

Smoke & Blazes

Volume 74, Number 4

Killington Section, Green Mountain Club

December 2021

Best Wishes for the Holiday Season



Nancy, Cathy, Lisa and Patches enjoying lunch and a little rest after hiking to Little Rock Pond in Wallingford.

Photo by Herb Ogden.

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Term expiration 2022

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Allison Henry*

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Term expiration 2023

Sue Thomas*

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Term expiration 2024

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*Second consecutive 3-year term.

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Trails & Shelters

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Fall reflection on Kent Pond.

Photo by Sue Thomas.

This n' That

► **Editor's Note:**

As many of you already know, this issue of Smoke & Blazes will be the last one for me as Editor. My first issue was February, 2011 when I volunteered to replace Bob Perkins when he retired as Editor. My intention was to serve for 5 or 6 years, but as the saying goes . . . "time flies . . ." and now it's time for me to retire. I have had my share of fun and frustrations while putting each issue together. Overall, it has been a rewarding experience. **Thanks so much to all of you who have contributed articles and pictures over the years, which is the main reason why Smoke & Blazes has been a successful publication and something to look forward to reading. I ABSOLUTELY couldn't have done it without you. Your words of encouragement and appreciation have meant a great deal to me.** In my experience, volunteering where there is need is a worthy endeavor and I am glad to have had the opportunity to help the Killington Section of the GMC in this way. Since our next editor has not volunteered yet, it may be a while before the next issue of Smoke & Blazes reaches you by mail and/or email. In the meantime, if you think you might be interested, give it some thought and contact a board member or myself with any questions you might have. On average, I spend about 25 hours quarterly to get out each issue. If you enjoy word processing on a computer, you are already half way there.

► **Covid Update, by Sue Thomas, Outings Committee Chair**

As we continue to cope with the pandemic, I recently participated in a zoom meeting with the main club and outings chairs from the other GMC sections to formulate some consistent guidelines for outings. I know I speak for everyone when I say that it has been a difficult year and a half, and time spent outdoors is so important to keep us all on an even keel.

Some sections reported they were still not offering hikes, as their members preferred to go out with a friend or two. Others are limiting their outings to work parties to maintain their piece of the LT. Most, I think, are following the same line as we are, having a very limited schedule due to the fact that very few leaders are willing to deal with all the restrictions and enforcement. Two sections seem to be operating fairly normally with full schedules.

We all agreed that in order to continue to offer group activities, we do, unfortunately, have to bow to reality and maintain some restrictions in order to keep everyone, not only our hikers, but also our community, safe as we head into the winter. So, this was the consensus:

- Leaders must collect contact information for each participant prior to the hike.
- Limit group size to 10, by pre-registration
- If carpooling, masks should be worn and car windows open.
- Social distance while hiking and avoid congregating at trailheads.
- If you are sick or have any symptoms, stay home.
- Vaccination is strongly recommended, and hike leaders may require it.

The most important rules, of course, are to use common sense and consideration for others. Let's keep it safe so we can continue to enjoy and be refreshed by our beautiful State!

► **Stick Season Messaging from the GMC (main office in Waterbury), by Wayne Krevetski**

Safety Tips - Heading into the backcountry? Snow and frost have been reported on mountain summits, and you'll notice the trails getting slippery, cold and dark. Try these safety tips for your next outing:

- Wear sturdy, waterproof boots.
- Use hiking poles to steady yourself.
- Bring a map and compass to help you locate the trail.
- Layer up for winds and cooling weather conditions.
- Have microspikes for traction to the summits; it's getting icy at higher elevations.
- Wear blaze orange for visibility during hunting season.
- Pack a headlamp and extra batteries for the shorter daylight hours.
- Leave your travel plans with someone you trust.

November - Native American Heritage Month – Many of us enjoy this landscape, which has long been stewarded by the Abenaki people. In honor of their historical and continued contributions, we recognize the indigenous names and meanings of our favorite outdoor getaways.

It is largely accepted that Mount Greylock in western Massachusetts is named for Wawanolewat, an honored war chief of the Abenaki who was known as Gray Lock.

Manicknug, said to translate from the Mahican language as the "place where the mountain heaps up." Today, it is also known as Stratton Mountain.

Tawapodiiwajo, meaning "place to sit in mountain." Another Abenaki cognate for the peak is "Moziozagan" for "moose's shoulder." Today, it is commonly recognized as Camel's Hump.

