

# Long Trail NEWS



Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

FALL 2017



# Long Trail

NEWS

The mission of the Green Mountain Club is to make the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people by protecting and maintaining the Long Trail System and fostering, through education, the stewardship of Vermont's hiking trails and mountains.

## Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

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Cover: GMC office staff on a Long Trail hike north of Taylor Lodge. Photo by Jocelyn Hebert



Peak foliage from the Pinnacle, Stowe

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## The Green Mountain Club and the Mystique of the Long Trail

The Green Mountains are a well-defined mountain range with a distinct high ridge running the length of Vermont. Virtually all Vermonters live within an hour's drive of the main ridge, and within minutes of a view of an identifiable peak.

The mountains divide the state roughly in half, both geographically and by population, and historically Vermonters have identified themselves as either “east siders” or “west siders.” The watersheds to the east and west of the main ridge essentially coincide with the state's boundaries. Nearly every river, stream, lake, and pond in Vermont has its source in the Green Mountains.

Because they define the state geographically, it is no wonder the Green Mountains have been central to Vermont's identity since the state's inception. The very name “Vermont” is a compound of French words for “green mountains.” Ethan Allen, who started the movement to make Vermont an independent state in 1778, famously defied New York authorities by declaring that “the gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills,” and then backed his claim with an armed mob that called itself the Green Mountain Boys. For a century after the Civil War, Vermont's Republican Party exercised virtual hegemony over state government, a political phenomenon historians have largely

credited to a self-imposed, extra-constitutional practice known as the “mountain rule,” by which governors were chosen from opposite sides of the Green Mountains in alternating terms.

Today Vermont is widely referred to as the Green Mountain State. Our National Guard still calls itself the Green Mountain Boys. In the Vermont Secretary of State's registry of corporations and trade names, the appellation “Green Mountain” is second only to “Vermont” as the state's most popular business descriptive. And of course, our thriving ski and tourism industries are intrinsically connected to our mountains. In short, for two-and-a-half centuries Vermont and Vermonters have closely identified themselves with the Green Mountains.

### By preserving the Long Trail we are preserving the Green Mountains.

The Long Trail's mystical appeal to the public imagination is closely related to the centrality of the Green Mountains in Vermont's identity. Although part of the trail's mystique comes from its status as the nation's first and oldest long-distance hiking

trail, and from the intense passion hikers profess for its rugged charm, I believe there's a more deeply psychological reason for the Long Trail's mystique, even for the great majority of Vermonters who never set foot on it.

Merely knowing that a “footpath in the wilderness” exists up on that high ridge allows us to imagine that the Green Mountains remain a wild, unkempt place, somehow untouched by civilization. So long as a person can walk a single continuous path the entire length of the state, we can retain the illusion of wilderness amidst ever-growing metropolis. The Long Trail is the canary in our psychological coal mine. If it ever ceases to exist, the myth of Vermont as an essentially rural place will disappear with it. By preserving the Long Trail we are preserving the Green Mountains and, with them, Vermont's storied natural beauty and independent character. And we can continue to believe that “the gods of the valleys are not the gods of the hills.”



— JOHN PAGE, PRESIDENT



## Long Trail Lodge Opening

A major error leapt out at me as I read Mike DeBonis' "Trail Mix" in the summer 2017 issue of *Long Trail News* (p. 20).

The text in the box showing the invitation to the twenty-first anniversary celebration of the club, to be held at Long Trail Lodge in September, 1931, erroneously states that Long Trail Lodge "first opened its doors in December 1932." The truth is that Long Trail Lodge, the GMC clubhouse, opened in December, 1923.

My uncle, Leonard Wright, directed the expansion of the clubhouse into a commercial hotel and was the first manager for Treadway Inns. His younger brother, Grover E. Wright, managed LTL for Treadway from 1931 until it was destroyed by fire in 1968.

—DAVID P. WRIGHT, MIDDLETOWN SPRINGS

**Editor's Note:** Mr. Wright is correct. The Long Trail Lodge opened in 1923, not 1932. It appears that numbers were transposed when the copy was transcribed. To clarify, Mike DeBonis' article on that page was unrelated to the publishing history box error.

## Share Your Story

I very much enjoyed reading the summer 2017 edition of the *Long Trail News* and seeing the names and addresses of the 247 hikers who completed hiking the Long Trail in 2016. As I read the list, I began to wonder, who are these people? It appears that some of the hikers were families from far away, such as the Stonebrakers from Greencastle, Indiana, while many were from neighboring states.

Perhaps the *Long Trail News* could ask those who complete the trail to send photos and tell us about their journeys, so that we can read about them in future editions? Or maybe the website? I never tire of reading about adventures on the Long Trail.

—CRAIG HAFFER, LANDGROVE, VT

**Editor's Note:** An excellent suggestion, Mr. Hafer! We love to read about Long Trail adventures too, but since space is limited, we ask folks to post their stories on our website under "Hiking" in the "Share Your Story" section. We can choose stories there to publish in the *Long Trail News* or on our blog.

## Exploring the Clara Bow Trail



PHOTO BY HEINZ TREBITZ

Following your recommendation (spring 2017) Inge [Treibitz] led a hike on June 25 to explore the Clara Bow Trail. Attached are a couple of photos showing one of the Ottawaquechee Section ladies negotiating the ladder down the abyss.

Comparing your information with our experience hiking that alternate Long Trail route, I imagine those two devious professors, Buchanan and Puffer, sitting at Taylor Lodge and planning this LT by-pass just for the fun of it. When they flagged it they must have chuckled and laughed all the way thinking of the unsuspecting hikers scrambling through that gorge.

The five of us had a good hike, and met the challenge of the "beautiful but tough" trail. Thanks for the article and suggestion.

—HEINZ TREBITZ, OTTAUQUECHEE SECTION

## Hats Off!

My hat goes off to each and every one of you. I love the GMC, and have been a member since my teens. Your work is much appreciated and is so important in keeping the Long Trail viable and thriving. Thank you!

—PETE SAILE, BURLINGTON SECTION

Thank you Jordan [Volunteer Long Trail Patrol Coordinator] for all of the hard work you all do in maintaining the trails. It's a serious commitment and a life changing experience for all of you. It gives me hope to know that your generation appreciates this fragile and magnificent wilderness we call the Green Mountains.

—LYN ELLISON, BURLINGTON SECTION

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# GEAR FAVORITES

## FROM THE GMC FIELD STAFF



**ILANA COPEL**  
*Field Staff Supervisor*

“In my humble opinion, there is no more versatile item of gear than the trusty bandana. Need a napkin? Bandana. Sweat dripping sunscreen in your eyes? Bandana. Bleeding? Bandana. Alerting hunters to your presence? Bandana. Feeling patriotic? Bandana. I carry no less than four on an overnight backpacking trip, and have named them for their uses: Sweat

Swag, Pee Flag, Snot Rag, and One-in-the-bag. (The one in the bag, being the all-purpose extra.) I recommend carrying at least one for first aid. Only your creativity limits the possibilities.”

**DALEY MATTHEWS-PENNANEN**  
*Wilderness Monitor*

“Two things that I don’t go into the woods without: my buff and my EpiPen.

“Buffs are simple, versatile, and so helpful. Mine keeps me warm when I’ve forgotten my hat. It keeps black flies from crawling around my ears when I’m on summit duty for hours. I’ll pull it down across my face for stirring compost when the flies are murderous. And it’s a great neck gaiter and hair tie.

“My EpiPen has been underutilized so far, and I’m perfectly okay with that. I’ve never had to use it in the woods, but I don’t think I could go out comfortably without it. Having an allergy with an anaphylactic reaction must be taken seriously. While it can be fun to joke about peanut-related silliness, it’s important to have a game plan if things ever head south. Plus, my friends seem to like to call dibs on who would get to stab me should I ever ingest peanuts, and what’s better than that?”



**KEVIN TOLAN**  
*Field Intern*

“I’m a junior at the University of Vermont majoring in wildlife biology. As a GMC field intern, whether I’m helping visitors get a better view from a summit or watching birds in my spare time, I always keep my binoculars within arm’s reach.”

**SUSAN WINTERS**  
*Wilderness Monitor*

“I like this hat because apparently it looks good! I get so many compliments. But also, because it’s really warm and hides my dirty, sweaty hair. It’s the only piece of gear I haven’t changed out since I started working for the GMC in 2013. It’s been with me for all my adventures as an intern, caretaker, and now wilderness monitor. I even took it on my LT thru-hike in 2016, and wore it every night on the trail.”



**JORDAN ROWELL**  
*Volunteer Long Trail Patrol Coordinator*

“My little tea pot is not only short and stout, but a very light and important resource when I’m in the backcountry. As a vessel for heating water—for cooking, purifying, or coffee—I never hit the trail without it.”



# Restoring the Crosscut Saw



## A VANISHING ART

Before chainsaws were invented, loggers depended on efficient and durable crosscut saws. While today's crosscut saws are made using mostly cheap steel, earlier saws were of high-carbon spring steel, tough and wear resistant. Since these saws were destined for logging camps where temperatures, wood species, and sawyer preferences varied, factories stamped out only the basic saw shapes leaving the final sharpening to skilled filers.

Following in the footsteps of the old filers, Killington Section volunteer trail maintainer Larry Walter restores vintage crosscut saws, a vanishing art he wants to keep alive.

A retired Green Mountain National Forest land surveyor, Larry has fifteen years' experience using crosscut saws, including "some attempts with really dull, poorly tuned ones." Over the years he noticed several nice saws hanging around Forest Service out buildings. Recognizing the importance of proper restoration,

Larry sought the expertise of master crosscut sawyer Warren Miller of Peck, Idaho. According to Larry, Warren had "filed a couple thousand saws and authored the U.S. Forest Service *Crosscut Saw Manual*," so was the perfect person to demonstrate the intricacies of tuning saws.

Loggers have used crosscut saws for centuries, either one-man (also called D-handle) or two-man versions, for both felling and bucking trees. Europeans used them as early as the mid-fifteenth century to buck axe-felled trees into log lengths. Their use in the United States is traced to 1635.

Bucking saws, used on downed trees, are generally heavier and stiffer, with a straight edge opposite the cutting side. Felling saws, used on standing trees, have the same outward curve on the cutting edge, but their back sides curve roughly parallel to the toothed side. They are generally thinner, more flexible, and lighter. Their narrow profile makes it easier to insert wedges in the saw cut (the kerf) so

it won't pinch the saw.

You may have only seen these medieval-looking saws during a logging demonstration at a county fair, but they are still used in federally designated wilderness areas, where power tools are prohibited. Vintage crosscut saws are especially valued in wilderness areas in the West and Alaska, because the long saws needed for really large trees are so flexible they can be bent over gear packs for transport by pack animals or aircraft to the job site, where they spring straight again for cutting.

