

The Trail Talk



VOL. XXXVIII NO. II

October 2006

Hurd State Park Hike July 16, 2006

Sarah O'Hare and Polly Silva joined me for a short morning hike around the trails of Hurd State Park in East Hampton, one of the trips described in the book 50 Hikes in Connecticut by the Hardy family. We followed the book's recommended direction and trail routes, heading first from the parking area on Route 151 down to the Connecticut River. A week earlier, my son Jimmy and I had scouted this part of the trail and had been surprised by a large snake in a bush along the riverbank. Fortunately, the snake was nowhere to be seen today. Continuing back up the hill, we ascended White Mountain (elevation a staggering 408 feet above sea level) and spent some time at Split Rock, which has a nice vista over the river. Back down through the park area and across a field that is home to a giant white oak we went. From that point, the trail markings and description become a bit confusing, but Sarah had walked the route a few years ago, and had annotated corrections in her guide book, so we found our way back to the parking area, after a pleasant walk that we estimated as about four miles.

*Leader: Jim Robertson
Hikers: Sarah O'Hare, Polly Silva*



New Members

David Sherman
Sandy Hook, CT

Michael & Chantal Turner
Plainville, CT

William & Pauline Marcarelli
Southington, CT

Debra Boutiette
Kensington, CT

David Wells
Agawam, MA

Long Trail maintenance September 30—October 1, 2006

Met up with Dave Chatel on the hike in. We reached Kid Gore around 4:45. We set up camp then proceeded to break rocks. We broke a couple and created some gravel. We had supper, sat around and talked, then went to bed.

Up at 6:30 Saturday morning to watch the sunrise at 6:42. It was spectacular. We cleaned out the fire pit then hiked to Caughnawaga. They have "Do Not Enter" signs plastered all over the shelter. They have a couple of saplings across the entrance to keep people out. We cleaned up all the garbage. Dave and I hiked to the top of Glastonbury. There were no blow downs. We did some clipping, and a lot of water bar work. The trail is in good shape. Blazes looked pretty good, both north and south. They can probably go for another year before they need to be painted. Back to the shelter about 4:45. Dave crushed some more rocks. We had supper. Seven people showed up around 6ish. Some of the overflow went to Caughnawaga. Nobody remembered any blowdowns between Story Spring and Kid Gore. We woke up Sunday morning. No sunrise, but lots of fog and rain. Dave and I worked on crushing another rock. Then started to home.

The privy is full to the bottom of the outhouse. It will have to be moved real soon. There were no clippers and no swizzle sticks under the shelter. Both Dave and I brought hoe's. I'm going to turn in a receipt for \$18.01 for my hoe. Dave bought his for \$2 at a garage sale. He also bought a sledge hammer for \$5. He left that under the shelter as well. There is one short handled shovel, an axe, 2 hoes, and some rock bars and that's about it for tools.

Noticed the right top corner of the shelter (as you are facing it) is beginning to sag. This is the top pole that begins to define the overhang. Dave thinks next time we should brace it up. Looked at the two tent sites we created last year. The one closest to the shelter was muddy. We need to change the angle to let water drain. The further one away looked good, but briars are beginning to grow there.

Jack Sanga & David Chatel

Club Information

http://www.conngmc.com

Officers & Executive Committee

Carol Langley—President

(860) 621-2860, cosmical14@yahoo.com

Dick Krompegal, 1st Vice President, Trails & Shelters

(860) 667-4205, rkrompy@aol.com

Sarah O'Hare, 2nd Vice President, Activities

(860) 563-7018, seohare7@yahoo.com

Bill Brodnitzki, Director To GMC

(860) 542-5641, wbrodnitzki@snet.net

Secretary, Position Open

Jack Sanga, Treasurer

(860) 648-9614, jsanga@cox.net

Marge Hackbarth, Reporter to the Long Trail News.

(203) 237-0560

Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President:

Carol A. Langley

67 Pondview Drive

Southington, CT 06489

(860) 621-2860, cosmical14@yahoo.com

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Dick Krompegal

142 Churchill Drive

Newington, CT 06111-4003

(860) 667-4205, rkrompy@aol.com

Membership

When filling out the form to join or renew circle the Connecticut Section on the application to receive, at no extra charge, the Connecticut Section's newsletter and activity schedule.

