

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Celebrating 100 Years of the Long Trail News

Quarterly of the Green Mountain Club

WINTER 2022



Long Trail

N E W S

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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Contributions of manuscripts, photos, illustrations, and news are welcome from members and nonmembers.

The opinions expressed by *LTN* contributors are not necessarily those of GMC.

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FRONT COVER:

A collage of covers of *Long Trail News* past.

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Northerly from Molly Stark's Balcony
Winner of First Prize.

PHOTO BY S. K. HARDY

The first GMC Photo Contest was announced in the *Long Trail News* in June 1928, and winners were reported in February 1929. Above, the winning photo of the first contest.

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From the President

As the Green Mountain Club celebrates the 100th anniversary of our marquee serial publication, the *Long Trail News*, I've been reflecting on what the *LTN* means to me and how the magazine has informed our members over the years and provided a window into changes to the trail, the club, and the hiking community.

From my time as a seasonal field staffer in the 1970s the *Long Trail News* has connected me to the Long Trail and kept me informed of club happenings. I always enjoy the beautiful photos, field updates, club and section news, and interesting feature articles. I enjoy sharing the *News* as well. I often leave a couple of copies in the shelters I adopt (Hazen's Notch Camp and Roundtop Shelter), and I'm pleased to see they've reached the hands of an End-to-End hiker and potential new GMC member. Congratulations GMC on reaching this important milestone!

The glossy professional magazine we enjoy today, however, has not always existed in this colorful format! Even into the late 1980s the *Long Trail News* was essentially a black and white newsletter printed on white paper. While the content was interesting and entertaining, it would be a few more years before the *LTN* evolved into its current format.

Up in my tiny home office, mixed with my collection of *Long Trail Guides* (going back to 1930) are old *Long Trail News* editions. I reread one for this piece — the November 1968 edition — and was interested in its take on “skimobiles.” I read of the loss of the old Sunnyside Camp, and that my old friend Joel Page was officially inducted as an End-to-End! Herb Ogden's article on how he made Long Trail signs for the club was informative, and as a “modern” sign maker I realized that

not much has changed in that particular department!

The pages of *Long Trail News* have been a place for club leaders to speak directly to the members, and I took a keen interest in the message from then President Bob Attenborough. In addition to reporting on the health of the club and the trail, he encouraged members to read carefully the article

on the recent passage of the National Scenic Trails System Act of 1968. Bob noted that the proposed legislation had been a subject of discussion and debate at board meetings. The topic was also a subject of discussion and debate in the pages of the *Long Trail News* — see Mollie Klepack Flanigan's article on page 8.

These excerpts from the older *Long Trail News* (all of which can be found on the Montpelier Section's website, thank you!) reminded me how important the magazine is in keeping members informed, and also in documenting club history.

From the early days of the *LTN* to today, the magazine has told the story of the Long Trail. It chronicled how the trail was built; the growth of membership and sections; the evolution of GMC's headquarters; and coverage of key decisions, controversies and victories.

The GMC does not exist in a vacuum. The club is a community, and discussing and exploring relevant issues like climate change, visitor management, Long Trail protection, waste processing, wind power, and side trail protection, just to name a few, should take place in our membership, sections, committees, board meetings, as well as in our print and electronic communications. Debate and discussion is a healthy part of every organization, and the *Long Trail News* has always served that important function.

I believe that there will always be a valued place for our print publications, including the *Long Trail News*. But just as the *LTN* has evolved, the methods and systems we use to communicate with members and the hiking public will continue to expand and change. The magazine is no longer the only vehicle for sharing club news and documenting club history. The club employs a variety of print and digital communications to reach our members, supporters, and the hiking community at large. We strive to share important contemporary issues relevant to our mission and our operational goals of protecting, preserving, maintaining and improving the Long Trail system.

And, as this message will reach you all with the winter edition, may I take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families a very safe and happy holiday season! See you on the trail!

—HOWARD VANBENTHUYSEN
GMC BOARD PRESIDENT



Howard VanBenthuysen

TRAIL SIGNS — PLAIN OR FANCY

Trail signs provide the necessary information to guide the hiker on the trail. Should they be plain or fancy? Herbert Ogden made the attractive signs in the picture below and he explains his theory about a “fancy” trail sign and how to make them.

I use low grade pine boards from the lumber yard, knots and all. The lettering is laid out with a Stenso or E-Z Letter Guide. The letters are routed out with a Black and Decker router. About my only headache is keeping the router bits sharp enough to avoid fuzzy edges on the letters.





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Surprised and Honored

I wanted to state how surprised and honored I was to be one of the recipients of the President's award at the annual meeting in June. However, this award does not belong to me alone, but to everyone who contributed their treasure, talent and time. It is also the collective effort of a dedicated and energetic committee of GMC staff including Alicia, Mike, Erica, and Rick, and members Lee, Martha, Amy, Steve and Sheri, and, of course, Jean Haigh. She would always say, "Let's do it!" Well, Jean, we did it! What a wonderful tribute to her memory.

—NANCY MCCLELLAN

CHAIR, LONG TRAIL LEGACY CAMPAIGN

Memories of the Burrows Trail and a Call to Action on Trails

While I am not easily swayed by fundraising letters, a recent GMC mailing on work needed on the Burrows Trail on Camel's Hump caught my attention. In 1975, I was a graduate student at UVM under botany professors Ian Worley and the legendary Hub Vogelmann and did my research on how the trail corridor impacted vegetation and soils in the spruce-fir zone. I spent several weeks based at the former Gorham Lodge while I conducted my research on the Burrows Trail.

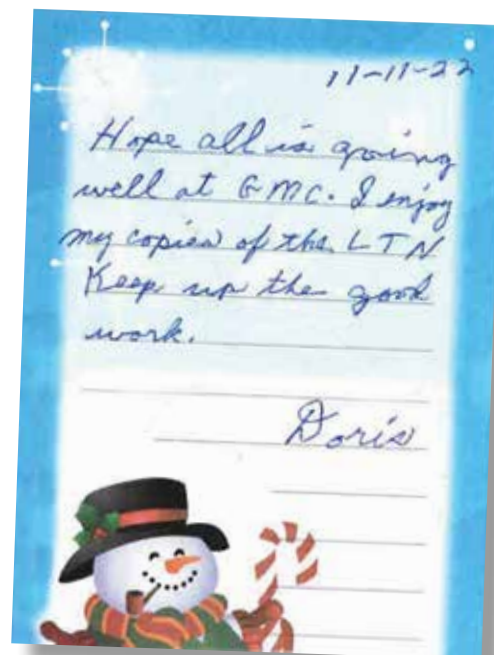
Flash forward to 2022, and so many more people are in the mountains which is placing enormous pressure on the most popular trails. It is great that people are getting outdoors — and we certainly want to encourage that — but taking care of trails today goes way beyond brushing back tree growth and cleaning out water bars. As documented well in past issues of the *Long Trails News* (see esp. the Fall 2021 issue), trail work is now much more complex and expensive.

As I wrote in the Appalachian Mountain Club journal *Appalachia*, we need to do more to preserve our precious mountains by investing in the most popular hiking trails. Extensive re-routes with more traversing and switchbacks and heavy investment in rock steps and drainage are required.

So, yes, I made a donation for Burrows Trail, and I encourage others to do the same.

—DOUG TESCHNER

PIKE, NH



Long Trail News feedback from the 2022 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

"I just love it! Read it cover to cover."

"Great publication, keep it coming. It's what I value most about my membership."

"I love it, though I would like to receive it via email."

"Enjoy the experience stories. Encourage continued safety aspects for hiking and promoting stewardship."

"I love this magazine and hope it stays in print because I save the issues."

"Love it! Please never go digital."

100 Years of the Long Trail News

Reflections from Longtime Contributors

The first sentence of the first article in the first issue states the purpose that seems to have been followed ever since:

"This paper is designed to impart to members and others interested in the Green Mountain Club the latest news of the Club and the Trail, and to constitute a record of the activities of the Club down to date of publication."

That's about as broad a charge as one can imagine and it gave the editors a fair amount of freedom to do what they wanted. Where do we go from here? Basically, [the club] has a broad mandate to keep altering the *LTN* to meet the needs of the moment. It's no longer the only point of contact with the audience — but I think it's the most important one — the "flagship," if you will.

— VIC HENNINGSEN, FORMER CARETAKER,
LONGTIME CONTRIBUTOR

My parents were GMC members, and I remember as a kid the *Long Trail News* came four times a year and lived on our living room coffee table. At that time it was the only form of communication the club had with members, so it was an important link. I remember reading in the *Long Trail News* that they were starting the caretaker program and that's what prompted me to apply, and I got the job. I was a caretaker at Taylor Lodge in 1971 and it started my lifelong involvement with the club.

— JOHN PAGE, LONGTIME BOARD MEMBER
AND PRESIDENT 2016-2019

I see the *Long Trail News* as an important membership benefit, a vehicle for GMC to communicate with members, and a way to make members feel part of the club. Many Long Trail landowners told me that they liked getting the *LTN*, and it helped them eventually decide to sell to the club.

I encourage you to retain the print format, as I feel many e-newsletters sit in inboxes and are never read, or only glanced at. Another suggestion is for more of a variety of articles. I feel the *LTN* has become too trail-focused recently, whereas we used to have more articles on LT/GMC history, places along the trail, nature, conservation, other Vermont hiking trails, and other outdoor sports.

— SUSAN SHEA, *LTN* EDITOR 2005-2013,
DIRECTOR OF LAND CONSERVATION 1990-2013

Obviously with the rise of online publishing, some of the original purposes of the *LTN* are better served online. I feel that as a result, the remaining roles of the *LTN* are if anything even more important, since they are not as well suited to the rather less deliberative pace of online communication.

I think the key difference regarding reading [online versus on paper] is the element of distraction. With an electronic device there is always the tempting possibility of abandoning what is on the screen for something else.

