

The Connecticut Section Of The Green Mountain Club

The Trail Talk

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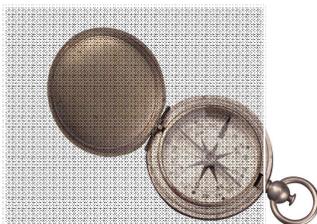
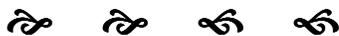
IN MEMORY OF BARBARA VAN WINKELN October 25, 1919 - March 7, 2010

Barbara, who was a long-time member of the Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain, passed away on March 7, 2010, at the age of 90 years. She spent her last 30 summers at her Art Gallery on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts. In 1995, she illustrated a children's book based on the Old Carousel Horse in the garden of the Chanticleer Restaurant in Sciasconset, Nantucket.

Barbara is listed in Who's Who in American Art. This well-known artist designed the letter head for our section's Newsletter during the early 1970's. If you look closely under the pine trees on the right side, you will see her initials. The Shelter is Kid Gore and the two hikers are her husband, Herb van Winkelen, and his hiking partner, Col. Anthony Shookus. The Connecticut Section is grateful for this very special letter head.

The Connecticut Section would like to express the club's deepest sympathy to her family.

*President
Carol A. Langley*



Bigelow Hollow
Sunday, January 10, 2010



Narrangansett Trail - Section 2 Saturday, January 23, 2010

Perhaps it was an omen for the year 2010. There was plenty of warm sunshine, which made it a perfect day for a winter hike. We started at Wyassup Lake with a brief climb to Lookout Point. After enjoying the view of the lake where we took a group picture, we headed back down and walked a fair distance on flat ground. Because it was so delightfully warm, some of us took off our coats and hiked in our long-sleeved shirts.

Because of our "chatting", we missed the trail a few times -- but we were never officially lost. Since some of the blazes were so confusing, we realized that we should have brought some blue paint and a brush for Dan. Around noon, we stopped and had lunch while enjoying the warmth of the day and the fun of being in the woods. There was hardly any snow, only leftover patches from the December snowfall.

We arrived at Route 49 where Dan and Dick continued on to

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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

Jim Robertson, 2nd Vice President, Activities

(860) 633-7279, jrobert685@aol.com

Laurene Sorensen, Director To The GMC

(401) 965-6724, laurenesorensen@gmail.com

Dan Zelterman, Secretary

(203) 230-9108, daniel.zelterman@yale.edu

Jack Sanga, Treasurer

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

Laurene Sorensen, Reporter to the Long Trail News

(401) 965-6724, laurenesorensen@gmail.com

Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President:

Carol A. Langley (860) 621-2860
67 Pondview Drive cosmical14@yahoo.com
Southington, CT 06489

Articles

The Trail Talk is published four times a year in January, April, July and October. Activity schedules are included in each issue. Reports of activities and articles must be sent to the editor no later than the tenth day of the month of the publication. Send articles to:

Mary O'Neill (860) 836-3736,
421 Tolland St maxmaera@gmail.com
Unit 114
East Hartford, CT 06108

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	\$ 40.00
Family	\$ 50.00
Senior (70 or older) or Limited Income	\$ 22.00
Nonprofit or Youth Group	\$ 50.00
Business or Corporation	\$150.00

Send annual dues to (can also pay online):

The Green Mountain Club
4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road
Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904
(802) 244-7037, www.greenmountainclub.org

Connecticut Section of the GMC

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the church. Mandy and Mike decided to turn around and walk back in preparation for the New Hampshire hike that was scheduled for the next weekend.

It was a really, really nice day to be out in the woods. Mandy's three pups had a grand time, too. From the lake to the church, the distance was six miles.

Hikers: Dick Hart, Mike Shaw, Dan Zelterman

Leader: Mandy Brink



Green Fall & Yawgoog Ponds Sunday, February 21

I'm having to write this out of a distant memory. So as not to repeat my past negligence in submitting writeups, immediately after this hike, I sat down and recorded my memories; however, it appears as if I've lost the flashdrive on which the article was stored, and now I have to write it again. Sometimes, being diligent doesn't pay.