Dues:

Individual Adult \$ 35.00

Family \$ 45.00

Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income \$ 20.00

Nonprofit or Youth Group \$ 50.00

Business or Corporation \$125.00

Send annual dues to:

The Green Mountain Club

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road

Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

(802) 244-7037, http://www.greenmountainclub.org



Mt Moosilauke August 4, 5 & 6, 2006

Everyone met at the Pemi Campground on Friday night. We trickled in from about 4 to 10. Grace and Jim were the first to arrive. A slight navigational error delayed Jack, Ron and Mandy. They arrived about 6:00. We set up tents and then went to North Woodstock for supper. Choosing a place to eat with 6 very agreeable people isn't easy. Every suggestion is met with "OK". We finally decided on a nice family Greek restaurant. I think everyone was pleased with their meal choice. Back to the campground where I finally gave in to Mandy's constant pleadings and soundly beat her at scrabble. Laurene, the last of the party to arrive, showed up around 9:30.

Saturday morning was a bright and beautiful day. We dropped one car at the Gorge Brook trail where we would finish up. On the drive back, Jim, Grace and I almost hit a moose. It ran right in front of the car. Luckily we were on a dirt road at the time and not traveling very fast. It probably was no more than 20-30 feet in front of the car. This was Grace's first up close and personal "Moose Experience". The rest of the drive back to the Beaver Brook trail was uneventful, and we began our hike around 9:30ish.

In true to GMC fashion, we took the wrong branch right from the parking lot. About 0.1 miles later and back at the main road, we finally figured it out and turned around (like traveling downhill when you are supposed to be climbing a mountain wasn't enough of a clue). When we finally got on the right trail, there were all these dire warning signs. "You must be in great shape to do this trail." "This trail is really dangerous." etc., etc. The trail description for the Beaver Brook Trail is listed as "Strenuous: The Beaver Brook Trail is the shortest, yet most difficult route to Moosilauke's summit due to extremely steep and rough trail conditions around the Beaver Brook Cascades." Combined with all the warning signs we were starting to get a little nervous. We decided to do the trail anyway. What, me worry?

The trail followed a cascading stream for quite a while. There were plenty of good photo opportunities. For the first section of the trail (maybe a mile) it was constant up. Every step forward was a step up. It was like doing the Stairmaster. The trail was well maintained, and marked. In many places where the trail was just rock ledge, they had driven spikes into the rocks and then placed railroad ties on the spikes to create steps. In some places they had driven in re-bar to make handholds. With these modifications and the fact that it was perfect hiking weather, we didn't find the trail all that "dangerous". In fact, Huntington's Ravine on Mt. Washington is a lot worse (and no warning signs). The second portion the trail was significantly flatter and was more like the normal hiking trails in CT. The final approach to



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the top was again all uphill, but a more gradual incline. We reached the summit before noon. This is a first for the group. Either we're getting better (even as we get older) or the mountains are getting smaller. The view from the top was really good. Not perfect, because there was a little haze, but we could see Mt Washington and all the other presidential whites. It was very sunny, but cool and windy at the top. Comfortable to hike in shorts and T-shirt, but when stopped for lunch most people put on additional layers. In most cases it was simply a wind breaker.

After a light lunch and about a 25 minute break, we took the obligatory group photo at the top, and then began down the Gorge Brook trail. This trail was not as strenuous, nor as scenic as the Beaver Brook Trail. There were two vistas on the way down which did provide good views. We were back at the car by 2:30.

On the way out, we noticed a stream that meandered through a bolder field. Someone had stacked rocks on top of each other. Now this wasn't just piling rocks up in a cairn. These were pointy rocks precariously balanced one on top of the other. We stopped initially just to look at them. Upon closer investigation we found some of them were true works of art. Since it was so early, we tried our hand at it. We spent about an hour stacking rocks on top of each other, and just cooling our feet in the nice clear babbling stream.

Finally hunger for ice cream drove us to stop stacking rocks and back into town. Since it was too early for supper, a light snack and then Grace and Jim left and headed back to Boston. Laurene, Mandy, Ron and Jack headed back to the campground. Mandy, Laurene and Jack went swimming in the Pemi river. We watched several people jump off a railroad bridge into the river. Looked like fun, but no one from our group did it.

Out of the water, into the showers, cleaned up and back to North Woodstock for supper. Our first choice was a BBQ Texas style restaurant. Upon walking in, and finding only 1 waitress and hearing a long-winded story about how none of the other help had showed up, how busy her life was, and why she was sooooo mad, we decided to try the Italian restaurant. That was a good choice. We sat outside on the patio, where it was starting to cool down. They had outdoor heaters going, but in my opinion the smoke and smell lessened what would have been a great experience.

