

# The Trail Talk

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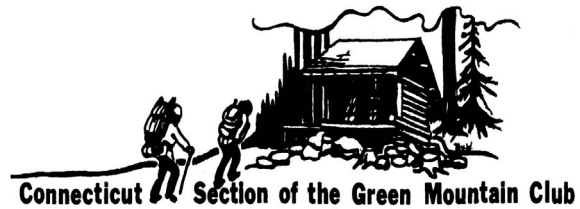
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## Mattabesett Trail Relocation April 03, 2004

Occasional rain & mist altered my plans. I originally wanted to blaze the 4.5 miles from the Black Pond area to Rt. 66. However, we had another task better suited for this misty day. Due to construction on Route 66 to widen the road, the northern end of our section of the Mattabesett needed to be relocated.

We scouted around to get the lay of the land trying to decide where the best location for the new trail would be and try to get views; stay out of wet, or potential wet, areas; interesting trees; good trees to blaze; avoid hemlock stands; avoid hard to maintain areas such as fast growing briar patches; good places to cross brooks; etc. I think the relocation is about a half mile in length. After all the input and suggestions for the best route we flagged the trail temporarily until we could get back to blaze to make it permanent.

Thanks for all the help!

David Chatel, Dan Zelterman, Sarah O'Hare, Ken Williamson  
By Dick Krompegal

## Mount Monadnock April 10, 2004

One couldn't ask for more of a near perfect day in mid April for hiking...sunny with temperatures in the mid 40's.

After a slightly late arrival on the part of the hike leader, (due to following a local resident out for a Sunday drive on a Saturday), we checked in with the ranger station for clarification of the trails that I had mapped out for a loop hike. We departed the visitor's lot at @ 9:45 am heading up the white dot trail for a while at a slight descent.... just enough incline to wake up the legs and get the lungs going. It felt good to be out hiking. Following the mud, rock and ice covered trail for a half mile brought us to the junction with the Cascade Link Trail where we took a right onto it in hopes of some solitary hiking.

The Cascade Link Trail is just as the name implies.....a trail

that parallels a cascading stream and small waterfalls. Our time was spent negotiating the ice patches, puddles and slippery rocks as we gradually ascended to 2100 feet where we hooked a left onto the Spellman Trail (the toughest trail on Mt. Monadnock) and began our hand over foot ascent of large boulders for the next half mile. Our hard work was rewarded with magnificent views east to the town of Jaffrey and surrounding valleys, ponds and open space. About three-quarters of the way up, we stopped for a short refueling break and watched the hawks and turkey vultures' glide with the wind currents. The Spellman Trail brought us to the intersection with Pumpelly trail. The latter stretch of this trail put us at 3000 feet with open ledge views of the surrounding area.

As we continued our ascent mending over and between granite boulder faces, the wind increased to at least 50 miles an hour. Everybody layered up, even though the sun was shining. We bagged Mt. Monadnock (3200 feet) at noon. The wind was so strong and cold we all huddled down in one of the rock pockets and ate lunch quickly. Some of us wanted to get going because it was getting cold, and I myself thought we should since the mountain top was becoming filled with people, and I longed for more solitary hiking.

We descended from the top on the White Arrow Trail in gusty and cold conditions negotiating down a jagged trail of rocks and boulders trying to keep an eye out for the Amphitheater Trail that we were going to take out to Bald Rock, but we missed the turn-off. (The ranger at the station said that there were a few trails that hadn't been maintained too well, and I assume that this was one of them). So with that said, we continued to descend sharply down the White Arrow Trail passing a few people coming up. I don't know what was tougher to negotiate; going up the trails with ice patches or coming down. Anycase, the White Arrow Trail ended at a spiderweb junction just above the halfway house site.

The trail plans had changed so we decided to follow the Hello Rock Trail out to a connector that would take us back to the visitor lot, but yet again, we were on an unmaintained trail which ended abruptly in the middle of the woods, cut off by blow-downs and the disappearance of the rest of the trail. So by a 4 to 1 vote and Dave's calculations from the map, we did a little bushwhacking and came to the toll road, walked a little ways and picked up the Parker Trail which took us back to the visitor lot, thus ending another GMC adventure.