Mozdebiwajo, or "Moosehead Mountain," is Vermont's highest peak, also known as Mt. Mansfield.

Gwenaden or "Long Mountain," is the end of the Long Trail, also called Jay Peak.

Learn more about the mountain names and their aboriginal origins from Rich Holschuh, of the Vermont Commission for Native American Affairs and public liaison for the Elnu Abenaki Tribe: <https://bit.ly/3mN6eEY>

Outing Reports

Clarendon and Pittsford Railbed, September 5, 2021, by Herb Ogden, Leader

After two rained-out tries at holding our first group hike since the pandemic struck a year and a half ago, we finally succeeded in breaking what probably was the longest period of no outings (except COVID-conscious work parties) since the Killington Section was

founded over one hundred years ago. Six of us and a very well-behaved dog had a pleasant walk on the Sunday before Labor Day. Bob Perkins, 94 years old, easily dethroned me from my usual position as the oldest hiker. He has 21 years on me.

The hike wasn't as advertised, but that was just as well because we probably would have been showered on in the backwoods of Mt. Tabor. I had planned to hike south from Devil's Den along the old highway to Weston, turn east near the town line on an abandoned highway to visit the remote Burton Cemetery, come out on Forest Road 10, and walk back up to the start. This became impractical when the Forest Service began to replace the Ten Kilns Brook bridge on Forest Road 10, however. I'll try again next season.

Having floated a couple ideas past those who had registered for the outing, I decided to park at the height of land on Florence Road in Proctor, go a few feet west to the old Clarendon & Pittsford Railroad grade, and follow it north into Pittsford. This took us past several abandoned marble quarries and an impressive stone wall on the west. There were some good views over cow pastures on the east. From various points, we could see, north to south, Bloodroot Mountain, Mt. Carmel, Blue Ridge, Pico, Killington, Little Killington, and Mendon. We continued north, eventually walking between or alongside rails that were still in place. We finally turned around 1.6 miles from where we started, about .07 mile south of stuff piled by the nearby OMYA plant that has buried the railroad. Farther north, the OMYA plant still produces a lot of traffic for the stub that remains of the old Clarendon & Pittsford Railroad. The part from OMYA south to Proctor was abandoned in 1977. It had been opened in 1888, giving the Vermont Marble Company a way to bring marble from its quarries in Pittsford to its mills in Proctor and West Rutland without using the Rutland Railroad's main line to Burlington.



Lisa, Melissa, Bob, Larry, Sue and Patches taking a break.



Melissa, Larry and Bob looking to identify distant mountains.

Killington Quimby, September 11, 2021, by Herb Ogden, Leader

On a beautiful cool sunny day, a half dozen of us visited what may be Vermont's most remote cemetery and the nearby cellar hole of a very large house. We parked at the Killington Town Office, walked River Road north to the Appalachian Trail crossing, and, in the next 1.3 miles, ascended 1100' east on the Appalachian Trail. With us was Upper Valley-Ottawaquechee Section President Dick Andrews, who told us there are 101 waterbars on that section. (His Section maintains the AT from Maine Junction all the way to the Connecticut River, about eleven miles more than we maintain.) We then enjoyed the ridge walk to the VELCO power line, where we lunched with a good view of Killington Peak. When we reached the good gravel logging road that begins on South Hill in Stockbridge, we turned south, then left it to follow an older road more or less along a contour. Passing a branch that leads up to a gap traversed by the AT, we continued to the huge Woodard cellar hole, barely noticeable below the road.

The Woodards lived so far from other folks that the Vermont saying "they live so far back that they have to keep their own tomcat" probably applied to them. The Woodard house must have been an impressive structure, with a deep cellar hole about four times the average size for its time and a central chimney pile so big that I think the house must have been two stories with multiple flues and fireplaces. The dry-masonry cellar hole is some seven feet deep and about forty feet square, and the chimney pile is about ten feet square. In summer, it is all hidden by foliage and hikers often do not notice it. It probably was built some time after May 1824, because that is the date of the earliest deed to a Woodard in Killington Lot 38, which contains the cellar hole and cemetery, and the deed says nothing about a dwelling. Perhaps the big house had fallen down or burned down by the 1850s, because neither the 1869 Beers Atlas of Rutland County, nor a wall map of the state about ten years earlier show anything where it is. No old map shows any road to it.