Back to the campground, where Mandy insisted we play an outdoor trivia game, similar to Triva Pursuit. I won't go into great detail, but let it be known, that Mandy needs to learn a LOT more about the great outdoors before she plays again. It's now 10:30 but she still hasn't beaten me at any game this weekend. Finally I agree to a game of Acey/Duecy (it's played on a backgammon board), where by she proceeds to make up the rules as she goes along. Surprise, surprise, I lost that game. Finally we can all get some sleep.

Up at 7:00 on Sunday morning, strike camp and off to the Kayak store. We had signed up for kayaking down the Pemi River. It boasted class I and II rapids. The course started in N. Woodstock and went 7 miles downstream and is listed as 3 hour trip. We questioned if there was enough water in the river to make the trip worthwhile. The guide said this was their 2nd best year in 12 years. There were several rapids that were really fun. One was so much fun, that we decided to shoot it again. As we turned our kayaks around, mine got caught on a branch and the river flipped it over. I'm just there to provide amusement for my fellow paddlers, because they all had a good laugh at my expense. Good thing the water was only waist deep. It was the only tip over of the whole day.

We encountered a rapid that had a standing wave. That's where water encounters an obstacle (usually a rock) has to change course and then tries to rush back into the void where it had to split. The result is a wave that you can surf with the kayak and stay in place. If you're really good, it doesn't take any effort. Ron and Laurene managed to ride the wave.

We came to another railroad bridge (not the one by the campground) and again there were people jumping off it into the river. It was about 18-20 ft above the river. This time it was too great a temptation. I had to try it. You couldn't just jump off the bridge but had to climb from the railroad bed to the superstructure. Getting from the railroad bed to the superstructure was the scary part. A count of 3 and down I went. I don't know how deep the water was, but I never touched bottom. Anyway, I was the only one brave enough (some said stupid enough) to do it.

We meandered down the stream, shooting the occasional rapid until the very end. Just before the very end, there was perhaps a 6 ft drop in the river over a series of rock ledges. It was broken up into two 3 ft drops. For me this was the most challenging part of the river trip. No one from the group had any problems navigating the rapid. However, coming over the ledge, the kayak nose is pointed straight down. As a result we all took water into the kayaks because none of us had skirts. Right after that, was the landing where we hauled the kayaks out, spread stuff out to dry and waited for about 15-20 minutes for the guide to pick us up.

Since this has been such a rainy year and it had rained heavily the previous Wednesday, the level in the river was adequate. I think another 6 inches of water, and this would be a phenomenal section of river to do. Less water and I wouldn't try the section we did.

Back to North Woodstock for a light lunch (again at the Greek restaurant). We finally broke up and headed for home around 2:30 in the afternoon. I can honestly say a good time was had by all.

Hikers Grace, Mandy, Laurene, Jim, Ron and Jack.

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New York AT Oct. 7-9, 2006

An enthusiastic group of seven gathered Saturday morning at the Elk Pen parking area to begin our three day trek on the New York Appalachian Trail, traveling north through Harriman State Park. The trail was easy on us as we began an immediate ascent of Green Pond Mountain. For the next two miles the trail continued to be gentle until we reached the base of Lemon Squeezer, a narrow and steep passage through huge boulders. Everyone made it through, some with their packs, some without and one became stuck and needed a good strong pull. According to Ed, this section of trail was the first section of the AT to be planned out. In particular, the original trail blazers looked specifically for an interesting area to direct the trail through and so the Lemon Squeezer came to be.

Our first night's stop was to be at the Fingerboard Shelter.



With it only a four mile hike this first day, arrival was quite early. Other people had already set up camp for the weekend, understandably, for the shelter was grand! It was built in 1928 of stone with two built-in fire places. It was situated in a large open area with many tent sites and water easily accessible. Laurene and Ed

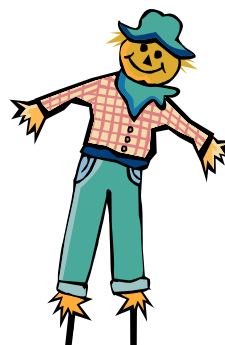
claimed their spaces in the shelter while everyone else found choice tent spots. Two women were settled in the shelter and their two friends tented nearby. Between them all they had four well behaved dogs. The littlest one, Roscoe, a Jack Russell Terrier, was a source of amusement to wile away the afternoon. A group of young men had also camped nearby for the weekend. Laurene, Don and Sarah went down to the brook to fetch water and then continued further to see Lake Tiorati. The lake was especially scenic with two small, colorful sailboats turning into the wind. Back at the shelter, Jack had a fire going. The day, closing into evening, produced the full moon which illuminated our campground. One by one, we hikers retreated into our sleeping bags, only to be awakened later by the young people having a party.

