

# Long Trail NEWS



Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

WINTER 2018



# 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: December hike on Moose Mountain Trail near GMC's Hadsel-Mares Camp in the Northeast Kingdom. Photo by Jocelyn Hebert.



Photographer on Camel's Hump Summit. Photo by Pierre Belzile.

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## From the President

**G**reen Mountain Club volunteers and staff members were extremely busy this season taking care of trails, shelters, and privies to make hiking special for everyone. With an ever-increasing population of hikers, maintaining the Long Trail, its 88 side trails, Vermont Appalachian Trail, and trails in the Northeast Kingdom requires more than a thousand dedicated volunteers, supported by an experienced club staff and agency partners. Their work this year was especially important because of tree-toppling winds and heavy rainfall in some areas. I sincerely thank them all.

Hiking opportunities do not end with the arrival of winter. The woods are magical then, and it's a wonderful time for hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. Although informal counting shows more winter hikers every year, you can easily find a quiet spot to immerse yourself for a peaceful walk in the woods. Look for animal tracks in the snow—maybe you'll be lucky enough to see wildlife in their winter habitat. Enjoy a picnic at a shelter (don't forget the hot chocolate!), and appreciate winter vistas through the leafless trees.

Winter exploration with family and friends will be a great experience if you

heed winter safety rules. Appropriate clothing and gear are a must, so make sure to set out with the ten essentials (listed on our website, [greenmountainclub.org/prepare](http://greenmountainclub.org/prepare)). We also encourage hiking in groups of at least two in winter. If you would like a skilled volunteer leader, check the Green Mountain Club's online events calendar, which lists many winter hikes led by GMC sections. You may also contact the GMC Visitor Center, where staff members can provide recommendations for families, young adults and groups of friends—anyone who wishes to enjoy a winter hike.

The *Winter Hiking Guide to Vermont*, one of the club's informative publications, is an excellent resource for trails in your area. Combine it with one of our first-rate regional hiking maps, and you'll be all set.

The club holds workshops all year to sharpen the skills of both experienced and new hikers. Check the website for courses in map and compass use, wilderness first aid, winter trekking, and more.

You can also enjoy a hearty week or a weekend in the Bolton Valley woods at Bolton Lodge or Bryant Camp, two rustic cabins new to GMC's list of rentals. Each has a wood stove, a supply of firewood, and a state-of-the-art privy.



Tom Candon

Both are near Nordic ski trails, and can be rented for very reasonable fees. (Visit [greenmountainclub.org/cabins](http://greenmountainclub.org/cabins).)

I strongly encourage frequent visitors and recent arrivals to Vermont to get outdoors and explore what we have to offer. The Green Mountain Club always welcomes new members and volunteers, and we can use all the help we can get to continue our mission of connecting Vermont's people and mountains to the benefit of both forever.

—TOM CANDON, PRESIDENT





## GMC Outdoor Adventure Storytelling Night

What a fun time we had last night listening to adventure stories. Laughter and unexpected thrills and chills. Thank you, GMC and Outdoor Gear Exchange, for hosting this great event. And thanks to Shacksbury for the hard cider.

—JANET STEINERT

## Giving From Your IRA

I was very interested to see the article [Donating from your Retirement Account: How to Increase Your Impact] in the latest magazine about giving from my IRA. I have been doing this for a couple of years, and I'd like to make a special donation to GMC right now. ...I have renewed my membership for the year already. I was inspired by the article and magazine—the photos, the stories, having hiked end-to-end over 10 years, finishing in 2000, and missing the hiking.

—SARA MOODY ALLEN, PHILADELPHIA, PA

## Thru-Hiker Impressed with Trail

Met up with a hiker on Monday up the Sterling Pond Trail who was filtering his water from one of the tiny streams. We introduced ourselves, and he let us know that he and his daughter were hiking The Long Trail non-stop (except for food drops), and were on the final stretch to Canada.

We let him know that we were just doing a day hike, returning home in the evening. But mentioned that we were members of the Green Mountain Club. He made such a fuss over us. I had to confess that we were not part of the corps of dedicated trail engineers that kept the trails so well maintained.

He was full of praise for the whole trail system that the Green Mountain Club keeps in top condition. Especial praise for the new bridge that crosses the Winooski River, which he thought was an architectural and engineering marvel.

Beyond this, I can tell you that this father-and-daughter trip was one full of heart, and the day-to-day marvels were shared as precious by these two—struggling over the Chin and making the shelter at Sterling Pond by nightfall as our paths crossed.

I thought you'd like to hear this, and perhaps share his appreciation with all the amazing folks who do the day-to-day work to provide for just such an adventure!

—ANNETTE SEIDENGLANZ

## More Wildlife Stories

I just want to say that the latest issue of the *Long Trail News* was awesome. The stories on emerald ash borers, moose, and efts were very interesting. These stories were of more interest than other stuff highlighted in past news. I encourage you to focus on more stories like that. I felt I was reading *National Geographic* for Vermont!

—THOMAS FERENCE

## Long Trail Patrol Work Praised

I went up to the Long Trail north of Boyce Shelter today to do a final inspection of the completed work, and I was very pleased! The crew did a fabulous job [on the reroute] and everything looks great! A lot of compliments from hikers. Awesome job on the crib wall at the switchback in a very wet spot. Please let Ryan [Baxter] and the crew know that it was great work and the Green Mountain National Forest recreation program really appreciates all their efforts.

—SETH COFFEY, U.S. FOREST SERVICE EMPLOYEE

## Long Trail a National Treasure

I did the Long Trail this year from Massachusetts to [Vermont] Route 15. I can't thank you enough. All along the trail, from the cleared blowdowns to the shelter maintenance to the uniformly wonderful caretakers, your work leaves the LT as one of our national treasures.

—SLOW LEE

## In Support of Bromley Observation Tower

I'm out of state, and don't get to Bromley often. The day of the Peru Fair was my first time there since the tower was removed. I understand why it had to happen, but am thrilled that efforts are being made to replace it with something timeless. Thank you for this great project.

—KEN GAGNE

### Long Trail News welcomes your comments.

Letters received may be edited for length and clarity. GMC reserves the right to decline to publish those considered inappropriate. Letters may not be published.

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# Your Trail Your Legacy

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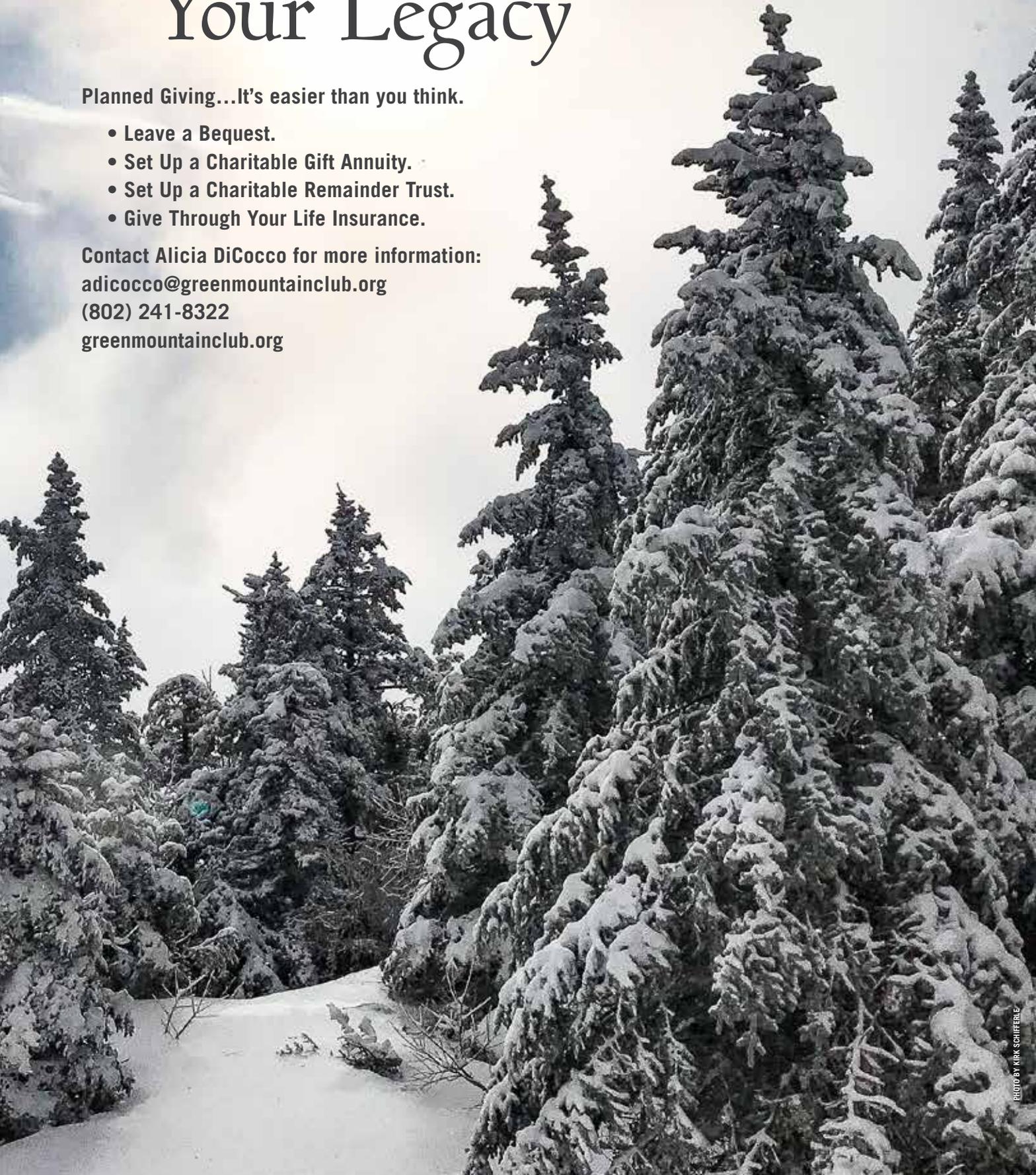
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# Why the Long Trail is Not a National Scenic Trail And What We Can Learn from It

COMMENTARY AND OPINION BY PRESTON BRISTOW

**Bourn Pond in Lye Brook Wilderness Area, by Jocelyn Hebert.**

Some stories are better left untold until long after they happen. I was a 30-something president of the Green Mountain Club more than 30 years ago when the club decided to “go it alone” and protect the northern Long Trail without federal help. I tell this story now, while I am still kicking, in hopes that it will be both a cautionary tale and a boon to strategic thinking.

The National Trails System Act of 1968 designated the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the nation’s first National Scenic Trails. Since the AT follows the Long Trail 104 miles from Massachusetts to Killington, the southern Long Trail is managed as a National Scenic Trail. The northern Long Trail was an obvious candidate for addition to the National Trails System.