Nonetheless, sometimes, it does. I'd be lying if I said that I reconnoiter all my hikes before hand. Since I usually stick to well established hiking routes, I tend to just wing it; but something told me that I shouldn't be so lackadaisical with



this event. My intuition proved me right. Because of the snow cover, we couldn't gather at the original meeting location on the west side of Green Fall Pond. I spent several

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hours driving around the area to find another, more accessible meeting location, which turned out to be on the east side of Yawgoog Pond near an obelisk that marked the Connecticut-Rhode Island border.



The easiest route to our new meeting location traverses through Camp Yawgoog, which is operated by the Boy Scouts of America. Although I've never been in the Boy Scouts (obviously), this prepubescent male Mecca reminded me of my childhood. My family spent many a summer at campgrounds around what is now known as J. Strom Thurmond Dam & Lake in Georgia. Our expeditions to these conquered wooded areas proved very therapeutic for a microphobic little girl. The fear of germs and disgust of all things dirty couldn't compete with the thrill of running through the woods with your brother and your smelly German Shepard while your imagination ran wild with magic and adventure. Born out of these sacred camps are reminiscent childhood memories of worry-free times that often serve as a 'happy place' in which to seek emotional refuge, even if subconsciously, during a more worrisome adulthood. Forgive my digression, but I wanted to pay tribute to the power and the healing effects of the outdoors although I'm probably preaching to the choir.

I remember the day to be cold but refreshing. We headed north along the Connecticut-Rhode Island border and then turned west. Our group attempted to find a cave south of Burnt Swamp that had been marked on the map, yet we never found it. We did, however, find Mill Site shelter. Like the few other shelters in Connecticut that I've seen, it was small and had an earthen floor. You wouldn't want to sleep in it, but it would provide a decent place to get out of the rain. There was also a spring nearby for drinking water.

Our trek eventually took us around Green Fall Pond. We had lunch at a picnic area on the west side. Afterwards, we continued around the pond and then headed east. When we reached the Connecticut-Rhode Island border again, part of the group turned south while three of us continued east. Even though I had lost 50% of my group, this was acceptable

since it was on purpose.

In terms of wild life, we saw snow fleas. As Sarah and I paused to marvel at the bouncing black dots on the snow around our feet, Jim wondered out loud if it was really necessary to stop and stand amidst the fleas. This prompted a discussion as to whether they were true fleas or not. We did not know.

Back at the parking lot, which is in quite a remote location, we also saw a lone, tan dog feasting on a cooked turkey. (?) I guess technically that's not wild life.

As our hike came to an end, we had the common discussion as to whether we should go out for pizza. It's the typical battle between the allure of well-deserved junk food (how often does that happen?) and the fatigue and desire to just head straight home after a long hike. Technology helped to create a great compromise. Thanks to a great GPS unit, which is the greatest thing since sliced bread along with antibiotics, the internet, and Turbotax, we were able to locate a nearby pizza parlor and call ahead (since the GPS unit had also provided the phone number!) and order the pizza. It came within minutes after our arrival at the parlor. The great outdoors and technology: what a great combination!

Hikers: Cathryn Dolan, James Fritz, Sarah O'Hare, Mandy Brink, Dave & Regina Chatel

Leader: Mary O'Neill



Beaver Dam Cabin at Wheeler Pond
Friday-Sunday, February 26-28, 2010



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Farmington Linear Trail in Hamden/Cheshire Sunday, February 28, 2010

It was a great day to be out on the trail. We began at the parking lot in front of a huge temple of athleticism with the sexy/foreign sounding name of *La Fitness*. The vast parking lot was filled almost to capacity. There was fear that all of these vehicles belonged to people who were also hiking the trail as opposed to hanging out inside the shrine, hoping to pick up dates. Anyway, it was a very long hike across the parking lot before we actually arrived at the place where the canal/railroad used to be.