Sunday morning brought a gorgeous start to our day. As the sun was rising over the trees to the east, the full moon was sinking in the west. It was a sure sign for a terrific day ahead. The trail continued to be gentle until we reached the William Brien Shelter where we stopped for a break. It was another stone shelter but not nearly as grand as the Fingerboard Shelter. Most disagreeable, actually, as the area was terribly littered and unkempt, most uninviting it was. The shelter was located at the base of a huge rock scramble, the beginning of the arduous terrain ahead. Our lunch stop was to be at the crest of Black Mountain, a good choice, for the views were excellent, the Hudson River to the East, a clear view of the Manhattan skyline to the South and early autumn foliage in all directions.

Our night's destination was West Mountain Shelter where there was reported to be no accessible water. Therefore, it was imperative that we get water at Beechy Bottom Brook, about a mile before the shelter. The brook was located just after a harrowing cross of the Palisades Parkway, not once, but twice. Upon arrival at the brook, good 'ol reliable Jack was there waiting for us. After the adrenaline-rushing highway crossing the leader completely forgot about this most important stop! Carrying plenty of water to see us through the evening meal, tomorrow's breakfast and for our hike out, we all trudged a mile upwards and over rock ledges to the West Mountain Shelter. Soon after our arrival many others came and set up camp, including an inner-city scout troop. Jack started a fire but was soon criticized for smoking everyone out of the shelter so the evening passed without one. Happy Birthday, Rich! A birthday cake appeared, complete with candles and balloons. It was then learned that it was Jack's birthday tomorrow (Monday), Leslie's birthday on Tuesday and Ed's in another week! A little cake and a lot of laughter over this made us briefly forget the arduous hike of the afternoon. As the night settled in, the lights of New York City came on and we fell asleep to the orchestra of crickets and katydids.

Monday's five mile hike was done in three groups. Laurene and Jack set out first, then Rich and Leslie, then Don, Ed and Sarah. It was arranged that all would meet at Ed's van at the Bear Mountain Inn. The descent of West Mountain was an enjoyable one with numerous open ledges with fabulous views. There was some confusion at one road crossing and for a few, much time was lost in attempting to follow old blazes. Reaching the summit of Bear Mountain should have been a highlight but with all the cars, people and trash the moment was a disappointment. Having seen great views all weekend little time was spent at the summit. The descent was the last leg of the 19 mile trek. We all met at the van and heard about Jack, Laurene, Leslie and Rich's continued walk over the Bear Mountain Bridge and afterwards, lunching on Oktoberfest fare in the park. We all then piled into Ed's van and drove back to our cars for the long ride home.

*Hikers: Jack Sanga, Leslie and Richard Chandler,
Laurene Sorensen, Don Hagstrom, Ed Myers
Leader: Sarah O'Hare*



**Metacomet-Monadnock Trail
August 19**

Section 5 of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail begins on US 202 in Holyoke, MA by the McLean Reservoir and ends six miles later on Rt. 141 near the Mt. Tom Reservation. It is a very scenic section traversing a wooded spur of East Mountain with abrupt trap rock ledges.

Driving solo without the keen eyes of her usual fellow hikers, Sarah managed to arrive at the prescribed time and place with some admitted detours. Bill sprinkled the drive to the starting point with historical facts of the area. After spotting the car, it was into the woods and on the trail. We skirted the northern tip of McLean Reservoir and ascended to a narrow ridge top now overgrown with scrub trees. Most of the trail follows old wood roads, logging trails and some ATV or snowmobile runs. Views to the east are rare and when found one could see Holyoke Community College, a very distant Wilbraham Range and the Connecticut River Valley, also known as the Pioneer Valley Region. Spectacular vistas to the west revealed Hampton Ponds Recreation Area, the Westfield River Valley and the distant Berkshire Range.