Till next peak, Happy Trails!

Hikers: Dave and Regina Chatel, Janeene Batten, Mandy Brink.  
Hike Leader: Steve Keri

**Mattabesett Trail Relocation  
April 18,2004**

The paint wasn't even dry on the newly blazed relocation of the Mattabesett Trail when hikers appeared. Five people reported for work at Guida's between 8:30 & 10:00. There was confusion caused by some mix up in publishing two different starting times by Dick Krompegal. We approached the flagged relocation from Black Pond. The CT section of the Mattabesett Trail had to be relocated because of the widening of Route 66.

Ken & Lora blocked out old blazes at an intersection and cleared the trail. Dick & John blazed the new trail with the standard blue paint to make the relocation permanent. Mary cleared the trail & scouted ahead to spot the best trees to locate the new blazes. Marge helped clear the trail, removed the flags used temporarily & picked up the minimal trash.

All but Marge ended the day with well deserved pizza. While eating, somehow the conversation turned to some of the tasks Lora, a veterinarian, does on dogs. After the guys squirmed in their seats for several minutes the conversation was mercifully changed.

Thanks for the hard work.

Lora Miller, John & Mary O'Neill, Ken Williamson

Written by Marge Hackbarth

Embellished by Dick Krompegal

**Pachaug Triathlon  
May 8, 2004**

Lora Miller was the only soul brave enough to come to the triathlon. We started with a warm up hike through the rhododendron sanctuary and then hiked to Mt. Misery where we had a light lunch. Then it was back down to the bikes for a ride to Hopeville Pond State Park. We stopped midway at Buttonwood Farms for some delightful ice cream. After arriving at Hopeville, we unloaded the canoe and headed down the lake. It was quite windy so it ended up being a pretty good workout. We had a beautiful day though and it was nice to be out on the water. We thought we'd entice more people to come next time by saying that we saw the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders practicing on our ride or that Brad Pitt was waiting to give us a massage at the end of our paddling, but in reality all we saw were some wood ducks, Canadian geese, swans and a black snake sunning himself. Still it was a fun day and with all three activities combined, a good workout for the day.

Participants Mandy Brink and Lora Miller

**Upper Goose Pond Backpack  
May 15-16, 2004**

Only had two people interested in this easy overnight. Liz

and Doug Walker from Hamden with their two dogs Jessie and Roscoe met me at the Tryingham parking area. Doug then drove us to Rte. 20 where we started about 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon to hike into the UpperGoose Cabin. As soon we got into the woods the nasty black flies were on us, so out came the netting. The trail in is about 1 1/2 miles and very easy. Reaching the Cabin our first chore was to get the tents up since the wind had picked up and the thunder could be heard off in the distance.

The platforms were the wrong size for both of our tents so we had to find that perfect piece of ground where we will have a comfortable night. Tents up and gear inside, we headed to the porch of the cabin to wait out the storm. But the storm only blew over us without a drop of rain. Must have blown out the bugs too, but not for long. During upper time the black flies were back. Because I had a dry supper planned and no cooking was necessary I was able to retreat to my tent and eat. More thunder and wind and this time. Rain, rain, rain. But the buggies were finally blown away.

Spent an enjoyable evening talking with two teachers from Wallingford who had come in kayaks and had a real set up for their kitchen. They even had a hanging stove, made by Black Diamond, which was very efficient. Apparently this is their favorite spot. There were other people camping and they also had canoed in. We were the only hikers. After hanging our food supply out of the bear's reach (yes, there is a resident from the hills who lives here), we moved into our tents.

The morning was cool with a misting fog that rolled across the water. After fueling our bodies we started our hike around the pond. The dogs thought this was great since it was cool and the bugs were not our yet. But by lunchtime the bugs were eating us again. Even the poor dogs were in agony. Doug paced back and forth as he ate to try to outwit the black flies. My black netting covered me from head to waist so I tucked my food inside the netting and ate.

