

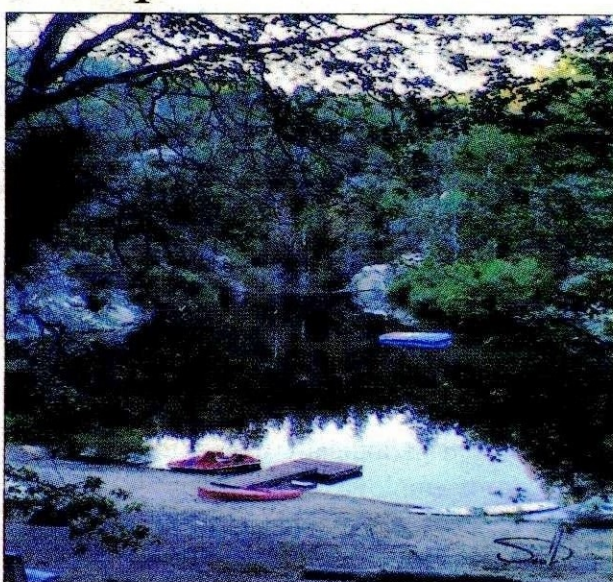
# The Story and Brief History of Arrowbear's Deep Creek Lake

by Steven Peter

The story of Deep Creek Lake is almost as fascinating as the family history that preceded it as noted in a letter written by Mary Smith, daughter of Frank Seccombe, who would become the eventual owner of the property. As you might guess, the name is also associated with Seccombe Lake Park on 5th Street in downtown San Bernardino. The lake was named after William C. Seccombe who was the mayor of San Bernardino from 1941-1947. William was also part-owner of Town, Seccombe & Allison Pharmacy starting in 1896 in San Bernardino.

According to the letter from Mary Smith, her father Frank Seccombe used to work at Consolidated Aircraft sometime around 1940, noting that financial troubles of the depression also affected the Real Estate business in California. Frank Seccombe's engineering education and the threat of war were the reasons for his leaving their home in 1940. While away from home he met a Mr. C. P. Carlock from Los Angeles.

Mr. Carlock had several lots in the local San Bernardino Moun-

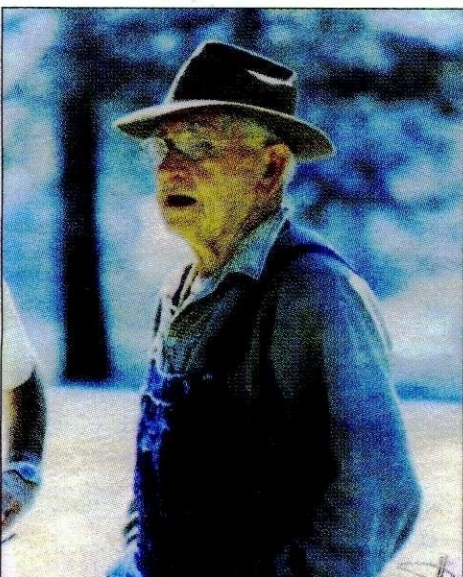


Peaceful morning at Deep Creek Lake. Photo courtesy of Seccombe family

tains and due to the family's love of the local mountains, Frank became interested in some of the lots and acreage up there. A 1929 statute about the legality of building a dam was used as a guideline and stated "that it requires that the construction of a dam...shall not be commenced without having first obtained approval of the plans and specification from this department". It is signed by Edward Hyatt, State Engineer, Chief of Division, State of California.

Mary further writes, "There is no evidence of purchase of the lake property until May 24th, 1943." Frank Seccombe eventually purchased the lots containing the partial flow of Deep Creek. According to Mary Smith, she located an old letter from Frank R. Seccombe dated Aug. 3, 1943, to Edward Hyatt which says: I own a piece of land situated in the mountains north of San Bernardino, Calif. Described as follows (change colon to a quote mark)"Portion of the East half of SE1/4, Section33, Township 2 north, Range 2 West SBB&M. A stream known as Deep Creek flows through this property for about 1000 feet in a North-Easterly direction. The property consists of about 23 acres. I wish to install a dam in this stream for the purpose of storing

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Frank Seccombe

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water in order to form a lake. The dam would have a maximum height of 24 feet from the bottom of the foundation and it will store 15-acre feet of water. I wish to file an application for a necessary amount of water and the right to erect this dam and otherwise to comply to State law, especially in regard to the fish and game laws." Frank received a letter stating, "Your application to appropriate from Deep Creek was received Aug. 21, 1943 and given the number 10702." After maybe several years of legal back and forth, on April



Deep Creek Lake Club 1948-Frank Seccombe is in the leather cap smoking. Photo courtesy of Seccombe Family

Scott remembers that "some people would ice skate on it in the winter but now we general drain it in the winter or it simply dries up. A clubhouse was built in 1960-61 where dances and potluck dinners were held for the

local community.

Scott Seccombe remembers that Agnes Seccombe, his mother, ran the lake for many years until it was closed to the public sometime in the mid-1980s. Scott says, "We should have run it as non-profit because we never made enough to even pay the property taxes."



Scott Seccombe and Richard Seccombe closing the dam gate in 1985. Photo courtesy of Seccombe Family

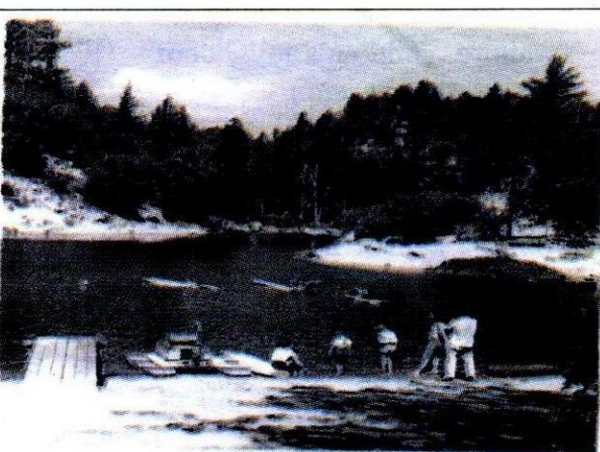
30, 1945, a Mr. Harold Conkling of the Dept. Of Public Works in Sacramento wrote Frank Seccombe: "Permit 6378, which has been issued in approval of your Application 10702, will be found endorsed on the reverse side of the attached copy of the application. As prescribed by law the permit fixes a definite time schedule within which to begin construction, complete construction, and make full beneficial use."

Eventually, in 1945 and 1946 the dam was finally finished. His two sons Richard and Willard and occasionally a few other friends worked on it. They used one gas powered cement mixer to mix all the cement and pushed wheelbarrows up a long ramp to pour the cement into the forms. It was hard work and most likely all volunteer.

The small lake was operated as a recreational business, allowing local people to swim and row boats in the lake. Fishing was not allowed however in the lake. Frank's grandson

ly around or on the 4th of July. Scott remembers that "some people would ice skate on it in the winter but now we generally drain it in the winter or it simply dries up. A clubhouse was built in 1960-61 where dances and potluck dinners were held for the local community."

Occasionally, in past years when the weather is good, the family invites some of the local citizenry to come and enjoy the lake. Old-timers remember the great gatherings usual-



Scott, Lucy, Loree, Agnes, and Richard Seccombe in 1961. Photo courtesy of Seccombe Family