By my reckoning the club declined National Scenic Trail status for the Long Trail on four occasions. The first was in 1975, when a bill was being drafted to grant broad powers for federal land acquisition by condemnation if necessary to protect the Appalachian Trail. The second was in 1986, when the club’s Long Trail Protection Fund was established with the goal of raising \$2 million to buy land or easements for the Long Trail from willing sellers. The third was in 1990 following the release of a Long Trail Protection Study by the National Park Service. And the fourth and final time was in 1993 when then Governor Howard Dean, as a budget saving measure, asked the club to reconsider National Scenic

Trail designation.

The club publicly provided two reasons for declining National Scenic Trail designation: fear that increased notoriety would cause overuse, and the lack of appreciation (if not actual betrayal) that private landowners would feel in return for their generosity in allowing the Long Trail to cross their properties.

But in keeping with the “rule of three” there was a nonpublic third reason: many officers and board members simply did not want the entirety of our rustically authentic, crudely charming, and oh-so-uniquely-

traditional enclosed camps with cookie-cutter Adirondack-style lean-tos; the colorful array of unique and individual trail signs was being replaced with uniform Forest Service signage; and, most offensive of all, wooden outhouses were being replaced with prefabricated steel outhouses.

One cannot emphasize how hated those steel outhouses were. Yes, they were porcupine proof, but they were ugly, smelly, cold to sit on, and the doors often stuck, piercing the forest tranquility with loud booms each time they were opened and shut.

Then there was the loss of Bourn Pond. Just as the northern Long Trail is known for Mount Mansfield and Camel’s Hump, the southern Long Trail had been known for its four “great lakes” – Stratton Pond, Bourn Pond, Griffith Lake, and Little Rock Pond. *Had* been known, that is, until 1978, when the list shrank to THREE great lakes. Smarting from the imposition of problematic wilderness status on some of their timber stands (or so many in the club believed), the Green Mountain

National Forest ordered that the Long Trail be relocated from the heart of Lye Brook Wilderness, away from Bourn Pond.

These suspicions were lent credibility years later when Robert Pramuk, a Green Mountain National Forest recreation planner, admitted during an interview as he was nearing



US Forest Service style shelter. Story Spring Shelter.

PHOTO BY DOUG LLOYD

Vermont mountain pathway to be regulated by uniform national standards. The Long Trail was always grass roots from the bottom up, not designed from the top down.

The club’s relationship with the Green Mountain National Forest was strained in the ’70s and ’80s. It felt pressured to replace its

retirement that the forced relocation of the Long Trail from Bourn Pond had been partly an act of retribution. “There was,” Pramuk was quoted as saying, “a feeling of, ‘You want wilderness, fine: we’ll give you wilderness.’”

Regardless of motive, the Long Trail, which since its inception had been known as “A Footpath in the Wilderness,” was itself determined by the Green Mountain National Forest to be an excessive human intrusion incompatible with federally designated wilderness, at least when it came to Bourn Pond. Losing Bourn Pond was felt as a body blow by the club. It wasn’t forgotten.

I still recall a staffer for U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy phoning me to say that legislation to designate the Long Trail a National Scenic Trail had been drafted, the senator had the votes, and all that remained was for the Green Mountain Club to request the status. It never did. The GMC Board of Directors wouldn’t pull the trigger, not in 1990 and not in 1993.

Even the shift of the Green Mountain Club offices from Rutland to Montpelier in 1977, and from Montpelier to its permanent headquarters in Waterbury Center in 1992, was partly influenced by an impulse to escape from the regulated environment of the southern Long Trail to the home rule of the north.

How different our relationship with the Green Mountain National Forest is today! The club has a stronger voice in designing shelters and privies and in the content of trail signs, the reviled steel outhouses are long gone, and there are no accusations of “spite” trail relocations. Truth be told, this change is due in large part to the club overcoming an attitude of stubborn parochialism and growing in its professional capacities.

Still, anyone who has seen a wheelchair accessible privy at a remote shelter on the southern Long Trail or the Vermont Appalachian Trail knows that regulations are alive and well on federal land. Just the chainsaw certification requirements for trail maintainers along with mandatory hazard tree removal are major challenges for volunteers. Environmental compliance documentation for trail relocations can be daunting, and the required engineering for trail structures can be overwhelming. This is simply the reality of operating a trail on federal land.

Why is this a cautionary tale? Because the question perennially resurfaces: should the Long Trail be designated a National Scenic Trail? Even Benton MacKaye, the father of

the Appalachian Trail, fretted that federal protection could leave the Appalachian Trail a body without a soul. Meaning: a corridor of federal land could be acquired (a body) but the trail itself could lose its grassroots vitality and heritage (its soul).

The Club and State of Vermont have invested millions of hard-raised dollars and 32 years of blood and sweat to protect our brave little trail through northern Vermont. Let us not forget that National Scenic Trail designation for the Long Trail would have been the easy way; the harder way was taken to preserve the soul of the Long Trail.

How could this story be a boon to strategic thinking? I think of the northern Long Trail as our demonstration project, our test site, our experiment station, our proving ground. It provides a model of what a uniquely Vermont trail should look like and how it can be managed, and it highlights the club’s skill and expertise as a manager.

The more the club gains credibility through its management of the northern Long Trail, the better it can advocate for flexibility and variation with our management partners (the Green Mountain National Forest, the National Park Service, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy) on the southern Long Trail. Moreover, U.S. Forest Service resources have been shifted from trail management to other priorities. The club has the opportunity—indeed, the obligation—to bring more capacity and expertise to the table for the southern Long Trail. And those who bring the resources often get more say in how they are applied.

Bringing more to the table, of course, takes money. The Long Trail, more than ever, needs your financial support. I know of no more efficient nonprofit than the Green Mountain Club. The opportunity is great, and the money will be well spent.

*Preston Bristow was GMC President from 1983 to 1986, founder and campaign chair of the Long Trail Protection Fund from 1986 to 1992, and now chairs the GMC Land Conservation Committee.*



US Forest Service style privy at Greenwall Shelter.

PHOTO BY LEE ALLEN



ADA accessible privy required today on Green Mountain National Forest and National Scenic Trail lands.

PHOTO BY MIKE DEBONIS

# RIDGELINE SOCIETY

## Changing the Shape of GMC's Annual Giving

**T**oday there is increasing uncertainty concerning the dependability of federal, state, and private grants to support the work of the Green Mountain Club and other nonprofits. We must rely more than ever on the generosity of individuals (like you!) to maintain and protect the Long Trail System, the Vermont Appalachian Trail, and trails in the Northeast Kingdom, and to provide our other programs.

Half of the GMC's \$1.7 million annual budget comes from dues and additional contributions from members. Without the generosity of people who join the club or donate to support our trails, we could not meet the needs of the trails and the people who use them. Unrestricted gifts enable us to meet our goals, and to reduce the instability of dependence on grants.

In 2000 the club created the Ridgeline Society to grow its base of unrestricted support. Put simply, each Ridgeline Society member makes annual unrestricted donations of \$1,000 or more. But at its core the society is much more than that. Its 86 donors have a substantial impact on the operations and health of the organization. In fact, their gifts total 70 percent of annual direct contributions and more than a third of total annual giving. The power of these gifts is amazing!

If you are in a position to join the Ridgeline Society, I invite you to donate \$1,000, \$5,000, or more this year to increase the impact the society can have on the work of the Green Mountain Club.

Thank you.

—ALICIA DiCOCCO, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



Call me anytime at (802) 241-8322, or email [adicocco@greenmountainclub.org](mailto:adicocco@greenmountainclub.org).



PHOTO BY LENNY CRASOSTOMO

Jay Peak Vista

# Beaver Meadow Trail

I moved to Vermont in 1998 and for over a decade, found winters a misery. Too cold, too long, too boring. But in 2010 some of my students, many of whom were peer instructors with the Saint Michael's College Adventure Sports Center, convinced me that with the proper clothing, instruction, and an attitude adjustment, Vermont winters could be enjoyed rather than dreaded.

By 2016 I had tried downhill, cross country, and skate skiing; I had snowshoed trails to some of Vermont's nicest winter destinations; and I was immersed in a year-long training to become a student instructor with the Adventure Sports Center, which had introduced me to many of these activities. But I had never tried a winter overnight on a trail.

Luckily, another former student knew just the place. What could be better than a mellow trail to a cabin with a wood stove and room for a crew of friends? On a chilly but sunny Saturday afternoon in February eight of us car pooled to Morristown and followed Beaver Meadow Road to the trailhead at its end.

One of the beauties of this winter hike is accessibility. It is only 2.3 miles long and gains only 900 feet in elevation, so families or groups of varying fitness can tackle it. Most of us wore micro-spikes, but

snowshoes would have worked, and given the light snow, hiking boots would have been okay.

The trail follows logging roads for 1.8 miles to a junction with the Beaver Meadow Cutoff Trail which bears right and leads to Whiteface Trail. Whiteface Trail continues ahead to Whiteface Shelter and Whiteface Mountain, but our way bore left and continued for about 0.5 mile on the Beaver Meadow Trail to the lodge.

*“One of the beauties of this winter hike is accessibility. It is only 2.3 miles long...so families or groups of varying fitness can tackle it.”*

The one obstacle was a brook crossed by a fallen tree rather than a bridge. This separated the adventuresome from the tentative. Some walked right across; others accepted helping hands at the start and finish; still others straddled the log and scooted along. Teamwork got all eight of us across without mishap.



Beaver Meadow Lodge, built in 1947 by GMC's Sterling Section, is a log cabin with benches along an interior wall and a sleeping loft. A table on one side was put to heavy use, because we had done a miserable job coordinating food, and had entirely too much. We quickly lit the wood stove located in the center of the lodge. With warmth and the ability to boil water, our winter camping was decidedly on the luxurious side.

In addition to comfort, Beaver Meadow Lodge offered excellent adventures for the following day. The Chilcoot Pass Trail leads steeply 0.8 mile to the Long Trail. Or one can pick up the Beaver Meadow Cutoff Trail behind the lodge, connect with Whiteface Trail, and hike a mile up to Whiteface Shelter.

We took a less ambitious option and reprised our youth on the frozen beaver pond by the lodge. We made up games running and sliding on the ice, wearing ourselves out a bit, before a short exploratory loop hike through the woods. In early afternoon we returned to the lodge to pack up and hike out, resolving to return again whenever we had the urge for a wonderfully fun but not-too-cold-or-strenuous winter adventure.

—TRISH SIPLON

*Trish Siplon is a professor of Political Science at Saint Michael's College, where she is also the only non-student Student Instructor at the college's Adventure Sports Center. Although she came to them late in life, she now loves figure skating, hiking, and rock climbing. She lives in Burlington with her partner, Jon Williamson, and Cat One (who had that name when he came to her).*



**GMC resources to get you there:**  
*Winter Hiking Guide to Vermont*  
*Vermont's Long Trail Map*

# Winter Exploration By a New Vermonter

Photography by GMC Membership & Communications Coordinator Kristin McLane



White Rock Mountain, Worcester Range



Cooper Lodge on Killington Peak



Mountain Ash berries on Mount Hunger



Bear claw markings,  
Willoughby State Forest



Camel's Hump Summit. Photo of Kristin by Jennifer Mayhew.