Of course, neither of these nor the trail were anywhere evident since the trail had been relocated some distance away years ago. In an effort to provide an authentic hiking experience to our rugged participants, we followed the old rail bed, now disguised as ever more parking lots. Anyway, we hiked and chatted, often walking four abreast, which was made possible by the wide pavement.

After about an hour of this physical activity, we all agreed that it was time for a break. We retired to a convenient Dunkin' Donuts to have coffee and discuss our next move. And use the rest room. Anyway, after another hour out on the trail, it was time for Mexican food and a beer, or two, and another plate of nachos, *por favor*. Anyway, hikes are supposed to be fun, not a death march, right? Besides, how many hikes can boast of such great amenities as these? On the way back, we again hit the Dunkin' Donuts. You just can't find a clean restroom on the trail when you need it, can you?

Hikers: Lora Miller, Beth Schwartz (guest), Ken Williamson
Leader: Dan Zelterman



Nipmuck Trail Tuesday, March 9, 2010

Today's midweek outing in Mansfield brought together seven hikers to traverse six miles of the Nipmuck Trail. Besides the spring-like day, the highlights included Knowlton Brook at the northern end, the Fenton River at the southern end, and a large setting of old cellar holes and walls in between. We are all looking forward to the next section of the Nipmuck Trail in April.

Hikers: Sandra Hassan, George Jackson, Bill Falconer, Dick Hart, Don Hagstrom, Bill Heath
Leader: Sarah O'Hare



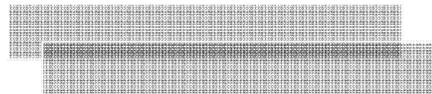
Mt Wachusett Sanctuary and State Reservation Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Cancelled the first time and nearly again because of the weather, this hike was finally completed. Len, George, and Bill met in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, for the carpool trip to Mount Wachusett Meadows and State Reservation. The resident ranger welcomed us with briefings of trail changes from the winter kill. A steady mist fell as we embarked on the first leg through the Meadow. A lone wild turkey was spotted before entering the forest.

There are many side trails in the sanctuary including the Mid State Trail that traverses Massachusetts from the Rhode Island to the New Hampshire borders. Coinciding with the Mid State Trail are the Chapman and Harrington Trails, which leads to the summit of Wachusett. As we hiked along these trails, we crossed old dirt roads, heard the pileated woodpeckers at work, and were able to observe the wind farm towers of Princeton Electric. The trail is a steady climb until the last half mile which resembles a giant stone stairway to the summit. As we crested, the snow fell and the winds kicked up, reducing the visibility. So much for the views of Boston and Mount Monadnock. We couldn't even see the summit signal towers that were barely fifty feet away.

After a quick survey of the remains of an old summit house and swimming pool, we descended from the elements for a lunch break on the Mountain House Trail where we met ascending hikers with a young pup. After devouring Len's supply of carrot sticks, we set out on the Jack Frost trail that runs through one of the last stands of old growth forest in central Massachusetts. This leg is not as rugged as the Harrington ascent. Serviceberry, Osier Dogwood, and bluets were in bloom. Great horned owls nesting in the area sounded two separate alarms. Our return was on the West Border Trail that passes a massive Glacier Bolder. At last, back in the meadow, the skies partially cleared to announce our damp and chilly return. We agreed that a return to this interesting and challenging 7½ mile loop is worth while regardless of the weather.

Hikers: George Jackson, Len Kochanowski
Leader: "Mr Capp" Bill Falconer



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Mattabesett Trail in Meriden/Middletown Saturday, March 20, 2010

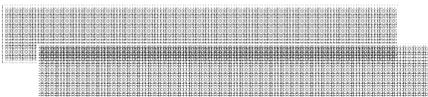
It was a great day to be outside after such a long winter. It was time to dust off the boots, stretch the knees, and get the cobwebs off the daypack. The map for the Mattabesett Trail shows a zillion miles of road-walk from Higby Mountain, across I-91, to Giufridda Park. Ugh. But months earlier, a sharp-eyed hiker noted a wayward blue blaze along Country Club Road in Middletown. The discovery of this blaze led to finding the off-road relocation that made today's hike S-O-O-O much better.