About a tenth of a mile south of the big cellar hole, we visited the cemetery where Asa and Mary Woodard lie. Who were these folks, buried all by themselves in a little plot surrounded by a stone wall, high on the northwest slope of Quimby Mountain? I suspect they were brother and sister, since a wife's stone from that era usually says "wife of" or "consort of" and adds the husband's name, but Mary's stone has just her name. Mary may have been the Mary Woodard that [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) says married Ezra Torrey in Bethel in 1819. Perhaps Ezra died and she went to live with her brother Asa. Mary died in February 1845, aged 72, and Asa died that July, aged 74. Asa came from Stockbridge. He bought 100 acres in Lot 62 in Little Sherburne in 1812 but sold it in a few months. The 1810 census, the first one in which he, Asa, heads a household, shows him (spelled Woodward) in Stockbridge, aged 26 to 44, with a woman 26 to 44, a girl 10-15, two girls under ten years old, and three boys under ten. The 1820 census shows him still in Stockbridge, with a woman over 45, two girls under 10, one boy under 10, and a boy 10-15 years old. The numbers of children don't match, but remember that child mortality was high.

Asa bought land in the Quimby area in 1824, 1829, 1833 and 1834. The 1830 census shows him heading a household in Killington with a woman aged 50 to 60, two males aged 15 to 20 and one aged 20 to 30. The 1840 census shows him (spelled

Woodward) in Killington with a woman aged 60 to 70 and no other household members. Apparently the children had all grown up and moved out. This census also shows an Asa, Jr., aged 30 to 40, heading a separate household with a woman aged 20 to 30 (presumably the wife of Asa, Jr.), and three children under five years old. My guess is that old Asa was its last occupant, no one kept it up after he died, and the roof caved in or it burned down by the 1850s, which is why it appears in no atlas of that decade or later.

Old Asa probably got to his big house from Stockbridge. Building anything like a decent road from the River Road in Killington up Quimby Brook was probably impractical with nineteenth century techniques. Madeline Fleming's History of Sherburne (Killington's name for most of its existence) says International Paper built the present Quimby Road in the 1940s. I guess that, to reach Asa's place by road, one went south from Notown in Stockbridge on the old road to Little Sherburne, then headed over East Mountain by more or less the route of the present logging superhighway, and headed back north more or less on a contour. Around 25 years ago, before the last logging operation, a jeep road followed the route of the present logging super highway south from the Appalachian Trail crossing, then diverged east, passed just west of the Woodard cellar hole, passed about 150' west of the Woodard Cemetery, passed just a few feet west of a very small cellar hole, and continued on south. We followed it only as far as the big cellar hole. Perhaps this was the route the Woodards used. The other possibility is that the Woodards used a road that crosses the ridge in the 2470' gap north of Quimby Mountain. The gap road links with one that comes up Johnson Brook from the Stony Brook Road and passes a small cellar hole less than half a mile from the gap road. The link from Johnson Brook over to Quimby Gap is barely noticeable now, even in spring with the leaves off, but it shows on LiDAR.

Half a year after Asa's death in 1845, several Woodards and possibly their wives deeded their interests in his home lot to another Asa, presumably his son. Asa, Jr. died in 1847 at age 46. He is buried in Stockbridge's Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. What happened to old Asa's home lot is not clear, because a fire destroyed the volume of the town land records that probably showed. It appears, however, that all the Woodards had sold out by the 1850s. Probably no one has farmed the west side of East Mountain for 176 years since the death of old Asa, the original homesteader.

Who was Quimby? The 1869 Beers Atlas of Rutland County shows only one house east of River Road on the west side of East Mountain, belonging to an "R. Quimby," and a private road leading to it not up Quimby Brook, but south of it. While the Beers Atlas did not always locate private roads precisely, it usually did a pretty good job, and the "R. Quimby" location is so far from the Woodard cellar hole that I don't think they can be the same thing. The atlas shows the Quimby house far to the southwest of the cellar hole and cemetery, near Taylors Pinnacle. Mr. Quimby's place is in Lot 40, but the Woodard properties are in Lot 38 (Quimby Mountain and west, where the cellar hole and cemetery are), and Lot 37 (north of Quimby Mountain, where there are a cellar hole, foundations and a stone wall). No Quimby shows up in the town land records of the time, so he must have been a renter, not an owner. A farmer named Annis Quimby headed a household of six according to the 1860 census. He and his wife Mahala are also in the 1870 census. His son, a farmer named Alfred, died in Killington at age 85 in 1938. Madeline Fleming, who wrote her history in the 1960s, located one person whose grandfather had known a Mr. Quimby. Now a mountain, a brook, and a locality bear the name.