Snowy forest near Bryant Camp



Trees on Pico Peak



Stone Hut, Mount Mansfield



Pico Camp



Sliding on White Rock Mountain



# The Long Trail: Our Legacy

By Keegan Tierney

I am no stranger to the Long Trail, having grown up and spent most of my life in Vermont. Wild places, challenging terrain, and a connection to the natural world fostered by wet feet and muddy gaiters rejuvenate me, as they do countless hikers and backpackers. The Long Trail and other Vermont trails have given all of us a great deal.

But as a new professional trail maintainer on the Green Mountain Club staff, I must ask: How is the trail holding up? What does it need from us?

In my first season as GMC's Director of Field Programs I heard questions like "Why is the trail so muddy?" and comments like "The trail was a stream!" One social media post read: "You call this trail maintenance?"

From a historical standpoint, those hikers were really asking: How did the trail come to be what it is today? But for the future, I think the question should be: How will we maintain the trail, with more and more users every year, and with climate change creating new threats?

### How We Got Here

In 1910, the creators of the Long Trail envisioned a footpath along the crest of the Green Mountains that would provide Vermonters and visitors access to our mountains, forests, and ponds for leisure and enjoyment.

In *Green Mountain Adventure, Vermont's Long Trail*, Jane and Will Curtis and Frank Lieberman described how the State Forestry Department approached Green Mountain Club trustees in 1912 with the idea of constructing a fire patrol trail through the Green Mountains. The department offered to provide the labor if the club funded the project.

"The Club was weak in membership, funds and knowledge; its only asset was the members' enthusiasm," Lieberman and the Curtises wrote. To stretch its limited funds, GMC agreed to work with the state.

By the end of 1913, GMC sections and the state had cleared and built more than a hundred miles of trail, an accomplishment they celebrated until trail reports starting coming in. "The State Foresters had underestimated the amount of money needed



and in order to get the job completed had done little more than blaze trees and clear the worst of the slash and fallen trees,” recounted *Green Mountain Adventure*. “Even worse was the fact that in order to speed up the work the men had followed old logging roads along the lower slopes of the mountains and made no attempt to climb along the crest of the chain.”

The Forestry Department’s goal had always been to build a trail with grades of no more than 15 percent, providing easy access for hauling firefighting equipment into the mountains. But hikers who wanted challenge and spectacular views were disappointed. Protesting the easy but unappealing first attempt to build the trail, Professor William Monroe, of the former New York Section, offered to fund and build 40 miles of high elevation trail from Camel’s Hump south to Lincoln Gap. Today that section is known as the Monroe Skyline, and it is one of the most rugged and admired stretches of the Long Trail.

The visionaries’ original intention to build a tough trail passing interesting natural features and over high peaks with dramatic views was fulfilled. Their philosophy was adopted by others in 1930 when work began on the Appalachian Trail, including the initially blue-blazed portion of the AT from the Long Trail to New Hampshire.

As my predecessor Dave Hardy put it: “Our trails were laid out and maintained by volunteers in a rugged corner of the country. The glaciated New England mountains with saturated organic soil are not an easy place to

design, build or maintain a trail. By and large the Long Trail was a new footpath across nearly impenetrable mountainsides; the whole idea was to get to places that were inaccessible at that time.”

## The Trail Today

Although the Long Trail has the same purpose now, we’ve learned that some stretches were not built to resist the erosive power of water on steep slopes in a wet climate, combined with today’s high volume of hiker traffic. Shortcomings become apparent more and more often.

GMC volunteers and trail crews have identified many problems and stabilized much of the trail over the years. Artificial features like waterbars (lots of them) now turn water from the trail on steep slopes, and stepping stones and puncheon elevate hikers in wet areas.

A trail building friend often wished aloud for the magical power of “a foam touch” (the ability to change a stone to weightless foam, and then back to stone) so he could accomplish more. He knew we had a heavy lift ahead of us with more than 500 miles of trail to keep up.

If we plan carefully for the next century, the Long Trail and our other trails will remain primitive footpaths with the unique rugged character that makes them special today, and they will support the hikers of tomorrow. As always, the quality of our trails will depend on the dedicated corps of volunteers and professional crews who work to protect and maintain them—and on you, the members who help fund them.

## We Need Your Help

This season GMC was able to fund 1 Long Trail Patrol crew for 17 weeks, 1 Volunteer Long Trail Patrol crew for 6 weeks, and 1 construction crew for 18 weeks.

The Volunteer Long Trail Patrol, funded by the US Forest Service and GMC, works on the 100-plus mile stretch of the Long Trail that coincides with the Appalachian Trail between Maine Junction and Massachusetts. Our construction crew focuses on building and repairing shelters, bridges, and privies. That leaves the Long Trail Patrol crew to maintain 170 miles of treadway on the northern Long Trail, plus all 166 miles of the 88 side trails.

In the future, we must plan with a critical eye on sustainable trail design and grow the field program to manage increasing trail use, climate change, and decreased volunteer capacity as today’s volunteers age.

Today it costs \$5,700 to run 1 Long Trail Patrol crew for 1 week. Ideally, we would have the resources to run 4 or more crews for a full season in 2019.

Please consider making a financial gift to support the Long Trail Patrol, and our remarkable trail system. To learn more or to make contribution, contact GMC Director of Development Alicia DiCocco at (802) 241-8322, [adicocco@greenmountainclub.org](mailto:adicocco@greenmountainclub.org) or visit [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org).





# PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE: Understanding Hiker Behavior

By Jocelyn Hebert

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...

—GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB WALKING SONG,  
PUBLISHED 1922, THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NEWS

When I picture the Long Trail and its side trails, I see a river stretching north to south with 88 tributaries. I often think about how I read the trail when I hike, and—like water—seek the path of least resistance. As a Long Trail thru-hiker and recent side-to-sider (having completed every side trail on the Long Trail System), I've spent a fair amount of time analyzing my hiking practices and considering my impact on the trail.

I wanted to learn more about the features I saw, such as bog bridges, stone staircases, and waterbars, which we use to protect trails from damage and make them more resilient. Last season I took time to slow down and take a closer look.

I also observed hiker behavior, including my own, and tried to piece together how hikers decide where to step or what route to take when they approach a problem area or a challenging spot.

## Puncheon

On the Stratton Pond Trail I counted bog bridges, also called puncheon. These planks or flattened logs span wetlands and low-lying stretches of trail susceptible to erosion and mud. In higher elevations, like the Mount Mansfield summit ridge, they create a durable treadway and protect fragile vegetation. By the end of the 3.7-mile trail, my tally was more than 230 lengths of lumber totaling about 1,700 feet.

That puncheon was clearly not installed as a temporary measure, but I wondered whether shorter stretches of it on other trails had been. Why was there puncheon in some muddy areas, and rocks

in others? And was it okay for me to walk to the side of it when the ground appeared to be dry? After all, it is quicker, and one less step up. And wet or damp puncheon can become treacherous.

According to Keegan Tierney, GMC's director of field programs, "Puncheon is often used when rocks are unavailable or where we need a quick fix to prevent further damage. Ideally, we would use rocks everywhere, because they last far longer and keep the trail more natural looking."

Keegan further explained that puncheon is usually inexpensive because it can be installed by relatively unskilled labor: "When we have a longer pack-in, a volunteer group can move a large amount of lumber in a day. Rock, on the other hand, takes a more skilled worker and more time to do well."

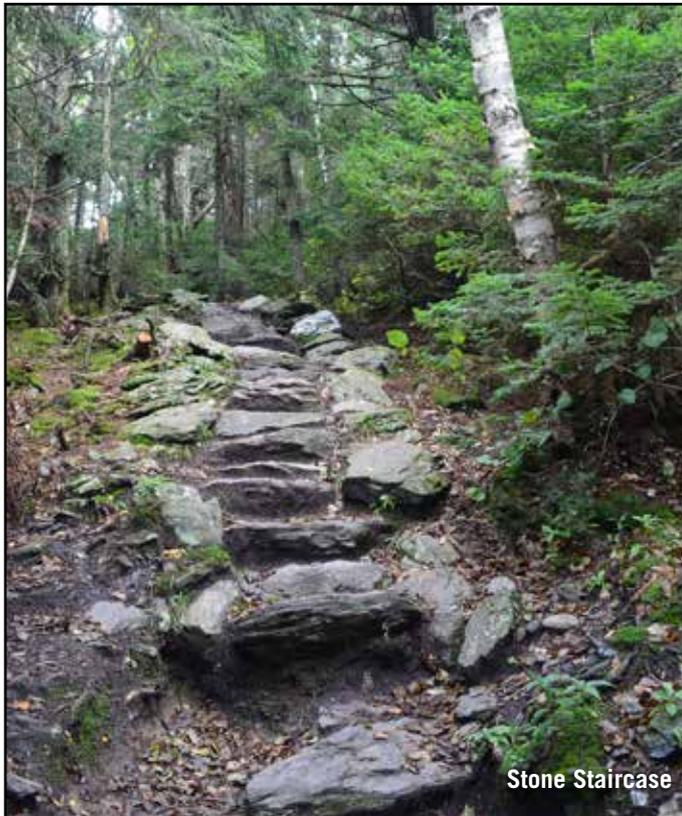
Keegan also pointed out that puncheon is sometimes placed in spots that are only seasonally wet. In dry weather you might wonder why it's there. "It's still important to use the puncheon and allow vegetation to grow back on the trail edges, because the vegetation helps reduce further erosion the next time the trail gets wet," said Keegan.

## Stone Staircases

When I came across stone steps or long staircases, I noticed the first step was often slightly too high for me. To save energy, especially when wearing a heavy backpack, I've learned to look for smaller rocks—stepping aids—centered at the base or off to



Puncheon



Stone Staircase



Waterbar

the side of the first step. I've pondered whether such stones were placed to help me, or if they were just there to support the steps. Keegan?

"Trail building is a science and an art. In many cases if you are stepping on a stone on a trail, it was put there with intention—whether to help you up, keep your feet dry, or keep you on the trail," said Keegan. When asked to clarify, he admitted that, no, trail builders didn't exactly have people like me (shorter) in mind. "We strive to build steps that are approximately eight to ten inches high, and if we can't find stone for that height we may build in a half step or an assist step within our gargoyles."

Gargoyles? They're next.

Although it seems stairs should make climbing a hill easier, many hikers still go around. Maybe the stones are slippery. Or maybe hikers traveling in opposite directions meet on stairs, and one walks the hillside vegetation instead of waiting. Or maybe older hikers prefer descending on a steady slope to soften jolts on their knees. Keegan described a technique trail builders use to discourage this: gargoyles.

"We place gargoyles on either side of the stairs. Gargoyles are jagged or oversized boulders that are difficult to bypass. Many times they are irregular rocks unsuitable for stair steps."