The trail has many ridgeline ascents, descents into brushy draws, turns and narrow ridges. It seems birds and animals were not moving about on this day but a four foot blacksnake did lie in our path. Our decision to skirt it was not necessary as the reptile slithered away from us. Some thoughts of climbing an abandoned radio beacon vanished as we examined the rusting hulk and realized our age group. After a number of stops on trap rock ridges, to my anticipated surprise the legendary peanut butter cookies made their appearance and disappearance. Near the Holyoke Revolver Club we crossed Cherry Street and from here the last two miles have been recently relocated onto Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife land at the request of private landowners. The end comes at the Whiting Street Reservoir entrance. See you here next time when we climb Mt. Tom and follow the ridge for a 6.5 mile Section 6 adventure.

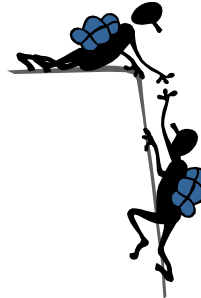
*Leader: Bill "Mr. Capp" Falconer
Hiker: Sarah O'Hare*



**Metacomet-Monadnock Trail
Section 6**

Section 6 of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail begins at Rt. 141 in Holyoke MA by the Wyckoff Country Club and ends six plus miles later on Rt. 5 by the Connecticut River. It's the more spectacular section of the M&M Trail. It rambles over Mt. Tom, Whiting Peak, Goat Park and Mt. Nonotuck thru hemlock glens and along skyline rim with steep talus slides. A drizzle greeted us at the trailhead but was

not enough to deter the scheduled start. The 1.5 mile trail to the top of Mt Tom soon was shrouded in fog and rain. It follows an old tote road by a swamp then a large glacial boulder before it starts the steep climb to the top. The elders Don, Carol and Bill were the last to reach the site of the Old Mt. Tom Hotel, which is now home to an array of radio and TV antennas. Sadly fog prevented any views of the surrounding country side. The trail continues along the top of steep 400 foot cliffs for about a mile. As the weather cleared superb views of Easthampton MA were revealed. A UMASS wind tower project poked out of the fog as we approached Whiting Peak. A steep descent brought us to the Reservation Center. With rumbles of when can we eat, Carol located a picnic table but Bill remembered more ahead on the trail. Times



have changed this ancient memory and the near mutinous hikers decided to eat by a rock outcropping half way up to Goat Peak. Except for Leslie and Rich we squatted on damp clothing to refuel. Henry had collected an array of mushrooms, some for lunch. Sarah's peanut butter cookies hit the spot. As is the case, a few hundred feet later we reached Goat Peak and the promised benches. From here views of the Oxbow and marinas were clear. The dampness caused slipping and twisting of body parts, which now had to be repaired in view of the public. An old paved road leads to Mt. Nonotuck and ruins of the Eyrie house. The descent was gradual on an old tote road leading to a power line. Even so the walking wounded. Bill and Sarah had little relief as we passed under US 91 and located our vehicles by the Connecticut River. Section 7 starts across the river, next.

*Hikers: Sarah O'Hare, Carol Langley, Rich and Leslie
Chandler, Don Hagstrom, Henry Smith
Leader: Bill "Mr. Capp" Falconer*



**Quinnipiac River Paddle
July 9, 2006**

A beautiful sunny but windy day we had for our first trip down the Mighty Q. Our group met at the Banton Rd. boat launch in North Haven. The river level had dropped from the recent rains so we had very gooie thick mud to deal with to get into our canoes and kayaks. Mission accomplished off we went. A pleasant current took us down the river. The GMC water scout Jack Sanga led the way in his kayak as he paddled down the river.

First call of distress Sarah is yelling Henry get my paddle. Her paddle had slipped out of her hand as she tried to cut a branch. Those who paddle with me know that every trip has a little work involved. Fast action and Henry has the paddle in hand and we were on our way down the river till we met the next tree across the river. The Quinnipiac was pretty clear probably from the force of the heavy rain that carried it down river.

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After we crossed under the Sackett Point Rd. bridge the river widened significantly as we entered the Wildlife Area. The wind also increased and paddling for me in my inflatable became a struggle as it did for others in their canoes. Under the railroad bridge and into the marsh area where we net a few other paddlers some going up the river and others down. This area has placed platforms for the Osprey to nest each year and we were in for a treat since a nest was occupied. The mother became quite disturbed with our intrusion of her space and flew over head making a racket.

