

Smoke & Blazes

Volume 78, Number 3

Killington Section, Green Mountain Club

Fall 2025



Join us on Saturday, September 27 for the unveiling of the new Vermont historical marker at Sherburne Pass, honoring an important site in the Green Mountain Club's history. See inside for details.



KILLINGTON SECTION



Fall 2025

Killington Section Officers

Herb Ogden, *President*
Allison Henry, *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 2026:
Wayne Krevetski*
Melissa Reichert*
Allison Henry

Term expires 2027:
Sheamus Fagan
Amy Peacock*
Maura Wildman*

Term expires 2028
Dave Coppock*
Herb Ogden*
Larry Walter

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

Contact us:

KillingtonSection@greenmountainclub.org

From the President

This year's Long Trail Day is Saturday 20 September. Our Section will provide Trail Magic (food and drink for hikers) at Vt 103. For more information or to sign up to help, please contact **Wayne Krevetski**, wkrevetski@hotmail.com, 802-282-2237. If you'd like to raise money for the GMC, please sign up ahead of time at <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/longtrailday2025/>. I've signed up to raise \$390 by hiking 3.9 miles from Vt. 103 to the Cold River Road, asking ten people to donate \$39 apiece, which is \$10 per mile. Note that, if you can't hike on September 20, it is perfectly fine to pick another day for your hike, because this is your Hike-a-Thon!

Trail Mix

Herb

The **Clarendon Gorge suspension bridge**, closed last spring due to a damaged cable, has been repaired and reopened. It will be inspected annually from now on.

Rifle season runs from Nov. 15 – 30 this year. If you venture into the woods wear blaze orange, or choose back roads, parks and bike paths. To see a complete list of Vermont's various hunting seasons, go to vtfishandwildlife.com.

The annual **Fall Pot Luck** will be Saturday, Nov. 22 at 1 p.m. at Godnick Adult Center, 1 Deer St. in Rutland. Bring your own place setting (to minimize trash) and a dish to share. After the meal Ruth will share photos from her trip to Ireland.

The Extra Mile

Heavy rain in May created slippery conditions on area trails. Over Memorial Day Weekend the Shrewsbury Fire Department was called out two days in a row to rescue fallen hikers – the first, a member of a college group descending Killington, who sustained a head injury, and the following day an AT through-hiker who broke an ankle near Clarendon Gorge. KS members **Gerry** and **Chryl Martin** rushed to help, bringing the through-hiker to their home for the night and delivering him to the airport the next day for his flight home to Utah.

Our intrepid Trails & Shelters chairs, **Larry Walter** and **Dave Coppock**, spent a very hot day breathing Canadian wildfire smoke to clear blowdowns on the LT/AT from Governor Clement all the way to Route 4, more than 30 trees in all. Dave spent another five hours clearing the Sherburne Pass Trail in late June. **Herb Ogden** spent the 4th of July holiday refreshing the blazes from Route 140 to Patch Hollow, presumably with regulation white, and not red, white & blue! **Diane Bargiel**, **John Danyew** and **Larry Walter** installed a new sign at Jungle Junction.



Board of Directors Report | June 14, 2025 submitted by KS rep. Bruce Peacock

A brief GMC Board meeting was held immediately following the club's annual meeting in Waterbury on June 14, 2025. As warned during the March meeting, Nancy McClellan stepped down as GMC President and Don Taylor was elected to succeed her. Bob Paquin, Senator Leahy's former aide, was elected as the new Vice President. Nancy Thomas and Anne Houser will continue as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.

The 2025 fiscal year ended April 30 at \$2.57 million, a surplus of \$87,000, following the spending and personnel reductions reported at the March meeting. The 2026 budget reflects a 14% increase. The endowment has increased from \$7.3 million to \$8 million due to receipt of bequests and improved market conditions.

Concerns remain about the future of our federal funding. Most of the club's federal contracts and agreements for work scheduled to take place in 2025 remain active. However, the ability of the USFS and ATC to develop new agreements for work in future years is uncertain.

Keegan Tierney, Director of Field Operations, mentioned the rapid repairs to the Clarendon Bridge by utilizing the cooperative management model of the AT. USFS engineers completed an initial inspection and provided the original plans for the bridge. Vermont Fish and Wildlife, who own the bridge and parcel, gave their blessing to re-build to original design standards. The ATC was able to secure funding for the material costs and 40% of the labor costs. GMC staff completed the repair in four working days. Keegan acknowledged the Killington Section for supporting trail closures and public notification.

