

Smoke & Blazes

Volume 77, Number 3

Killington Section, Green Mountain Club

Fall 2024

They came, they sawed, they conquered



John Danyew and Chad Peterson tackle a massive blowdown on the AT/LT south of Patch Hollow during the Killington Section's lower-elevation work day in May. See inside for more photos of our members and volunteers in action.



KILLINGTON SECTION



Fall 2024

Killington Section Officers

Wayne Krevetski, *President*
Herb Ogden, *Vice President*
Melissa Reichert, *Secretary*
Maura Wildman, *Treasurer*

Committee Chairs

Amy Peacock, *History & Archives*
Sue Thomas, *Outings*
Larry Walter, *Trails & Shelters*
Dave Coppock, *Trails & Shelters*

Delegates to GMC Board

Bruce Peacock, *Director*
Ruth Hare, *Alternate*

Web Site: gmckillington.org

Andrew & Isaac Jones,
Web Masters

Smoke & Blazes

Sue Thomas, *Editor*

Killington Section Directors

Term expires 2025:

Bill Cooke
Dave Coppock
Herb Ogden

Term expires 2026:

Wayne Krevetski*
Melissa Reichert*
Allison Henry

Term expires 2027:

Sheamus Fagan
Amy Peacock*
Maura Wildman*

**Second consecutive 3-year term, not eligible for re-election.*

Contact us:

KillingtonSection@greenmountainclub.org

From the President:

Greetings to all the members of the Killington Section, I hope you are having an enjoyable summer and getting out into the great outdoors. I am writing to let you know that the Section is moving into the 21st century by developing an emailing list to contact members about upcoming events, hike reminders and emergency notifications regarding trail conditions. It will also allow us to send you copies of *Smoke & Blazes* digitally. The advantages of digital copies are many, some of which are color photos, expanded content and cost savings to the Section.

Some of you have been receiving the newsletter via email already and we thank you for doing so, but at this point our email list is incomplete and we are afraid that some members may not be receiving a copy at all. You folks can help by sending an email to KillingtonSection@greenmountainclub.org with your name and address. As always your contact information will be kept strictly private, used for Section business only. We will continue to mail paper copies to those who do not request digital. Thank you for your help in this project.

Sincerely,
Wayne

Trail Mix

Long Trail Day will be Saturday, September 21 this year. The Killington Section will be greeting backpackers and day hikers at the Rt. 103 trailhead with snacks and GMC info. If you'd like to help out or contribute food, contact **Wayne Krevetski, 802-282-2237**. Or, celebrate the trail with a hike from Minerva Hinchey to Clarendon Gorge. Contact **Herb Ogden, 802-293-2510**, hogden@vermontel.net for meeting time and place.

Regular hunting season in Vermont runs from Nov. 16 – Dec.1 this year. If you venture into the woods during that time, remember to wear blaze orange. Better yet, choose alternate destinations such as back roads, parks and bike trails. To see a full list of Vermont's various hunting seasons, go to vtfishandwildlife.com.

If you're planning a hike in northern Vermont, be aware that some trails may still be closed or inaccessible due to the flooding in July. The latest information can be found at greenmountainclub.org/hiking/trail-updates/.

Smokey House in Danby, a nonprofit working to advance sustainable agriculture and forestry, has been hosting the GMC's southern trail crew for several seasons. To show its appreciation, the club encourages members to volunteer at the farm for a day, this year on **Thursday, August 29**, 9 a.m. til mid-afternoon, but shorter time commitments are welcome. The work will be outdoors, dress for farming and landscaping. RSVP to nbates@greenmountainclub.org.

The History Committee reports that our **Long Trail Lodge historical marker** has been approved by the State and is now in production.

The annual **Fall Pot Luck** will be held on Saturday, November 23 at 1 p.m., at Rutland Free Library, upstairs in the Fox Room. Bring your own place setting and a dish to share. After the meal Herb will entertain us with photos from his recent walking tour in the Cotswolds.



The Extra Mile Cheers for the volunteers!



