or Removed – 89

Of the 55 Standing Towers:

Standing Steel Only, No Cab – 22
Standing Steel Converted to Observation – 6
Standing Steel and Cab – 26
Standing Wooden Enclosed – 1

Average Condition of the 26 standing towers with Cabs:

Good Condition – 11
Fair Condition – 4
Poor Condition – 5
Bad Condition – 6

Usage

Rentals – 0
Lookouts eligible to be used on a volunteer basis - 2

NOTE: There are several standing towers with cabs that are extremely deteriorated and are expected to collapse or blow off the steel at any time. These cabs are not classified as salvageable.

Membership and Budget

2024 membership – 28
2024 end of year balance - \$953.21

As in past years, no chapter funds were requested from the FFLA accounts. All expenses were covered by the director as a donation to the chapter.

NHLR

12 Total Entries

Research / Archives

We continued research efforts on tower sites, largely remotely. We did one oral-history and interview of a past watchman this year. Worked with various organizations and individuals to provide history and background data on towers and tower sites. We made no trips this year to the Maine State Library, Maine Forest Service or any other locations to retrieve archival information.

Facebook Presence

Our Facebook following is as follows:

- 2526 Page Likes
- 3623 Page Followers

We continue to see the below benefits -

- Connecting with many former watchman, yielding a wealth of info
- Connecting with the families of former watchman, yielding a wealth of info
- Provides a good mechanism for communication and outreach
- Is a good research tool
- Has created more exposure for the chapter
- Provides a mechanism to socialize our online membership

Activities

Squaw Mountain Watchman's Camp and Tower

We continue to be in maintenance mode with the camp and tower at the Greenville visitor's center. We visit a minimum of 3 times a year to maintain the site. Possible upcoming tasks in 2025 may include painting the tower steel and cab.

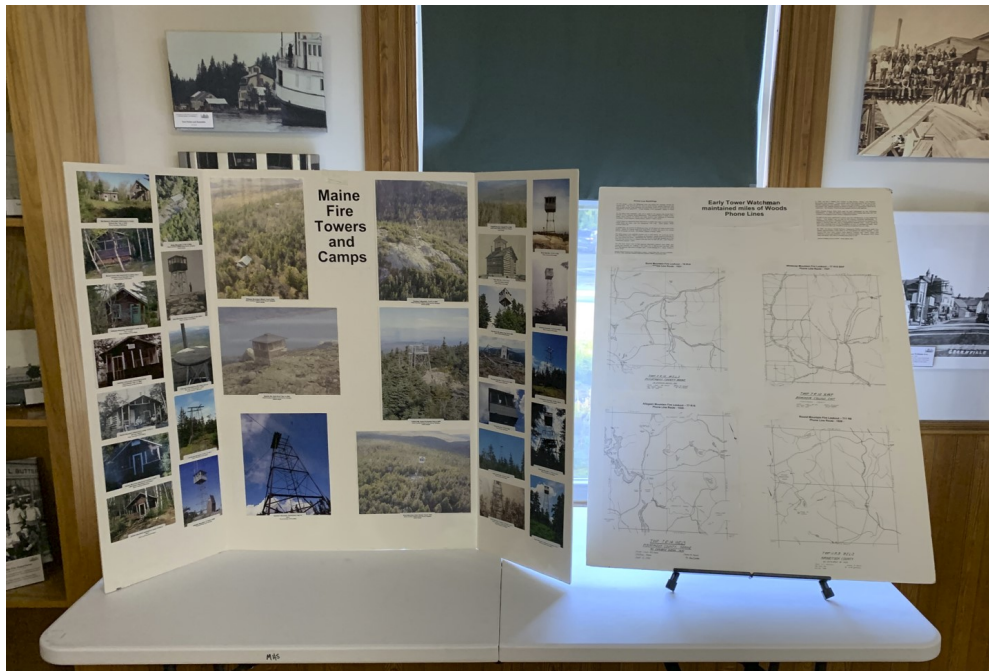
Ossipee Hill

Our tower steward, Ken Kennedy, continued to open and close the tower in 2024 as well as starting some new timber replacements. Volunteers did some structural work up at the Ossipee Hill fire tower in October. The team replaced some of the lower leg ties. Little by little, areas of need are being addressed. In 2025, some stair work and possibly some cab siding will be tackled. Moulton Lumber in Cornish donated the lumber for the project and John Moulton and Ken Kennedy did the work.



Squaw Mountain watchman event

We worked with Ed Jewett, a local organizer in Greenville, to host a former Squaw Mountain watchman for a talk at the Moosehead Cultural Heritage Center in September. We assisted with program development and setup display boards and photo boards. Rodney P. Bailey was the 1960 watchman on Squaw Mountain.



Mount Hope

The tower continues to be available for volunteers on high fire days.

Other Projects

- We performed trail maintenance on the **Williams Mountain** watchman's trail and we also did a cleanup around and inside of the watchman's camp.
- We performed trail maintenance on the **Green Mountain** watchman's trail.
- We began an effort to revive the old watchman's trail on **Coburn Mountain**. We cleared about ½ of the upper trail in 2024. The hope is to finish the effort in 2025.
- We cleared out the footings of the **Mount Kineo** fire tower. These footings contain important carvings of early watchman, including Alice Henderson, Maine's first lady lookout.

Other Activities

We made several tower and camp site visits this past year. Trips included Mount Kineo, Coburn mountain, Green Mountain, Squaw Mountain, Williams Mountain and camp, Pleasant Pond mountain, Boundary Bald mountain, and Kokadjo ranger camp.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Cobb
Maine Director