The Long Trail crosses six designated wilderness areas, all located south of Bread Loaf. Larry and other Killington Section trail maintainers use restored crosscut saws almost exclusively (even outside wilderness areas) to fell and buck trees. "They're quiet, fast, light, and easy to use if properly filed. Plus, they're just a lot of fun," said Larry.

A seasoned sawyer can easily identify common early crosscut saw tooth patterns: Plain Tooth, M Tooth, Great American



Bucking a tree using two-man crosscut saw. Photo by Chuck Helfer.

Tooth, Champion Tooth, Lance Tooth, and Perforated Lance Tooth, among others.

The Plain, M, and Great American patterns have cutter teeth that sever wood fibers and clear shavings from the kerf. The Champion, Lance, and Perforated Lance are more complex; they include cutter teeth but also rakers designed to clear the wood the cutters have severed.

Crosscut saws are finicky, and will not perform well unless the cutter teeth and rakers are properly shaped and sharpened. This is no quick or easy task, requiring between six and thirty-two hours of work using an assortment of costly vintage tools.

Last year Larry trained GMC field staff members to properly restore Green Mountain Club crosscut saws. “This is not a common skill, so the more young people I can train, the better,” said Larry.

Daley Matthews-Pennanen participated in Larry’s training. She said the precision demanded in sharpening was the most difficult part. “We’re talking about thousandths of an inch here. And if you’re off by just a few thousandths, the saw isn’t going to cut well or efficiently.”

Daley described one of many meticulous steps, swaging the rakers: “You’re bending the rakers over themselves to drop their height down below the height of the [cutter] teeth. This is done by placing a metal rod along the sloping inside curve of the raker, and hitting that rod with a small sledge,” said Daley. “You want to proceed in this step cautiously, as once you’ve dropped a raker too low, it’s essentially useless in sweeping out loose wood shavings. So you swage on a single raker once, twice, ten times, always checking how far it’s dropped. Once you get the right height on the raker—we were measuring at nine thousandths of an inch below the teeth, I believe—you move on to the next one. There are about five dozen on a saw, so it’ll be a few hours spent on this step alone.”

The tedious work pays off. Larry and his trainees tested the restored saws in the woods. “We pulled strings, or “noodles,” of wood shavings that were several inches long—a good indicator of a well-sharpened saw—and our saws sung as beautifully as anything you could imagine,” said Daley.

“It’s really rewarding to watch noodles fly out of a kerf after you’ve worked on a saw for twenty-four hours,” added Larry.

As a caretaker and handler of vintage saws, Larry created a set of helpful guidelines for antique dealers to distinguish between saws that still have value from those that should be retired. If a decorative piece is what you’re looking for, Larry recommends a saw “beyond restorative feasibility—deeply pitted and/or filed into oblivion.” He’s confident it will look just as good on display.

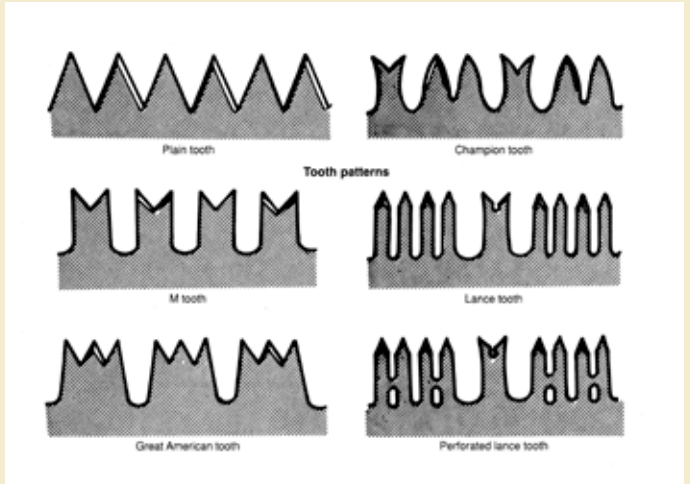
And, he says, “You’ll be helping preserve the dwindling supply of tool stock that’s still out there.” He encourages antique dealers to try to leave these valuable saws (and axes) in our modern workplace. “Once they’re gone, there won’t be another production run to take the place of the sharp and efficient stuff that’s still out there.”

—JOCELYN HEBERT  
LONG TRAIL NEWS EDITOR



Larry Walter

PHOTO BY DAVID STINSON



Dave Hardy using the one-man crosscut

PHOTO BY LARRY WALTER



Field Staff Training with Bill Garrison from the US Forest Service

# A New Generation of Crosscut Sawyers



Isaac Alexandre-Leach



Jake Chinitz



Daley Matthews-Pennanen

## You Can't Unfile a Saw

The most difficult part of filing the saws was, for me, shaping the teeth. This is done with an awfully large file. Because quality crosscut saws are no longer produced, any saw you are restoring is an antique. Knowing this, shaping the teeth is quite an emotional ride, because there is so little room for error. You cannot unfile a saw. As an amateur filer you vacillate between thinking, “I’m really getting this! I am a MASTER restorer! Bringer of sharp points and even bevels!” and “This gorgeous antique will never recover from what I have now done. I’m sorry, Larry. I’m sorry, saw.”

Jake, Daley, and I are all very interested in continuing to learn this peculiar skill. Through scavenging the GMC’s supplies, a little eBay searching, and great generosity from Larry and crosscut training co-instructor Dave Stinson of New Hampshire, we have some of the necessary tools. However, to be able to fully restore saws on our own and pass this knowledge to future staff, there are a handful of rather expensive tools that we would need to acquire, either through a grant or further donation. The GMC has several high-quality saws that need sharpening and would be a great asset to the field staff.

—ISAAC ALEXANDRE-LEACH, CAMEL’S HUMP LEAD CARETAKER

## Crosscut Saw Before Chainsaw

I find chainsaws complicated, intimidating, and dangerous and prefer using crosscut saws. Of course, using either one improperly is dangerous, but a crosscut saw may allow you to sense a warning as wood shifts and creaks, or starts to tighten a kerf. Whatever happens, usually happens more slowly.

My first experience using a crosscut was when I was GMC’s ridgerunner in 2014, and a microburst knocked over about nine good-sized trees north of Churchill Scott Shelter. Larry Walter and a few volunteers from the Killington Section went out with a collection of Larry’s saws. I helped Larry buck each tree using five- and six-foot-long two-man saws and couldn’t believe how efficient we were. I immediately fell in love with the saws, and made sure to get a spot in a crosscut certification class that fall.

The kit you take into the woods with a crosscut saw is much lighter than the one required for chainsaw work (you don’t need to carry and use fuel) and, unless it’s a D-handle meant for one person, the saws require two people using good communication and collaboration.

Crosscut saws will last a very long time if they’re well maintained. The GMC has a great collection and it would be a shame for them to fall into disrepair because the knowledge and skill required to upkeep them was lost with time.

Part of what I love so much about conservation work is getting out in the woods with a group of people and working to improve something we all share. I hope to continue working with Larry, either at his shop, or at the club, to build upon the knowledge I have.

—JAKE CHINITZ, NORTHERN FIELD ASSISTANT



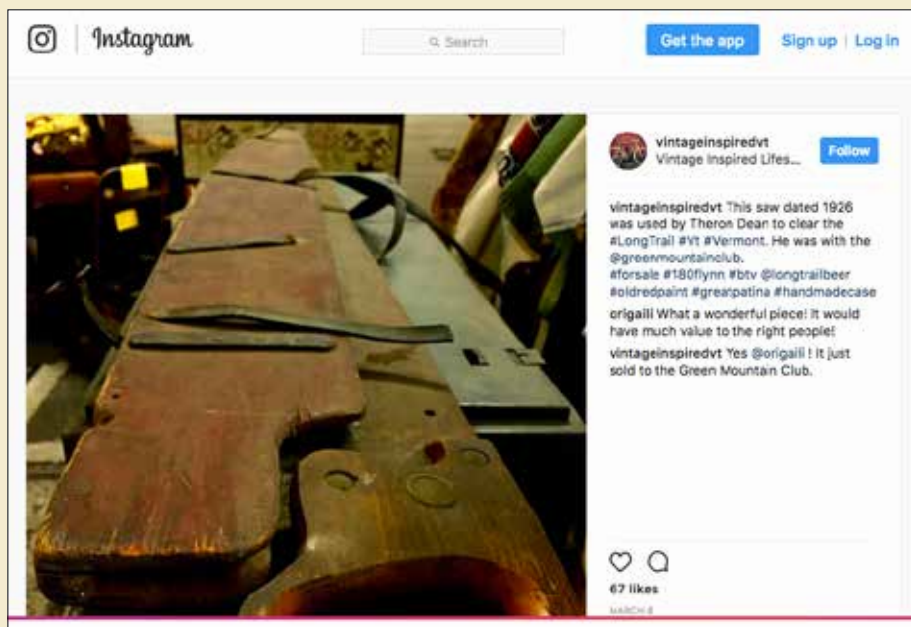
# Trail Pioneer Theron S. Dean's VINTAGE CROSSCUT SAW

**T**heron S. Dean, an early GMC trail maintainer, was chairman of the Trails and Shelter Committee in 1917. He is also remembered for his early-1900s lantern slides capturing the essence of the new Long Trail.

Last March a Burlington antique store tagged the Green Mountain Club on an Instagram photo of a vintage crosscut saw and handmade wooden case. Carved into the wood of the case was a date and name: *Sat July 24-26, Theron S. Dean, Burlington.*

GMC Executive Director Mike DeBonis, a history enthusiast and trained forester, was excited by the realization that this saw had been used on the Long Trail by the pioneer trail builder. *We need to get that saw.* Mike got on the phone to learn more. Seventy-five dollars later (reflecting a good discount provided to the GMC), it was his.

The antique store owner didn't usually buy saws, but had been struck by the red-painted, hand-crafted saw guard. When she saw Theron Dean's name on it she thought it was important to save the saw. GMC President John Page remembers an auction



at the Dean residence in Burlington, and he suspects the saw was sold at that time.

Mike gladly donated the well-cared-for crosscut to the club. "The saw has likely been in a barn collecting dust for years, and is in good enough shape that it could do

trail work today," Mike said.

But instead, this one will be on display in the GMC Visitor Center in Waterbury Center. Our apologies Larry.