Frequent and severe storms have made a mess of the trails all over the state, but our volunteers have stepped up to keep the Killington Section in shape. Clockwise from top: Dave surveys the newly reopened view from Airport Lookout; Claire supervises a blowdown removal done with precision, thanks to Larry's arsenal of tools. Dave at the saw; Candy cheerfully clears out the endless water bar north of Patch Hollow. We'll be rallying the troops again this fall to "put the Trail to bed," see the hike schedule for dates and come lend a hand.

Melissa Reichert was elected to serve on the Green Mountain Club board of directors at the annual meeting in June. Melissa is currently serving on the Killington Section board, and on the club's Land Conservation Committee.

Ruth Hare is placing our Killington Section hikes onto the main club calendar, which can be viewed on the GMC website at greenmountainclub.org/calendar-outings-events. It's already increased participation in our outings, Thanks Ruth!

Brian Toomey has volunteered his tech expertise to untangle MailChimp and get the email system rolling, so watch for updates and hopefully email reminders soon.

As always, many thanks to our dynamic duo **Larry Walter** and **Dave Coppock** for all the extra hours they spend clearing blowdowns and brush off the trails in between work days.

Outing Reports

What a View | Mount St. Catherine, Poultney, May 11, 2024 by Diane Bargiel

The Deane Preserve is really a special place, and its owner, Bill Osborne, is continuing to craft his legacy that also represents his late sister. He has built a sturdy bridge that should withstand even the height of an active thaw with steady rains, and has created a pond in the flat meadow area, which, within days, had been discovered by various amphibians. Due to some erosion over the years, it is safer to go up the yellow trail, which was the first trail carved out of the 85-acre patch of heaven. Even though it is only a mile long, it is a good workout. It is steeper and more direct than the 1.25 mile green trail, which has switchbacks. Bill is also working on a new “blue” trail, which we did explore a bit of to add a little more to the adventure. The blue trail is off of the right-hand side of the yellow trail going up, and will eventually loop down to the meadow. The mix of hemlocks and hardwoods with the beautiful contours of the hill itself allows for a lovely experience in nature with a lot of birds from scarlet tanagers to my beloved hermit and wood thrushes. We actually saw a hermit thrush on a fairly low branch that I’d say was not more than 20 feet away; I could see its kind of chunky body with the light sprinkling of tan speckles on its throat. It was rare indeed to be that close to this private bird. Other birds we heard included a great-crested flycatcher, least flycatcher, black-and-white warbler, and a black-throated green warbler, among others. The vista at the top did not disappoint. We had wonderful views of the Adirondacks, and had permission from the owner of the neighboring property to trek down to another vista that opened up the Mettawee Valley to the south and a beautiful patch of the Taconic range. All told, we did around 4 miles that day, and enjoyed great company, a lot of “eye candy” with the beauty of our vistas and the woods. A link to the trail map can be found at www.slatevalleytrails.org.



Beating the Rain | Tamarack Notch to McLaughlin Falls, May 18, 2024 by Sue Thomas

We delayed our start to enable several folks to scoot home for rain coats, for as every seasoned hiker knows, the ritual packing of the raingear is essential to ensuring there will be no need for it. It worked like a charm! After spotting a car near the falls, we began the hike with a stroll through the accessible walking loop at Tamarack Notch, where interpretive signs tell the story of the Civilian Conservation Corps, headquartered there in the 1930s while constructing a campground. All the buildings are gone now, but stone chimneys and campsite fireplaces dot the woods, surrounded on this May day by wildflowers. In later years the site was home to a Girl Scout camp, and when I joined the Killington Section in 1982 our fall potlucks were held in one of the small cabins. There was no heat, so parkas remained on, and it was a challenge to find space amid stored cots and mattresses – by comparison the Godnick Center is the Taj Mahal. Leaving the loop trail, we climbed via the old Notch Road, no longer drivable since Irene bit a huge chunk out of it, to a lovely spot along the river bank where numerous small cascades and falls made for a perfect lunch stop. Continuing up the hill we reached a small cemetery, final resting place of the Wilkins family, who farmed there in the mid-1800s. Their apple trees still grow and stone walls meander through the woods. As we continued down the road we found several cellar holes, marking what must have been a far from easy life. We ended the hike with a glimpse of the falls through the trees, once the power source of a mill, just as it began to rain.