"The staircases themselves are installed on steep ascents where the soil type can't support foot traffic on the slope of the trail," Keegan added. "Stairs keep the soil in place and prevent washouts."

## Waterbars

I stopped periodically to analyze waterbars, which divert runoff from trails; the steeper the grade, the more waterbars. The club's trails have so many waterbars that today a major responsibility of GMC sections and trail adopters is clearing them in spring and fall. Without waterbars (and volunteers, for that matter), steep sections would be washed away in no time.

When I looked closely, I often noticed sections of fallen trees or big branches bookending the waterbars. GMC Field Supervisor Ilana Copel told me this is a subtle and natural way to keep hikers from mistaking the drainage runouts for trails and walking in them—a technique like placing gargoyles along staircases.

## Brush Piles

Have you ever been hiking along and stepped over a pile of branches before realizing you were veering off the trail? That pile was also placed to direct hikers away from a false or closed trail.

"When trail maintainers have time to properly brush in a trail—returning it to its original state so it blends in with the rest of the forest floor—signs of an old trail shouldn't be detectable," said Ilana. "The branches are a temporary fix until maintainers can find the time and resources to brush it in properly." So next time a trail doesn't look or feel quite right, check for branches at the opening. Often they'll be there, telling you to retrace your steps.

*continued on next page*



## Social Paths

In many areas I saw what are called social paths. Hikers form these alternate paths as they seek the easiest and/or safest route to avoid eroded trail, stretches of exposed and gnarly tree roots, wet rocks, fallen trees, or mud.

Ilana gave me an example: “Hikers like taking lower paths when available, so if they can walk on the downhill side of a boulder they will, even if the trail goes on the uphill side,” she said. “This especially happens when the trail goes on the uphill side of trees. Over time, the soil covering the tree roots is compacted and disturbed by foot traffic, leaving an exposed, uneven walking surface. To avoid walking over open roots, hikers walk on the downhill side of the tree, creating trails that become more worn than the original.”

Ilana said trail maintainers clip vegetation on the uphill side of the trail and let brush on the lower side grow, shifting hikers—and eventually the trail—back where they belong.



Social Path



Logs, Sticks, and Boughs

Switchbacks, built into hillsides to stabilize slopes, are also susceptible to social paths, as hikers yield to the temptation to cut the corners and walk straight up or down the slope. “This can be prevented by designing each corner so it cuts out around a boulder, a set of trees, or some other physical deterrent,” said Ilana. “Trails that form from bypassing corners often become steep dirt chutes that erode quickly.”

Occasionally, I came across blowdowns on the trail with cutouts, where two- to three-foot-wide sections had been removed instead of the whole tree and wondered why. “This is done intentionally to further define the desired trail width and minimize disturbance to trailside vegetation,” explained Ilana. “No matter whether the whole tree or just a section is cleared, trail maintainers try to clear fallen trees as soon as possible to keep hikers from creating a detour around the entire thing.” The effort to remove trees quickly can be difficult in designated wilderness areas where power tools are prohibited and trees must be cut using hand saws.

## Logs, Sticks, and Boughs

On particularly generous stretches of muddy trail I sometimes saw evergreen boughs, sticks, and small logs tossed in the mix. The extent of mud on the Long Trail can sometimes be astonishing, and without *something* to walk on there would be no good way across. You are faced with balancing on often slick logs or the occasional miraculous stone, or walking on the outskirts on intact vegetation, grasping tree limbs as you go. The latter is discouraged. I used to be happy to see a branch to help me across a mud pit, but it turns out that placing branches and boughs in the mud is also discouraged.

According to Keegan, organic matter like wood eventually makes the problem worse. “Logs and sticks parallel to the trail tread form micro dams that hold water and prevent it from running to the sides of the trail. So that causes water to run further down the trail,” he explained.

“As soon as organic matter starts getting thrown on the tread in a muddy area, it acts like a sponge, keeping that trail section wet. This causes further erosion, as water soaks into the soil and then holds the soil in suspension (aka mud).”

Keegan explained that in many cases what is needed is a small amount of de-berming, which is removing the raised lip on the downslope side of the trail caused by compaction of the center of the tread, erosion of the tread, or migration of material to the out slope. He said he had sometimes been forced to pull dozens of sticks from the mud before he could even begin de-berming an area.

Although I was just curious about some of the things I saw on the trail, after talking with Keegan and Ilana I have a deeper appreciation for the amount of thought and work that goes into trail building and maintenance.

The high volume of traffic on the Long Trail today, reaching hundreds of thousands of hikers annually, combined with the fact that many parts of the trail were built more for beauty and challenge than for durability, presents a significant maintenance problem to the GMC: how to balance our preference for a natural trail with few manmade structures against the endless expense of maintaining portions kept nearly natural rather than altered for durability.



VLTP crew replacing puncheon



## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of National Trails System Act

October 2, 2018, marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the National Trails System Act, which designated the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the nation's first two National Scenic Trails.

Since then Congress has designated 11 National Scenic Trails, 19 National Historic Trails, and more than 1,000 shorter National Recreation Trails and connecting trails. Many are open for cycling and horseback riding as well as hiking. The system spans 55,000 miles through 49 states, almost 7,000 miles more than the length of the Interstate Highway System.

In Vermont the Long Trail and Appalachian Trail share the same footpath and National Scenic Trail designation for 105 miles from the Massachusetts border to Maine Junction, with the Appalachian Trail extending another 46 miles east to the Connecticut River. The North Country National Scenic Trail is planned to extend to the Appalachian Trail in Vermont, but at present its eastern terminus is the shore of Lake Champlain in New York.

## Land Purchase at Wheeler Pond

The Green Mountain Club has signed a purchase and sale agreement to buy 16.75 acres next to our property on Wheeler Pond in Barton.

The acquisition protects the property from private development, and will increase parking and public access to trails.

The wooded property affords pleasant views of the pond and surrounding mountains, and could be a future location for a GMC tent site, rental cabin, or outdoor education site. It will also be a

sustainable source of firewood and timber. The club plans to close on the property in December.

## Theft at GMC Headquarters

Sometime in the night of September 19 one or more thieves broke into Green Mountain Club headquarters in Waterbury Center and stole nine chainsaws and two generators. The club filed a police report, and put out word of the crime to the surrounding community and on social media.

The response was amazing. The local and GMC communities were outraged that someone would steal the tools used to maintain the Long Trail. We are very happy to report that the support of our trail community and our insurance will enable us to replace all the stolen equipment.

## Save the Date for GMC's 23rd Annual Winter Trails Day!

**Saturday, March 2, 2019**

**Flood Brook School**

**91 VT Route 11, Londonderry**

Try out winter hiking with experienced GMC leaders and join our great community for a fun-filled day at Flood Brook School in Londonderry. There will be guided group hikes around the southern Green Mountains, winter skills workshops, snowshoe demos, kids' activities, and a campfire all day. Then stay for the après party and raffle!

For more information visit [greenmountainclub.org/winter](http://greenmountainclub.org/winter).



Winter Trails Day group

## LORNE CURRIER

### Completes VHCB AmeriCorps Term at GMC

**O**n an early morning in late August I arrived at GMC headquarters to find Lorne Currier loading a GMC truck with tools, gloves, and hardhats for a service trip to the Northeast Kingdom. That has been a familiar sight during his 18 months as GMC's Vermont Housing and Conservation Board AmeriCorps Outreach and Field Coordinator.

With a strong trail and backcountry background, Lorne expanded the club's volunteer service program significantly. Just in this field season he led 16 service trips, organizing more than 150 volunteers from various organizations for projects on the Long Trail, Appalachian Trail, and trails in the Northeast Kingdom. The result: more trail work completed, better trail conditions, and many more people—especially young people—familiar with, and invested in, the Green Mountain Club and what it does.

Lorne was also responsible for coordinating the club's group outreach system, which helps manage group use of the Long Trail.

Lorne served during a significant transitional period in GMC's Field Programs, and provided essential leadership and support by providing Leave No Trace training for staff, organizing outreach and education events, and working with partners to plan future trail projects.

After finishing his term with GMC this fall, Lorne set out to hike the Long Trail. We hope he felt tremendous pride as he walked over the many miles of trail that he helped steward.

—MIKE DeBONIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## Board Report

**T**he Board of the Green Mountain Club met September 22, 2018, at club headquarters in Waterbury.

Treasurer Steve Klein reported that income and expenses were tracking close to budget. Brett Hodgdon presented the results of his firm's audit of the club's fiscal year 2018 financial records. For the third year in a row, the club received a clean audit. The board voted unanimously to accept the audited financial records.

Executive Director Mike DeBonis provided a one-year report on progress toward the goals of the club's strategic plan, organized according to the plan's four themes: protecting and managing the trail resource; operational excellence; engagement and inclusion; and strengthening the membership and volunteer culture of our sections.

Alicia DiCocco, director of development, described the proposed capital campaign, which the board unanimously agreed to launch in March, 2019.

The board authorized club staff to move forward with negotiations with proponents of the Mount Mansfield Science and Stewardship Center, to be built on the footprint of the current summit station, provided that the facility is prohibited from exceeding limits on overnight use.

The board passed a resolution authorizing the club to pursue membership in the Land Trust Alliance. Membership in the alliance will provide resources and tools to help GMC meet its strategic plan goal of bringing the land conservation program up to Land Trust Alliance standards.

The board unanimously approved the roster of committee members and chairs for 2019 presented by GMC President Tom Candon.

The meeting adjourned in time for members to join the annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic festivities.

—MIKE DeBONIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## THE LONG TRAIL NEWS

February 1941

Volume I [New Series] No. 2

### New Year's Eve at Bolton

by Larry Dean

Among the ten sections of the Green Mountain Club there exists no finer tradition than the annual New Year's Party of the Burlington Section. While the rest of the country are tooting horns and swinging in a packed dance hall, the Burlingtonians quietly roll up blankets and set out for Bolton Lodge late on the last day of the year.

Ordinarily the best skiing for the Burlington Section centers about this Lodge - miles of cross-country trails and a cabin that can be comfortably heated even in severe weather. Lack of snow provided the principal departure from the annual routine this year: ice-creeping was the order of the night rather than skiing. By nine-thirty on New Year's Eve, sixteen had arrived at the Lodge after doing three and a half miles of pack-juggling up the Trail.

Normally a group of hikers who have tramped that distance are ready to have taps sounded at least by ten, but the New Year's spirit triumphs even on the Trail. The last hours of 1940 were spent hilariously in salting down tall tales of hikes and hiking, an intimate reading by Professor Buchanan of one hiker's experiences on the Trail, and in stowing away a sack of shell peanuts that someone had brought along. Every Yankee has to keep his hands or jaws busy on such an occasion, and in the absence of enough whittling to go around, the peanuts did the trick. Then as the minute hand of Professor Buchanan's watch crept up on midnight, the 1940 calendar was ceremoniously brought out and its traditional burning took place as yells and whoops reverberated through the rafters.