The quarterly schedule of the *LTN* forces time for reflection and deliberation before responding to its content by a letter for Mountain Views, or a request to the editor for space for a rebuttal or other response. Forced delay in response is usually presented as a major disadvantage of print publication compared to the lightning reflexes of online alternatives, but when tensions run high it can actually help the achievement of consensus, or at least understanding. A feature, not a bug.

I think the *LTN* is a better medium for longer and more complex stories, and particularly for potentially controversial or divisive topics. As a platform for discussion, a quarterly magazine is less likely to receive heedless or intemperate comment or reactions than online alternatives, and it is much easier for an editor to encourage and establish a thoughtful, productive and balanced discussion.

— DICK ANDREWS, LONGTIME
LTN COPYEDITOR, UVO SECTION PRESIDENT,
INVENTOR OF THE MOLDERING PRIVY

My tenure at the Green Mountain Club truly inspired who I am today as a communications professional. I loved working there so much. I loved the people and the mission.

The direct access to the historical archives—the photos, the guidebooks, the old issues of the *LTN*—was something that left me in awe and inspired me, as were the connections I made to such wonderful people.

I recall fondly working with Reidun Nuquist, who at that time was probably the age I am now. She inspired me and she became a bit of a mentor to me. She wrote many pieces for the magazine on a regular basis. I interviewed [former GMC president] Shirley

Strong, so that we could tell her incredible story and the role she played in protecting the trail. The people of the Green Mountain Club and the Sections were also hugely important.

Today, as in the past, the *LTN* also has the critically important role of looking at the trail, this resource, and its history in light of the issues facing our state and the country today. That, of course, includes the obvious issues of trail protection, overuse, and encroaching development on lands surrounding the trail. It also means examining the history and where the club stands today in terms of the more difficult issues of race and LGBTQIA+ issues. Buried in those archives that we celebrate and love so much are ads in the guidebooks that said: "Gentiles only." They weren't GMC's ads, but ads that were sold and were allowed to be published. It's important for a club that is 111 years old to talk about where it and the outdoor industry is today in terms of those issues.

With all that said, one of the greatest gifts the Green Mountain Club has is that it is an organization and a place where people come together for the love of the Long Trail and the mountains. In its mission, it spanned politics. That gift, at this time in our country, can help people come together over difficult issues.

— SYLVIA PLUMB, *LTN* EDITOR, 1992-2001

Thank you

A huge debt of gratitude is owed to the many longtime contributors and volunteers who assisted me in preparing this special issue. They gave their knowledge, insights, time, and energy in helping me to learn, research, and analyze important elements of GMC history through the pages of this magazine, and helped me understand the position the magazine holds in the club today. For more on that, see page 22.

A special thank you to **Ken Hertz of the Montpelier Section** who nearly singlehandedly made a fully digitized and searchable archive of the *LTN* available to the public (bit.ly/LongTrailNewsArchive). Being able to search names, topics, and other keywords made the job of compiling a Centennial issue easier by tenfold.

— CHLOE MILLER, GMC COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER AND *LTN* EDITOR

PARKWAYS & POLITICS

Early Political Activism in the *Long Trail News*

By Vic Henningsen

The GMC found itself in unfamiliar territory twice in the last century, when the federal and state governments proposed construction of a scenic parkway along the Green Mountain ridgeline. The club played a central role in the important political controversies surrounding proposals that seemed to threaten the very existence of the Long Trail, and the *Long Trail News* was crucial to the club's success resisting both projects.

In 1933, advocates argued that a Green Mountain Parkway would bring jobs and economic development to a state so poor that many residents joked they hadn't noticed the Great Depression. Several GMC leaders, like club founder James P. Taylor, joined scores of prominent Vermonters and major newspapers like the *Burlington Free Press* in enthusiastic support for an effort that would modernize Vermont and increase access to the Green Mountains.

However, the majority of the GMC Board regarded the parkway with horror, and sought to mobilize opposition to a project that threatened to scar the Green Mountains forever. The *Long Trail News* became their major weapon, thanks to the energy and enthusiasm of its founding editor, Edward Sprague Marsh, a Brandon lawyer and longtime GMC trustee.

Described by a colleague as one "whose caution and conservatism . . . were only exceeded by his love of Vermont and his devotion to the GMC", Marsh had been editor of the *News* for 11 of the 17 years he would serve, and he had long since shaped it into the voice of the club. Writing almost all of

the copy himself, he reported on board actions, section events, trail conditions and anything else he considered worthy of the attention of members.

Between 1933 and its ultimate defeat in a statewide referendum in 1936, the parkway became the major topic of the *Long Trail News*. Marsh and the GMC were hardly even-handed. When Governor Stanley Wilson denounced the club's opposition, Marsh editorialized:

A COMPLIMENT

At the trustees' meeting a letter from Gov. Wilson, an ardent partisan of the parkway, was read, in reply to an invitation to him to attend the meeting. In this he said that he could see no good reason for his attendance, that if the Green Mountain Club was determined to wreck the parkway project, he did not desire to be present at the wrecking. This acknowledgment that the Club has the power to wreck this plan, coming from such a source, is indeed a compliment. The Club has the disposition to accomplish this wrecking, and to make a complete and thorough job of it, and if it also has the power, there is no question as to the result.

Long Trail News — Editors Over Time

EDWARD SPRAGUE MARSH

Founded "The Green Mountain News"

December 1922 – June 1939

"For the first time in its history the Long Trail News is issued without the guiding hand of Mr. Marsh who devoted so much time and thought to it."

October 1939

W STORRS LEE

November 1940 – May 1941

ELIZABETH BRADSHEET WALSH

August 1941 – May 1943

“This acknowledgement that the Club has the power to wreck this plan, coming from such a source, is indeed a compliment. The Club has the disposition to accomplish this wrecking and to make a complete and thorough job of it.”

When a poll revealed that almost half of the club’s in-state members actually favored the parkway, Marsh downplayed the result, emphasizing the 14-to-2 vote of opposition by the GMC Board, “who may be said to be better qualified to judge.” He canvassed nationwide, giving significant space to prominent figures voicing opposition like author Sinclair Lewis. Pro-parkway sentiment was largely absent from the *News*; it isn’t clear whether few wrote to express support, or Marsh didn’t print them.

The *Long Trail News* kept club members informed of the club’s position—including full treatment of two alternative proposals developed by the board—and motivated readers to take action. Two members, William H. Field and his son William Field Jr., publishers of the *Rutland Herald*, turned their newspaper into a major opponent of the parkway with editorials echoing points already made in the *Long Trail News*.

Historians differ on the ultimate reasons for the 1936 defeat of the parkway. While many argue that it reflected Vermont’s traditional conservatism and opposition to Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal, historian Bruce Post points out that many opponents of the project worried that it would attract the wrong kind of out-of-state visitors and risk Vermont “going the way of the Catskills” – a clear reflection of the antisemitism pervading America then.

Although antisemitic sentiment did not appear in the *Long Trail News*, it was evident in private letters and in the *Herald*. What did appear in the *News* was a general hostility to lower-class outsiders Marsh and others believed would debase the quality of the Long Trail experience. While club lore generally applauds the defeat as a win for protecting the mountaintops, the reality also reflected a more complex – and unsavory – agenda of exclusion.

However varied the motives were, all agree that the Green Mountain Club punched well above its weight in organizing and

furthering opposition. Heretofore a traditional hiking club, the GMC demonstrated that when pressed it could play a significant role in major issues of the day.

So it wasn’t altogether a surprise that the GMC returned to the barricades when a renewed parkway proposal emerged in 1965. Led by Burlington Section activist (and later GMC president) Shirley Strong, the club was quick to oppose Governor Phil Hoff’s effort to take advantage of President Lyndon Johnson’s National Program of Scenic Roads and Parkways to enhance tourism in Vermont. The *Long Trail News* again filled with denunciations of the plan and exhortations that readers take action.

In a detailed editorial Shirley Strong laid out the club’s reason for opposing the route, among other arguments this one:

*“Our Green Mountains and the Long Trail
are being threatened by a Scenic Parkway...
Precious little remains along the ridges of the
Green Mountains that hasn’t been taken over by
commercial recreation and private ownership.
Camel’s Hump is the only major peak which
has not been developed commercially.”*
(August 1965)

Unlike the prolonged controversy of the 1930s, the Hoff plan collapsed within a year – perhaps because plans for two Interstate highways made a scenic parkway superfluous, or the \$116 million price tag was prohibitive, or, just possibly, that seeing the GMC returning to political activism in the *Long Trail News* led proponents to rethink their plans.

Historian and former Vermont Public commentator VTC HENNINGSSEN was a caretaker and ranger-naturalist on Mount Mansfield in the 1970s.

LB PUFFER

April 1944 – May 1951

“All members know how interesting he made The Long Trail News.’ Under his guiding hand as editor, the “News” has been something to look forward to.”

November 1951

MARY PERKINS

November 1951 – May 1960

MARGARET PONS

August 1960 – May 1974

“As we tread life’s pathways change is inevitable and the time has come when I can no longer give The Long Trail News top priority of my time on those “deadline” dates or whenever the copy finally arrives.”

Resignation Note, May 1974

We Can Not Rest Until the Job is Done

Protecting the Trail through the Pages of the *LTN*

By Mollie Flanigan

The *Long Trail News* has long been a critical platform for informing GMC's membership and rallying its support for the Long Trail Protection Campaign. Launched in the 1980s, the campaign seeks to secure a permanent, legal, and forested route for the Long Trail.

An early account of the campaign's launch in November 1985 framed the issue:

"Today, approximately 30% of the Long Trail traverses private lands The Green Mountain Club has always been proud of its ability to establish and maintain cooperative relationships with these private landowners. However, such cooperation has become more and more difficult to attain. With increased trail usage, landowners have become more reluctant to permit access to their properties and very concerned about liability. And the Club has found it more and more difficult to discourage incompatible land uses."