Jockey Hill Jaunt | Shrewsbury, June 29, 2024 by Herb Ogden

I was pleasantly surprised that, despite a forecast of showers, four other people showed up for this hike and a fifth tried to join but missed the meeting point at Pierce's Store in N. Shrewsbury. From there, we spotted a car at the north end of maintenance on the Tin Shanty Road and then drove to the south end of Clement Shelter Road to begin the hike. We followed that road for a couple miles, till we reached a snowmobile bridge over Sargent Brook. We stopped at Gov. Clement Shelter so I could tell the tale of the former privy, the Lt. Gov. Jarvis Snodgrass Memorial Gazebo, and of Snodgrass, whom my father and I invented in 1965. Until the 1930s, the Clement Shelter Road was the route of the Long Trail. It was then moved west, avoiding a very steep climb out of the valley but adding a wet stretch that was a problem until Jerry Parker built the stone bridge over Government Brook and Jerry's Parkway north of the bridge. After crossing Sargent Brook, we followed a wood road northeast and then southeast over the ridge between Jockey Hill and Shrewsbury Peak till we reached the unmaintained north end of the Tin Shanty Road, where the remains of a farm were hidden by foliage. Our footwear wound up pretty wet on account of all the wet grass in the trail, but only a few drops of rain fell on us.



Up and Over | Blue Ridge Bushwhack, Mendon to Chittenden, July 13, 2024 by Larry Walter

Dave and I listed this little puppy as being "difficult" and were asked several questions as to the meanings of "bushwhack" and "difficult." Those who showed up, and there were several (12!), had a pretty good sample of both at day's end. It was already getting hot at 0900 when we met at the fire station. Weather called for a chance of storm cells passing over Blue Ridge later in the afternoon. Typical Vermont summer stuff. Thankfully, no one was wearing shorts. Dave did a great job of figuring out how to get three cars spotted at the Lefferts access road. We initially considered having two groups hike from opposite ends to meet at some pre-determined rendezvous, but correctly assumed it would be too hard to time it right and to keep on the same route. Five of the stronger hikers ended up spotting said vehicles while the others got a head start up Canty. We eventually grouped up around 11:30 and organized the bunch with Dave as leader and Joel Blumenthal as the sweep. Both are members of Rescue Inc., so we were in good hands. I had not seen the untrailed portion of this trek without 3 feet of snow on it, so it was a bit of a surprise to see so much hobblesh, plus fir and spruce saplings. There were other sections that were open and nearly parklike. One hiker momentarily lost her shoe in a particularly sticky bog. We made our way northwesterly along the eastern flanks of five high spots along Blue Ridge, sometimes being treated with open glades of huge yellow birch, white ash and conifers. One yellow birch was measured at 38" diameter. John Danyew, an experienced woodsman, speculated that due to the reduced moose population the undergrowth had been allowed to grow unchecked. After sliding by the fourth summit, we descended a long, razer-sharp ridge with beautiful views over Chittenden Reservoir and Lefferts Pond. It was a little steep in this section, but the footing was pretty solid. The last 6000 feet (800 feet of descending) was the most challenging, since it was increasingly steep and littered with boulders, sinkholes and sub-surface streams. I was impressed with how upbeat the group remained, even though this was a



bit more than they'd bargained for. Dave and I set the compasses at about 20 degrees and tried to pick a decent route down the hill. Some of the boulder piles are downright bizarre. We pulled off a direct hit on the cars (GPS makes you look good) and about half of us limped down to the pond and went for a swim or at least a wade. The water was glorious. Perhaps we should schedule more "difficult" hikes? Stay tuned for more Coppock/Walter inspired insanity.

The survivors.

Hound Dog Serenade | Wallingford Pond - Little Rock Pond, July 20, 2024 by Zeppo Reichert

“Oh Boy!” I thought to myself when we started out in the car, “We’re going hiking!” But when I jumped down from the seat and got a look at my companions for the day, I just lifted my snout to the skies and sang the ancient song of my people! Pretty soon they were all singing too, though it sounded a bit like laughter, I couldn’t be sure...