Keegan also mentioned that the major trail relocations planned for Belvidere Mountain and the Mass. state line, revealed at the March meeting, would start soon.

The 29th edition of the Long Trail Guide is now available featuring the latest trail information, updated tables, maps and stunning imagery.

Lead the way!

Do you have a favorite hike you'd like to share? Contact Sue at 802-773-2185 to get it onto the next schedule.



Green Mountain Club Killington Section presents

Historical Marker Unveiling Ceremony



Saturday, Sept. 27 | 4:00 p.m.
Sherburne Pass Trailhead



Words from:

Killington Section President **Herb Ogden**
Lodge Historian **David Wright**

Celebrating the site of the historic Long Trail Lodge, which stood in Sherburne Pass from 1923 - 1968 and served as the original home of the Green Mountain Club

Outing Reports

Wildflower Walk Washout | May 17, 2025 by Sue Thomas

The rain washed the paint off the trillium,
The Solomon seal floated by,
The trout lilies swam in the deluge,
As rain poured down from the sky.

It showed not a sign of abating,
So really, what could we do?
Jack huddled snug in his pulpit,
So wisely, we stayed at home too.



Doing the Deane | Lewis Deane Preserve, Poultney, June 28, 2025 by Diane Bargiel

Four of us, including a newbie to our group, traversed the Lewis Deane Preserve in Poultney on Saturday, June 28, 2025. The standard loop of going up the yellow trail (1 mile, mostly up, up, up), and the green trail (c. 1.3 miles, with switchbacks), includes gorgeous hemlock forests and a fabulous view at the vista at the top where the view is of the Adirondack Mountains, Lake St. Catherine, and a marshy/boggy area just below, complete with beaver lodges. Last year, I



was given permission by a neighboring landowner to go to another vista, so we added that for a view of the Taconic Mountains in the Mettawee Valley towards the south, and had a little different view of the ADKs. The owner of the LD preserve, Bill, has been adding another trail towards the bottom for those who can't climb mountains anymore, but who still want to be enjoying these beautiful woods of hemlocks and hardwoods and the meadows. He's really done a great job, which includes a walk around the meadow primarily in the shade, and a beautifully laid out trail to a new bridge with seating for viewing nature and a waterfall (in season). Crossing over the creek at the trail entrance is soothing and beautiful, and we say hello to the creek again at the bottom of the green trail. All told, we did

around 3.3 calorie-burner miles, saw a scarlet tanager land on a tree right in front of us, and heard hermit thrushes and other birds. What a delightful way to spend a few hours! I am filled with gratitude for our gorgeous spot on this planet, and for the wonderful members and guests of the GMC Killington section.

(Mostly) Dry Feet | Clark Brook Trail, Granville, July 6, 2025 by Allison Henry

Fun Fact: the Clark Brook Trail is the only side trail on the east side of the Long Trail in the Breadloaf Wilderness, while there are four on the west side. On the day of the hike, four of us piled into one car and easily reached the trailhead (due to my not-quite-as-easy recon trip the weekend before). My devoted passengers then stood by, patiently slapping mosquitos and picking nettles out of their socks while I executed a 17-point turn to park at the trailhead just so. There are primitive campsites along the White River and Clark Brook at the bottom of the trail, and we saw a wide variety of camp setups ranging from big-box store dome tents to a Mercedes camper van worth more than my house! I had heard there was a difficult brook crossing a few tenths of a mile from the trailhead so I'd advised everyone to bring water shoes, but when we reached the crossing it turned out to be rock-hoppable. I managed to soak one foot up to the ankle which I found refreshing in the 80-degree heat. As we ascended the trail we saw



evidence of recent skilled trail work including well-built waterbars and side ditching. Impressive. About halfway up we encountered two backpackers with familiar faces. They were two young people who had previously attended a K-Section trail work day and were finishing up a multi-day trip. You never know who you'll see in the wilderness. The trail became very steep for the final half mile or so and it was a relief to see the Long Trail sign at the top. Once we reached the LT we hiked north a few tenths of a mile to Mt. Roosevelt for lunch at a south-facing overlook called "Killington View." It was a little hazy and hot but the sun, sky and breeze were gorgeous. The views were a great reminder of why we do this! The hike down was uneventful and all eight feet stayed dry. Back at the trailhead we spent a few minutes cooling our feet in the White River. The cold water dunking was almost as gratifying as the views at the top.