Since then the campaign has been a frequent topic in the *Long Trail News*, the primary medium for rallying support and shaping, promoting, and celebrating the campaign's efforts and successes.

The Lead Up

May 1971 "Vermont General Assembly passes Joint Resolution 22"

"Its passage recognizes the GMC's leadership role and represents a significant step in the Club's efforts to ensure the preservation and proper use of the Long Trail and other hiking trails in Vermont, including the Appalachian Trail."

The early '70s marked a major transition for the club, because of greatly increased use and the realization that the trail's existence and integrity were threatened. The resolution read, in part,

"the continued existence of the Long Trail system and the preservation of its usefulness, beauty and natural character is threatened by the rapid encroachment of residential, commercial and business activity..."

The club realized it must increase its influence and scope to preserve the trail. A key step was persuading the Legislature to recognize GMC as the "founder,

sponsor, defender, and protector of the Long Trail System." Legislative recognition became the foundation for the Long Trail Protection Campaign.

August 1975 "GMC Landowner Agreements Help Protect Long Trail"

"In a program of major significance the Green Mountain Club and a number of private individuals and corporations have joined hands in a step to preserve and protect the Long Trail... Under the license agreements... the landowner grants the GMC a six-foot right-of-way for the trail... All the agreements run for five years."

Negotiating these agreements began in 1973, but the 1975 article was the first *LTN* discussion of trail protection strategies. By the early '80s flaws became apparent, as the club realized many landowners planned to sell land, putting temporary licenses or handshake arrangements at risk.

A landowner who told the club he intended to sell property 1985 "in a very real sense, initiated the Long Trail Protection Campaign," the *LTN* reported

ROBERT "BOB" HAGERMAN

August 1974 – May 1981

"Bob had been a newspaperman, and it sometimes showed.

A memorable if questionable headline from 1977:

'Annual Meeting Marred by Death and Resignation.'"

Larry Van Meter

"Then as now, LTN editors did not have exclusive control of the publication.

Bob got his headline, but it landed on page 8."

Preston Bristow

JEFFREY SILMAN

February 1984 – November 1985

PAUL S DENTON

August 1981 – November 1983

in November 1987. The club mobilized members and advocated legally binding protection for the LT.

The Campaign

November 1985 “Long Trail Protection Resolution Approved by Board of Directors: Focus of Attention is Northern Vermont”

“In northern Vermont, tens of thousands of acres are [up for sale] and the potential impact on the Long Trail is enormous. Between Coddington Hollow and the Canadian border 32 of the 39 miles in private ownership are for sale....This situation represents on the one hand, an opportunity for the Club to obtain permanent protection for the Long Trail On the other hand, it creates a serious problem; the Club has enjoyed good relationships with the landowners who are now selling their properties – we may not be so fortunate in the future.”

Nearly every issue through the late '90s dedicated space to the campaign, detailing donations, legislative action, media coverage, letters of support from members, and — happily — numerous land acquisitions, transfers and deals. Much early focus was on fundraising, stressing urgency and the responsibility of members to do their part.

CLEO BILLINGS

Feb 1986 – November 1988

PROGRESS!!
FIRST LONG TRAIL PROPERTIES
PROTECTED
\$120,000 GRANT FROM VERMONT
HOUSING AND CONSERVATION
TRUST FUND
VERMONT CHAPTER OF NATURE
CONSERVANCY PLAYS VITAL ROLE

NOW WHAT?

The first Long Trail properties, important properties, have now been protected, and the GMC can finish the year with a true sense of accomplishment and progress. But we can not forget the major problems which still confront us. More than 60 miles of the Long Trail remain unprotected. And before we can commit all our resources to this mileage, we must first repay the Nature Conservancy the \$120,000 loan which made up half the purchase price of the Meltzer property.

“It was apparent the wheels of trail protection would not always, if ever, run smoothly.”

— Nov. 1987 article detailing the purchase process of the very first tract under the Campaign.

November 1987 “Progress!! First Long Trail Properties Protected”

“The first Long Trail properties, important properties, have now been protected, and the GMC can finish the year with a true sense of accomplishment and progress. But

we can not forget the major problems which still confront us. More than 60 miles of the Long Trail remain unprotected. And we must first repay the Nature Conservancy the \$120,000 loan which made up half the purchase price of the Meltzer property.”

Purchasing the first two tracts of land was a major step for the campaign, and tested a strategy of working with other conservation organizations for land deals.

The partnership kick-started the campaign, but the club and The Nature Conservancy did not share the same long term goals for protecting the entire Long Trail System. GMC looked for other ways to further the campaign.

Summer 1993 – “National Scenic Trail Designation Considered”

GMC's Land Protection Committee has been asked to respond to Governor Dean's request that the Club pursue either National Scenic Trail status or some other federal involvement in protection of the Long Trail... The committee recommends that the Club proceed with drafting legislation.

Between 1992 and 1995 GMC considered, drafted and reviewed federal legislation designating the LT a National Scenic Trail. The club rejected designation after strong resistance from landowners fearing potential eminent domain acquisition of a trail corridor.

SYLVIA PLUMB

Summer 1992 – Summer 2001

“How could I have known at the age of 24 when I began working at GMC that I would spend nearly ten years of my life as editor of the Long Trail News?”

Fall 2001

KATHERINE BORCHART

November 1989 – Fall 1991

For details of this complex debate, read “Why the Long Trail is not a National Scenic Trail,” Opinion and Commentary by Preston Bristow, Winter 2018.

The charge of the Long Trail Protection Campaign became even more important after the National Scenic Trail debate. The GMC strengthened its partnerships with the Vermont General Assembly and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, and developed a method of Long Trail protection in which we would work with those partners for funding and long term ownership for properties GMC would buy from willing landowners.

Governor Howard Dean, a longtime advocate for Long Trail protection, immensely strengthened the emerging partnership with his support for appropriations in capital and general fund budgets. A few legislators, including Senators Robert Gannett and Richard Mazza, also played key roles. The club raised money for part of each acquisition and related costs from many individual donors and foundation grants, and often thanked them in the *Long Trail News*.

In 1996 the Long Trail State Forest was established as a vehicle for transferring properties from landowners to the state.

“Vermont is home to a new state forest.... the Long Trail State Forest. [It] was created through a partnership between the State of Vermont and the Green Mountain Club...Most of the land has been acquired as a result of GMC’s Long Trail Protection Campaign.”

Many properties were also transferred to preexisting state forests, such as Camel’s Hump, Mount Mansfield, and Jay State Forests.

Coverage Slows While Work Progresses

From the late 1990s through 2010, coverage of the campaign in the *LTN* gradually declined, though work progressed apace. Still, club presidents kept the campaign in the foreground through communications like the Winter 1997 “**President’s Message: Almost There, I Can Tell.**”

“The GMC has much to celebrate. We have protected 46 miles of the Long Trail, 14 miles of side trails, and more than 17,100 acres of land. Fourteen miles of the Long Trail and six miles of side trails are left to be preserved. Together, we will make this dream a reality.”

Each land deal was briefly reported in the *LTN*, but with little information on the many years of extensive behind-the-scenes work brokering each deal:

Fall 1998 - “This spring, the Green Mountain Club completed a high-priority acquisition with the purchase of 150 acres in Johnson from Blanche Cushman. This property contains a critical section of the Long Trail and a mature northern hardwoods forest...This acquisition leaves eleven miles of the Long Trail and six miles of side trails with no formal protection in northern Vermont.”

Even in the Fall 2001 article, “**A Jewel for All Time: The Black Falls Tract Protected at Last,**” extolling the beauty and value of the largest, most expensive, and in many ways most critical tract in GMC land protection history, the road to conservation was only briefly detailed:

“At times over the past ten years, the project seemed jinxed: Three previous attempts to conserve the property failed due to partners pulling out, a lack of funding, or lack of agreement with the owners. But this spring the club’s efforts finally paid off.”

Next Steps of the Campaign

With more than 95 percent of the trail protected, the few remaining private landowners hosting the trail were unwilling or unable to work with the club for various reasons. In 2013, Susan Shea left the club after a 23-year career as GMC Director of Conservation (and *Long Trail News* Editor). She had shepherded most of the club’s 91 land deals.

“‘Susan Shea’s accomplishments are on par with the founding of the LT itself,’ said Rolf Anderson, former GMC President (1997-2000). ‘Although credit for the Club’s successful conservation program is shared with many others, her years as a conservationist for GMC will be her legacy, GMC members will be forever grateful to Susan for her dedication to the Green Mountain Club and the preservation of the Long Trail.’” (Summer 2013)

KATY KLUTZNICK

Fall 2001 – Winter 2004

SUSAN SHEA

Spring 2005 – Spring 2013

“After twenty-three years with the Green Mountain Club, Managing Editor and Director of Conservation Susan Shea left in March to pursue other opportunities...Under her tenure, the newsletter evolved into a full color magazine with captivating feature articles and outstanding photography.”

Summer 2013

The club consolidated the diminished land protection program and the growing land stewardship program into the Land Conservation Department. Trail protection remains a top priority. Successes reported in the *Long Trail News* include the Winter 2020 article “**Celebrating Success After 34 Years, Coddling Hollow Property Conserved, Protecting One-Third of a Mile of Long Trail in Johnson and Waterville,**” which detailed the complex efforts behind the deal. Such details had been seldom described early in the campaign.

While pursuing projects already in the works, GMC began to consider how to pursue the campaign’s goals with fewer willing sellers, less in-house expertise, and ever-shifting financial support.

To that end, the club is currently undertaking a strategic conservation planning process to chart the campaign’s future. As explained in the Summer 2022 *LTN*,

“Strategic conservation planning is a framework used by land trust organizations to plan conservation goals, and ensure they are working proactively to protect the resources they aim to conserve. By taking time to plan, an organization can assess the current need for land protection and what threats and challenges its lands face, set updated goals and measure success in meeting them, [and] identify partnership opportunities.”