The bedding down a half hour later brought out some serious accommodation problems. Bolton Lodge was built to take care of a dozen. There were sixteen of us. With a little jackknifing, the bunks were made to suffice for fourteen, and two others compromised by stretching out on the floor and benches.

Ten more club followers drifted in the next day bringing the roster to twenty-six and making as fine a lounging and hike company as any lodge ever entertained.

Sitting on one of the lodge bunks, with my feet dangling over the edge, New Year's Day, I turned over the thought that this group surely exemplifies true out-right democracy, all ages and professions mingling together in complete enjoyment, each mindful and anxious to help the other enjoy the day - such an atmosphere made the Long Trail possible.

Late New Year's afternoon as the group picked their icy way home, the clouds lifted letting the slant rays of the sun filter through. Along the arena of frost-encrusted, fir-covered slopes, the sun cast a ribbon-like streak of gold, and where the slopes were untouched by the ribbon, a sheen of pink and purple was reflected - the perfect benediction to a grand party and for a new year.



**Bolton Lodge interior**



**Early GMC snowshoers at Bolton Lodge**



**Burlington Section outing to Bolton Lodge**

# BOLTON LODGE Celebrates 90 Winters



**B**olton Lodge's long and rich history began in 1928 when GMC Burlington Section members built the shelter to provide an overnight site between Camel's Hump and Taylor Lodge. The shelter replaced deteriorated Dunsmore Lodge, which was built in 1917 to provide a base camp for extending the Long Trail north to Mount Mansfield.

According to the *Long Trail News* of December, 1928, "The new lodge on Bolton Mountain is probably the best constructed and most inviting camp yet built on the Trail... It is designed after the cottages of Wales and Ireland, four feet of cobblestone at the base, white stucco above, and a four-sided roof with round corners. Red and black shingles trimmed irregularly give the effect of a thatched roof...It is warranted porcupine proof."

Despite its sturdy construction, Bolton Lodge deteriorated in the 1950s. Completion of the Bolton Valley Ski Area access road in 1966 provided opportunity for misuse and vandalism, and accelerated its decline. Proximity to the paved road also changed the wilderness experience, and eventually GMC rerouted the Long Trail to the high ridgeline west of the lodge in 1984.

Nordic ski trail builder Gardiner Lane, and others associated with the Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry Ski Center, maintained the lodge as a winter shelter. Lane's careful and dedicated protection likely kept Bolton Lodge in a restorable condition.

Restoration finally came in the summer of 2017, when GMC gave Bolton Lodge a

new roof, windows and doors, and stabilized the exterior stone and stucco walls. The club restored the original bunk beds, and rebuilt the table and benches, based on historic photos. Finally, the GMC installed a wood stove, chimney, woodshed, and efficient backcountry composting privy.

Bolton Lodge, now in the Mount Mansfield State Forest, is owned by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, and managed by GMC through an agreement for public rental.

Guests at Bolton Lodge can enjoy the network of Nordic and backcountry ski trails managed by Bolton Resort in winter before relaxing by the wood stove. In summer and fall guests can hike, bird watch, and relax by a campfire.

The GMC's Burlington Section initially planned to revive a New Year's Eve tradition by hosting a potluck dinner at Bolton Lodge to ring in 2018. When the weather forecast called for 14 degrees below zero, all thought otherwise. So a "new tradition" was launched. Now GMC members and friends gather at Bolton Lodge on the Sunday after the section's annual meeting. For 2019 the meeting is Saturday, January 19, to be followed by the gathering at Bolton Lodge on Sunday, January 20, at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome!

To learn more about Bolton Lodge and make a reservation, visit [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org).

—TED ALBERS  
BURLINGTON SECTION PRESIDENT

Restoration of Bolton Lodge and conservation of the 1,161 acres of surrounding land would not have been possible without the collaboration of Friends of Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry, the Vermont Land Trust, the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, and GMC. Backcountry skiers and hikers are also indebted to the generous organizations and individuals who provided financial support for restoring the lodge.



### *My Dearest GMCers,*

Thanks from the bottom of my heart for the fabulous 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party at Bolton Lodge. Also for the great engraved walking stick. It was nice to see all of you at the party and thanks for joining in on the sing-along. I was happy to be back in the woods again! My best to all my dear friends at GMC.

—DORIS WASHBURN

# Gifts Come in Many Forms

Here's your chance to get to know some Green Mountain Club volunteers, board and staff members—all gifts to GMC—as they show off clothing available at the visitor center and online. Stop by headquarters in Waterbury Center, visit the web ([greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org)), or call (802) 244-7037 to place an order. GMC members get a 20 percent discount.

**TOM CANDON** is a Long Trail end-to-ender and president of the Green Mountain Club. Tom loves winter in Vermont and spends time hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and since retiring, downhill skiing.

## What spots on the Long Trail were most unforgettable during your section hike?

“The steep descent from Harmon Hill down to Route 9, the summits of Mount Abe, Camel’s Hump, and Mount Mansfield where the views are breathtaking, and the endless stretches of pure serenity. The most memorable, and satisfying, was standing with my son at the Canadian border.”

**Wearing:** Men’s quarter-zip long sleeve shirt. Charcoal gray. \$39.95; Baseball cap. Jungle green, emerald green, blue, or oyster. \$18.95.

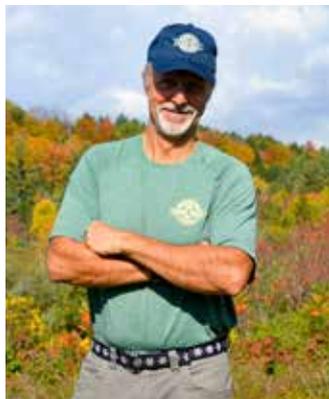


**AMY KELSEY** is a new GMC board member and former executive director of the Catamount Trail Association who, of course, loves to ski. One of her favorite things to do, when conditions allow, is to skin up a mountain as the sun rises and ski down in the early morning light.

## Why did you join the GMC board?

“I am an avid trail user in all seasons. I want to do my part to sustain the trails I love, and the organizations that maintain them. I also sense that there is an amazing group of people who volunteer with the GMC, whether they serve on the board or share their time and expertise in other capacities. I am excited to learn from and work with them.”

**Wearing:** Women’s quarter-zip long sleeve shirt. Iris. \$39.95; Mount Mansfield trucker hat. \$19.99.



**RICK HOPKINS** is a Long Trail thru-hiker and works in the GMC Visitor Center. When he’s not seeking out deep untracked snow when downhill skiing, he’s looking at maps to figure out places to hike the next season.

## What was the most memorable interaction you had in the visitor center this year?

“When hikers came in and said they had just completed—earlier that day—their thru-hike or multi-

year section hike of the Long Trail. One could feel their psyche, energy, and enthusiasm for the feat they had undertaken and accomplished. I felt fortunate to have been on duty to hear the details of such varied on-trail experiences.”

**Wearing:** Men’s Long Trail performance T-shirt. Forest green heather. \$21.95; Baseball cap: Jungle green, emerald green, blue, or oyster. \$18.95.



**KURT MELIN** has worked on GMC’s field staff for ten seasons. He was introduced to Mad River Glen during a GMC ski day and has been employed there in winter ever since. After cooking breakfast and lunch, he manages to get out and ski at the end of almost every shift, which as an Indiana native, he never thought he’d be doing.

## After a decade on GMC’s field staff, what would you say to other young people who might be thinking of applying to the Long

## Trail Patrol or for a caretaker position?

“Absolutely do it! It can be challenging work, and you won’t get rich, but it will almost certainly be the most rewarding job you’ll ever have. I can’t tell you how many former field staff employees have told me their times at GMC were among of the best of their lives. You’ll do hard

manual labor in tough conditions, but the beauty of nature and joy of comradery make it so worth it. You'll always be proud of the work you did here."

**Wearing:** Winter beanie with GMC logo. Black. \$18.95.



**AMY AND QUINN POTTER.** Amy manages GMC's Visitor Center and is mom to four-month-old Quinn. She is also a Long Trail thru-hiker. Her favorite winter activity is exploring the woods while backcountry skiing. Her challenge now, with a newborn, will be finding time to ski. She's already looking forward to the day when Quinn can join the fun.

**How do you think the Long Trail and Vermont mountains will affect Quinn's life?**

"I hope that with this great resource available he will learn to love the outdoors. I think if he forms a connection with the trail like his dad and I have, he will want to help preserve not only it, but other wild places. We need to foster Quinn's generation to appreciate nature and the earth, so they will want to work to sustain it. I also hope it will influence him to live a healthy lifestyle by getting outside more and exercising through hiking."

**Wearing:** Camel's Hump trucker hat. \$19.99; Women's Long Trail organic cotton long sleeve shirt. Iris. \$25.95. **Wearing:** Baby onesie. Green. \$13.95.

**KENNA REWCASTLE** is a PhD student at UVM and GMC board fellow who has lived in Vermont a little over a year. She realized that learning to snowboard was crucial to surviving winter. Before moving to Vermont, she lived in Sweden for a year where she spent especially cold and grey winter days at home sipping glögg, which is now one of her favorite winter traditions.



**Why did you choose to work with GMC for your Rubenstein student non-profit board residency program?**

"As an ecologist who studies mountains, GMC felt like a natural fit. Becoming a board fellow has allowed me to experience firsthand how mountain ecosystems are integrated into management decisions pertaining to conservation and public enjoyment of Vermont's most iconic ridgelines. This experience has given me insight into how my research can benefit the vision and goals of organizations like GMC both now, as a graduate student, and in my future career path."

**Wearing:** Women's fleece jacket. Light royal blue. \$39.95.



**LARRY WALTER** is a retired surveyor with the U.S. Forest Service, crosscut sawyer, and 2018 Green Mountain Club Volunteer of the Year. He spends time in winter practicing Tai Chi, snowshoeing and hiking with the Killington Section, and catching up with all the crosscut saws and axes that need attention.

**Why do you think it's important to train young sawyers?**

"Hopefully, to maintain our societal knowledge in the use of all things made by hand, including use and restoration of saws and axes. Otherwise, people just assume that unless a tool has some sort of internal power source, it's worthless. I hope that a resurgence in interest will create a market for USA-built, high quality saws and axes. We used to make the best in the world."

**Wearing:** GMC logo vest. Black. Available in men's and women's sizes. \$44.95.

**HOWARD VANBENTHUYSEN** is a former ranger-naturalist, current GMC board member, and trail sign maker. In winter he enjoys spending time at his camp on the side of Buchanan Mountain, lighting a fire, snowshoeing around through the woods, and returning to the warmth and comfort of his cabin.



**What made you decide to become a ranger-naturalist in the 1970s?**

"My interest in backpacking, the woods, mountains, and trails started at an early age with trips with my folks up Mansfield. Some of my fondest memories come from our overnights at Butler Lodge, scrambling around on the rocks and watching the sunset over the Adirondacks. Caretaking at the former Gorham Lodge on Camel's Hump for a summer led me to become a ranger-naturalist. Thanks to Kenn Boyd, who hired me, I had a wonderful summer in the woods helping others and living with nature."