A Steamy Day on the Dome | The Dome, Pownal, July 12, 2025 by Larry Walter

The weather report, in characteristic form, called for some Atlanta-like conditions. Not really expecting any interest in ascending 1700 feet through a sticky, sun-baked atmospheric soup, I was surprised to hear from Sunghee Jones and Eva Csuhi. So... Why not? It took exactly 1.5 hours to get there, despite my tendency to frustrate other drivers with my speed-limited driving pace. "Who is this old fart?!" Luckily, the license plate says VivB. We met a couple people at the parking lot, including a college professor from Williamstown, MA (Magnús T. Bernhardtsson) whom Viv and I had listened to last winter (a Green Mountain Academy presentation). He's an Icelander and a very dynamic and interesting speaker, should ya'll get the chance to sit in on one of his talks.

I was a little concerned with ticks, since the early parts of the 5-mile (round trip) trail run through some small clearings. Permethrin appears to have done the trick as nothing managed to latch on to me. The ascent is pretty much at an even grade and appears to have been an old logging road. Since a good portion of the walk was under canopy and we maintained an even pace, the hike was actually pleasant, although deer flies, black flies and mosquitoes pretty much dictated steady movement forward. There are some very beautiful sections on the west side of the ridge through moss-lined forest. Lots of chestnut oak, and Eva pointed out sassafras. We had some great conversations featuring rep's from California (with pithy contributions like "Dude!"), South Korea and Hungary. No one else was on the trail, which was a little surprising. I remember there used to be a local trail group that maintained the trail, but I don't think they've been very active. There were several blowdowns, but nothing that wasn't easy to get over or around, and the red blazing is pretty tired. Probably aging out. Promising a "view" we were not disappointed with a spectacular 2-degree panorama of something mountainy off to the south. Since the terminus is somewhat exposed rock and it was, by then, hotter than a five-cent 38-special, we snuck back under the canopy and had lunch. Herb had alerted me to a cool wetland that was just east of the summit, but I was too lazy to check it out. Our return to the car was pleasant...again, not too steep.

Something Strange in the Water | Kent Pond, Killington, June 19, 2025 by Ruth Hare

Fortunately, Killington GMC paddlers are a resourceful and adaptable bunch. Transportation challenges and a late change of venue to avoid a mysterious algae infestation did not dissuade us. John, Larry, Viv and Sue all proved willing to go with the flow. Our planned destination, Silver Lake State Park in Barnard, had temporarily closed its beach a few days before our outing because of something strange in the water. An attendant who answered the phone described pink strings of an algae-like growth, but said the beach had reopened because it was not deemed hazardous. Picturing a Saturday-morning round of indecision, should the beach prove to be closed again on the day, the leader opted for Kent Pond in Killington instead. That left only the question of how Larry and Viv would get their canoe to the launch. A borrowed truck solved that problem, and we set off to circle the pond on a comfortably warm (continued on p.6)



Mostly sunny day. A family of ducklings also skirted the shore, tipping their tails up like cancan dancers to feed. We also saw a lone Canada goose floating around, perhaps the only one of its flock foolish enough to stray south of the border. Too soon, we completed our circuit, and so added a loop around the largest island to extend the trip. A post-paddle treat of cold cantaloupe (courtesy of Sue) put the perfect cap on the day.

Smoky, But No Bear | Redfield Trails, July 26, 2025 by Herb Ogden

This was going to be a hike from Rutland to Proctor on the Carriage Trail, but it was still closed north of Resting Brook on account of logging. Our group of four therefore left the Carriage Trail west of Muddy Pond and switched over to the



Redfield Trails. They provide a nice mix of hardwood and evergreen forest, with good west views from a couple tenths of a mile over lawns and a nice northwest view north of the lawns. Many thanks to the landowner for allowing these trails on his land! Leaving the Redfield Trails, we went as far south and east as we could on the Pine Hill biking-hiking trails, some of which has just been improved. Wildfire smoke limited the long-distance views and could even be smelled on occasion. We heard a variety of birds but saw few animals. The sow bear and two cubs that were the subject of warning signs must have been elsewhere. Our newest member found some mushrooms that were both edible and pretty. All in all, it was a very pleasant excursion.