The rich history of challenges, opportunities, setbacks, accomplishments, and plans in the Long Trail Protection Campaign lies in the pages of the *Long Trail News*. Perusing the archive for this article, I was struck by the intense coverage through the late ’80’s and early ’90’s, and the oft repeated declaration of its importance. Kim Simpson’s “**President Letter**” in the Summer 1994 *LTN* said, “*Completing permanent protection for the Long Trail System is our most important task. We cannot rest until this job is done.*”

While coverage of the Campaign has slowed with the pace of its projects, the Long Trail’s legal protection remains a top priority for the Club, and one that we will continue to report on in these pages in for years to come.

Thanks to Sue Shea for input on this article.

JOCELYN HEBERT

Summer 2013 – Summer 2020

CHLOE MILLER

Spring 2021 – Present

EVOLUTION of the Cover Design

December 1922. Founded by Edward Sprague Marsh, “The Green Mountain News” is “*designed to impart to members and others interested in the Green Mountain Club the latest news of the Club and the Trail, and to constitute a record of the activities of the Club down to date of publication.*” The first issue had five pages, but the page count settled at an even four until 1940.



December 1925. The paper’s name changed. “*The name ‘The Green Mountain Clubhouse’ having been officially changed to ‘Long Trail Lodge,’ it has seems best to follow suit and adopt a corresponding title for this paper. The reason is the same in both cases: the new name is more distinctive.*”



In **April 1928**, the trustees voted to publish bi-monthly, and made a plea to the sections to provide enough updates, news, and material to support such a publishing schedule.

October 1939. J.A. Allis reported the death of Marsh in June 1939. For years it has been believed that the August 1939 issue was missing. Upon further review of club records, it seems likely the issue was skipped because of Mr. Marsh’s death.

November 1940. A new editor was named, and the magazine got a flashy new look. The new series featured a cover image and was a pocket-sized 16-page booklet with a single column of text and illustrations and photos throughout.



Continued on page 22

Leave No Trace: Then and Now

By Sasha Weillbaker

To celebrate 100 years of the Long Trail News, I read back issues to learn what they said about trail stewardship and etiquette.

The seven principles of Leave No Trace were formalized 25 years ago, but GMC had its own language for trail etiquette long before that, even if some of it makes us cringe today. Here's a sample showing how language, attitudes, and behavior have changed — or stayed the same — over the years.

September 1937

"Let no one say, and say it to your shame, that all was Beauty here until you came."

A REQUEST

Friend, when you stray or sit and take
your ease
On moor, or fell, or under spreading
trees,
Pray leave no traces of your wayside
meal...
Let no one say, and say it to your shame,
That all was Beauty here until you came.

An anonymous verse asked hikers to collect their refuse so others could enjoy nature undefiled. This sentiment paralleled today's LNT principle "be considerate of others," but the focus was the next hiker, not the surrounding environment.

February 1954

"Don't drop litter, cans, paper, or glass on trail; hide it."

"WALKING AND CAMPING ETIQUETTE" (from *Appalachian Trailway News*)

DON'T SMOKE WHILE WALKING trails; wait
until you rest.
DON'T DROP LITTER, cans, paper, or glass on
trail; hide it.
GREEN TREES: Cut none. Don't waste wood.
CONSERVE.
LUNCH AND CAMPSITES: Leave them cleaner
than found.

Leaving campsites and trails cleaner than they were found and respecting nature are in line with today's principles. However, the advice regarding litter then was to "hide it" rather than carry it out.

1968-1970

CARRY-IN, CARRY OUT

"Some of the shelters have covered garbage pits. But others don't. Out West they urge, 'If you carry it in, carry it out.' Likewise, especially at the heavily used shelters, we pack out cans, bottles, aluminum foil and other unburnable trash, so that the shelter surroundings may be kept attractive." (MAY 1968)

"More people means more demand on the facilities' surrounding shelters. Dumps, signed, should be provided for what's left behind. Better yet, let's promote the "carry-in, carry-out policy" as the best solution and set an example ourselves!" (FEB 1970)

"The Club is now promoting the "carry in-carry out" idea and signs urging this practice will be placed in shelters. Volunteer groups can be used to clean up old dumps and to make improvements on the footpath." (AUGUST 1970)

Until the late '60s, waste removal was not top of mind. Many overnight sites had dumps, and hikers often burned trash unaware of the toxicity of the smoke. In 1968 there were a few mentions in the *LTN* of the new-fangled carry-in, carry-out philosophy. The club adopted the policy by 1970, spurred by then-president Shirley Strong, a staunch environmental advocate. By August 1970, the club had fully implemented the policy, and the *Long Trail News* said dumps were being removed from shelters.

Discussions of dumps and trash removal were emblematic of a much broader shift in attitudes in the hiking community and in the GMC's approach to trail management. *LTN* reports also described development of the site caretaker program, and discussions appeared of management of group use of the trail, use and maintenance of outhouses, and other topics that would become the foundation of modern trail stewardship and maintenance.

May 1972

"A new educational aid has been developed by the Publicity Committee to help in the GMC's program to encourage desirable hiking habits by persons using the Long Trail and other hiking trails in Vermont. It is a wallet size card printed on one side with the guidelines for using the trail and other the other side with a clothing and equipment checklist."

THE GREEN MOUNTAIN HIKER RESPECTS THE ECOLOGY OF THE MOUNTAINS. HE,

- Understands and protects the delicate ecosystems of the higher elevations.
- Leaves the ground cover in place.
- Leaves all living plants unharmed.
- Carries a portable stove for cooking.
- Camps or builds fires only in designated places.
- Never builds fires above treeline.
- Uses only dead wood.
- Makes sure his fire is completely out.
- Walks on rocks above treeline and not on the fragile alpine plants.

RESPECTS OTHERS WHO ARE USING THE TRAIL. HE,

- Washes away from the water supply and not in it.
- Informs others of his plans.
- Carries out what he carried in.
- Welcomes others and shares facilities with them.
- Limits his stay to two nights at a shelter.
- Leaves his site better than he found it.
- Provides one qualified leader for each four youths.
- Limits the size of his group to ten persons.

RESPECTS HIS OWN NEEDS AND ABILITIES. HE,

- Plans his trip carefully and within his limitations.
- Informs others of his plans.
- Carries adequate food, clothing and equipment.
- Takes time to enjoy his surroundings.
- Keeps his wilderness experience as natural and meaningful as possible.



As the club adapted to the swelling number of hikers, it increasingly emphasized on-trail education, using the caretaker program and wallet cards with desirable hiking habits on one side and an equipment checklist on the other.

August 1975-1991

"THE CONSIDERATE HIKER" made semi-regular appearances in the *Long Trail News* from August 1975 through Fall 1991. Quippy reminders ranged from the general refrain **"does not litter, does not litter, does not litter"** to the specific: **"leaves in place natural relics or oddities such as a wasp's nest, strange tree growth or lovely piece of driftwood so that the next hiker can enjoy them in situ as you did."** (February 1980).

THE CONSIDERATE HIKER...

...Travels in groups of fewer than ten, leaving the serenity of the woods undisturbed for others.

By February 1988 the "Considerate Hiker" had narrowed its focus to one contentious issue: managing large groups. This subject appeared no less than 11 times over the years. Many complaints and discussions in the *Long Trail News* ultimately led to creation of the AmeriCorps Group Outreach Coordinator in 1998, a position the club still staffs.

For more on group use, read *"Two Decades of Group Outreach on the Long Trail"* in the Spring 2018 issue: bit.ly/LongTrailNewsArchive

Summer 1996

The national Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics incorporated in 1994. In 1996, GMC first published guidelines under the heading "Leave No Trace" — 14 of them, from "use a backpacking stove" instead of wood fires, to "don't carve your name into trees or shelters." Today's consolidated seven principles cover the same concepts.

Leave No Trace Guidelines for Trail & Backcountry

You can help preserve a piece of Vermont's "footpath in the wilderness" as you enjoy it by leaving no trace of your visit. While you hike, please follow a few guidelines to ensure that the trail and the backcountry experience will be there for others to enjoy in the future. Please leave no trace of your passing.

By summer 1999, the *Long Trail News* published the Leave No Trace principles we promote today. GMC has been advocating the principles and their application through publications and education ever since.

Fall 2015

"The seven principles communicate a broad message, but it's everyone's responsibility to determine how to apply them in the backcountry... Thinking of Leave No Trace as an ethic of best practices, rather than seven steadfast principles, enables you to ask the "how" behind each principle and to make the ethic as variable as the land."

Leave No Trace An Ethic of Best Practices

In Fall 2015 Caitlin Miller (then GMC's Group Outreach Coordinator, now Secretary of the GMC Board of Directors), described how applying Leave No Trace principles can vary depending on situation, place, and personal experience, underscoring that the principles are ethics, not detailed and rigid rules.

Today

Since 1994, Leave No Trace Principles for Outdoor Ethics have been a framework for reducing adverse recreational impacts outdoors. But ethics are unique to each person and landscape, and Leave No Trace is not a perfect prescription. In 2022, we see the principles more judiciously:

Leaving **no** trace is literally impossible, and people learning the principles may see them as daunting and punitive, which might discourage outdoor recreation. We can reframe our thinking to **"minimize** our trace."

Applying Leave No Trace principles may tend to separate us from the natural world, rather than embedding us in it. Its practices necessarily contrast with those of indigenous cultures that relied on the land for mostly biodegradable resources, and in return provided for the land's health.

On a practical level, the injunction "Leave No Trace" is difficult to translate into many languages, which can be a barrier to understanding for anyone whose first language is not English. For many, a more natural construction is "Do Not Leave Any Trace."

In order to be a truly inclusive outdoor recreation community, trail managers must recognize the varying perspectives and backgrounds from which we all develop our own ethics and relationship to the land, and keep those in mind when teaching and applying the Leave No Trace ethic.