—JOCELYN HEBERT,  
LONG TRAIL NEWS EDITOR

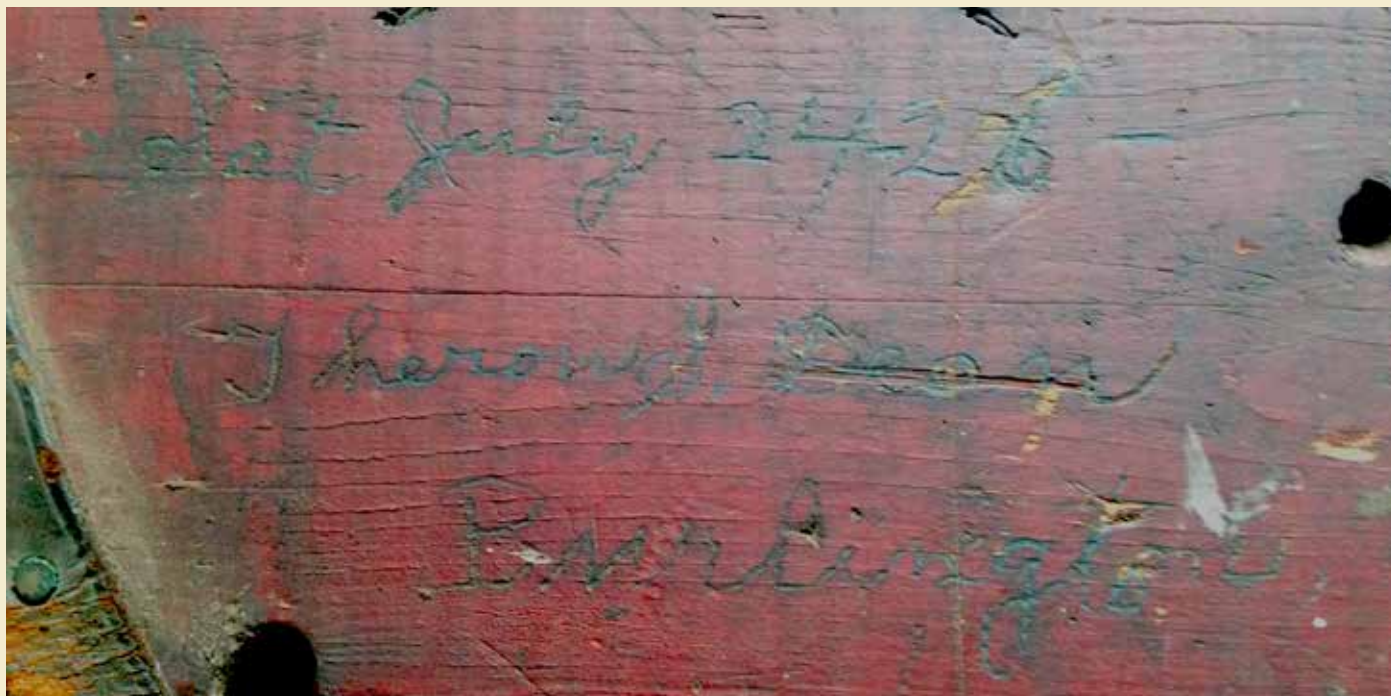




PHOTO BY LINDEN KLEIN

# Music in the Mountains

What is it about music and the mountains? They seem to go hand in hand. Is it the simple entertainment that requires little or no extra gear? Or the easy joy of combining song and trail?

On my 2013 Appalachian Trail thru-hike I set out carrying a backpacking mandolin, thinking I'd find musical inspiration in nature. I never seemed to find time to play it, though. I was too busy walking, eating, or sleeping. But I did have time to sing. I could do that while I hiked. And, that's how I got my trail name, Siren.

The Appalachian Mountains were the perfect setting for the songs I loved—old English, Scottish, and Irish ballads. Those old songs have a rich history in Appalachia since many of its earliest European immigrants came from the British Isles. Due to the region's isolation the songs kept their original forms as they were passed down through the years, while outside influences continually changed them in Britain. When British folksong collector Cecil Sharp learned of these purer versions in the early twentieth century, he traveled the Appalachians collecting them, and created several publications folk singers still use today.

I knew of Sharp and of many of the songs he collected through singers like Sheila Kay Adams, Jean Ritchie, and Elizabeth LaPrelle. Imagine my surprise when I hiked into Hot Springs, North Carolina, to stay at the famed Elmer's Sunnybank Inn, and learned it was the former home of Jane Gentry, who had given about seventy songs to Sharp. Elmer even

keeps a music room, and I was able to read through many songbooks, finding that one of my favorites had also been Gentry's.

Most of the old songs, and the ones I favor, are ballads—story songs. They provide entertainment, often teach a lesson, and are easily passed down. They celebrate journeys through life, love, and new lands. What better music to accompany my own journey from Georgia to Maine? The farther I hiked, the more interested I became in the songs and their history, downloading new ones on my phone to learn along the way.

Sometimes I sang for others, with occasional requests for a "bedtime story," but I mostly sang for myself. Music during hiking can provide cadence for walking, give your weary mind something to explore, and add to the communion with nature. There's nothing quite like casting your song out into the ether at the summit of a mountain, or finding a cave with great resonance to harmonize with. Although many of the songs are sad, singing them still provided joy.

I know I'm not alone in my love of the nature-music combination. Playing or singing around a campfire is common, and many of my friends carried small instruments on their thru-hikes: ukuleles, flutes, harmonicas, backpacking guitars, even a full-sized mandolin. Some wrote songs inspired by their travels, and all of them relished any opportunity to make music with others.

In California I once passed a professional

cello player carrying his instrument up to Muir Pass at 11,955 feet. I was already ten miles down from the pass, so turning around to follow him would've meant an extra day out. Unfortunately I didn't have enough food to get me through, so I had to hike on. I learned later that a friend behind me had arrived at the pass as he was starting to play, and it was just as magical an experience as I'd envisioned.

On the same trail another friend got to experience a short musical performance in the snow at the crest of Forester Pass at 13,153 feet. The stories go on, from live music in the Cascades in Washington, to impromptu concerts in the Grand Canyon's Redwall Cavern and Blacktail Canyon—narrow spaces with fantastic acoustics. Such experiences lodge in people's memories for a reason—the joy that music and a natural setting provide.

Now that my journey has brought me to the Green Mountain Club, I've been enjoying occasional forays into the history of music here. Music appears to have played a significant role, with many songs and poems printed in the *Long Trail News* through the years, and even the publication of GMC songbooks. The lyrics celebrate hiking journeys, the builders of the Long Trail, and camaraderie among fellow GMC members. They romanticize life a bit more than traditional ballads do, but I enjoy them just as much. Are we not all "wayfaring strangers" when we travel the trail?

—KRISTIN McLANE ("SIREN")  
MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

## GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB WALKING SONG

WRITTEN BY RICHARD W. SAUNDERS

*Air: "I went to the Animal Fair."*

I joined the Green Mountain Club;  
I felt like a regular dub;  
The first four miles were only smiles  
And then there came the rub.  
My prayer for a rest was balked;  
No matter how hard I talked,  
They would not rest at my request,  
But only walked and walked.

(Refrain in monotone)  
And walked and walked and walked and walked  
And walked and walked and walked.

Oh, but my feet were sore,  
And some of my clothes I tore;  
The mud was deep, the hills were steep,  
And fences we climbed galore;  
As onward the leader stalked  
My prayer for a rest was balked;  
They left me dead as on they sped,  
And walked and walked and walked.

(Refrain in monotone)  
And walked and walked and walked and walked  
And walked and walked and walked.

## PRETTY SARO

A TRADITIONAL TUNE, AS SUNG BY ELIZABETH LAPRELLE.

When I first come to this country in eighteen and forty-nine,  
Well, I saw many fair lovers, but I never saw mine.  
I view'd all around me, saw I was quite alone,  
And me a poor stranger and a long way from home.

Well, it's not this long journey I'm a dreading for to go.  
Nor the country I'm a leavin', or the debts that I owe.  
There's only one thing that troubles my mind.  
That's leavin' my darling, Pretty Saro, behind.

Fare thee well to old mother. Fare thee well to father too.  
I'm leaving for to ramble this wide world all through.  
And when I get weary, I'll sit down and cry,  
And think of my darling, Pretty Saro, my bride.

My love she won't have me so I understand.  
She wants a freeholder and I have no land,  
But I could maintain her on silver and gold,  
And buy all the other fine things that a big house could hold.

I wish't I was a poet, and could write some fine hand.  
I would write my love a letter that she might understand.  
And I'd send it by the waters where the islands overflow,  
And I'll dream of Pretty Saro wherever I go.

Well I strove through the mountains, and I strove through the main.  
And I strove to forget her, but it was all in vain.  
On the banks of Old Chloe, to the mount of Said Brow  
Where I once loved her dearly, and I don't hate her now.

Down in some lonesome valley in a lonesome place,  
Where the small birds does whistle, and their notes do increase,  
My love she is handsome, both proper and neat.  
I can't think of no better pastime than to be with my sweet.

If I were a turtle dove, had wings and could fly,  
Right now to my lover's lodging tonight I'd draw nigh.  
And in her lily-white arms I would lie there all night.  
And I'd watch the little winders for the dawning of day.



PHOTO BY BERTHOLOMEW SINGER



PHOTO BY GINNY O'BRIEN

# MUSICIANS on the Long Trail





# Wool Knickers and White Blazes

## A 1917 Inspired End-to-End Long Trail Hike

BY MIKE DEBONIS



Okay, admit it. At some point, you've wondered what it was like to hike the Long Trail back in the early days. You know, wearing wool knickers, carrying a pack basket, and drinking water straight from streams. Maybe the date on a historic shelter triggered your thought. Or a hand-colored glass slide of cheery hikers in wool clothing, or curiosity about what backpackers did before Therm-a-Rests.

I'll admit it. I've thought about it a lot. For me, the trigger was the *Long Trail Guide*.

As a kid growing up in Vermont I was fascinated by the idea of carrying everything you need on your back and walking someplace new every day. I can remember poring over the 1971 guidebook, imagining what it would be like to hike the whole trail. When I finally got my chance in 1996, the experience was better than I had imagined.

My passion for the Long Trail grew to include a hobby of collecting Long Trail guidebooks. What I love about the old ones are the hand-drawn pull-out maps, vivid trail descriptions, and gear and food recommendations, like these from the 1917 and 1920 guides:

*For food, bread and bacon will keep you going with little weight.*

*The camp equipage carried is a matter of personal experience and desire, but a good rule is to wear woolen underwear. . .*

*A tent is not necessary on most of the trail; it may be needed in the southerly part if the hiker desires to sleep out, in which case a very light, small tent of balloon silk is advised.*

*No person should ever travel the Long Trail without axe, compass, and matches.*

The idea to do a retro hike began to form in earnest as the club started to plan the one-hundredth anniversary (twenty-eighth) edition of the *Long Trail Guide*. I read the 1917 edition to learn how to best reenact the early trail experience. Since the trail ended at Johnson in 1917, I figured if I hustled, I could make the 230 miles from the Massachusetts line in the two weeks I had off from work.