Many beautiful Pines lined along the trail and gave off their scent as the sun finally broke through and sent the temperature up and the humidity followed. We found our selves taking frequent breaks as the dogs were minding the heat as well as the hikers. This past fall Liz and Doug completed the Long Trail. These dogs have done many miles with Doug and Liz and they carried their own packs! Soon we heard the all too familiar sound of the cars on Tryingham Road. Liz waited with the dogs while I drove Doug back to get their vehicle. Thanks for joining me on this hike. Another section of the AT has been completed. In the fall I plan to do the next section North to Dalton, hope more people will be able to come. The weather should be more pleasant then.

Backpackers: Liz & Dough Walker, Carol A Langley, Dogs Roscoe and Jessie.

### Long Trail/Appalachian Trail Maintenance In VT May 21 - 23, 2004

A forecast of rain for the weekend but Friday was bright & sunny for the walk in. Preplanned, I Met Greg Western & Lea Colasuonno from the GMC at the shelter. They had walked the proposed relocation north of the shelter & weren't too impressed. After some discussion we realized something didn't match so the three of us walked north about a mile, up the damn boring climb to the top then followed the flagged relocation. Some flags were down & it appeared some were added by someone. It became evident that Greg & Lea had not completely followed the proposed relocation. After wiggling around some out in the forest we came to an understanding of what I was proposing & agreed the proposed new trail would be an improvement and a more gradual climb, more interesting than hiking straight up on an eroded trail down to the bed rock, near a cliff for another potential great vista, etc. After the inspection Greg & Lea had to leave for other duties.

Later in the afternoon I was joined by Bill Brodnitzki and his son Tom Brodnitzki, Jack Sanga and Sarah O'Hare. Since I had a cold I pitched a tent so as not to keep others awake in the shelter with my coughing. During the night I had a short battle with a porcupine. Battling porcupines at this shelter, before they ate your boots and other equipment, was a common event in the past, but this was my first in years. They like salt in any form and you think one would learn not to relieve them self just outside their tent when porcupines are in the area.

We had a rain shower at night and Saturday morning it threatened rain as we gathered our tools and headed south to inspect the trail, clip brush, work the drainage dips and clear waterbars. Midmorning we were joined by Andy Gagner. Andy walked in from the northern end. He informed me there were many blow-downs south of the Story Spring Shelter. We worked the four miles up to the top of Glastenbury Mountain. A tough, very tiring task but a great job was done clearing the waterbars and drainage. I tried to halt the torture of clearing the drainage by just leaving the hazel hoe about 3 miles in and picking it up on the way back. Jack would hear none of it so we continued all the way up the mountain with several of us switching tools every so often. Bill carried an axe, apparently his new attraction. With it several blowdowns were removed. We arrived back at the shelter in late afternoon, very tired. Even though it was cloudy all day and constantly threatened rain we had only two short showers. Very late in the evening we were joined by an Appalachian Trail through hiker - he started in Georgia. That morning he had started hiking in North Adams, Massachusetts - that's 39 miles in one day in terrain that is anything but easy. From his appearance I believed him. We gave him some of our snacks, he deserved the treat.

Early Sunday morning, before sunrise, a very noisy thunderstorm went over. After eating we worked on the vista in front of The Kid Gore Shelter, clearing brush to keep it open. We also

had the obligatory discussion about what other large trees to take down to improve the view.

Thanks For All The Work!

Workers: Sarah O'Hare, Jack Sanga, Andy Gagner, Bill Brodnitzki, Tom Brodnitzki

From the GMC in VT Greg Western & Lea Colasuonno

By Dick Krompegal



Birds bees mosquitoes and gnats  
Camp fires gloves and hats  
Tracks snacks packs on back  
Sunrise sunset stars and it's black  
Shoes socks blisters on toes  
Why is this fun? Nobody knows  
~Trail Poet

### **Mattabesett Trail June 5, 2004**

This particular trail was no stranger to our GMC members as this 5.7 mile section of the Mattabesett Trail is maintained by us! Just the trail to hike on CT Trails Day! Eight GMC members and five newcomers enjoyed a delightful hike along Beseck Ridge today.