**Wearing:** Men's Long Trail organic cotton long sleeve T-shirt. Pacific blue. \$25.95.



**DORIS WASHBURN** is a Long Trail end-to-ender, 50-plus-year GMC member, dedicated volunteer, and Montpelier Section member, who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with some of her GMC friends at historic Bolton Lodge in July.

**Wearing:** Toboggan beanie with GMC logo. Black or green. \$25.95.



# Once There Were Mount Hunger, New Guinea, and Wallingford:

## ABANDONED GMC SECTIONS

By Reidun D. Nuquist



The Montreal Section moving the Tillotson Camp outhouse: The young man in the picture is Lucas Soderstrom, who has yet to join the GMC, but was delighted to get into the diggings! The feet in the picture belong to John German, noted Montreal graphic designer, who is a member, but who was more than pleased to delegate the work. (photo by Geeza)

Today we have 14 well-established sections, or chapters, of the Green Mountain Club, each with its own culture, history, and traditions. Some were organized in the early years of the club—Bennington, Burlington, Killington, and Sterling appear in the first 1917 Long Trail guidebook—while others were founded more recently.

During the GMC's 108-year history, many sections have come and gone. Tracing their history is challenging; it can be easier dating their founding than disestablishment. According to club bylaws, sections fold when they have fewer than ten members, or when members vote to disband. What follows is an attempt to identify and date the abandoned sections. (See also "GMC Sections Over the Years" by Sylvia Plumb, *Long Trail News*, Fall 1999.)

### Barre Section (1952-1959)

Barre Section members were mostly women who enjoyed cookouts and singalongs. Favorite destinations were Nichols Ledge, Pigeon Pond, and Taylor Lodge. Membership reached a high in 1955 with 65 members. That year the Montpelier Section organized, eventually proving itself the more vital of the two. In 1959 the Barre Section treasurer turned over the section's savings of \$60.81 to the GMC, stating that the section had become "rather inactive, due primarily (I think) to a lack of male leadership."

### Blue Mountain Section, Ryegate (1917)

The section is listed with 26 members in the first 1917 Long Trail guidebook. No other mention was found.

### Brandon Section (1911-1917?)

Brandon organized in 1911 at the home of Albert G. Farr, a native son who had gone west and made a fortune. Loving his local mountains, he invited GMC membership chairman Dr. Louis Paris down from Burlington to help establish a local section. Sixty members signed on, Farr and his family as life members. Farr funded the building of the Long Trail from Lincoln Gap to Brandon Gap, and Farr Peak is named for him.

In 1917 the section was down to 12 members. That may have been the end.

### Jay Peak Section (1923-, 1927-, 1974-1981)

The Jay Peak Section had multiple births. In June, 1923, 1,500 people gathered at the foot of the mountain for Jay Peak Day. GMC president C. P. Cooper spoke, and a new section was organized with 23 members, mostly from Newport and Troy, but "after languishing a while it died in infancy."

Four years later, James P. Taylor spoke to 400 at Jay and "was present at the formation of the Jay Peak Section . . . inspiring over 200 people to climb Jay Peak that day in the rain."

On January 12, 1974, the board of trustees welcomed a new Jay Section with 88 members into the club family. It lasted until 1981 when it dissolved.

### Lake Pleiad Section, Middlebury (1923?-1939?)

The section was first mentioned in 1923,

when it relocated the Long Trail from Sucker Brook to Brandon Gap. It had 58 members, among them Middlebury College professors P. C. Voter and Raymond White, editors of the Long Trail guidebook. In 1936 the section was listed as 'anemic,' yet took 90 copies of the newsletter. The last *Long Trail News* mention is from 1939.

Confusing the issue, the section was often referred to as the Middlebury Section, and in 1958 the *Long Trail News* reported that the GMC trustees had "established a Middlebury College group as the first College Section" of the club.

Today the Middlebury area is served by the Bread Loaf Section, organized in 1974.

### Montgomery Section (1927-1929?)

The *Long Trail News* of December, 1927, reported that a new section had organized in September at Montgomery with 25 members. It was assigned the Long Trail from Jay Peak to Belvidere Mountain. The following year, the section "generously agreed" to build a camp at Hazen's Notch.

The last *Long Trail News* mention was in 1929.

### Montreal Section, Canada (1979-1988)

The one and only foreign GMC section was organized in 1979 with great enthusiasm and 90 members. It maintained the Long Trail between Vermont Route 118 and Hazen's Notch. Canadian law required the section to obtain a non-profit charter from the Province of Quebec. Dwindling interest caused the section to fold in 1988.

### Mount Hunger Section (1922-1929?)

Organized in October, 1922, at Montpelier, the Mount Hunger section had the ambitious plan "to build a trail from Montpelier over the Middlesex Range, White Rocks, Mt. Hunger and Worcester mountain to Elmore mountain." It would also co-operate in the extension of the Long Trail to Canada.

Four years later it had 16 members. In 1929 the section had been "in a state of coma for some time, and it was feared that it was a hopeless case." In 1954, the GMC received its remaining bank balance.

(After my elderly Montpelier neighbor died, I discovered that he and his brother had been key members of the Mount Hunger Section. If I had only known!)

## New Guinea Section (1946-1947)

This was one of several “irregular” sections declaring itself a GMC chapter. Sgt. Ronald Busse of the New York Section found himself stationed in the South Pacific at the end of World War II—with “A mountain at my doorstep and not [to] try to climb it unthinkable!” In two lengthy reports to the newsletter, Busse described the mountains he climbed while overseas.

## New York Section (1916-1999)

For decades, this out-of-state section, founded by Prof. Will Monroe in 1916, was the biggest, most vigorous, and most influential of club chapters.

As years passed, its members’ interests came to focus more on Camp Thendara in Harriman State Park, north of New York City, than on the far-away Long Trail. The adoption of uniform dues for all sections in 1989 made it difficult for the New York Section to maintain its clubhouse.

The following year, the 450-member section voted to disestablish itself from the GMC.

## Pioneer Valley Section, Massachusetts (1966-1994)

Section members centered around Springfield, Northampton, and Greenfield, Massachusetts. They were responsible for 8.9 miles of the Long Trail and Deer View Shelter—which burned in 1967.

When membership dwindled from more than a hundred to the twenties, the section voted “with a great feeling of sadness” to disband in 1994, after almost three active decades.

## Proctor Section (1923-1938?)

Between 1923 and 1935 section membership fluctuated between 19 and 42. The Proctor Section maintained the Long Trail and five camps from Brandon Gap to Sherburne Pass. It was last mentioned in the *Long Trail News* in 1938.

## St. Albans Section (1935-, 1975-1988)

The section’s first president was Capt. R. H. Domey (for whom Domey’s Dome is named), a veteran of World War I and an employee of the U.S. Post Office for almost 50 years. Members took care of the trail between Fred

Tucker Camp and Journey’s End.

In 1975 the section reorganized with 41 prospective members. It changed its name to Laraway Section in 1988.

## Stowe Section (1911-1917?)

The Stowe Section was present at the GMC’s first annual meeting, which was held in Stowe in 1911. In the 1917 Long Trail guidebook, the Stowe Section was listed with 15 members. There is no other information.

## USS Baltimore Section (1953-1954)

From the *Long Trail News*, Fall 1954: “A few months ago we were surprised to receive the summer schedule of the USS Baltimore Section of The Green Mountain Club . . .

There is actually a section of the Club aboard the heavy cruiser *Baltimore*. . . The Section was formed in Trieste about July 10th, 1953, when Jack Sloanaker, member-at-large [and member of the 1951 Long Trail trail crew], arrived by airplane to become one of the junior officers . . . Section members claim to have the most active and varied program of any GMC section.” Hikes included Mounts Etna and Vesuvius and days spent in the Swiss Alps.

## Wallingford Section (1932-?)

From the *Long Trail News*, November 1932: “The Swezey camp was burned during the summer. The Wallingford Section is preparing to rebuild and also will build a new camp a little north of the Peru road.” This is

the only newsletter mention of the section.

## Waterbury Section (1911)

In 1911 Dr. Louis Paris referred to the Camel’s Hump Club, founded in 1908, as a Waterbury Section. There is no other mention of GMC status.

## Wyanokie Section, New Jersey (1935-1952)

The Wyanokie Section, headquartered in Montclair, New Jersey, began with 25 to 30 members. It was the only section without responsibility for the Long Trail, and was primarily a walking club, with outings followed by supper. When it voted to disband in 1952 the GMC received a \$94 donation.

Looking at section longevity, I am struck by the staying power and loyalty of our out-of-state sections like Connecticut and Worcester, when other far-flung sections have failed. Clearly, energetic officers and a full outing schedule have much to do with section health. To quote the *Long Trail News* of May, 1940, “Outings are the life blood of any outing club and mountain climbing clubs are no exception. Show us a section with few hikes and we will show you a weak section with shallow following.”

*Reidun Nuquist, a member of the Montpelier Section, writes frequently on the history of the Long Trail and the Green Mountain Club. She would like to hear from anyone with information about abandoned sections.*



On July 19, the Montreal Section moved the outhouse at Tillotson Camp. Eleven members turned out for the work party, which moved the facility about twenty feets from its former, overflowing site. John Geeza, Montreal Trails and Shelters Chairman, hastens to assure all potential users that it will equally “commodious” at its new site!

# 27<sup>th</sup> Annual James P. Taylor Outdoor Adventure Series

For more than a hundred years the Long Trail has inspired Vermonters to seek adventure in the Green Mountains and beyond. The James P. Taylor Outdoor Adventure Series, named after the man who first envisioned the Long Trail, brings such adventures to you. Join us for inspiring presentations that will transport you to mountains and waterways near and far as we celebrate twenty-seven years of the Taylor Series—a great way to spend an evening!

Admission is \$5 for members and \$8 for nonmembers; kids under 12 are free. Tickets are available at the door only. Proceeds support local sections and the GMC Education Program.

Please check the GMC website, [greenmountainclub.org](http://greenmountainclub.org) for full calendar, updates, and changes.

**All shows held at GMC Visitor Center unless otherwise noted.**



Flying Northbound

## Flying Northbound to the Triple Crown

*Nika Meyers (Early Bird)*

Thursday, December 20, 7 p.m.

Former GMC Group Outreach Coordinator Nika “Early Bird” Meyers completed the Triple Crown of hiking (Pacific Crest Trail, Continental Divide Trail, Appalachian Trail) last summer by dancing up the AT in 78 days and 16 hours. Through photos, videos, and art she will share stories of exceptional beauty, emotion, silliness, magic, coincidence, and physical challenge. After 8,000-plus miles of walking, she is glad to return to the GMC, where her love for long trails started.