I considered key factors that would make my modern-day hike as similar to a 1917 hike as possible, and decided I would follow the 1917 and 1920 guidebooks' advice on gear, clothing, and food.

A photo that hangs in the GMC Visitor Center of a hiker in period clothing carrying a pack basket inspired me to carry one

too. While researching where to buy one, I learned how they were made, and decided I could make my own.

Two things are needed to make an authentic pack basket: a brown ash log and a good hammer. Brown ash is unique in that the wood separates into strips (or splints) at the annual growth rings when pounded. A forester friend told me that a logger up north had cut some brown ash, and suggested I might be able to buy one of the logs.

You want to make sure you find a good "pounder"—one with thick enough growth rings to provide strong splints, but not so thick that they are too hard to pound out. I bought a good one, and it still took me all summer to pound out enough splints. I had to shave and cut each strip to size, depending upon whether it was a vertical support or a weaver. I rolled the splints together for storage, and then soaked them in water to soften before I began weaving. I wove the basket over the winter of 2016, and took it out on its first trial hike that spring.

I made the bottom runners from old Long Trail Patrol tool handles, fashioned a canvas lid to keep the rain out, and equipped the basket with leather straps. The 1920 *Long Trail Guide* recommends leather straps over canvas ones because

canvas tends to curl and cut into your shoulders. For the record, leather straps curl and cut into your shoulders, too, but not as badly as canvas straps.

**DAY 1.** *It's about 12:00 p.m. and I just finished climbing up Pine Cobble. I am not even on the Long Trail yet. Heck, I am not even out of Massachusetts and I'm soaked clean through my wool clothing and leather hat. I took off my wool shirt and wrapped it around the pack straps for some extra padding.*

The 1920 guidebook recommends a tent or tarp made from balloon silk. The best I could make out is that balloon silk is not really silk, but waterproof cotton, similar to a high thread count cotton sheet. I got a sheet from a thrift store and looked to the internet to figure out how to waterproof it. I found one recipe for a linseed oil coating that looked promising. After several attempts, I couldn't get the sheet to shed water properly, so I modified the recipe by adding silicone. That seemed to help. It wasn't period correct, but it worked better than linseed oil. Silicone also won't spontaneously combust in your pack (as folded cloth soaked in linseed oil is apt to do). Was the tarp waterproof? No. But it would shed water.

**DAY 3.** *Heading to the Winhall River for the night. About a mile past Stratton Pond, I got caught in a summer thunderstorm. I put on my poncho and hunkered down on top of my basket like a mother hen over an egg trying to keep it dry. The rain left the trail and campsite filled with water. I decided to push on to William Douglas Shelter and was thankful for a roof over my head and a place to dry out my gear.*

One of my biggest concerns was having to sleep directly on the ground. In the old days, lodges had bunks covered with bough beds cut from conifer trees, but cutting vegetation today would not be very Leave No Trace friendly. The 1920 guidebook recommends carrying a pillowcase and filling it with leaves for added comfort. It was probably user error, but I was never able to get a bed of leaves to be "comfortable." Sleeping became a moving target. On the plus side, I got early morning starts (birds begin to sing at 4:17 a.m. in mid-June, and it's light enough to see the trail a little after 5:00).



My food was not much different than what folks carry today: cheese, trail mix, meat, bread. The biggest difference was the packaging. I carried food in waterproof cloth bags, packed blocks of wax-coated cheddar cheese, and repackaged all other food using wax paper, paper bags, or foil. I carried cans of salmon and anchovies, and tried to eat all canned foods during the first day of a resupply. I generated very little waste, and packed out all my trash in paper bags (after a couple of days on the trail, empty fish cans would stink to high heaven, and I wished I had a plastic bag). I was lucky to have great support, and could arrange food resupplies at road crossings. In 1917 hikers walked to local farms listed in the guidebook, and for small sums could get hot meals, a bed for the night, and staples such as meat, bread, and eggs.

**DAY 6.** *It's pouring rain and I'm stopped at Governor Clement Shelter for breakfast. Anchovies, bread, and cheese with a chaser of nuts and chocolate. I like soaking up the leftover salty olive oil at the bottom of the anchovy can with bread. I know that I'm lingering too long over breakfast delaying the wet climb up Killington.*

Since the pack basket had limited volume and heavy loads were uncomfortable, I decided to carry less food and use more frequent food drops. Despite my best efforts, I found it difficult to carry and eat enough food for the necessary calories. Lack of a big cooked meal at night was the biggest difference, and if I were to do it again, I would build in more time to prepare proper evening meals. In 1917 most shelters were equipped with cookware, and meals were prepared on wood stoves or open fires. Because shelters no longer have wood stoves and wood fires are not permitted at many overnight sites today, I carried an Esbit alcohol stove. The stove was good at boiling water, but it was not as successful at slow-cooking foods like rice and oats. So I gave up my alcohol stove early on, and relied mostly on dry food.

**DAY 9.** *Massive rainstorm tonight. At Skyline Lodge and very happy to be out of the rain. Sleeping on the bare wood of the shelter, but I don't mind. The first time I visited Skyline was in the winter of 1988 during high school. I remember hiking up the Skylight Pond Trail in running shoes wearing the equivalent of plastic bread bags over my socks. No, it is not lost on me that my gear has actually regressed from what I used on that hike so many years ago.*



Much of the trail has changed since 1917, especially down south, but north of Route 4 it largely follows the original footpath. I chose to depart from the current Long Trail to follow the original route in two places: the Sherburne Pass Trail from Pico to today's Maine Junction north of Route 4; and a special pre-arranged ferry crossing of the Winooski River in Bolton. I gladly paid the twenty-five-cent fare, just as in 1917. Unfortunately, only a couple of the lodges that sheltered hikers in the early days remain: the Lake Mansfield Trout Club in Nebraska Valley, and Barnes Camp

at the base of Smugglers' Notch. Both were popular stops along the trail.

The privately owned Lake Mansfield Trout Club is still in business, but no longer hosts hikers. In support of my hike, however, the Trout Club managers generously offered me room and board.

**DAY 12.** *After a ferry ride across the Winooski River and a hike up over Bolton Mountain, I made it to the Trout Club by 4:15 and checked in to my room. Dinner is served at 6:00 and I had enough time to get cleaned up and make my hiking clothes presentable. There is some benefit to hiking in pleated knickers and a button-down collar shirt. The highlight was a dinner of rack of lamb, mixed vegetables, baked potatoes, and a fruit cobbler desert. Seconds? Yes please, I'll have seconds.*

It was an interesting contrast to hike with gear you can pick up at a thrift store or make in the back yard. I concluded that, yes, you absolutely *can* hike using vintage or homemade gear. *But you don't have to.* Modern gear and clothing are amazing and make hiking so much more safe and enjoyable.

While the trail has changed over the past hundred years, I like to think that the trail experience hasn't all that much. I was filthy, and didn't care. I marveled at how good the water tasted. I looked forward to a breakfast of anchovies, cheese, and nuts (because everything tastes good on the

trail). I got up with the birds, hiked as far as my feet would take me, and went to bed when the sun set. And each day, I was struck by the inexplicable beauty of my surroundings.

I don't begin to claim I had a pure 1917 hiking experience, or could hold a candle to those early pioneers, but hope that by understanding what the trail was like for those that had the will to build it, I will be better equipped to help care for and protect it.





Handmade pack basket



Hand-forged knife



## Food (continued)

- Cashews, almonds, raisins
- Rice
- Hardboiled eggs
- Coke – glass bottle
- Guinness – glass bottle
- Sugar
- Salt
- Pepper

## Clothing

- Wool knickers
- Knee length wool socks
- Sock liners
- Wool under garments
- Leather hat
- Rubberized poncho
- Wool hat
- Wool long sleeve shirt
- Wool sweater
- Leather hiking boots
- Wool long underwear (bottom and top)
- Two bandannas
- Leather belt

## Equipment

- Hand woven ash pack basket
- Wool blanket
- Homemade waterproofed cotton tarp
- Waterproof cotton ground cloth
- Hand-forged camp knife in leather belt sheath
- Two-liter metal canteen and one-liter metal canteen
- Bug net
- Alcohol stove, alcohol in glass bottle
- Tin cup
- Journal, pencil
- 1917 *Long Trail Guide*
- 2017 *Long Trail Guide*
- Waxed cotton bag for journal and guidebooks
- Waxed cotton bag for food
- Matches, dental floss, and water purification tablets in a metal box. I used birch and beech twigs as natural tooth brushes (don't tell my dentist).
- Twine to hang food bag and set up tarp
- Candle
- Toilet paper

## Food

- Bread
- Cheddar cheese
- Cured meat: pepperoni, bacon, summer sausage, jerky
- Canned fish: salmon, anchovies
- Hershey's chocolate bars

## Concessions

- Modern watch and compass
- Cell phone (used as well as carried)
- Modern bug net for sleeping
- Light waterproof ground cloth (not canvas)
- Water purification chemicals





The field staff locked Director of Trail Programs Dave Hardy and Field Supervisor Ilana Copel in bear boxes and hijacked Field Notes to catch you up on what's been happening this summer.

## KURT MELIN

### Construction Crew Foreman

The construction crew has plenty to do! Crew veteran **Justin Towers**, volunteer extraordinaire **Bill Good**, newcomers **Alex Dugas** and **Jesse Vining**, and yours truly are deep into the restoration of Bolton Lodge, preparing for work on Butler Lodge and Bryant Camp, and doing small jobs around the state. We've already worked as far south as Seth Warner Shelter and as far north as the Northeast Kingdom.

The restoration of historic Bolton Lodge will take up the lion's share of our time this year. Built in 1928, it is the second oldest Long Trail shelter, though the trail now bypasses it. The lodge resembles an old English cottage, with fieldstone lower walls, upper walls of stucco, and a

hipped roof. So far, we repaired the crumbling stone wall, installed a new floor and foundation, and repaired the original bunk beds. Adhering to historic preservation guidelines means a new roof with shaped shingles approximating the original, original paint color on doors and windows, and bunks and tables like those used in 1928.

Butler Lodge will take another large chunk of our season. As at Taft Lodge last year, a helicopter will airlift material to Mount Mansfield. The crew will put on a new roof and porch, and replace rotted log courses. It's a lot of work but we're having a great time doing it.