Not wanting to create a problem we paddled to Peciman Island where we had planned to have lunch. The tide was out so the water level was low. Eleanor Poole said we can just walk in and out of the canoe she jumped. Lordy, Lordy what do we have here someone is sinking in up to her knees into black sucking mud - get out the ropes and pull her out - the men sprang into to action and Eleanor was saved - lets get out of here. So back we paddle to the Wildlife Area but staying on the opposite shore and land at the boat launch. Not the nicest place to have lunch but we all had nice cement blocks that we sat on and were entertained by the mother Osprey teaching the baby to flap it's wings in preparation to take the first flight, which we did not witness.

By the time we finished lunch the tide was starting to come in and the wind was still blowing out of the south. Eleanor Poole and Dennis Butler who were in a canoe that was pulling me along as it became impossible to keep up decided we should head for the take out. Henry Smith, Sarah O'Hare and Jack Sanga went to the other side of the island hoping to get on to it but their attempts were futile.

Soon everyone was at the take out, pulling the canoes and kayaks out of the water and loading them on the roof racks. We then headed for ice cream at Cold Stone Creamery, not knowing how expensive a treat it would be most of us were shocked to find out our cones cost \$5.00.

Hope you all had a good time on the water. Thanks for joining me.

Paddlers: Henry Smith, Sarah O'Hare, Eleanor Poole, Dennis Butler, Jack Sanga & Carol A. Langley



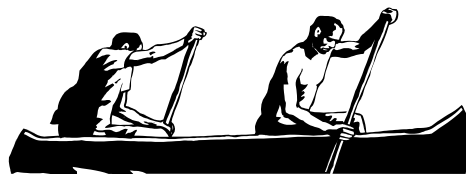
QUINNIPIAC RIVER PADDLE Sun. Aug. 27, 2006

Well we all know how much rain we had this summer and once again the weatherman was predicting showers in the afternoon. Just as we unloaded the canoes the sprinkles started looking at each other, I said "does everyone have rain gear if you do we can put it on and go play rain or go home and watch it rain". Three paddlers and myself carried the

canoes to the river, put on rain gear and started our day. The launch spot was a nice sandy beach where Henry Smith and I had cut a path through brush and poison ivy earlier in the week for this paddle. A nice strong current took us around the corner under the bridge as we started our wet day. The Mighty Q twists and turns around and around keeping one very alert. As always saws were necessary to cut trees and limbs that were obstructing the river path.

Henry Smith and Sarah O'Hare were in front so most of the cutting was done by the strong arms of Sarah. The rain really came down but we paddled on to our destination to our take out just above a broken dam in Cheshire. With rain and current becoming stronger paddling it became a bit challenging making all the twists and turns. Some places along the river banks there were stairs and screen houses that landowners had built to enjoy the peace and tranquility of the river during the summer. We also saw canoes and kayaks tied up. In one place we saw a blowdown that someone had dragged from the river and cut up for their firewood. Thank you very much. In one place the tree across the river was so large that we had to cut away branches and drift under lying almost flat in the canoes. One place that we reached took all four of us out of the canoes and between pushing and pulling we cleared a small passage. We were certainly making progress clearing the river.

The river was pretty clean from litter but just as we went into another bend in the river there was a cooler and other things caught in some brush, well one of the sticks from the brush was in the wrong place and as we turned the corner the canoe turned over. At this point the river was over my head and I had gone in for a good dunking as did my partner Dick Arnold who lost his hat. The river is pulling us down stream which has more bends and we can't see around so we did some fast assessing of our situation. Since Dick could not touch bottom we decided to go back up the river into a little cove we spotted where there was a bank and a shallow sandbar. Dick pulled the canoe by the rope and I swam behind kicking and pushing. In minutes we had emptied the canoe and were back in ready to try this bend again, success and off we go.



When we reach Sarah and Henry they ask what took you so long, I said "Oh, we decided to play in the water for a bit, they just

laughed, little did they know. As we reached the bridge under Rte 322 in Southington we took a lunch break. Henry forged on with saw in hand crossing the river to a huge blowdown that we needed dynamite for. After sawing a couple of limbs we decided to drag the canoes over the tree onto a sandy beach. Down the river again where we had a few rifles and some quick water. The last mile we were starting to get chilled since we were soaked to the bones and rain had not let up for a minute.