The trail area is also shared by motor bikes and ATVs. Over time their own trails have crisscrossed ours and many times we wandered off the blue blazed path onto theirs. With a little backtracking we would quickly find our way onto the right trail. After arriving at Black Pond we headed for nearby Guida's Restaurant for ice cream refreshment.

Hikers: Mandy Brink, Steve Keri, Leslie and Richard Chandler, Ken Williamson, Janene Batten, Lora Miller, Jim Rovando, Justus Addiss, Alison Johnson, Paul Pikula, Alan Cobham

Leader: Sarah O'Hare

### **Mattabesett River Cleanup June 6, 2004**

A dreary late spring Sunday morning greeted us as a small group of 3 people met behind Wal-Mart in Cromwell to clean up the Mattabesett River. The guys loaded up the canoe while I went to park the car. Henry in the bow and Bill in the stern and myself in middle with all the equipment, we pushed off expecting a large blowdown from last summer to be in our path but much to our pleasure the blowdown had been taken care of.

A misty cool day urged us to paddle on, very little garbage

was found along the banks. Probably the greatest eyesore was the green silt fencing put up by the highway department when they are doing roadwork along the river. It amazes me that they can always put this fencing up but never take it down. We came upon a few shallow spots where it was necessary for Henry and Bill to get out. One sandbar netted a screen door, which apparently had been washed down river during high water. It was so old that the metal strips broke easy. Next we retrieved a beach ball, cups, cans and bottles, fishing line that were floating in the river. Our trip was productive since we managed to end the trip with 3 bags full. However there many branches and other debris that need to be removed.

We used the bow saw only one time to remove a tree that was blocking our PASSGE on this river trip. There is one spot where we all had to get out and float the canoe with a rope tied to the bow and stern as the going was quite rough because of a broken dam and many rocks.

The trip was enjoyable and only took about 2 1/2 hours to end at the Saw Mill Pub in Cromwell. Just as we took out the sky opened and the rain came, so we stuffed all our gear under the canoe and headed to the Pub to warm up and get some food. We had planned to paddle back up stream so we didn't spot a car. Once in the Pub we offered the guys at the bar \$5.00 to drive us back but it was raining so hard that they wouldn't budge from the barstools. Bill reckoned we should have offered them a round then maybe we would have had some takers. Henry called his brother Jeff to come and rescue us. Bill was very gracious and picked up the tab for lunch. Thanks for joining me. Yes, as advertised we did get wet, we did get dirty and we had fun doing a good deed.

Paddlers, Bill Falconer, Henry Smith and Carol Langley

### **Macedonia Brook State Park June 19, 2004**

This 6.7 mile loop trail through picturesque forest was a delight. Not just an easy walk in the woods, however. The terrain was rugged with many climbs, as we learned as soon as we set foot on the trail.

At the noon hour we found ourselves at a pond, an appropriate place for lunch. Due to evidence of recent goose presence we sat on the dam to enjoy the view, a rest and lunch. Lunch had an international flair for Janene had brought Ken a Vegemite sandwich, an Australian delicacy. Vegemite is a yeast byproduct from beer production. "Yum," we all thought and a few were lucky enough for a sample bite. Ken was grateful, for that provided less sandwich to eat. Vegemite is definitely an acquired taste.

The afternoon portion of the trail proved to be the most challenging and yet the most rewarding. The path steeply climbed

Pine Hill. As we neared the top the blueberries were beginning to ripen. From the ledges we had an excellent view south down the Macedonia Brook Valley. Dick thought it the finest view in Connecticut.

Following the trail down over steep ledges we came to the trail's most difficult section, the ascent of Cobble Mountain. We had to climb up an 8-foot ledge with few handholds. This surely was a moment where we had to get by with a little help from our friends. Serious encouragement and assistance was required which resulted in complete success for all. Reaching the summit of the mountain we had a terrific view west, New York and the Catskills beyond; also, Bear Mountain and Mt. Everett in Massachusetts. Descending Cobble Mountain was the ending section of our hike. Not quite ready to end our joyous day together we headed into Kent for pizza and a walk through the town.