## JAKE CHINITZ

### Northern Field Assistant

This season eleven caretakers are working on the Long Trail north of U.S. Route 4, including **Adam Joseph** and **Isaac Alexandre-Leach** as lead caretakers on Mount Mansfield and Camel's Hump respectively. The caretakers packed in on June 28 after a little over a week of training and orientation. Training week included presentations from agency partners including the **Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife**, the **Vermont Department of Public Safety**, and the **U.S. Forest Service**. Even former field staffer **Mariah Keagey**

stopped by to demonstrate proper tool use, maintenance, and ergonomics.

We were fortunate to have Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife Botanist **Bob Pop** meet us on the Mount Mansfield ridgeline to lead the annual alpine walk and teach about the fragile high-elevation alpine vegetation.

Caretaker reports so far indicate many maintenance needs, including clearing blowdowns and drainage and replacing signs. The summits have been busy and we've tracked hundreds of hikers every weekend on the high peaks (Camel's Hump, Mount Mansfield, and Mount Abraham). And, of course, our privies look great as caretakers clean and maintain them regularly. Please remember: at a batch bin composting privy, pee in the woods not the privy! But moldering composting privies need moisture. Signs will tell you which is which.

## Isaac Alexandre-Leach

### Camel's Hump Lead Caretaker

We got off to a beautiful but soggy start on Camel's Hump. Our goal was a season of happy cohabitation by the mountain's visitors (day hikers, thru-hikers, caretakers) and its permanent residents (hares, deer, birds, mice...).

Ever since GMC's staff dealt with serious black bear problems on Camel's Hump two summers ago we have concentrated on keeping the relationship between campers and bears peaceful. Happily, efforts to minimize food scraps, odors or other temptations have kept bears out of our camps—*most* of the time. Spring shelter inspections revealed evidence of bear activity around the composting outhouses at Montclair Glen and Bamforth Ridge shelters. At both sites, a bear had pawed through composted material that was drying prior to dispersal, and at Bamforth Ridge a bear had removed and inspected the catcher tub beneath the toilet (yum!). This is a vivid reminder to all of us that something doesn't have to smell good to interest a bear. It just has to *smell*.

*(When you see a bear box installed near a shelter, please use it to store food and other aromatic items such as toothpaste, soap, shampoo, hand sanitizer, moist wipes, and other toiletries.)*



Construction crew at Bolton Lodge



**2017 FIELD STAFF:** **Back row L to R:** Justin Towers, Jake Chinitz, Isaac Alexandre-Leach, Darcy Anderson, Chris Gaye, Mary Beth Herbert, Susan Winters, Ava Raku, Daley Matthews-Pennanen, Jesse Vining, Emily Ulman, Isaac Bernstein, Robin Roianov, Alli Summerly, Ben Cowan, Julie Higgins  
**Front row L to R:** Volunteer Bill Good, Kurt Melin, Jordan Rowell, Kelly Missett, Lorne Currier, Matt Amenta, Elinor Israel, Crystal Stroud, Alex Dugas, Kevin Tolan, Laura Xiao, Sam Kenney, Leo Saraceno, Clara Kuhn, Marla Davidson, Ilana Copel, Ben Kunesh, Director of Trail Programs Dave Hardy  
**Missing:** Adam Joseph, Sean Pease, Jonah Roscoe

## ADAM JOSEPH *Mount Mansfield Lead Caretaker*

Having been the Taft Lodge caretaker on Mount Mansfield two years ago, it is wonderful to be back where I feel I belong. What's more, I couldn't ask for better company. Field staff members on the mountain this year are all eager to tackle the big tasks at hand: the management of high use on Vermont's most popular mountain, and interaction with thousands of hikers, teaching them about the high-elevation plants and landscape.

When I last called Mansfield home, there was a rally cry for ideas about ways we could improve the visitor center at the top of the toll road. Now at the mountain's helm, I promised myself big things! This spring I started making a replica of artist Dave Blumenthal's 3- by 5-foot 3-D relief map of Vermont (located at the GMC Visitor Center), showing the elevation of the mountains and highlighting the Long Trail. I hope to have it ready for display in the Mount Mansfield Visitor Center this fall.

Other improvements to the visitor center include more comprehensive and engaging posters and a temporary wall closing off the unused parts of the build-

ing, creating a warmer and more aesthetically pleasing atmosphere for visitors. Come check it out! In September the facelift will really start to take shape.

## BEN COWAN *Southern Field Assistant*

The Long Trail south of U.S. Route 4 has caretakers and a ridge runner staffing Stratton Pond, Griffith Lake, Little Rock Pond, and the Coolidge Range. Since packing in to their sites at the end of June they have been hard at work maintaining privies, shelters and trails, and educating hikers on bear safety and Leave No Trace principles.

The Volunteer Long Trail Patrol has been relocating part of the Branch Pond Trail, and replacing a good stretch of decayed and broken puncheon. We also plan to replace puncheon on the Stratton Ridge spur trail and at Stamford Meadows. The Long Trail Patrol will work to finish a new trail linking the Long Trail to East Dorset.

Bear incidents at Story Spring and Kid Gore shelters early this summer showed a need for bear boxes. The Mountain Goat in Manchester generously funded three at each shelter.

We would like to give a big thanks to long-time volunteer **Jim Sullivan** for donating his time, knowledge, and expertise to the southern crew. His assistance really makes our jobs easier.



Chris Gaye carrying bear boxes



## SEAN PEASE

### Long Trail Patrol Leader

The season has been rife with rain, black flies, mud, and plenty of trail work. Two weeks on the Camel's Hump Monroe Trail allowed the Long Trail Patrol to improve drainage and lay rockwork to keep hikers on the trail and out of the mud. The trail sees heavy day hiker traffic which, in such a wet year, has caused an ever-widening trail as people try to avoid mud, eroding the edges and trampling vegetation. It was our pleasure to share the Hump Brook Tent site with the Camel's Hump caretakers, who are doing an excellent job on the mountain this season.

The Patrol finished three weeks on Mount Mansfield's Frost Trail. The upper section benefited from milled and treated pine lumber, and black locust timber harvested in Shelburne Valley by **Ken Brown** of the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and GMC Field Supervisor **Ilana Copel**. A helicopter drop near the ridge last season enabled the crew to build two staircases and a ladder in areas where erosion threatened alpine vegetation. The vegetation and views from this section of trail are stunning, so the time

and effort coordinating this project will surely pay off.

We thank GMC Construction Crew Foreman **Kurt Melin** and the Mount Mansfield caretakers for their warm

welcome and knowledgeable presence on the trail, and everyone else who helped us.

Next, we'll head south to finish the East Dorset Trail, connecting it to the Long Trail.



Isaac Bernstein hand skidding log



Clara Kuhn crushing rock for fill



Isaac Bernstein (f) and Sean Pease (r) building ladder

## JORDAN ROWELL

### *Volunteer Long Trail Patrol Coordinator*

On June 29 our first round of volunteers, from as far away as Italy and China, joined us for another epic season of the Volunteer Long Trail Patrol (VLTP). After a night of orientation and a home-cooked meal at the U.S. Forest Service Mount Tabor Work Center in Danby, known as “The Tabe,” the crew headed into the Green Mountain National Forest the next morning for a four-night hitch.

We battled heavy packs and heavier rains as we made our way to Bourne Pond. The beautiful view at the pond made the three-mile hike worth it. The next day the crew started a half-mile reroute of the Branch Pond Trail north of Bourne Pond to avoid excessively wet ground.

In three days VLTP Crew Leader **Mary Beth Herbert** and Field Intern **Laura Xiao** taught the basics of trail work: tool safety, corridor clearing, building durable tread, and more. Mary Beth and Laura helped cook delicious meals and made the crew feel at home in the Lye Brook Wilderness.

After the Bourne Pond reroute the VLTP will replace puncheon at the south end of the Branch Pond Trail. We look forward to meeting more amazing people who chose to donate a week of their time working with us to maintain Long Trail.



VLTP members carrying boards for puncheon

## SUSAN WINTERS and DALEY MATTHEWS-PENNANEN

### *Wilderness Monitors*

“Sooo...what do you guys actually do?”

This is the question we’ve been working to answer since we arrived as wilderness monitors in May. But it’s a fair question, and one we have been slowly figuring out the answer to. The U.S. Forest Service introduced wilderness monitors to the GMC in 2016, creating an exciting opportunity for the organizations to work together. The program is new territory for both, so we’re doing our best to refine it.

The Forest Service manages eight designated wildernesses in the Green Mountain National Forest, which are a lot of territory for a small staff to look after. The Long Trail passes through six of the wildernesses, and GMC caretakers and trail crews work on the Trail and all its side

trails. This creates a common interest in effectively fostering a wider appreciation for Vermont wilderness areas. Enter the wilderness monitors!

This season we are documenting and pulling non-native invasive plants from trailheads in Lye Brook, Big Branch, and Bristol Cliffs Wildernesses. We use ArcMap software and Garmin GPS devices to document the plants we find and pull, which will help future monitoring of these sites.

We check and maintain wilderness privies, because properly managing waste is one of the most important things GMC can do to provide enjoyable experiences for hikers and protect sensitive land and water resources.

We record how many people and dogs we see to learn what populations use Vermont’s wilderness areas. And we have the pleasure of discussing Leave No Trace

principles with those we meet.

We also visit shelters and tenting sites, both official and unofficial, and record how they are weathering the ever-increasing number of hikers using them.

We clear water drainages, clip and blaze trails, and clear blowdowns with folding saws, axes, and a crosscut saw.

Lastly, we keep our eyes open for items and structures that don’t belong in the wilderness. We plan to pack out an old privy composting bin and a makeshift shelter, and we ceaselessly dismantle unauthorized fire rings.

We are thrilled to have the unique job of wilderness monitors. The work is rewarding, and we are lucky enough to be able to shape this position so it will be even more effective in the years to come.

We hope to see you on the trail this fall so we can discuss the importance of wilderness and Leave No Trace principles!



# Baseline Documentation Reports

## The Annals of GMC Conserved Lands

**H**iking the Long Trail our eyes are focused, not on roots and rocks complicating our footing, but on the trees as we intensely look for orange. Or blue. Or pink. Any color, other than the greens, browns, and greys of nature. Our mission is to find and document property boundaries, and painted blazes or surveyor's flagging are our guides.

Boundary information is a required part of a Baseline Documentation Report, or BDR. Land trusts across the country develop BDRs to record a property's history and resources, and the BDR becomes the go-to document on a property. GMC's Land Conservation Program develops a BDR for every parcel the GMC protects on the Long Trail corridor.