After our cemetery visit, we went a little downhill to see the foundations of what appeared to be two barns, one quite small. Just beyond them is the little brook that probably was the Woodards' water source, and about 100' beyond that is the large cellar hole. We then retraced our steps back to the modern logging road, soon turning right on the Quimby road. Had we continued straight, we would have wound up in the Notown area of Stockbridge. On the Quimby jeep road that Fleming's history dates to the 1940s, we then descended past a modern camp, the only building we saw on the whole hike, and continued down the narrow valley to River Road at the town office.

Little Rock Pond and Green Mountain, Wallingford, September 25, 2021, by Herb Ogden, leader

For this outing, we had a beautiful sunny day with temperatures in the high 60s and trails that had finally dried out reasonably well after a rainy July . . . but hardly any hikers. Four of us and Patches the dog hiked the two miles from Forest Road 10 to Little Rock Pond. The grade is easy but the going is a little slow on the last mile or so because the trail has eroded down to a lot of rocks in places. It's being loved to death. Still, hiking along Little Black Branch is pretty. While we lunched at the pond (pictured on front cover), Patches tried her luck at catching various underwater creatures. As far as we know, she didn't, but she had a good time. While Patches and three of her admirers headed back south on the Long Trail, I finished the advertised hike on the Green Mountain Trail. Contrary to what our Outings Chairperson thinks, there still is a view of the pond from the ledges if one goes all the way south on them, about 200'. Perseverance helps. The trail between the pond and the ledges is a bit of a challenge. Either there are now fewer of the trees and roots that used to help hikers navigate the lower ledges or I am not as good at navigating them, or both. Anyway, I would not want to descend that trail if the rocks were wet. As it was, however, I was ascending, the rocks were dry, the view was fine, and the woods up on the ridge were beautiful.

Half Moon State Park, Hubbardton, September 26-29, 2021, by Vivian Bebee

The last time Larry and I camped at Half Moon we went tent camping at one of our favorite sites that also included a lean-to. We both like tenting, but this time decided to choose one of the cabins . . . Beetle by name. Fortunately, there were no beetles and it was very cozy. The weather was mostly cool and cloudy, but we did have a day and a half of blue sky and sun. The staff there, as usual, were so nice and kept all common areas neat and clean. All the cabins there have 2 bunk beds and one futon. The futon is not all that enjoyable and we have two very comfortable cots of our own, so we asked the staff if they could remove the futon before we arrived and they said no problem. That gave us more floor space for our cots and we used the bunk beds for our gear. We did a lot of walking around the Pond, did a several hikes on the High Pond trail and the trail around Glen Lake to the Glen Lake overlook. I even got Larry to play cards with me (not an easy thing to do) and he beat me at rummy (also not an easy thing to do). Our friend, Bob, stopped for a visit and we talked him into joining us for the Glen Lake overlook hike. We didn't have to twist his arm too much though. On our way to the overlook, a baby porcupine (picture on Page 6) waddled across our path. The last morning we were there, we heard this large crashing sound in the woods behind our cabin. Actually, the small, marshy end of the pond was directly behind our cabin with the woods on the other side of the marsh. We did the loop hike around the pond and found the

tree that had just crashed, which looked pretty old and had some rotten parts. We did not end up staying for our last night since it was going to be very cold that night and raining the next morning when we had to pack everything back into the car. So we spent the day hiking and left around suppertime.



Photo by Larry Walter.

Upper Michigan Road, Pittsfield, October 2021, by Diane Bargiel

Sue introduced me to a wonderful walk on Upper Michigan Road, a dirt road that intersects Michigan Brook a number of times along the way. Below are pictures of Sue checking out the Michigan Brook kiosk and fall foliage under a bright blue sky.