Hikers: Dick Krompegal, Leslie and Richard Chandler, Ken Williamson, Lora Miller, Janene Batten  
Leader: Sarah O'Hare

### Long Trail Maintenance In VT June 25 - 26, 2004

Bill and Gerry Brodnitzki and their grandson Sam Hester, Marge Hackbarth and Dick Krompegal met around noon on Friday to walk in by a side trail to the Black Brook Bridge. Bill provided the material & tools to do the repair work on the stairs. The women watched while the others did the repairs. Sam assisted by hammering in nails.

After the repairs we drove to the side trail into the Story Spring Shelter. In late afternoon we reached the shelter and set up our tents and other gear for the three-day stay. Sam insisted on oma's (German for grandma) playing his favorite card game- he won every time. John Bensenhaver and Ken Williamson joined us for the evening snacks and beverages. Later Gerry and Sam departed for their ride back home. Everyone was glad when Frank Maine arrived with his chain saw because we had heard there were blowdowns south of the shelter. A troop of boy and girl scouts spent the evening at the shelter. The talkers stayed up late.

During the night it started to rain so everyone slept in late Saturday morning until the rain stopped. However, things were not too dry as someone had removed the tarp from over the table. The work crew left to work south, about 3.5 miles to a vista. Nanette Roina arrived in time to join them. Marge stayed behind to clean the spring, fire ring, shelter and privy. Sarah O'Hare arrived and headed south to catch up to the others. Thanks to Frank's chain saw, and Frank, about 12 blowdowns were removed from the trail. All worked on the normal trimming of brush and removing sticks and limbs from the trail.

Later in the afternoon, back at the shelter after a full day's work, all prepared to settle in for the evening to eat and rest. Frank with his chain saw, Bill with his axe and John's & Bill's skill we had plenty of wood for the evening's hot dog roast. Bill even gave Sarah a lesson on how to use an axe to split wood. Everyone brought lots of snacks, which we shared with the Through Hikers. Frank even passed out his barbecued chicken. The talkers stayed up even later. No rain at night and the black flies took the day off from eating.

Sunday morning it was in the low forties. Per usual Dick served freshly brewed coffee. We leisurely disassembled our tents and packed our bags. A group tore apart wire and boards from an old outhouse, rolled the wire to carry out and buried the wood to rot. Understandable Procrastination delayed for years this task but the area now looks much cleaner. Everyone helped carry out the tools and garbage to the cars, about a half mile from the shelter.

Bill, John and Nanette headed home. A flat tire scotched Ken and Sarah's plans to drive up Mt. Equinox. Dick, Marge and Frank drove to the Somerset Reservoir, the one you can see from the Kid Gore Shelter. This reservoir supplies water for hydro-electric power. Boating, fishing and picnicking is allowed but no camping. There is a trail that leads around the reservoir. We only had time for a short hike on which we were passed several times by a very young, confused fawn.

Pictures of this trip can be seen at the following address in the photo section <http://groups.aol.com/gmccct>

A very successful work trip again. Many thanks to all.

Written by: Marge Hackbarth

Workers: Sarah O'Hare, Sam Hester and his grandparents Bill and Gerry Brodnitzki, John Bensenhaver, Nanette Roina, Ken Williamson, Frank Maine.

By Dick Krompegal



Hiking is fun and the trail has just begun  
Will I hike the trail in the rain  
Will I hike despite the pain  
Will I climb high to see the view  
Will I hike when the sky's not blue  
Will I hike the trail all alone  
Will I hike soaked to the bone  
Yes I will! and if you ask why  
This will be my final reply

Hiking is fun and the trail has just begun ...

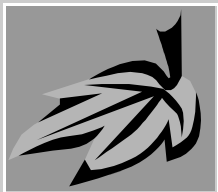
~Trail Poet



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