Sarah and Dan staged a car at the end and met up with the remainder of the group at the Park. Huffing and puffing, we lumbered up Chauncey Peak. There was some tearful reminiscing about hikes to this location by GMCers who had since gone on to follow that great trail-blaze in the sky. There were great views in all directions. We located some old graffiti by a long-ago, enterprising hiker had who packed in a hammer and chisel especially for this job.

The rock quarry continues to eat away at the trail, which disappeared under a pile of tailings. We located the trail again a small while later and followed it around the cliffs overlooking Crescent Lake. The trail dropped steeply, crossing the abandoned canal. A huge channel was cut through the rocks. We marveled and admired the effort involved, which made it a perfect time for a break!

Calories expended and consumed, we were refreshed to continue exploring the new relocation. The trail followed the canal and turned east, crossing the canal again. We followed fresh blazes out of the park and south on a short road walk. The trail reentered the woods and followed an abandoned trolley track. This made for some nice, level walking around Highland Lake. The rickety and bouncing bridge over the flow was nearly washed away last winter. This made for a scary crossing, but there were no catastrophes to report. We met up with a hiker working maintenance, clearing debris from beaver activity near a dam. He promised to fix the bridge next. It was nice to see that other groups provide trail maintenance in addition to our group. This task is often overlooked by some hikers but is much appreciated by others. A good time was had by all.

Hikers: Sarah O'Hare, Don Hagstrom, Bill Heath, Tom Marston, and Buckeye
Leader: Dan Zelterman



Gay City State Park Day Hike Sunday, March 21, 2010

Weather-wise, March can be unpredictable, yet on this second day of spring, clear skies and record breaking temperatures favored this excited group of hikers. Unfortunately, the hike leader, Sarah, had to delegate the trail responsibilities to Mr Capp. Two new faces were amongst the group of eight, and soon all were bound in friendship.

After a few instructions about the general trail directions, the hike began on Birch Mountain Road. With leafless trees and shrubs, creatures still in their dens, and flora in early bud stage, chatter of this and that permeated the forest. A plethora of mountain bikers challenged us at many turns on the trails. At about 2 1/2 miles, the red-blazed outer loop was reached. Bikers indicated that the southern route was inundated with water in many spots. The first major decision to reroute the hike was democratically decided by the leader. We would traverse the specified route in reverse and deal with the swamps later.

It was exciting to realize that we were walking in the steps and witnessing the evidence of a long lost communal society that was originally known as Factory Hollow. After a fire destroyed the village, there was a second attempt to reestablish the mills; and the new settlement was named Gay City. It, too, eventually burned. The interconnecting wagon tracks, cellar holes, and the wooden mill walls remain. Lunch break was short but the famous "Sarah Cookies" were a reminder of her presence.

As we reached the southern end of the outer loop, it was time to confront the swamp dilemma that had been reported earlier by the bikers. Dry feet were preferred despite the addition of another half mile. Now that we were back on the return trail with dry feet, we noticed that it was a steady uphill jaunt for the next mile. On the way in, keen-eyed Karen had spotted some Colts Foot. By the end of the trip, we had noticed that the Colts Foot had sprouted because of the warmth of the day.

Our arrival at Birch Mountain Road presented us with our last decision: either road walk a few hundred feet to our vehicles or opt for the half mile wooded trail recommended by our original leader. This time, Mr Capp was out-voted, and the wooded trail, possessing the already seen erratics and Shenipsit Trail Connector, was retraced. No one was the worst for wear after the 8.2-mile hike that included the reroute and the retrace. This indeed was a great day to be outdoors with nature. We missed Sarah but thank her for selecting this day and trail.

Hikers: Lenny Kochanowski, Jonathan Burnham, George Jackson, Polly Silva, Deanna Steinberg, Dave and Karen Wells
Leader: Bill "Mr Capp" Falconer