## Northville-Placid Trail: The Oldest Long Distance Hiking Trail You’ve Never Heard Of

*Julie Wolfe and Kristin McLane*

Thursday, January 10, 7 p.m.

Want to spend time in the wilderness, but only have a couple of weeks? Head for the Adirondacks and the 138-mile Northville-Placid Trail, which plunges deeply into the quietest reaches of Adirondack Park. This historic but lightly used trail bypasses the park’s high summits, trading big views for the solitude of pristine lakes and remote forests. Join Julie and Kristin as they recount their 2018 experiences thru-hiking the trail.

## Tour du Mont Blanc

*Phyl Newbeck*

Thursday, January 17, 7 p.m.

Last June Phyl Newbeck and Bryan Harrington completed the Tour du Mont Blanc.



Tour du Mont Blanc

The eight-day hike featured incredible views of the Alps, and covered about 85 miles in France, Switzerland, and Italy. Come hear their tales of trekking on what has been called the best hike in Europe.

## Hiking Iceland’s Laugavegur and Fimmvorduhals Trails

*Greg Maino*

Thursday, January 24, 7 p.m.

Iceland is a hiker’s paradise, and there’s no better way to experience the diversity of terrain than hiking the Laugavegur and Fimmvorduhals trails. Join Greg Maino as he shares his experience and photos, and answers questions about his trip.

## Hiking Nepal’s Everest Region to Ama Dablam Base Camp

*Kristen Bernarsky*

Thursday, January 31, 7 p.m.

Trekking the Everest region is the dream of many hikers. From Kathmandu, Kristen Bernarsky flew to the famous Lukla airstrip to start her lodge-to-lodge adventure. She will describe terraced Sherpa villages, trail conditions and food, and tell why her trek culminated at Ama Dablam, the third most climbed Himalayan peak.

## An American Ascent (Film Screening)

Thursday, February 7, 7 p.m.  
Outdoor Gear Exchange  
Burlington

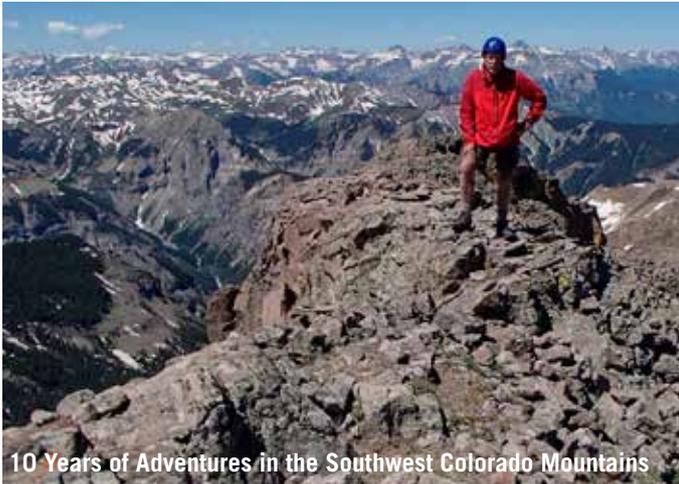
*An American Ascent* documents the first African-American expedition to tackle 20,310-foot Denali, North America’s highest peak. In a few decades the United States will be a majority-minority nation, as people of color outnumber today’s white majority. Yet many of this future majority do not consider the outdoors a place for them. By ascending Denali, nine climbers challenged this adventure gap, and began a history of inclusion among outdoor adventurers. The film addresses overlooked issues of race and the outdoors as it chronicles the challenges of weather, logistics, terrain, and altitude. Screened in partnership with Outdoor Gear Exchange.

## Vermont’s Original Rail to Trail: The Long Trail and Logging Railroads

*Preston Bristow*

Saturday, February 9, 7 p.m.  
Manchester Community Library  
Manchester  
*Hosted by the Manchester Section*

Vermont’s logging railroads lacked the scale of New York’s Adirondack Mountains, where no fewer than 22 logging railroads reached deep into old growth forests. Vermont also lacked villainous timber barons like New Hampshire’s J.E. Henry, the notorious White Mountain railway “wood butcher” famously quoted as saying, “I never see the tree yit that didn’t mean a damned sight more to me goin’ under the saw than it did standin’ on a mountain.” Yet logging railroads did penetrate the Green Mountains, and three are intertwined in the history of the Long Trail.



10 Years of Adventures in the Southwest Colorado Mountains

### 10 Years of Adventures in the Southwest Colorado Mountains

*Rich Larsen*

Thursday, February 14, 7 p.m.

Many of the mountains around Silverton, Colorado are made of layers of cliff-forming volcanic ash above 13,000 feet. Richard Larsen was introduced to some of these peaks while finishing the One Hundred Highest peaks in Colorado between 2010 and 2012, and has gone back in recent years to tackle some others of these 'interesting' peaks above 13,500'. He will present pictures and narrative about the adventures he and his hiking/climbing partners have had in this area over the last 10 years.

### From Gletscher to Gipfelkreuze: Exploring the Natural and Cultural Landscapes of the Alps

*Jeff Munroe*

Thursday, February 21, 7 p.m.  
Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, Middlebury  
Hosted by the Bread Loaf Section

Jeff and Diane Munroe are avid hikers and travelers. Jeff is a professor of geology at Middlebury College, and Diane coordinates community research projects for the

college's environmental studies program. Last year they spent Jeff's sabbatical abroad, largely in Austria, where Jeff was a Fulbright Visiting Professor at the University of Innsbruck in the spring. In the fall and summer they ranged the Alps from France to Slovenia, hiking and enjoying local culture. Jeff will share the beauty and diversity of the Alpine landscape, as well as the unease occasioned by the retreat of every glacier they saw.

### Northern Forest Canoe Trail: The "Wrong" Way

*Peter Macfarlane*

Thursday, February 21, 7 p.m.

In the spring of 2013 Peter Macfarlane paddled the 750-mile Northern Forest Canoe Trail from the Adirondacks to northern Maine in 28 days in a cedar-strip canoe he designed and built.



Northern Forest Canoe Trail

Five years later he took on a bigger challenge by paddling from Maine to the Adirondacks, bucking persistent headwinds and nine major upstream rivers, riding only four rivers downstream. On June 10, 2018, he paddled into Old Forge, the first recorded passage of the trail from east to west. With photos and video he will take you through his planning, and then on the roller coaster ride of joyful paddling, loss, exhaustion, despair, and some sublime moments.

### Black Bear Behavior

*Ben Kilham*

Thursday, February 28, 7 p.m.

Ben Kilham, a wildlife biologist from Lyme, New Hampshire, has studied the habits of black bears and has rehabilitated orphan cubs for more than 20 years. The subject of news articles and documentaries, including National Geographic's *A Man among Bears* and Animal Planet's *Papa Bear*, Ben has also co-authored the book *Among the Bears: Raising Orphaned Cubs in the Wild*.



### Flying Northbound to the Triple Crown

*Nika Meyers (Early Bird)*

Thursday, December 20, 7 p.m.

### Northville-Placid Trail: The Oldest Long Distance Hiking Trail You've Never Heard Of

*Julie Wolfe and Kristin McLane*

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Manchester Community Library, Manchester

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### Black Bear Behavior

*Ben Kilham*

Thursday, February 28, 7 p.m.



## Green Mountain Club Volunteer of the Year: LARRY WALTER

Larry Walter has spent his life caring for and protecting forests and their recreational resources. As a surveyor with the U.S. Forest Service, Larry helped the Killington Section with countless trail and shelter projects for two decades. Upon retirement he redoubled his trail work efforts, became co-chair of the Killington Section's trails and shelters committee, and was elected as alternate Killington Section director on the GMC Board.

In addition, Larry honed his expertise in the use and maintenance of one-man and two-man manual crosscut saws, which have been used in North America since 1635. Mostly replaced by chainsaws, crosscuts still clear fallen trees in federally designated wilderness, where motorized and



**Larry Walter displaying proper plank technique on the Mount Tabor conference table to 2018 GMC field staff members**

mechanical equipment is prohibited.

Crosscut saws are important to the GMC because parts of the Long Trail and many of its side trails are in federal wilderness. Larry has been key to preserving the art

of crosscut use in Vermont by co-leading certification courses with the U.S. Forest Service and teaching maintenance skills to GMC staff. Larry also has helped GMC acquire quality saws and bring old, worn saws back to life. "Without Larry, our fleet of crosscut saws would be merely decorative," said Isaac Alexandre-Leach, GMC field assistant.

When he's not performing miracles on ancient crosscut saws, riding his motorcycle or teaching Tai Chi, Larry forms a strong link between hikers and the U.S. Forest Service. Recently he collaborated with Forest Service staff to scout and re-route the Cauty Trail on Blue Ridge Mountain to put it entirely on public land.

For all of this and so much more, Larry earned the 2018 Volunteer of the Year award.

### Section Directory

#### Bennington

Maintenance: Harmon Hill to Glazenbury Mountain  
 President: Lorna Cheriton, (802) 447-1383  
 E-mail: chertop1@comcast.net  
 Website: meetup.com/gmcbennington

#### Brattleboro

Maintenance: Winhall River to Vt. 11 and 30  
 President: George Roy, (603) 381-7756  
 E-mail: neogeo03106@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: Herb Ogden, (802) 293-2510  
 E-mail: hogden@vermontel.net  
 Website: gmckillington.org

#### Laraway

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

#### Northern Frontier

Location: Montgomery  
 Maintenance: Hazen's Notch to Canada  
 President: Ken Whitehead, (802) 933-5352  
 E-mail: mrsswhitehead@gmail.com  
 Website: gmcnorthernfrontier.org