— HAILEY LYNCH, VHCB AMERICORPS
GROUP OUTREACH COORDINATOR

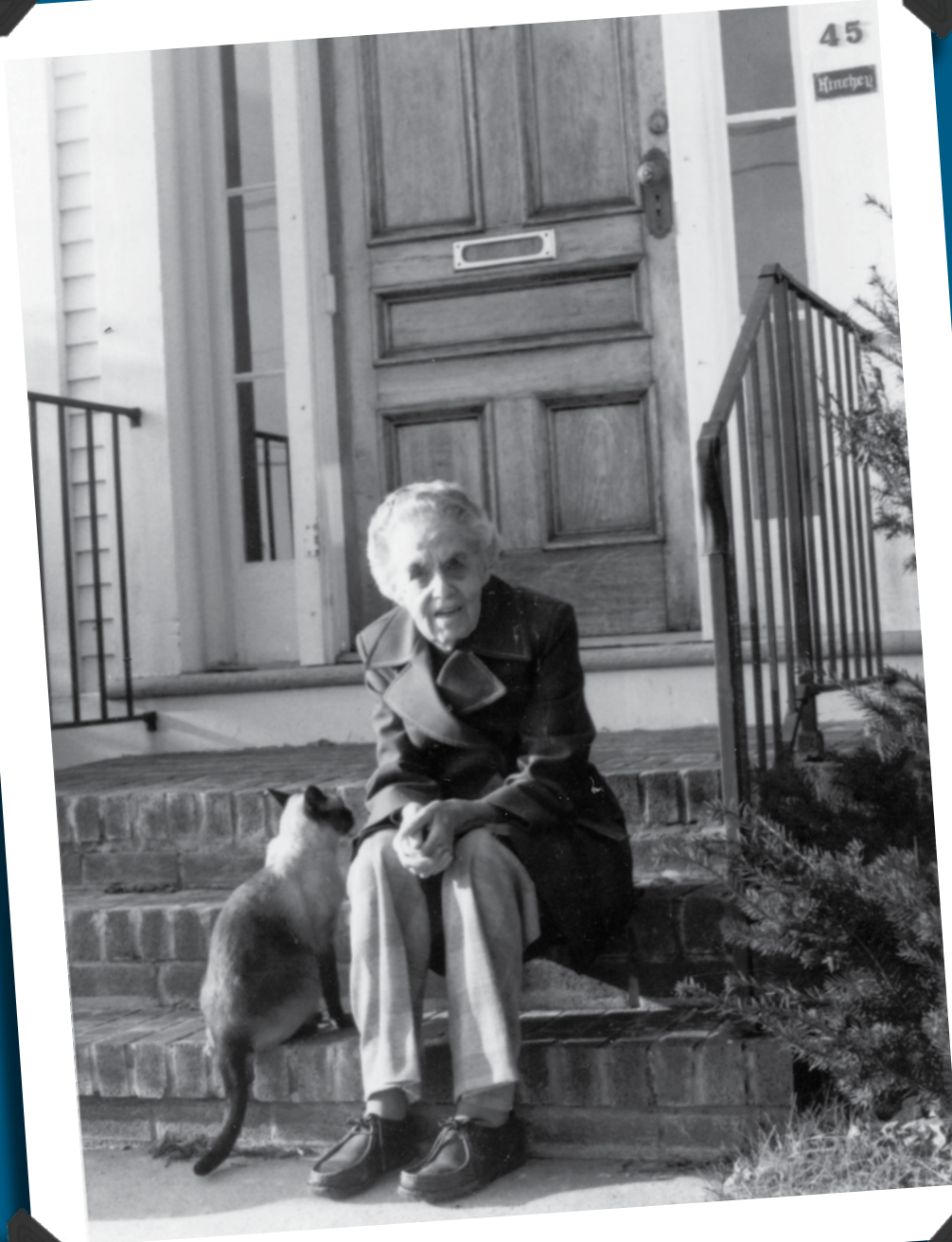
Hailey recently completed a Leave No Trace Master Educator Course.



MINERVA HINCHEY

GMC's Longtime Corresponding Secretary was responsible for mailing
the *Long Trail News* for 22 years

By Larry Van Meter



Green Mountain Club members might assume club headquarters has always been in Waterbury Center. But not so long ago the office was the dining room of a modest frame house next to the Vermont State Fairgrounds in Rutland.

In the 1950s and '60s the club operated from Fred Field's insurance office on Merchants Row in Rutland. Fred was an active GMC member, and his bookkeeper was native Rutlander Honora Minerva Hinchey. Minerva had only rarely been on the Long Trail, but her job included mailing the *Long Trail News* to club members, then numbering only 200. In 1955 she was elected GMC Corresponding Secretary, then the club's only year-round paid position. She succeeded Lula M. Tye, who had served since 1926.

**REPORT OF THE
TRUSTEES MEETING,
May 1955, Long Trail News**
*"A letter of application
for the position of
Corresponding Secretary
from Miss Minerva Hinchey
was read. The trustees voted
unanimously to recommend
her to the members at the
Annual Meeting."*

When the Field Agency closed in the early 1960s, the club office moved to Minerva's house, where she lived with her brother and niece, both public school educators. Hikers, many from out of state, often found 45 Park Street seeking information on the Long Trail, and knocked tentatively at her front door. No Vermonter uses the front door, so Minerva directed them to the back and ushered them into her dining room filled with guidebooks, file cabinets, and, notably, the Addressograph machine.

After four or five years of imposing on Minerva's home, the club decided that exploding interest in the Long Trail warranted a more accessible space on Center Street downtown, about a mile away. The rented office was nothing fancy: a tiny windowless space with ochre shag carpeting and fake wood paneling next to the Back Home Café, a sketchy second-floor bar and restaurant. Illuminated

by harsh fluorescent lighting, the office had the ambience of a popup Halloween store.

I was hired in 1975 as the club's first executive director. Recently turned 25, I had been a shelter caretaker and ranger-naturalist on Camel's Hump for several seasons. I had met Minerva a few times at club activities, and she greeted me warmly when I first climbed the steep stairs. Clearly pleased to see me, she said, "You know, Larry, I'm 81 and 81!" Enjoying my perplexed response, she explained with a twinkle in her eye: "I'm 81 years old and 81 pounds."

Minerva used a portable electric typewriter, but nothing else was motorized. The membership list was a set of metal file drawers containing 4,000 aluminum Addressograph plates, each holding a name and address. The Addressograph resembled an industrial punch press, and with the plates it filled a corner of the cramped office.

Minerva did a club-wide mailing five times a year. Placing each envelope or *Long Trail News* copy on the Addressograph, she put all 81 pounds to the task of depressing a stiff lever emitting a loud "Ka-chunk!" as it printed each often-fuzzy address. A mailing took several days, and according to *Smoke and Blazes*, the Killington Section newsletter, Minerva "would sleep all the next day" after each one.

Minerva was quite prim and proper. But more than once when she returned from the bathroom we shared with the Back Home Cafe she remarked, with a shy smile, "Well, Larry, it's really interesting what people write on the walls in there!"

She also managed guidebook orders, and was on a first-name basis with our commercial customers, from the tiny Bennington Bookstore to the huge EMS store in Boston. Ever the frugal Vermonter, she used old paper grocery bags from home to wrap packages. The "First National Stores" logo on the bags occasionally confounded the Post Office, but most parcels arrived as intended.

Hikers often phoned for trail information. Minerva never hesitated to answer, even when she didn't actually know trail conditions. She'd hiked a fair amount in her younger days, but mostly stuck to walks around her neighborhood by the time we worked together. When I sensed a caller needed accurate information, I would hop up from my desk next to Minerva's: "Let me handle this one, Minerva."

By the late '70s, as I returned to school, the GMC Board decided to move the office



Addressograph machine with sample address.

north, initially to Montpelier. The club had changed substantially in Minerva's 20 years, growing seventeen-fold to 3,500 members and expanding its staff accordingly. There was an uncomfortable understanding that Minerva would not move with the office. Her job was central to her existence, and soon after the move she declined and passed away, at the age of 83.

Naturally, one who worked for the club so long, though seldom on the trail, was fondly remembered. The club renamed former Sunnyside Camp for her in 1979. This honor reminds us that the club's work doesn't happen only on the trail. Blazing, brushing, erosion control and shelter and privy maintenance are critical. But so, too, is work behind the scenes. People like Minerva, paid and unpaid, have quietly enabled the club to serve its members and the public well for more than a century.

LARRY VAN METER worked for GMC first as a shelter caretaker on Camel's Hump and then as the organization's first executive director, from 1975 to 1977. He also served as Executive Director of the Appalachian Trail Conference (now the Appalachian Trail Conservancy) and as an educator for many years. He lives in rural southern New Jersey, where he is the president of the Forman Acton Educational Foundation.

The Long Trail via Public Transit

~ CIRCA 1917 ~

By Preston Bristow



James P. Taylor founded the Green Mountain Club in 1910, and just seven years later the club published the first edition of the *Guide Book of the Long Trail*. Henry Ford introduced his Model T in 1908, but in 1917 automobiles in Vermont were still objects of curiosity. Worse, few rural roads were better than dirt tracks. Autos are mentioned in the 1917 *Guide*, but—unsurprisingly—not prominently.

So how did the typical tramper get to this new thing called the Long Trail? By public transit and lots of walking. Here are some “Access to the Long Trail” descriptions (edited for brevity while preserving the terse guidebook style) from the 1917 *Guide*:

JOHNSON TO MANSFIELD: *From Johnson Station on St. J. & L.C.R.R., climb short hill, turn to left at sign “French Hill.” At 1½ m bear right up hill, 2 m bridge crossing brook, falls at right. Continue up steep hill, at 2½ m bear left on less used road about ten rods to turnstile and Long Trail sign.*

Of note is the St. Johnsbury & Lamoille County Railroad that provided two daily passenger trains each way through Johnson Station in 1917. Passenger service ended in 1956, and the line was abandoned in 1996. It is today the state-owned Lamoille Valley Rail Trail. (A “rod” is an Old English unit of measurement still used in some surveying, 16.5 feet.)