Everybody Knows Larry | Old Job Trail, Mount Tabor, August 2, 2025 by Sue Thomas

What do Vermont's first millionaire, lumber baron Silas Griffith, and our own Larry Walter have in common? One was a notorious penny-pincher (I'll leave you to decide which) and certainly both have massacred their share of trees – one for profit, the other for trail maintenance. But no, the similarity I speak of is widespread fame. Along the Old Job Trail we came upon a volunteer trail adopter busy rerouting a section eroded by recent storms. Stopping to chat, Larry introduced himself, but the fellow seemed already to know him – “You sharpen saws,” he exclaimed, “Everybody knows Larry!”

Humbled by the celebrity in our midst, we continued on to the site of the village of Griffith, where Silas operated 35 charcoal kilns. All that's left now is an impressive mountain of sawdust, but the Forest Service keeps the meadow open with periodic controlled burns and the trail adopter clears a pathway with a hand scythe. We made our way through gingerly dodging some poison parsnip and crossed the brook for lunch at Old Job shelter, where a poster provides history and photos of the charcoal operation and once-bustling village.

A pleasant hike along Lake Brook through a pretty, open woodland filled with orange mushrooms, blue Clintonia berries and small purple orchids had us back to the bridge and Big Branch shelter in no time. On the short climb back to our cars we met a group of young girls from the Farm & Wilderness summer camp toting packs nearly as big as they were, on their way for a night in the woods. We stopped to enjoy the view at Big Branch Overlook on the way home, spectacular, though quite smoke-filled that day, alas. Maple creemees revived us and completed a really fun day.



Larry trying to dodge the paparazzi.

A Fall “Put the Trail to Bed” work day is coming up in November! See the hike schedule for details

Backtracking



Mortimer Proctor sits at the head of the table (farthest from camera) at the December 1923 dedication of the newly completed Long Trail Lodge. Many Killington Section members would have attended, can anyone identify them?

Long Trail Lodge, the Green Mountain Club House

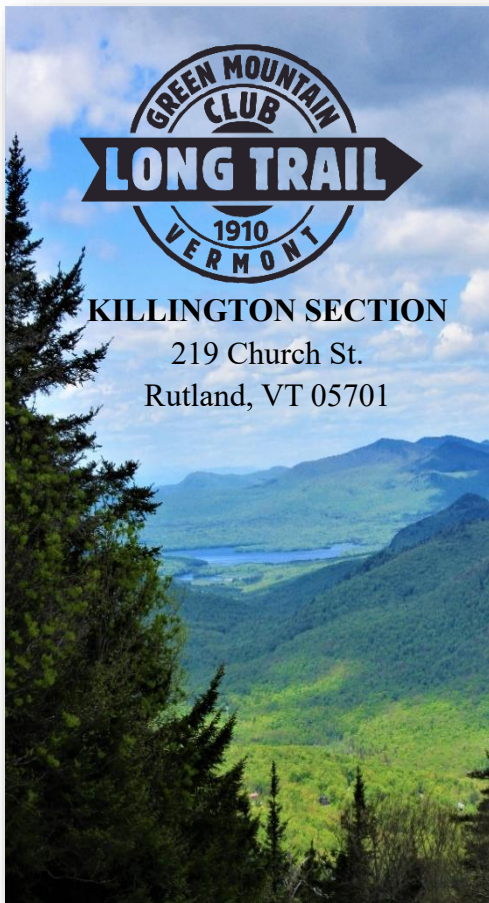
By David Wright

IN 1922 Green Mountain Club President Mortimer Proctor announced to GMC board members by telegraph from California, "I wish to donate complete the new Green Mountain Club House to be built near Deer Leap on Sherburne Pass." His mother, the widow of Gov. Fletcher Proctor, was to donate the furnishings.

The 33-year-old executive in the family business, Vermont Marble Company, had been given 1000 acres including Pico Mountain and much of Sherburne Pass for his birthday in 1910. He chose master rustic builder Paul Thayer to design and construct the clubhouse, using stone, logs and lumber from the site.

In the summer of 1923 nineteen-year-old Herb Davison of Rutland heard that there was some interesting construction going on up at Sherburne Pass and decided to investigate. He borrowed his father's Model T and drove the nine miles up the gravel highway through Mendon to the pass, arriving around noon. Alerted by smoke from a campfire he found a group of workmen cooking lunch, including parts of a freshly killed porcupine. The scene was as memorable as the half-finished Club House.

Snow was on the ground at Sherburne Pass when GMC members gathered in December 1923 for the dedication of the newly completed Green Mountain Club House, Long Trail Lodge.



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