The club's BDRs provide staff and volunteers with a wealth of information useful for monitoring and learning about GMC-conserved lands. Reports include physical descriptions, legal restrictions, significant resources, and boundary information. BDRs further contain photo documentation and maps depicting the location, topography, and unique features of a parcel.

Drafting a BDR requires researching every available source of information.

The first step is an exhaustive search of the property files at GMC's office. These contain deeds, easements, transcribed phone conversations, email correspondence, management plans, land surveys, and other information. The writer pulls and combines relevant information to form a consistent narrative describing the property's history, including how GMC conserved it.

If missing deeds, easements or other third-party interests create gaps in the legal record, research in the town office can reveal aspects of the land's history, including prior owners and surveys, that might help with unanswered questions.

The next step is visiting the property to document boundaries, corners, trails, encroachments, and unique resources. Staff members take photos and GPS points for photographic references of key features to establish the baseline condition of the land.

In the final step, the writer assembles all the information and answers outstanding questions. My first BDR raised the following legal research questions.

GMC has land surveys for most of its properties, but the one I reported on was a donation to the club, and a single

comprehensive survey did not exist. Did any boundary information about the property or adjoining parcels exist that could help guide the Club's management of the land? To find out, I first turned to the property's deeds, since they often include helpful boundary descriptions. In this case, however, they lacked detailed boundary information, and merely cited prior deeds into apparent perpetuity. I next turned to the town records. I found that neighboring property owners had recorded surveys that collectively stitched together the majority of GMC's property lines. While not as comprehensive as a proper survey, my research provided GMC a complete report of the available survey information, which will inform future management decisions.

Previous Long Trail protection efforts created another outstanding question. A generous friend of the trail donated a conservation easement and trail right-of-way a decade before donating a much larger property in fee to the GMC. The fee land covered the same territory as the previous conservation easement and part of the trail right-of-way, so the question emerged: what happens to those legal restrictions now that GMC owns the land?

I discussed each of these legal considerations with a property law professor. They elicited a shake of the head and the response, "Oh, boy... you really got your fill with this one." Indeed. Interesting research questions for a first-year law student to explore and resolve.

Drafting a BDR is a long, painstaking process. The process was new to me, but it is familiar to GMC's Land Stewardship Coordinator Mollie Flanigan. She and other GMC staff members spend countless hours behind the scenes to protect the Long Trail and its surrounding land. Writing a BDR is just one important step in the much larger effort of continually protecting the trail.

—KYLE SASSER, VERMONT LAW SCHOOL CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP INTERN

### KYLE SASSER: GMC Conservation Stewardship Intern



Each year GMC is fortunate to partner with Vermont Law School to host a conservation stewardship intern to support the club's high priority projects in its land conservation program.

This summer we welcomed North Carolina native Kyle Sasser to the staff. Kyle is pursuing a Juris Doctor Degree with the goal of a career in public lands management. He developed baseline documentation reports for conserved properties, assessed legal restrictions on land owned by GMC, and assisted with boundary maintenance and easement monitoring.



## A Hiker's Scavenger Hunt

### Natural Wonders to Look for on Your Next Hike: Goldenrod Gall Fly

Fall is a great time for curious hikers to look for galls—irregular swellings of plant tissue caused by injury or parasitic organisms—and to marvel at the amazing animals that trigger them. In Vermont one of the easiest types to find forms on goldenrod, a plant with clusters of tiny yellow flowers commonly seen in late summer and early fall.

About fifty types of insects make galls on goldenrod. Among the most common galls are the perfectly round spheres formed by the goldenrod gall fly, *Eurosta solidaginis*. The gall is hard on the outside, spongy on the inside. If carefully cut open, it will most likely reveal a white grub no more than a quarter of an inch long.

This grub coerces goldenrod into making a home for itself by feeding on the plant's stem. Scientists believe the larva's saliva contains a chemical that mimics the plant's hormones, triggering the plant to increase cell production and grow abnormally at the site of injury. This creates a gall in which the animal can spend most of

its life, feeding and overwintering while it pupates into an adult.

Overwintering in a gall is not a luxurious life since the plant provides no heat. To prevent damaging ice crystals from forming in its cells, the fly has adapted to produce a kind of antifreeze that reduces the water content in its body and allows the animal to survive the long winter unharmed.

The gall provides not only food and shelter, but protection from most predators, although a few crafty creatures have devised ways to get at the insect. Some birds, such as the downy woodpecker and black-capped chickadee, can break into the gall. Even a couple of parasitic wasps can reach the potential food source. Two species of chalcid wasps (*Eurytoma gigantea* and *E. obtusiventris*) can penetrate the gall with long ovipositors to lay eggs in it. Once the wasp's eggs hatch, the wasp larvae feed on the fly larvae, use the home to overwinter, and emerge in the spring as adults.

If the goldenrod gall fly larva escapes predation, it will pupate into an adult in the gall and emerge. The adult fly lives only about ten days, long enough to mate and carry on the next generation.

—MOLLIE FLANIGAN, LAND STEWARDSHIP COORDINATOR



## Profile on a GMC Conserved Land

The Green Mountain Club manages more than eighty tracts of land, totaling more than 25,000 acres. These lands protect not only a permanent route for the Long Trail, but also the natural and cultural resources that make the Long Trail a place worth exploring and a vibrant home for humans, animals, and plants.

**Name:** Deigh Tract

**Location:** Bolton, Vermont

**Owner:** Green Mountain Club

**Since:** 2014

**Size:** 114.7 acres

**Trails:**

- Long Trail: .05 mile along Oxbow Ridge
- Duck Brook Trail (formerly the Long Trail): 0.2 mile

**Landscape Features:**

- **Geography:** The western slope between Bolton Notch and Oxbow Ridge
- **Water:** Tributaries of Duck Brook, which drains into the Winooski River in Bolton.
- **Natural Communities:**
  - Rich northern hardwood forest
  - Montane yellow birch-red spruce
  - Northern hardwood talus woodland
  - Seeps

- **History:** The Deigh Tract was once part of the Oxbow Mountain ski area, which operated from 1970 to 1975. The T-bar lift can still be found stretching up the hillside a few feet off the property's boundary.



# Diversity Brings Strength

## Expanding GMC's Educational Offerings

Hello, Long Trail enthusiasts! I am pleased to join you in the heart of the Green Mountains as the GMC's education and volunteer coordinator. I plan to emphasize the portion of our mission statement that intends "...to make the Vermont mountains play a larger part in the life of the people..." by enhancing and expanding our educational programs and volunteer efforts.

In 2011 I switched from field ecology to education because I wanted to work directly with people and share my passions for conservation and recreation. My career path has led through diverse fields, including technical climbing and mountaineering instruction, K-12 environmental science education, backcountry guiding, and natural history interpretation. Locations have varied as well. From the southeastern Appalachians and the White Mountains of New Hampshire to the granite-walled valleys of Yosemite National Park, I have had the privilege of connecting communities with the wonders of their backyards.

I firmly believe that education and immersive, hands-on activities are the best ways to meet the challenge of preserving wild spaces. Don't you remember the first time you felt cold creek water swirling around your ankles, or the feeling of digging in dark, organic

mountain soil? These experiences accumulate and bring people to understand that they are components of a large living system. This understanding creates love for our land and the desire to care for it.

In the coming years, I hope to diversify our educational programming. Our current workshops cover the basics one needs to thrive in the Green Mountains: wilderness first aid, backpacking skills, map and compass navigation, end-to-end panels and winter travel, to name a few. However, the twenty-first century has introduced new opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. Want to learn to ride an off-road unicycle? Practice yoga on a stand-up-paddleboard? Walk a slackline between cliffs? There are instructors for these activities, and many more.

While I doubt we'll offer unicycle classes anytime soon, I do want to partner with local instructors to offer more activity workshops such as rock and ice climbing, trail running, and yoga. Practices like these already take place on or near the Long Trail System and we have an opportunity to be involved in them. If we can share the importance of both enjoyment and maintenance of the Long Trail with a diverse group of use trail users, then we can all recreate in harmony.



Rob Rives

I also plan to further integrate the arts into our workshop series. Expect more classes on nature journaling, illustration, writing and photography to emerge in the coming months. Inspiring the next generation of artists is central to our mission; their work creates additional connections between people and mountains that foster an attitude of stewardship.

Finally, I aim to expand our educational programming for Vermont youth. By partnering with schools, youth organizations, and summer programs, I believe we can reach a significantly larger and more diverse youth base, and continue inspiring future members and leaders of the Green Mountain Club. When kids enjoy outdoor experiences, their families are naturally drawn in as well, and the Vermont mountains will play a larger part in the life of the people.

The Green Mountain Club has thrived for more than a hundred years on a solid foundation of volunteerism. As I envision expanding and enhancing our educational offerings, I hope to draw upon the vast knowledge and experience of GMC volunteers. Many of our workshops are taught and led by volunteer instructors. If you would like to share your knowledge, please contact me, and we'll work together to build a workshop.

See you in the mountains!

—ROB RIVES  
EDUCATION AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR





# Green Mountain Club Outdoor Programs

At GMC, we are always looking for ways to help you have fun, be safe, and learn more about the outdoors. Educational workshops are added to our website through the year, so be sure to visit [www.greenmountainclub.org](http://www.greenmountainclub.org) periodically to sign up. Workshop full? Ask to be added to the waiting list. Here are a few of our current offerings:

## Yoga for Hikers

**Wednesdays in September, 5:30 – 6:30 P.M.**  
GMC Hall, GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

Lori Flower of Karmic Connection Yoga will lead us in a practice tailored for hikers to increase strength, endurance, and balance. We will also work on flexibility, range of motion, and mindful meditation. Classes may be held outside, weather permitting.

Fee: \$12 per class or \$40 for all four.  
Rain or Shine. Drop-ins welcome!

## Yoga and Hiking Retreat

**Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 15-17**  
Hadsel-Mares Cabin, Wheeler Pond  
Barton

Lori Flower of Karmic Connection Yoga will lead a weekend of hiking and yoga in the remote Northeast Kingdom. Awaken your senses and relax while mindfully moving through the forest. Savor restorative evenings stretching by the fire near your shared rustic cabin. Lori's gentle holistic approach is ideal for individuals new to



yoga or those wishing to bring depth to their existing practice. Lodging, breakfast Saturday and Sunday, and dinner Friday and Saturday included.

Limit: 8. Fee: \$250. GMC members: \$200.  
Rain or shine. Please register two weeks in advance.