STOWE TO MANSFIELD: *Electrics to Stowe from Waterbury on C.V.R.R. Team to Bingham’s Falls, 7 m. Trail to Sterling Pond and Long Trail to Smuggler’s Notch, Barnes Camp and Mansfield. Via Electrics to Stowe from Waterbury, stage to summit Mansfield. Summer Hotel. Lake Mansfield is 5 m from Moscow on Stowe Electric Railway.*

Electrics to Stowe? Yes, Virginia, there once was an electric railway to Stowe. The Mount Mansfield Electric Railroad ran three round trips each day, taking 50 minutes to cover the line’s 12 miles from the Waterbury Station on the Central Vermont Railroad to Stowe village. A victim of the Great Depression, the line ceased operation in 1932. “Team” referred to a horse-drawn wagon or buggy. “Stage” was likely still the horse-drawn Mansfield Mountain stagecoach.

BOLTON TO CAMELS HUMP: *At Bolton Station on C.V.R.R. face south, cross track, through mill yard to river where ferry is necessary. Best telephone Mrs. C. S. Brush at Bolton in advance and arrange transportation as boat is usually on south bank of river.*

One rowboat or another operated by various families ferried hikers across the Winooski River until 1964. Today the river is crossed by a 224-foot-long steel suspension footbridge. If only Amtrak’s Vermonter, which carries passengers over the former Central Vermont Railroad, had a Long Trail flag stop.

WEST BRIDGEWATER TO KILLINGTON: *From Woodstock by Woodstock R.R., take daily stage to West Bridgewater. Follow arrows past farms, keep to old road to “Juggernaut” (abandoned farm) at 1½ m from West Bridgewater Village. Cross opening and take trail at further end of house...*

White River Junction was a major rail hub served by the Central Vermont Railroad and the Boston & Maine Railroad. The 14-mile train trip from White River Junction to Woodstock took



PHOTO: BILL GOVE COLLECTION AT VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MOSCOW WAY STATION – The Moscow Way Station on the Mount Mansfield Electric Railway. Three ladies are standing on what is today’s busy Route 100. This is the stop for Lake Mansfield.



PHOTO: APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

APPALACHIAN TRAIL STOP – Appalachian Trail Stop on New York’s Metro-North Harlem Line. What about a Long Trail Stop on Amtrak’s Vermonter in Bolton?



50 minutes, whereas the 14-mile trip from Woodstock to West Bridgewater took three rough and jarring hours by a horse-drawn stagecoach. Although well-run, the Woodstock Railroad did not survive the Great Depression, and was abandoned in 1933.

BENNINGTON TO SUCKER POND:
Optional Route – Trolley to Pownal. Take highway past Barber Pond, over “County Road” hitting Long Trail into Sucker Pond.

The Berkshire Street Railway once had an extensive trolley network, and one could disembark from the Rutland Railroad’s Bennington Station (or the Boston & Maine’s Williamstown, Mass., station) and ride a trolley to Pownal. The trolley ceased operation after the Great Flood of 1927. The accommodations at Sucker Pond were described in the 1917 *Guide* as “Fish & Game Club canvas tepee. Contains stove only.”

As many and varied as the public transit options to the Long Trail were in 1917, were we trampers then, we likely would have cheered the Good Roads movement and the advent of automobiles affordable to all. Today, 105 years later, most hikers rely on private cars – their own or those of the network of paid and volunteer trail angels and shuttle drivers.

As we consider the benefits of public transportation once again, the options for reaching the Long Trail are limited, yet slowly expanding. Fortunately we have the Amtrak Vermonter and Ethan Allen Express trains serving Vermont once more, as well as good roads to support bicycles, buses and even – dare I predict – self-driving taxis.

PRESTON BRISTOW is a past GMC President and chairs the GMC Land Conservation Committee. This article combines his interests in biking, history and railroads.

The Long Trail via Public Transit Today

EMILY HUNT completed an end-to-end Long Trail hike in 2020 using public transportation and the trail angel network to get around. Here is how she found it, 105 years later...

When you live in a city and bike, walk, or take the train everywhere, trying to get back to the woods can be daunting. Fortunately I was used to getting to the woods on buses. I haven’t owned a vehicle for the four years I’ve lived in Boston.

When Covid lockdowns started in March, 2020, my international travel plans evaporated, so I turned my sights to the nearby Long Trail. With just three weeks of vacation, I had to carefully plan the trickiest part: getting to and from trailheads efficiently in the early stage of a global pandemic. Vermont still had public transportation on hold to reduce spread of the virus.

I knew reaching the remote northern terminus would be a challenge, so I started there. I found a **Concord Express** bus from Boston to Littleton, N.H., right on the Vermont border. A trail angel picked me up and drove me the last 45 minutes to the trailhead for a small fee.

I hitchhiked to and from towns for resupply while hiking, wearing a mask. Vermont’s hiking community is amazing – I had few problems getting a ride even then, a happy surprise.

As I approached the southern terminus in North Adams, Mass., I faced the return to Boston. Today Google Maps can help you figure out how to combine several bus lines, if you try different combinations of intermediate cities. I discovered a local bus from North Adams to Pittsfield, Mass. Great! But, it only ran once a day, and wouldn’t get me to my job in time. Trail angel to the rescue, again. From Pittsfield I could take **Amtrak** to Boston and **The T** (Boston public transportation) to my apartment.

Getting to and from the trail with no car or friends or family to help took a little finagling, especially during Covid, but it was worth it for the freedom of hiking on my own schedule and not worrying about the security of a parked car.

Vermont Public Transportation Options

To the Southern Terminus

Peter Pan Bus Lines offers reasonable rates from most major cities to Williamstown, Mass.

Green Mountain Express Purple Line has service from downtown Bennington to Pine Cobble Trail in Williamstown.

Amtrak service to Pittsfield, Mass. via the seasonal **Berkshire Flyer** and the **Lake Shore Limited**.

Bennington Area

The **Green Mountain Express Emerald Line** serves downtown Bennington to the LT/AT Trailhead on Vermont Route 9.

Rutland/Killington area

“The Bus” (**Marble Valley Regional Transit**) offers service from downtown Rutland to the Inn at Long Trail and stops at the Vermont Route 103 trailhead upon request.

Route 7/Middlebury Area

Tri Valley Transit buses offers a “stop by request” at the LT parking lot on Vermont Route 125, with service into Middlebury.

The **Amtrak Ethan Allen Express** resumed service in summer 2022, with service from New York City to Rutland, Middlebury and Burlington.

Burlington/Richmond/Bolton

Green Mountain Transit will pick up and drop off at the Richmond Park and Ride, about 6.5 miles from the LT trailhead on U.S. Route 2 in Bolton.

Northern Terminus

Green Mountain Transit Richford/St. Albans commuter bus connects Burlington and Richford, but a shuttle or taxi is needed to go the rest of the way.

Piece routes together using **connectingcommuters.org** or Google Maps.

The local bus options are plentiful in Vermont and neighboring states, but the schedules sometimes leave a lot to be desired. Unless time is no object, it can be impractical to do an entire thru-hike of the Long Trail relying solely on public transportation. That’s where the extraordinary network of trail angels comes in. More information on shuttles, taxis, and trail angels is available by emailing gmc@greenmountainclub.org.
Subj: Transportation List

DECENTERING Whiteness in Hiking

by Mardi Fuller



You'll find me in our northeastern woods in every season. Ever since sleepaway camp hikes in the Catskills and then my first backpacking trip on the Long Trail, in college in 1997, I have loved our particular configuration of forest land, our wide variety of vibrant trees and our rich soil. As I became a regular hiker, the alpine zone drew me in, especially in winter. The drama imprinted itself upon me: rime ice on rocks and brush, the massive drifts at times, and trail signage transformed into icy art installations.

As a child and as a young woman I was sensitive to the fact that I was one of few, if any, Black people that I saw on the trail. In Vermont, 90% of the population identifies as white, and the folks who utilize the Long Trail largely reflect that number. The low-level discomfort I felt in a perceived white space was not terribly different from my experience in school or in the workplace, with one notable exception: I went to the woods in my free time. Time when I could've chosen the relief and the peace found in Black or BIPOC community. And yet, I wanted to be outside — I love to be in nature because I am nature, because the living earth infuses me with wellness and healing, with inspiration.

It can be weird outdoors, for People of Color. We love nature as much as White people, the dominant group, but we've faced barriers, both conceptual and practical, that impede our full access to it. Indigenous people are the original leaders on this land, be it in adventure, preservation, or agricultural innovation. Black, Asian, Latine and multiracial people have connected and contributed to the land for as long as we have been here. But our contributions

have gone unrecognized or erased, and our experience on the land is fraught with the memory of our oppression. Peeling back all of the layers of why and how we've gotten to where we are requires more than just a history lesson. It requires an analysis of how social forces engender patterns and habits that become entrenched. It requires connecting our identities to our environmental heritages. And for White people it requires understanding the history of racialization, listening to lived experiences of people of color, and integrating that knowledge into their ways of being.

But Why Do You Hike?

What follows is a composite of multiple conversations over the years. A White hiker asks me,

"Why don't more Black people hike?"

I struggle to determine how to approach this question, where to even begin. Some would find the question intrusive. I don't. I know that the intent is genuine curiosity. But I'm saddened by the ignorance of it. The answers are complex, but they are easily discoverable.

I respond by flipping the question.

Well, hmm. Why do *you* hike?

The hiker may answer: "Because I love nature! I love being outside, I love physical exertion. Because I've been going since I was a kid. Some friends invited me as an adult. I went on a school, group or church outing. I am an Eagle Scout."