Blue Ridge Point to Point Bushwhack, November 5, 2021, by Dave Coppock

We (myself, Clare and Nancy) met at the 3-car USFS parking lot on Wildcat Rd., left Nancy's car there, then drove another mile to where the Catamount Trail leaves Wildcat Road. There are pull-offs on both sides of the road there for parking. We hiked up an old logging road on land purchased several years ago by the Trust for Public Land. This track rises 1400' over a couple of miles, staying to the south of the large brook that flows down the northeast side of the Blue Ridge massif. Then we threaded the needle through a beautiful gap between two of Blue Ridge's many summits. The GPS units weren't working so we took compass bearings off the map. This worked fine.

These peaks are covered with an embarrassment of giant, old, yellow birch trees and open glades. We perched in the sun on a log and ate lunch amid these giants. Then we skirted what must be a 4-acre swamp and picked our way up cliff bands to a long spur. Soon we found a stunning view to the northwest, with Lake Champlain and the Adirondacks staring back at us (picture on Page 7). Another massive birch glade led us to our final descent down a boulder-strewn mountainside. We popped out of the woods right where the compass said we would: the 3-car USFS lot where we'd left Nancy's Prius. The whole thing took us 5 hours. It's a wonderful adventure if you don't mind a bunch of bushwhacking.



Photo by Dave Coppock.

Put the Trails to Bed Work Day, November 6, 2021, by Larry, Co-Chair of Trails & Shelters Committee

Two groups hit the trail today. Group One: Cindy, Bill and Pam cleaned waterbars, ditches and culverts (there are a lot of them) from Minerva Hinchey to Patch Hollow. They found MHS swept clean and there was no garbage!

Group Two: Me, Herb, Dave, Melissa and Nancy took on the Bucklin trail, which I had noticed a week earlier was getting a bit silted in. The count varies on the number of waterbars for this bad boy, but it's somewhere pushing 180 if you go all the way to the shelter. There are about three 8-foot planks and two 6-footers that are in need of replacement. The sills are fine. Keegan told me the professional crew could pack those into the relo-area when they work on Bucklin next season. I hadn't really thought of this, but things were pretty frozen up on the top 25% of the climb, so we had to swing the tools pretty hard to break through 1" of duff. Dave, Nancy and I got back to the cars at about 1700, Melissa around 1300 and not sure when Herb got back. A lot of hours, at any rate.

In addition, on November 9th, Melissa and I spent a total of about 13 hours re-blazing yellow line and bearing trees along the east side of the trail corridor to the south of Route 103. The weather was really nice. Some ticks were found upon return. It was a challenge to find some of the monuments, especially those that were set into the bedrock (rock-caps). Looking forward to getting back out there to continue south towards Spring Lake Ranch.

Out and About, by Sue Thomas

I'm continuing to make good use of my forced retirement, wandering trails and backroads, sometimes on my own and sometimes with friends...and twice now with bears! In fact I've been feeling like something of a bear magnet--let that be a warning to anyone who risks a hike with me. Several times when the critter itself didn't put in an appearance, it left a reminder to be stepped around. Soon they will all go beddie-bye for the winter, and I will once again be a safe hiking partner. Below are few pictures of some wanderings and those who have accompanied me.



Diane relaxes on Upper Michigan Rd.



Claire conquers a boulder at Chaffee Falls.



Sue & Rob at Silver Lake.

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KILLINGTON SECTION

Your Invitation to Join **Killington Section, Green Mountain Club**

The Killington Section, based in Rutland, VT, is a chapter of the statewide Green Mountain Club. Membership in the Section includes membership in the Club. Members receive a membership card, the Club quarterly *Long Trail News*, and the Section quarterly *Smoke & Blazes* including a schedule of outings, trail work parties, and social events. Members also receive reduced rates on items from the Club bookstore and at most overnight sites served by caretakers. Membership dues help to maintain trails and shelters in the Killington Section (Route 140 to Route 4) and the Long Trail system throughout Vermont.

ANNUAL DUES:

Individual\$45
Family\$60
Senior/Student/Friend\$25

Contact us for information on life memberships
and categories for giving at a higher level.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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I also enclose a contribution of \$_____ to the Kirk Trails and Shelters Fund supporting the Killington Section's maintenance and preservation of trails and shelters.

I would like information on volunteering for:

___trail work, ___shelter work, ___sign making, ___publications, ___leading outings, ___publicity, ___education

Make check payable to "GMC" and mail with this application to:

Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury – Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677