We started off through the woods and soon came to an enormous hole in the ground where a bridge used to be, but not to worry, we crossed easily upstream and continued on our way to Aldrichville, which looked like nothing much to me but our leader Sue said there was once a whole village there. All that’s left now are stone walls and some rusted metal pieces, which didn’t smell all that interesting, though everyone else seemed fascinated. (See page 7 for more about Aldrichville).

Lunch by the pond could have been better had Sungeeh shared her sandwich when I asked politely instead of shrieking and tossing it in the air, but never mind, it was a beautiful spot. After lunch we encountered a Scottie dog who made some disparaging remarks about my lineage that I just couldn’t let pass without comment, so there, Shortie! The rest of my pack stopped for ice cream on the way home, but I’d put in a long day keeping them all in line so opted instead for a well-deserved nap.



Zeppo and his pack

Smoke and Paddles | Bristol Pond Paddle, July 22, 2024 by Ruth Hare

We had a good turnout of five people in three boats for this tour of Bristol Pond – confusingly also known as Winona Lake. Smoke from Western wildfires somewhat dimmed the views of the Green Mountains and surrounding wetlands and farm fields but could not thwart our enjoyment.



After following a winding channel from the boat launch to the main body of the pond, we paddled a counterclockwise circuit of the shore. A large family or small flock of Canada geese joined us for part of it. Bright white water lilies spread their petals to reveal yellow centers. Yellow lilies, not yet open, stood at attention on the end of their stalks like little yellow suns. Larry and John swore they saw a muskrat, but Sue, Laurelae (from elsewhere in

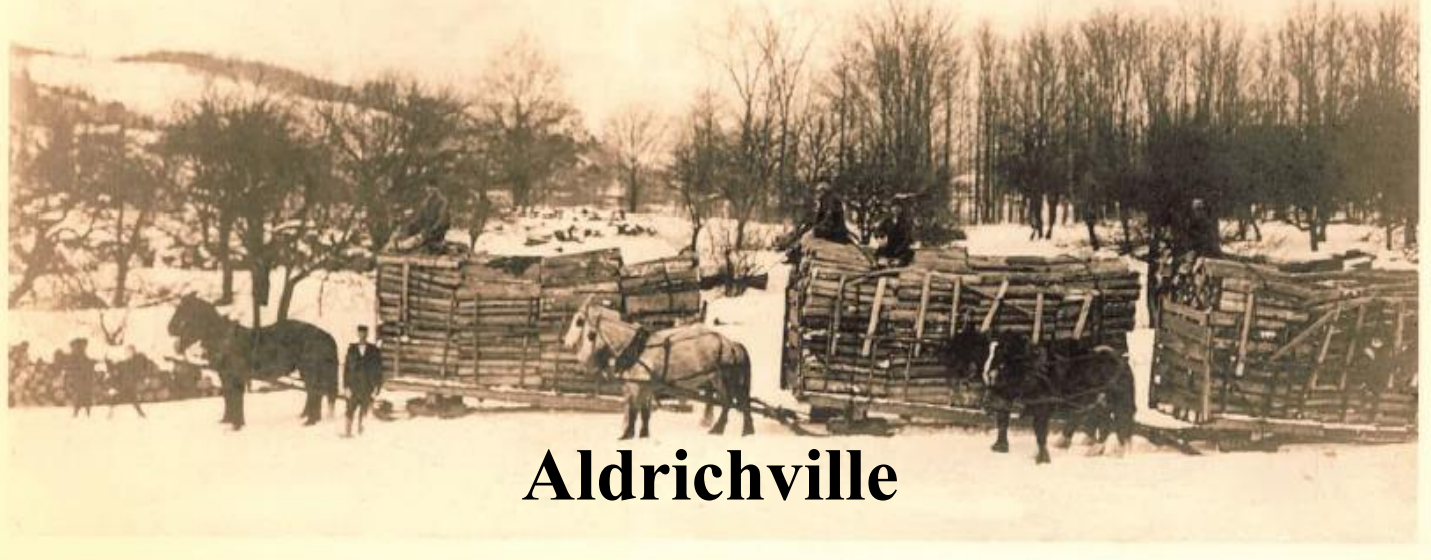


Vermont) and I did not. A young man casting from a boat pulled in an impressively large fish almost immediately after getting onto the water. Children tried their luck fishing from the dock.