These responses highlight a focus on individualism and a deep and likely unrecognized sense of belonging in those spaces. A belonging felt so deeply that some might experience it as an entitlement, as a sense of ownership. Additionally, it is a hallmark of both white cultural conditioning and our nation's value system to over-emphasize individuality and individual choice, even in the face of ready evidence of how our environments, our families, our communities and our shared history impact our realities.

In this conversation, some hikers would even stop at, "I love being outside" - had they never thought more deeply to examine exactly how they had developed that love? They had received opportunities over the course of their lives to have varied experiences outside, never being questioned for their interest, rather receiving affirmation that what they had just done was strong, brave, cool.

At this point in our discussion, a humble and open conversation partner sees the direction I am headed in, and I can share some of the ways that People of Color have been historically excluded from access to outdoor sports and even simply to nature spaces. I do my best to explain some of the history and the national ideologies centuries in the making that shape policies and outcomes. I draw on the scholarship of Carolyn Finney in her seminal book, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans in the Outdoors*.

The Forces at Play

The environmental ideology that we operate out of today has its foundations in our country's origin story: the colonists' forced removal of Native Nations from their lands and the enslavement of African people. Throughout the long process of its founding, the U.S. attempted to erase the history of the land it now occupies in order to build upon it a new identity which did not include Black, Indigenous and people of color in its narrative. We were actively pushed to the margins. The legacy of these original sins, and all the oppression that followed, looms large in our policies, social dynamics, and existence today.

The federal government moved Native people off of lands to create national parks, designated for the “enjoyment of all men,” which implicitly meant White people. Concurrently, the same federal government put laws into place to limit movement across the land and accessibility to the land for Black people, Chinese people and Native people. The Homestead Act of 1862 gave 160 acres of free land to White men even while the pending legislation to give former slaves 40 acres and a mule was rescinded by the government to appease former southern slaveholders.

The narratives shaped during this period were key to enshrining the symbols and iconography meant to inspire White men to expand into the land, and to exclude the rich history People of Color have with the land.

And of course, all of this precedes the concrete atrocities and injustices that we talk about more frequently in the conversation about equitable access to the outdoors.

Black people were forced to work the land during the eras of slavery and sharecropping, creating an emotionally fraught relationship to the natural world. The risk of violence or false accusations at the hands of White people loomed in the woods. In the 20th century, sectors of society including banking, real estate, and even churches enacted residential segregation by race, systematically pushing Black people into concentrated urban areas that were then deprived of green space and other resources. Segregation banned us from many parks, pools and beaches. Today, discrimination, profiling and violence are regular threats, so much so that we have hashtags like: #DrivingWhileBlack, #RunningWhileBlack, #BirdingWhileBlack.

Socioeconomic inequities leave us collectively with less time and money to invest in recreation. We are “welcome” in most parks and on most trails, but we didn’t co-create these outdoor recreation venues. We aren’t free to fully be ourselves and bring our unique talents and perspectives to the enterprise, and to the detriment of the institution, we don’t share ownership of outcomes and thus we may not feel responsible for caring for and protecting that space.

Making Change

Making change will rectify past wrongdoing and enrich outdoor experiences for all of us. It involves healing from the toxicity of past and current dynamics, and it’s happening. Affinity groups provide BIPOC the critical time and space to recover from everyday racism and hyper-awareness around our race. They provide an environment with the conditions necessary for us to self-determine rather than taking direction from the existing structure. This allows us to develop unique leadership models which we then offer to the greater community.

What can White hikers and others occupying dominant social locations do? First, and most importantly, step back, listen and follow. Marginalized groups who have been living under cultural dominance need some time to exercise our agency, to develop our terms of engagement and our cultural expressions within the landscape of outdoor institutions and activities. White hikers can support initiatives financially, and provide technical help when asked. During this time of rebalancing, drawing People of Color, queer people, people with disabilities, neurodiverse people and more into the halls of leadership, White people can learn and grow, focusing on racial identity development in order to better understand and interpret the forces at play.

Decentering whiteness in the hiking community is critical to opening up access for all. This includes recognizing racism and white supremacy in our ways of thinking and operating and working to root them out. It means naming white cultural norms and making space for all groups of people. It doesn’t mean these practices are necessarily bad or good, but that they shouldn’t be the sole occupant of the center. This will be a collective process throughout societal intersections including individual, interpersonal and institutional levels. When true leadership is established across groups who have been marginalized by white supremacy and heteropatriarchy we’ll see an increase in BIPOC folks, queer folks, people with disabilities, people of all ages, all sizes participating in ecological protection, recreating on their own terms, improving their health outcomes and finding their own joy.

MARDI FULLER is an outdoor industry leader who advocates for racial equity through writing, speaking and community building. A lifelong backcountry adventurer, in January 2021 she became the first Black person to hike all 48 of New Hampshire’s high peaks in winter. She lives in Boston where she works as a nonprofit communications director and volunteers with the local Outdoor Afro network. Follow her journey at @wherelocsflyfree.



Mardi and a friend at the top of Mount Ellen, Summer 2021.



Evolution of Professional Crews, 1929-2022

THE 2022 FIELD SEASON was our second post-pandemic year with full staffing. More funding enabled us to tackle the backlog of work, and we completed a significant number of trail improvement projects.

From starting the top-to-bottom overhaul of the Burrows Trail to finishing five years of trail relocations to protect Stratton Pond from shoreline erosion, our crews and caretakers employed a sophisticated combination of skills to make valuable and lasting improvements. I am impressed and humbled by our crews, as they strengthened GMC's reputation for expecting technical proficiency and high efficiency.

But the trail building industry has become increasingly competitive in the last 20 years. We struggle each year to hire experienced trail crew leaders who can meld the art and science of modern backcountry trail maintenance and construction. GMC has run a professional paid crew for more than 90 years, so I was curious to see how the club's field programs have evolved, and what we can learn to strengthen today's field program staff. *The Long Trail News* tells the story...

“It was decided to have four experienced woodsmen patrol the entire trail, two over the northern half and two the southern half, before the tramping season opens, renew the blazes where needed and do ordinary clearing.” ~ APRIL 1929

GMC introduced a roving crew in 1929 to check trails, perform light routine maintenance, and tell sections what they needed to do. By 1931 the club needed to considerably increase the crew's charge:

“As a remedy [to ongoing poor conditions] [Wallace M. Faye] suggested an all-season patrol to last about 100 days with three men at work continually, and suggested a tentative program for them, including work on side trails and relocations. The cost of this he estimated as at least \$1000, which is probably an underestimate, as it includes wages and provisions for three men and the cost of running a car.” ~ FEBRUARY 1931

This was the start of the modern Long Trail Patrol. Professor Roy O. Buchanan was hired to lead the crew, which he did on the ground for 36 years before turning to planning and training.

“Prof. Buchanan and his famous crew proved themselves the possessors of every asset desirable in such work- good woodsmanship, capable trail and camp builders, faithful, economical, efficient, tactful, resourceful and ever thinking of the Club's welfare.” ~ FEBRUARY 1932

While our staff still has these qualities, much has changed. We need trail builders who understand basic principles of engineering, construction, soils science, ecology, and psychology. They need a sound aesthetic



PHOTO BY EMMA SEKERCAN

Burrows trail crew members Mo (left) and Febe (right) crush and fill.

sense to build sophisticated structures hikers will find natural and attractive. They must communicate with and motivate crews of their peers, manage complex projects, monitor quality, do hard physical work, and be content living in a tent. And do it all with a smile when explaining the intricacies of their work to the 97th curious hiker.

It works best when seasonal field staff return to GMC for a few consecutive years, as they provide institutional knowledge that improves efficiency in managing the Long Trail System.

“GRADIENT How the Patrol tells whether the grade is too steep to put a trail straight up: lay the tools on the ground; if they don't slide, O.K.; if they do, put in a zig, and (if necessary) a zag too.” ~ NOVEMBER 1940

While this passage was a joke, it reminds us how far trail building has come. When the trail was cut in the 1910s, the club's founders and volunteers aimed to put the Long Trail on ridgelines, usually cutting the shortest path upward. Today we seek trail durability to cope with climate change and ever increasing traffic.

“The cost of the Patrol, both for labor and materials has, like the cost of everything else, increased greatly described over pre-war figures, while the dues and the membership in the club have remained almost stationary.” ~ NOVEMBER 1949



PHOTO BY THERON DEAN

One of the first Long Trail Patrol crews with their truck.

Long Trail News Editor L. B. Puffer pleaded with the membership to recognize the cost of the Long Trail Patrol in the postwar world. Today we have similar challenges - wages and material costs are skyrocketing. There are shifts in the labor market and a greater need to support employees in the field. We are pleased we could raise wages for 2022, but cannot compete with commercial trail building companies and frontcountry jobs.

“The Patrol’s major priority was rehabilitation and physical protection of the treadway. Work performed included installation of several hundred water bars, extensive ditching and drainage control activity, construction of numerous trail bridges and catwalks around muddy areas, minor relocations around hazardous spot and other undesirable trail features, and restoration or reconstruction of several gullied or badly worn portions of the trail.” ~ NOVEMBER 1974

Hiking exploded in the early ‘70s and the trail was not designed for this increased use. At this time, most of the club’s trail work was being done by individual and section volunteers. The club saw a major shift in management as the club granted more work to the paid crews to meet the trail’s construction and maintenance needs. Those crews had to do ever-more sophisticated work, and some 1974 projects resembled today’s.

“The other frustration was the loss of half a dozen LTP members early in the season. Although new people were hired to fill the gaps, personnel turnovers detract from the overall effectiveness of a trail crew; the teamwork so essential to a good crew is extremely difficult to develop with new faces appearing, and valuable time is lost training new crew members in mid-season.” ~ NOVEMBER 1978

I could feel the pain in Harry Peet Jr.’s postseason report. Since the pandemic, seasonal employees’ expectations have changed, and we have reconsidered our expectations. We’ve been lucky to have had minimal mid-season turnover, but illness, injury, and the unexpected challenges of

the job’s isolation complicate seasonal personnel management now.