#### Upper Valley-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: gmsterling.org

#### Worcester

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

# A Dark and Stormy Night on Camel's Hump: My SAR Story

By Scott Berkley

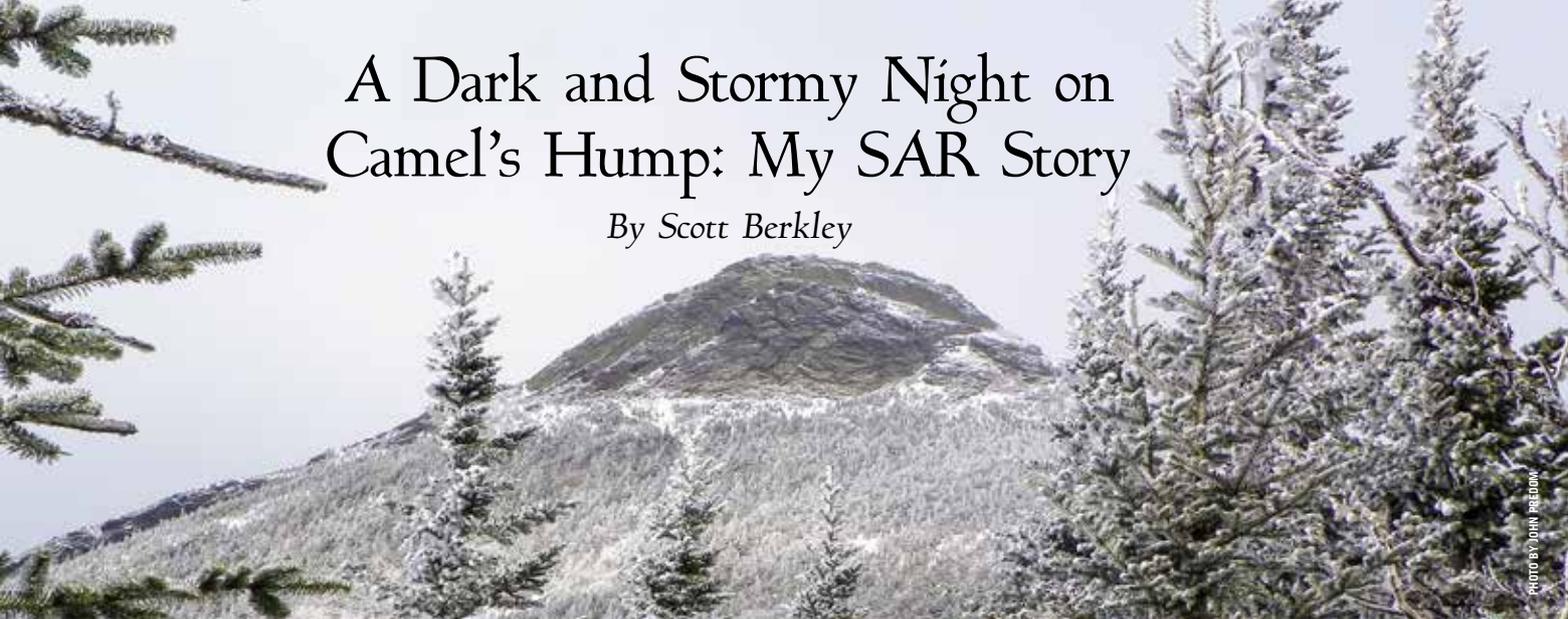


PHOTO BY JOHN FREEDMAN

The situation: an injured hiker sitting beside the Monroe Trail on Camel's Hump, a mile below the summit and a few hours after sunset in early November. There was a light snowfall with temperatures around freezing. The hiker was calm, protected by layers of clothing, and well-fed thanks to an emergency supply of peanut butter cups.

On a routine neighborhood hike an hour before, a slip and fall had led to a fractured tibia and fibula—both bones in the lower leg. A simple fracture (no broken skin), but movement impossible without outside help. The victim stayed warm, thanks to hefting a 30-pound rock up and down repeatedly, and kept focused by working on a splint improvised from pack straps, sticks, and a sequence of shoelaces. But mostly playing a game of waiting. Waiting for rescue, however it might arrive.

Every year a small percentage of backcountry travelers find themselves needing rescue. I had been on several search and rescue missions in my past life as a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club's White Mountain hut croo, and lower-leg injuries requiring litter carries were common.

Usually logistics were straightforward: send a well-equipped hasty team to stabilize the victim, followed by a larger team of rescuers, often several dozen members of a local search and rescue (SAR) team, to carry a litter down rough terrain for hours on end.

The twist this time was that I was the victim.

On November 9, 2017, I set off on a standard after-work hike with my partner Phoebe. We've both logged hundreds of

hours running and hiking in the dark, so we thought nothing of setting off from the Monroe trailhead at 4:45 p.m., prepared with headlamps and warm clothing. Six-thirty saw us on the summit, admiring winter stars emerging from scudding clouds. On the descent light snow began to fall, and the wet runoff froze into slick sheens. In a moment of inattention I slipped on an icy slab and landed awkwardly in a jumble of rocks below.

It wasn't a long or extraordinary fall; I've emerged unscathed from dozens of longer

Phoebe put her experience in many long and complex rescues to work ... She helped me put on all our warm layers, moved me out of the wet treadway onto a dry pine bough, and ordered me to eat plentiful snacks and hydrate.

and more dramatic tumbles. However, when I tried to stand my leg crumpled beneath me, and I yelped as I felt bones grinding together above my ankle. Phoebe and I took one look at my leg, folded at a 90-degree angle. While I stared, uncomprehending, Phoebe put her experience in many long and complex rescues to work, and knew exactly what to do. She helped me put on all our warm layers, moved me out of the wet treadway onto a dry pine bough, and ordered me to eat plentiful

snacks and hydrate. I shook warmth into my fingertips, and watched her headlamp bob down the trail. With no cell service on that side of Camel's Hump, she had to find a landline phone to call 911.

As I tried to stay warm at about three thousand feet, I contemplated what was happening below. Could a litter carry be mounted, and if so, how long would it take to reach me? It would take time to summon a sufficient team, and with snow predicted, I knew rescuers would need still more time to prepare for their long outing.

All the same, it wasn't lost on me that I was lucky to have broken my leg where I did. The Waterbury area has one of the best SAR infrastructures in the country, with multiple teams close by. What's more, I was on a reasonably accessible trail with a solid treadway, not stranded on some complex part of Bamforth Ridge. Less than three hours after Phoebe called 911 from a house near the base of the trail, I saw her headlamp and two others swinging up the switchbacks below.

The two-man hasty team was from Richmond Rescue. While Chris straightened my leg and splinted it with an air cast, Brad prepped me for a long litter ride by wrapping me with heat packs in a reflective space blanket and a sleeping bag. Around 11:00 p.m. 26 additional rescuers arrived, carrying a litter with an all-terrain wheel for use on smooth ground. Even though they came from seven different rescue organizations, they worked as a fluid unit as they flipped me into the litter and strapped me in, taking care to keep me warm, comfortable, and dry. Not long after, following a few bumpy sections requiring roped belays on

*continued on next page*

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*A Dark and Stormy Night on Camel's Hump (continued from page 29)*

steep sections of trail, the litter started to feel like a cozy bed, and I fell asleep.

Littering is tough work, and it can't have been easy to get my six-foot-three, 190-pound frame down two miles of wet, icy trail to a waiting ambulance. But the teams made short work of it, arriving at 2:30 a.m. Eight hours from accident to ambulance is the fastest, most effective rescue I could have dreamed of.

I am still in awe of the work that the teams from Richmond Rescue, Camel's Hump Backcountry Rescue, Waterbury Backcountry Rescue, Huntington SAR, Mad River Valley Ambulance, Stowe Mountain Rescue, and Colchester Technical Rescue did to get me off the trail as quickly and comfortably as they did. The rescuers came from a wide variety of backgrounds, both outdoor and professional, but each and every one had decided to leave a warm house and come out on a cold night to help someone they had never met—and to do it with the utmost respect, professionalism, and technical proficiency.

Now, almost a year after that dark and stormy night on the Monroe Trail, my leg has healed with a few fun scars. I'm back to roaming the Green Mountains on foot, but I'm still analyzing what happened that night, and how I can travel more safely in the backcountry in the future. Though there's not much I could have done to avoid the bad luck of breaking my leg, I wish I had been prepared with a full winter kit rather than the bare-bones equipment I used for short autumn outings. It's all too easy to get tricked into going light in the mountains during the corner seasons, but going light in cold weather compromises self-sufficiency from the start.

I am lucky that others came to my aid when I could not be self-sufficient, and I am beyond fortunate that, when disaster struck, I was in an area where backcountry rescue is so well orchestrated and effective. Here's to the work of our local rescue teams, and to many years of safe trips into the mountains!



**Scott holding the stone he lifted to keep warm while waiting to be rescued.**

*Scott Berkley is a trail runner and backcountry skier. After six years spent as a seasonal employee of the AMC, he now calls Richmond home. As an AmeriCorps member serving with the Catamount Trail Association, Scott leads trail work projects and youth Nordic ski programs along the 320-mile Catamount Trail.*

# Lane, Lane, What Do you See?

**M**y daughter Lane has always loved the children's book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*, written and illustrated by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle. After the first snowfall this winter we hiked the Burrows Trail on Camel's Hump, and decided to ask each other what we were seeing on the trail. Here are the conversations we had:

**Lane, Lane, what do you see?**

**Lane:** The moss on this tree over here. It's icy. Sometimes I use moss to make frosting for my mud cupcakes. Icy moss would be even better.

**Mommy:** I see the hill in front of us and there are SO many people on it.

**Lane, Lane, what do you see?**

**L:** I see this one little tiny leaf that is so cute. I found it on the side and it has brown and red and yellow. And a hole in it.

**M:** I see all the trees where the leaves have fallen off and now I can see the rest of the mountains better.

**Lane, Lane, what do you see?**

**L:** Whoa! Look, at that rock! It looks like pizza. But not pizza with pepperoni. Just cheese pizza. I'm going to jump on it.

**M:** I see the same rock, and I think someone that works for the Green Mountain Club probably put that rock there so that you can use it to get over the water without getting your feet wet.

**L:** Which person did it? What is their name? How did they get it there? Did they do it by themselves?

**M:** I don't know who did it. I think they probably worked together as a team to move the rock over with rock bars, which are like big heavy sticks that help you move big objects.

**Lane, Lane, what do you see?**

**L:** Well, I don't see anything because I'm closing my eyes because ice is falling on my face! Does that mean it's winter?

**M:** Almost! Winter comes to the mountains before it comes to our house.

As you get higher up it gets colder and instead of rain, the mountain will get snow or ice.

**L:** Why is it colder at the top of the mountain than at the bottom?

**M:** (I explain.)

**L:** Oh. I wish it were warm at the top.



**Lane, Lane, what do you see?**

**L:** Snow! I see snow! It's the first snow I saw all year. And the green trees aren't green anymore.

**M:** They're green AND white.

**Mommy, Mommy, what do you see?**

**M:** I see the trees too, but I am looking at a rock and trying to figure out the safest way to get both of us up there.

**L:** You mean the rock that looks like a great big chicken?

**M:** Yes, that one.

**Mommy, Mommy, what do you see?**

**M:** Oh wow, I see an opening in the trees where you can see the top of Camel's Hump.

**L:** Now I see the view! Look at the view, Mommy, we're here. (We were not there.) The snow is all over the mountains and I think I see someone climbing up it.

**Lane, Lane, what do you see?**

**L:** I see another big rock! I'm going to jump over the rocks.

**M:** That rock is part of a waterbar that the trail crew put in.

**L:** What's a waterbar?

**M:** It's a row of rocks that helps keep the water off the trail.

**L:** Like this water off the path? Oops, I stepped in it. But that's OK. The rocks are my walking path to my castle.

We saw different things, and I know that was partly because she is shorter, and we literally have different points of view. But I think it was mostly because at four years old she is trying to navigate the world and understand how it works. She pays attention to details, and is fully present in each moment. She doesn't worry about the hill in front of her, but notices how the environment changes and asks questions along the way, inserting her imagination whenever she can.

Never could I have imagined a waterbar as a walking path to a castle. But I'm so happy that it can be.

—ALICIA DiCOCCO  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



Alicia DiCocco and daughter Lane.



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