Our circuit complete, we returned to shore for lunch in the shade and some ice-cold watermelon, courtesy of Sue. What a treat on a hot day! All in all, interesting sights and good company added up to a very pleasant outing.

New leaders are always welcome! Contact Sue at 802-773-2185 by late Oct. to get onto the next schedule.

Backtracking



Aldrichville

Photo from the Wallingford Historical Society

Most AT/LT hikers will pass by a long stone wall and a few pieces of rusted metal not far north of Little Rock Pond and never know they have just visited the once-bustling village of Aldrichville, in its day the largest lumber operation in Wallingford. From 1882 – 1898 the woods along Homer Stone Brook rang with the sound of axes and saws every winter, when the felled trees could be easily skidded to the mill yard in preparation for the spring thaw's abundant water which powered the mill. Lumber was then hauled to the railyard in Wallingford for shipping.

At its peak the village was home to a saw mill, a lumber yard, a blacksmith shop, a small store, several boarding houses for single men and homes for workers and their families, and a school. In the 1890s new technology was implemented, with water from a mill pond piped to a boiler and turbine system for more efficient steam power.

By 1898, the timber depleted, the Aldrich brothers had moved their operation south to another site closer to the railroad, and the woods fell silent one more. Some buildings, such as one of the boarding houses, were moved into Wallingford, others fell victim to time and fire, leaving only their stone foundations to mark their place.

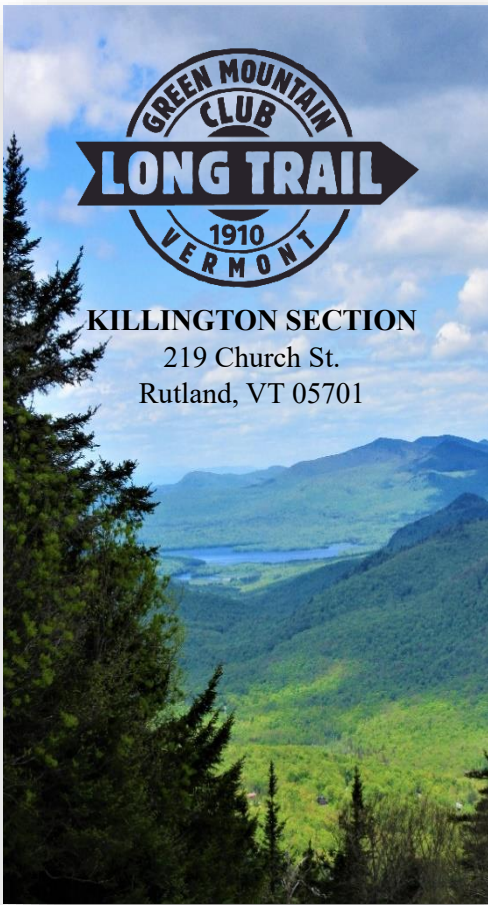
Then in 1997 the Green Mountain National Forest in partnership with the Hayes Foundation and assistance from the Wallingford Historical Society, Wallingford Elementary School and the Masonic Lodge, brought 65 local students ages 10 –14 to the site for a history and archaeology field school. For three summers the students uncovered artifacts, mapped

the site, researched the lives of the people who lived and worked there, and studied the ecosystem. They built a model of what the village would have looked like, and used their new knowledge to create an interpretive sign, sadly no longer in place, though some of the tools and pieces of machinery they uncovered are still at the site for all to see.



On our hike to Little Rock Pond in July we encountered this massive washout, likely a result of last summer's severe flooding in southern Vermont, which took out the bridge. More recently a VAST snowmobile trail, this old wood road was once known as French Avenue, after the French Canadian loggers and homesteaders who lived in the area, and predated Aldrichville. The road runs down to South Wallingford, where Aldrichville lumber was hauled for shipping.

Thanks to Dave Lacy for his help in my research.



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 store 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: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

I 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, tech support

Make check payable to "GMC" and mail with this application to:
Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center, VT 05677