“Two new fulltime staff positions were established: Northern and Southern Field Assistant. The creation of these positions was the result of a lengthy review and investigation of the Club’s current staff situation and needs.” ~ MAY 1983

The *Long Trail News* reported enlargement of the full time, year round field programs team. These positions exist today but are no longer permanent, resulting in frequent turnover among qualified supervisors who have been trail crew members or caretakers, and know the needs of the LT well. (This year the roles were held by returner Nigel Bates and newcomer Kevin Hart.)

WANTED: “PAT ON THE BACK”

The next time you meet a GMC Field Employee on the trail, stop and introduce yourself, especially if you are a Club member. Remember, these low paid field employees are working hard for you and others, so that your hike may be more enjoyable. Too often their efforts are overlooked and a little “pat on the back” is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

In 1980 the *Long Trail News* implored readers to give trail workers a “Pat on the Back” to compensate for low pay. Today’s employees aren’t falling for that. True, GMC provides many intangible benefits: living in some of the most beautiful places in Vermont; completing important projects; a public largely appreciative of

our staff. We provide some benefits other employers don’t, such as off-duty housing and retirement contributions. But we have room to improve.

By making progress on livable and competitive wages, we will be a more equitable employer. By including time for rest and recuperation, we will reduce chronic injury rates that result from the hard work of backcountry life on the body. By improving our policies and commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we will instill the values younger employees seek in an employer.

GMC is not alone. At the recent Northeast Alpine Stewardship Gathering, colleagues from the Adirondack Mountain Club, the Appalachian Mountain Club, Baxter State Park, and the Friends of Acadia voiced these concerns in our plenary sessions. The loss of technical and organizational knowledge to the seasonal grind threatens all of our organizations. We will probably need to develop structures beyond the traditional seasonal workforce to meet the increasing need for competent professional trail crew leaders and members.

We have a responsibility to invest substantial time, energy and money to make GMC an employer of choice for seasonal and field employees. I look forward to tackling these challenges with our staff, volunteers, and membership, so that the club remains the premier trail management organization in Vermont and beyond.

— KEEGAN TIERNEY

2022 Field Work at a Glance

Two Long Trail Patrol crews, a backcountry construction crew, office staff members, volunteers, and caretakers completed an enormous amount of work, including:

- Built or repaired **five privies** (Kid Gore, Old Job, Stony Brook, Taft, and Thistle Hill Shelters)
- Repaired or constructed **six shelters** (Seth Warner, Sunrise, Stratton View, Spruce Peak, Puffer Shelters, and the new Beaver Dam Cabin at Wheeler Pond)
- Hardened tread and addressed erosion on **nine stretches of trail** (Dunville Hollow, Stratton Pond, Griffith Lake, LT/AT near Governor Clement, Bucklin Trail, LT at Cooley Glen, Burrows Trail, Sterling Pond Trail, northern LT near Tillotson Camp)

Read more about these projects at greenmountainclub.org/2022-field-season-in-review/

EVOLUTION of the Cover Design

Continued from page 11

Wartime threw the club, and its publication, into disarray. The **April 1944** book covered three issues, and acting editor L.B. Puffer explained the schedule change and the new budget. *"First, of course, an apology is due to all the members of the club for the delay in the appearance of the News. There is really no good excuse, but there are reasons.... However, here is an issue, and, since it takes the place of two or three regular numbers, we can afford to make it a little more voluminous and include more illustrations without exceeding the limited appropriation of the last annual meeting."*



By **August 1944**, the publication returned to a simple, four-page, two-column newspaper-type layout, the result of both a limited budget and limited submissions. GMC Corresponding Secretary Lula Tye wrote, *"Time goes by very quickly, and if you send in everything you can, then it will not be difficult to get the material together for the printing. Come on, let's all get busy and send in lots and lots of good material for the News."*



The magazine saw few changes in the next decades. It was the primary member communication, so it included detailed reporting of trustee meetings, annual meetings, intersectionals (club-wide camping and hiking gatherings), and reports from sections. "Lighter fare" included poetry, trip reports, letters from hikers, and a few photographs. Its length increased with time.

The Next Century of

I hope you enjoyed this special issue and our walk down memory lane celebrating 100 years of the Green Mountain Club's membership publication. After two years as GMC Communications Manager and Editor, this project gave me a deeper understanding of the club and its important turning points; its members, volunteers, leaders and shapers; and the roles of the *Long Trail News* and the club's outreach communications going forward.

So, what purpose does the magazine serve today, and where do we go from here?

Researching the evolving appearance of the *Long Trail News* for the sidebar at left, I was surprised to learn that the design of today's magazine, introduced in 1998, hardly changed in more than 20 years, while the online communications world has changed immensely.

GMC created a Facebook page in January 2009, and sent our first email newsletter in March 2010. Today we mail about 6,500 copies of the *Long Trail News* to members, but we reach 15,000 email subscribers and 25,000 Facebook followers.

We can send news, announcements, and event updates to members and non-members anytime with the touch of a button, with no need to lock content in place weeks ahead of quarterly mailings. We're able to reach nonmember hikers in a way that was logistically impossible pre-Internet and posed a challenge to my predecessors. Thus, many people question the value of print publications, and indeed some of our sister organizations have scrapped print magazines, citing budget constraints and reader preferences. They may have a point.

But the *Long Trail News* remains valuable and appreciated. Most members say they read and enjoy it, and we email PDF copies to members who prefer that. We have no plan to shift to an online-only version of the *News* or end production. But for both practical and strategic reasons, the *LTN* must continue to evolve as it has for a century, to match today's communications reality.

From its earliest days, the *Long Trail News* was a platform for the club's volunteer and staff leaders to describe their work and convey their opinions to members, and to shape their understanding of the club. It didn't shy from taking strong political stances, as you can see in Vic Henningsen's piece on page 6 about the Green Mountain Parkway proposal of the 1930s. Edward Sprague Marsh, founding editor of the *LTN*, exercised tremendous influence, and probably shaped the club's presentation of a remarkably unified opposition to the Parkway. "My sense is that the club kept a tighter rein on editors after Marsh," Vic says.

While the *News* tackled certain topics head-on with strong positions, it's also telling what *didn't* appear in its pages, perhaps considered too fraught or divisive.

An example is a pivotal incident in 1971, when young caretakers angrily stormed the board meeting at the Intersectional (an annual outdoor club gathering), demanding

the Long Trail News

action on overcrowding plaguing the trail. The issue was covered delicately, as the magazine understandably sought to downplay the rift between young seasonal staff members and older, more conservative leaders. Only in 2017, in “Is this a Hiking Club?” did the *News* cover the tense dynamics at play in 1971.

But the *Long Trail News* has often carefully reported on difficult issues that affect the trail experience, such as the debate about wind turbines on ridgelines that led to a policy in 2011, and we are committed to continue that.

As this special edition is coming together, the staff and board are undertaking a strategic planning process to define priorities and goals for the next five years. Key themes are emerging: coping with increased trail use and the impacts of climate change, and fostering a membership and hiking community that cares for natural resources and welcomes hikers of all backgrounds. Staff and board members and section leaders are delving deeply into these issues, and they want members to join the conversation, even when it is difficult.

As former editor Sylvia Plumb said, “*Today, as in the past, the LTN has the critically important role of looking at the trail, this resource, and its history in light of the issues facing our state and the country today.*”

As we sharpen the focus of the *Long Trail News*, we must challenge ourselves to share perspectives of people who have been left out of our community, as activist Mardi Fuller does so thoughtfully on page 18. Her examination of historical and modern forces affecting BIPOC hikers offers the largely white and privileged Vermont hiking community the opportunity to broaden their understanding of inclusivity on the trail.

In the coming years you can expect long-overdue changes to the *Long Trail News* as we seek to develop both print and digital communications to best serve you. The *Long Trail News* will concentrate more on in-depth stories, and email and other online platforms will handle news and updates, a shift we’ve already begun. We’re considering different lengths, layouts, and online components for print stories. We hope to continue building a stable of talented writers to share experiences not previously documented in these pages, as well as continue to share progress reports on the club’s work on the trails. All the while, we plan to maintain the longstanding history and integrity of the *Long Trail News*.

The Green Mountain Club would not exist without you, the member. As we work to make the *Long Trail News* best serve you, we invite you to share your opinions and stories.

My inbox is always open: cmiller@greenmountainclub.org

—CHLOE MILLER

SPECIAL THANKS: Lee Allen, Dick Andrews, Preston Bristow, Vic Henningsen, Ken Hertz, Matt Krebs, John Page, Sylvia Plumb, Susan Shea, Howard VanBenthuyssen, Larry Van Meter, Sylvie Vidrine.

EVOLUTION of the Cover Design

In **May 1985**, editor Jeffrey Silman revealed an updated format, cover design, and paid advertisements. The Board approved these changes warily: “*Concern was expressed, however, that the News not be changed drastically or become a slick magazine.*”



Sylvia Plumb oversaw two thoughtful redesigns during her editorship. In **Fall 1992**, she writes, “*We introduce this new look with the hope that we have developed a cleaner, easier to read, more modern publication, while maintaining a sense of the Club’s history and tradition.*”



Just six years later, Sylvia did it again. “*Why the change? We needed to communicate better with you. Articles about the goings on at the club left no room for features and photographs about GMC volunteers, history, or sections and little room for discussion of trail issues. To remedy this problem, we have added eight pages and redesigned the format.*” — **Winter 1998**. Sylvia introduced departments such as “Trail Mix” and “Mountain Views.”



Sound familiar? The magazine kept this 32-page, full-color, feature-and-department format for 20-plus years. In **Winter 2020**, we scaled back to 24 pages considering pandemic pressures, staff capacity, and the increased focus on digital communications.





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