## Nature Photography Workshops

**Thursday Evenings: Sept 28, Oct 5, Oct 12, 5:30 – 7:30 P.M.**

**Locations TBD**

Master photographer and naturalist Sean Beckett will guide students as they explore composition, light, and exposure in a natural setting. Investigate local ecology, develop a naturalist's eye, and gain the technical and artistic foundation to capture outstanding photographs in the Vermont woods. Workshops will be held at different locations weekly in the Waterbury-Stowe area. Ideal for photographers of all skill levels. Must have your own camera.

Limit: 10 per session. Fee: \$35 per session, or \$90 for all three (GMC members receive 20% discount).  
Please register two weeks in advance.

## Nature Journaling with Rachel Sargent

**Saturday, September 30, 10 A.M. – 4 P.M.**  
GMC Visitor Center  
Waterbury Center

Learn to record your observations and interpretation of the natural world in a journal. We will experiment with colored pencil, pen, and watercolor, and develop techniques to capture the intimate details of wildlife, flora, and fauna. Participants must supply their own journals and illustration utensils. A variety of artist tools will be on hand for experimenting.

Limit: 15. Fee: \$35 (GMC members receive 20 % discount). Rain or shine.  
Please register by September 23.

## Green Mountain Fall Foliage Photography Immersion

**Saturday Morning, October 7–Sunday Evening, October 8**

Photograph the region's most breathtaking forests, vistas, streams, and farmsteads during Vermont's peak foliage season. Join master photographer and naturalist Sean Beckett on a quest to elevate your outdoor photography skills. Shoot at favorite local destinations in the "golden hours" of sunrise and sunset, returning to GMC Headquarters for mid-day workshops on composition, post-processing, and technique. Receive one-on-one instruction adapted to your skills and interests in this small-group atmosphere. Appropriate for all skill levels. Please contact GMC for more details about what type of terrain to expect and necessary gear.

Limit: 10. Fee: \$250 (GMC members receive 20% discount). Rain or shine.  
Please register two weeks in advance.



## Women's Backpacking Workshop

Six engaging women ranging in age from fourteen to sixty-two, led by GMC Membership and Communications Coordinator Kristin McLane and Visitor Center Manager Amy Potter, enjoyed a sunny weekend at Stratton Pond in June. Nice weather and moderate terrain were perfect for learning backpacking basics. We enjoyed beautiful views from the Stratton Mountain Firetower before having dinner by the pond. Many topics were covered including gear, food, safety, and how to properly secure food in the backcountry. We thank Stratton Summit Caretakers Hugh and Jean Joudry for welcoming us and sharing their extensive knowledge of the mountain.

—AMY POTTER, VISITOR CENTER MANAGER

## Section Directory

### Bennington

Maintenance: Harmon Hill to Glazenbury Mountain  
President: Lorna Cheriton, (802) 447-1383  
E-mail: chertop@comcast.net  
Website: meetup.com/gmcbennington

### Brattleboro

Maintenance: Winhall River to Vt. 11 and 30  
President: George Roy, (603) 381-7756  
E-mail: neogo03106@gmail.com  
Website: brattleborogmc.com

### Bread Loaf

Location: Middlebury area  
Maintenance: Sucker Brook Shelter to Emily Proctor Shelter  
President: Ruth Penfield, (802) 388-5407  
E-mail: ruthpenfield@gmail.com  
Website: gmcbreadloaf.org

### Burlington

Maintenance: Winooski River Footbridge to Smugglers' Notch  
President: Ted Albers, (802) 557-7009  
E-mail: ted@ted-albers.net  
Website: gmc Burlington.org

### Connecticut

Location: Hartford, Connecticut  
Maintenance: Glazenbury Mountain to Stratton-Arlington Road  
President: Jim Robertson, (860) 633-7279  
E-mail: jrobert685@aol.com  
Website: connngmc.com

### Killington

Location: Rutland area  
Maintenance: Vt. 140 to Maine Junction  
President: Barry Griffith, (802) 492-3573  
E-mail: bgriffithvt@gmail.com  
Website: gmckillington.org

### Laraway

Location: St. Albans area  
Maintenance: Lamoille River to Vt. 118  
President: Bruce Bushy, (802) 893-2146  
E-mail: brbshey@comcast.net  
Website: gmlaraway.org

### Manchester

Maintenance: Vt. 11 and 30 to Mad Tom Notch  
President: Marge Fish, (802) 824-3662  
E-mail: marge.fish@gmail.com  
Website: gmc-manchester.org

### Montpelier

Maintenance: Camel's Hump to Winooski River Footbridge and Smugglers' Notch to Chilcoat Pass  
President: Steve Bailey, (609) 424-9238  
E-mail: stevebailey@gmail.com  
Website: gmcmontpelier.org

### Northeast Kingdom

Maintenance: Willoughby and Darling State Forests and the Kingdom Heritage Lands  
President: Cathi Brooks, (802) 626-8742  
E-mail: cathibrooks@aol.com  
Website: nekngmc.org

### Northern Frontier

Location: Montgomery  
Maintenance: Hazen's Notch to Canada  
President: Jane Williams, (802) 827-3879  
E-mail: gmcnorthernfrontier.org

### Ottawaquechee

Location: Upper Valley, and New Hampshire  
Maintenance: Appalachian Trail: Maine Junction to NH border  
President: Dick Andrews, (802) 885-3201  
E-mail: techcomm@vermontel.net  
Website: gmc-o-section.org

### Sterling

Location: Morrisville/Stowe/Johnson  
Maintenance: Chilcoat Pass to Lamoille River  
President: Greg Western, (802) 655-6051  
E-mail: gw60031@hotmail.com  
Website: gmcterling.org

### Worcester

Location: Worcester, Massachusetts  
Maintenance: Stratton-Arlington Road to Winhall River  
President: Ram Moenns, (603) 767-2962  
E-mail: shivratri@gmail.com



## Sections

# NORTHEAST KINGDOM SECTION Newport Students "Hike the Long Trail"

Walking is a great way for kids to spend time with friends, feel free, and see things not normally seen from inside a car.

As Community Outreach Specialist at North Country Hospital, I wanted to teach pedestrian safety to Newport City Elementary School kids in a way that was fun and exciting, and kept them engaged all year. A simulated walk on the Long Trail seemed the perfect way. Every time a student participated in a monthly walk, they also completed a simulated trek from one Long Trail shelter to another, taking them closer to Journey's End. If they completed all eight walks, they completed a virtual end-to-end!

This helped kids stay active, have fun, and learn that walking is environmentally friendly, thanks to support from North Country Hospital and a generous Walk This Way grant from Safe Kids Worldwide, a program sponsored by Fed Ex.

Safety skills for walking to school are like those for hiking. Both require planning a route, preparing for the weather, and awareness of hazards. When kids walk to school they learn to look left, right and left before crossing. They learn to make eye contact with drivers before stepping into a crosswalk, to walk facing traffic, to wear bright clothing, and to obey all rules. The Long Trail crosses roads, so these skills are as important for a hike on the LT as they are for a walk to school.

The nineteen students who walked all year were treated to a real hike on the Long Trail with GMC Executive Director Mike Debonis. Mike welcomed them at the trail-head, recounted some of the history of our local Vermont treasure, and gave advice on trail etiquette. Only five of the first- through fifth-graders had ever hiked, so this was a great introduction to an activity that could become a lifelong passion. Encouraging kids to exercise regularly by hiking prepares them for a healthier future, and it may groom a future generation of GMC members and volunteers.

Teachers, students, community volunteers, and hospital staff members hiked to and beyond Jay Camp at their own paces, and probably no two hikers told the same story about their adventure when they got home that night.

We succeeded at our goal of having fun while teaching and reinforcing pedestrian safety and helping keep Kingdom kids active. Six fifth-grade students, asked to describe the adventure in one word, replied: "Muddy, fascinating, hot, buggy, exciting"—and unanimously—"fun!"

The Northeast Kingdom of Vermont is our home, and we all want Kingdom kids to live it, love it, and remember that no matter where their trails lead them, the Long Trail was where it all began.

—BETH BARNES, NEK MEMBER



Kids hiking to Jay Camp

# Young Adventurers Club

The Young Adventurers Club is a Green Mountain Club program designed to get young kids and their parents outdoors to hike, play, learn, and make friends.

## Northeast Kingdom Young Adventurers

Angela Smith and I led our first YAC hike, and it was a lovely reminder of how important it is to get our children outdoors. Exploring Perry Holbrook State Forest, we experienced a familiar, beloved place through the eyes of a child.

Although our group was small, wonder wafted on the warm late spring breeze. We stopped to watch a wood frog, to feel the softness of moss, and to laugh and rejoice in the splendor of the forest. I heard young voices asking the types of trees and commenting on the beauty of the lush canopy above us. I was inspired as a two-and-a-half-year-old little girl was cheered on by all to keep hiking...and she did it! The mud and bugs tried to thwart us, but this hardy group of women and youngsters was not deterred.



Although my mission is usually to reach the top and leave the world behind, this mission was much different, and, I would say, perfectly accomplished. It was to light a fire in the hearts of children so they might love the places I do long after I can set foot on trails. I wanted them to see the beauty of the forest, experience the shades of greens, browns, and grays,

the varied textures of bark, grass, and stone. I wanted parents to turn off their phones and just be in the presence of their children.

It was a marvelous day, and I look forward to our next YAC adventure!

—AMI ENGLISH  
NORTHEAST KINGDOM YAC LEADER  
AMIMARIE143@GMAIL.COM



## Bread Loaf Young Adventurers

We had a blast on our June hike at Silver Lake. There was lots of rock climbing, running, and even swimming. Typically, four- to eight-year olds join us on our adventures, but we've also had older and younger kids, parents and even grandparents. So much fun!

—LAUREN BIERMAN  
BREAD LOAF YAC LEADER  
LAURENBIERMAN1218@GMAIL.COM

## Montpelier Young Adventurers

Even for parents who love outdoor adventure, getting little ones outside can be tricky. It's not always easy to find hikes with kid-friendly terrain, or other parents with matching schedules who are ready to get out and explore. The Montpelier Young Adventurers Club, started nearly a decade



ago by Lexi Shear and her late husband David Blumenthal, aimed to eliminate some of the obstacles to getting families outdoors by organizing fun, accessible outings for families with children under five. They offered dozens of outings in central Vermont and beyond. Today, continuing that legacy, we are reviving the section's YAC club, by offering a slowly growing list of events in all seasons. In the last year we've hiked to the Adamant Quarry, explored the North Branch Nature Center, and had picnics on the East Montpelier Trails. This year we will head to Chickering Bog, do the loop at GMC headquarters, and more!