Reaching the take out we had to climb into the cold water and

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pull the canoes out. Four soaked people climbed into Dick's car to drive and get the other cars. We had the heat on 85 and the teeth were chattering since the temp outside was a balmy 57 degrees. Thanks for joining me on another water adventure.

Paddlers: Sarah O'Hare, Henry Smith, Dick Arnold, Carol A. Langley



AT/LT Rte. 9 VT. - Rte 2 No. Adams Sept. 15 - 17, 2006

As we left CT. on Friday morning it was raining but the forecast for VT. was showers with sunny and cool Sat. and Sun. The group met at the Greylock Community Center in No. Adams where our shuttle waited for us. Chris Berks and Marge March from the Bennington Section offered to shuttle us to Rte. 9 where we would start the hike. Martha handed us fresh parsley to enhance our meals for this weekend. When we reached the trailhead the air was heavy but no rain so we started our climb up the rocks to Harmon Hill. The rocks were slippery and moss covered so the going was slow except for Dennis who went over the rocks like a mountain goat.

Henry was having a field with all the mushrooms so he was far behind. Lunch was had on Harmon Hill at the trail register box. A very light breeze stirred occasionally to help keep us cool. Hiking in Vermont was very muddy and very green with no views so watched the white blazes and moved along. Clogged water bars needed attention so I slowed up with Don Hagstrom. Suddenly we see a brown building on the trail could this be the shelter? It was a welcome sight since we spent most of the day skirting water and mud. Jack Reynolds had claimed the picnic table for his bunk and the others were taken so I settled for the upper bunk over Rover. Just as we settle in along come two hikers dressed in camouflage wanting a bunk. So I pulled down my things and was going to share a bunk with Henry, they weren't happy they wanted another bunk. I told them they could share the top bunk or go to the camping zone. While I was in conversation with these guys the other hikers were sizing these guys up and I was advised later that they were packing 45 rifles. They did not want to mess with Grandma Carol, so they quietly crossed the river and set up their tents.

Now down to the job of the firewood for the campfire. Everyone pitched in sawing, dragging dead wood, and pulling down dead limbs with a rope. While the men gathered wood for the evening fire I made drains to let the water run off and away from the shelter and picnic table area. Darkness came soon and with the damp air the sleeping bags were the place to be. Well there was no fear of any animals coming near the shelter since we had two first class snores. Rover had a steady rhythm but Jack was making all kinds of strange noises even

waking himself up a couple of times. Don who had slept in his tent just a short distance from the tent was also serenaded.

Sunshine greeted us on Sat. The trail took off along side a beautiful stream, which we followed for a bit then the climbing started. Henry left about an hour after the rest of the group and spent his day clearing blow downs. Don and I once again cleared water bars and added a few rocks where needed. We got some good practice in taking off and putting on our backs. As we crossed Sucker Pond Outlet we were walking in water since the boards were under water. Trying to improve the trail we found some logs and placed them across to help other hikers. Just above Roaring Branch we had lunch on a log at the south end of the beaver dam. More mud and water but we finally crossed County Road and had a much drier trail into the Seth Warner Shelter. Here we had a very nice camping area and spread out. Once again we had a nice campfire, but for some reason time doesn't matter when you are tired on the trail into the sleeping bag you go. When we reached the shelter at 4:00 Jack and Dennis were already in the bags relaxing. By 6:15 Sunday these two were on the trail and we never saw them again as their driver from CT. was picking them up at 1:00 in North Adams.

Henry, Don and myself hiked together once again clearing the trail where necessary all too soon we were at the VT. MA border. Plans were to have lunch on the rocks where the Cobble Trail comes and take in some sun. Down, down the trail went making the knees work hard. The stream sang to us as we hiked along. The weekend was over and another section of the AT completed. Next year we will do another section and move further North. Many thanks to the Bennington folks who shuttled us to the trail head.

Backpackers: Jack Reynolds, Dennis Hennessey, Henry Smith, Don Hagstrom, and Carol A. Langley



Farmington Linear Trail Through Hamden and Cheshire Sunday, August 6.

Nobody showed up: I hiked alone: (Do I still get credit for leading this hike?!) 11 miles, 6 hours, had a great time. Stopped at Dunkin' Donuts -Twice. My write-up consists of the following Haiku:

It was a canal, a railroad, and now a trail. I chose my own mode. At least we didn't lose anybody during the hike!

Best wishes: Dan Zelterman