—SHARON PLUMB  
MONTPELIER YAC LEADER  
SHARON.PLUMB@GMAIL.COM



## Burlington Young Adventurers

This summer six families (including nine little ones from infant to eight-year-olds) got out to enjoy the beauty of Mills Riverside Park on a sunny, 70-degree morning! First, we raced to the pond, three-year-olds in the lead, to gently catch and hold frogs, dip our feet, and have a snack. The group then walked along the woods trail and back down to the Browns River. Kids enjoyed splashing rocks into the water, wading in, and moving rocks around. It was great to see so many new faces and explore together! Thanks to all who came out.

—MICHELLE CONNOR  
BURLINGTON YAC LEADER  
COLEM2003@HOTMAIL.COM



# 107th Annual Meeting Honorees

## Dick Andrews, Heinz and Inge Trebitz, Lee Allen, and Steve Klein

The Green Mountain Club's highest honor, the **Honorary Life Membership Award**, was presented this year to Ottauquechee Section members Dick Andrews, Heinz Trebitz, and Inge Trebitz.



Dick Andrews, Inge and Heinz Trebitz

### DICK ANDREWS The Renaissance Man

It would be shorter to list the GMC committees **Dick** has *not* served on, the areas of volunteer work he has *not* touched, and the ways he has *not* helped the trail and club than all the ways he has. Dick's volunteerism dates back thirty-eight years to 1979 when he joined the Ottauquechee Section, having been a hiker and trail maintainer long before.

Guess who is responsible for developing the moldering privy? And, for co-authoring the highly regarded *Back Country Sanitation Manual*?

Today Dick is president of the O-Section which is responsible for maintaining the Vermont AT from Maine Junction to the New Hampshire border.

A long-time journalist and reporter for the *Rutland Herald*, Dick stepped up several years ago as volunteer copy editor of the *Long Trail News* and just completed his eighteenth edition.

Watch for Dick on the trail down south as he is also an adopter of Peru Peak Shelter and the Griffith Lake Tenting Area.

### HEINZ AND INGE TREBITZ The Heart and Soul of the O-Section

Heinz and Inge joined the Green Mountain Club's Ottauquechee Section in 1993 and have been a dynamic duo since. They have been called "the heart and soul of the section" more than once.

Among other forms of volunteer service, **Heinz** was O-Section President and a GMC Board member. He is a trail adopter, maintaining 2.2 miles of the AT between Vermont Route 12 and the Woodstock Stage Road, and he is the section's maintenance coordinator of the AT from Chateaugay Road to Cloudland Road. His list of previous GMC awards is lengthy!

**Inge** is the editor of *Footnotes*, the O-Section's quarterly newsletter—a job with inflexible deadlines and no vacations that according to O-Section President Dick Andrews, "she executes with the efficiency and precision of a Swiss railroad." She received the club Special Service Award in 2015. Three years ago, Inge completed a section hike of the Long Trail.

Inge and Heinz have led hundreds of section outings: cycling, canoeing, hiking, backpacking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and of course trail work. They have welcomed section members to their home countless times for GMC meetings and events. And, they always encourage participants in outings to rise to challenges and enjoy themselves.

The **President's Award** is given annually to one or more individuals that the president chooses to honor for exceptional service. This year, President John Page presented two awards to volunteers who, according to John, "repeatedly offered to take on important tasks that maybe nobody else would have been willing to do, and that almost certainly nobody else could have done as well."

### SECRETARY LEE ALLEN The Parliamentarian

In addition to handling the secretary's traditional responsibilities, **Lee** familiarized himself with all the club's bylaws and policies as part of the governance review process, effectively becoming the person looked to whenever policy and procedure issues arose. Lee helped develop the recent club membership survey, spent hours analyzing its results, and presented them to the board in clear and concise form so they could be used to inform the strategic planning process. Last fall Lee agreed to chair the re-constructed Nominating Committee that we rely on to recruit new board members and, perhaps most importantly, to select future club officers. "Simply put, he's got a lot of wisdom and I trust his judgment and advice," said John Page.



Lee Allen

### TREASURER STEVE KLEIN The Visionary

**Steve** has been called a visionary and great strategic thinker by President John Page and Executive Director Mike DeBonis. Steve's day job is managing the state budget for the Vermont legislature. GMC benefits greatly from his expertise. Over the past year, Steve played a key role in navigating a successful review of club governance and on top of everything else, brought terrific energy to the strategic planning process, working closely with staff and volunteers on the project. John Page says, "Steve doesn't care who gets the credit, so long as the idea takes root and grows."



Steve Klein

Congratulations to all of this year's esteemed award winners!



# Board Report

The GMC Board met briefly on June 10, following the annual membership business meeting hosted by the Bread Loaf Section at the Common Ground Center in Starksboro.

President John Page called the meeting to order, and welcomed new board members Robynn Albert (general) and Cynthia Taylor-Miller (Killington Section). John expressed appreciation to outgoing members Lexi Shear (general) and Allison Henry (Killington Section) for their service.

The Board elected officers for the 2017-2018 year: John Page, president; Tom Candon, vice president; Steve Klein, treasurer; Lee Allen, secretary.

A review of the fiscal year 2017 (ending April 30, 2017) financial statement showed the club finished the year with a \$15,500 budget surplus after putting \$16,000 (1 percent of expenditures) into the operating reserve. Unaudited totals were: \$1,409,904 in revenues, \$1,628,853 in expenditures, and \$279,482 in net distributions from the endowment and from funds previously set aside for special purposes. In addition, there were \$28,774 in capital expenses and transfers to other funds.

Board members briefly discussed the strategic plan draft, which included goals, outcomes and strategies for each of four themes: operational excellence, engagement and inclusion, protecting and managing the

trail resource, and strengthening our sections' membership and volunteers. Executive Director Mike DeBonis encouraged all members to review the plan carefully and contact him with suggestions.

The meeting adjourned after clarification of language surrounding the recently approved bylaw amendment on executive committee functioning.

Dates of future board meetings are: September 23, 2017 (Volunteer Appreciation Picnic to follow meeting); January 6, 2018; March 17, 2018; June 9, 2018; and September 22, 2018. Meetings are open to all Green Mountain Club members.

—LEE ALLEN, SECRETARY

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

**WHO:** In honor of our fabulous volunteers and anyone who wants to celebrate them with us!

**WHAT:** Catered picnic, music, awards, and camaraderie

**WHERE:** Green Mountain Club Headquarters, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center

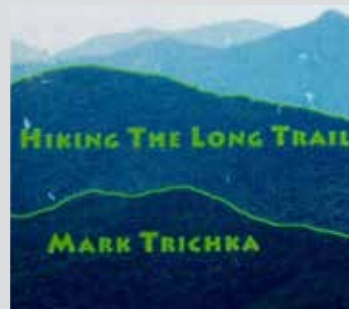
**WHEN:** Saturday, September 23, 1:30 - 4:00 PM

**WHY:** Because GMC was built on volunteerism and still relies on it today.

**HOW:** RSVP by September 8th at: [greenmountainclub.org/picnic](http://greenmountainclub.org/picnic)



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# The Long Trail and Me

I first set foot on the Long Trail in 1963. I had shown Andrew, my new husband, my childhood mountains of Telemark, Norway, and now it was his turn to introduce me to the Green Mountains. We drove from his parents' house in Burlington to Stowe, and headed up Mount Mansfield.

I was amazed at how long it took us to climb out of the trees. In southern Norway where I grew up, the treeline is at 3,600 feet, and mountain hikes are in the open; if not, they are "forest walks." Here the treeline was so much higher than at 61 degrees north.

The lack of views was not the only surprise that day. We encountered the strangest creature I had ever seen: a lumbering, sharp-spined creature with stubby legs. It bore only a vague resemblance to the cuddly little hedgehogs of my childhood (think *The Wind in the Willows*). It was my first encounter with a porcupine.

In 1970 we moved north from Boston to Montpelier, and I accepted that mountains could indeed be green. We joined the local section of the Green Mountain Club, pleased to meet other young families who liked hiking. Son Jon first climbed Camel's Hump at age four, in the company of other GMC children. It took us a few years to muster the courage to lead trips, but by now Andrew and I have co-led more than 300 section outings, some on the LT.

My most intimate relationship with the Long Trail, however, has been as a trail worker, and the sections I know best are those maintained by the Montpelier Section: the LT south from the Winooski Valley to Gorham Spring and the LT north from Smugglers' Notch to Chillcoot Pass. I like to think that I know every waterbar and problem area.

My favorite thing is playing in the mud, diverting water from the trail. I can spend half an hour on all four in one spot, dispatching muck and wet leaves, moving rocks, and pulling roots. When the water finally flows where I want it, I feel like a hydraulic engineer!

If I have a fixation, it is with stepping stones and stone stairs. I want hikers to



Reidun Nuquist (left)

step on them, not next to them. If the stones are covered by gravel, leaves, and debris, I start raking and don't stop until each stone shouts, "Hey, this way, step on me!"

Most of my trail work has been in the company of good friends in the Montpelier Section. Then, after Andrew and I retired, we adopted 2.7 miles on Bamforth Ridge. This gave us an excuse to add additional "inspection" and work hikes to our calendar. In late summer, I would swing my swizzle stick on the lower section of trail, in an effort to discipline the nettles.

Today we are adopters of one of the newest Long Trail sections: the mile along the southern bank of the Winooski River, from the footbridge to the boat launch. It is a stretch of trail unlike any other. It crosses farmer's fields, winds past chicken enclosures, and skirts virtual forests of kale. The greatest challenge is keeping the trail visible in the tall grass, which seems to shoot higher as you watch.

Over the years I have read hundreds of Long Trail end-to-end reports in the GMC archives. Some are riveting, describing dramatic encounters with wildlife and weather. My own report from 2002 (one year behind Jon's) is exceedingly dull. Reading it now, I am struck by how much of it is about trail conditions: lack of blazes, needed brushing, submerged stepping stones, rotten puncheons. Did I take the time to listen to the white-throated sparrow and smell the balsam?

I don't know that I have learned my lesson. In June, we were hiking in Scotland with Jon and friends. When I look at my photographs from the West Highland Way, I see shot after shot of drainage ditches, waterbars, and stone steps.

Once a trail worker, always a trail worker.

—REIDUN D. NUQUIST  
MONTPELIER SECTION



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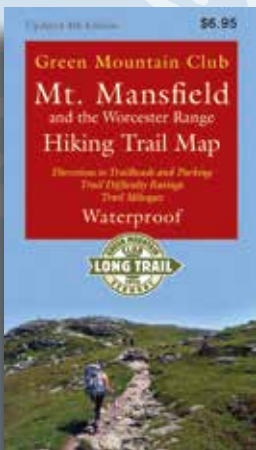
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