

Connecticut Section of the Green Mountain Club

Volume XXXIV Issue II

Editor: Carol A. Langley

April 2013 – June 2013

LONG TRAIL END TO END

Ross M. Lanius	1972	Michael Cunningham	2010
Marge Hackbarth	1984	Russell Charest	2010
David Wells	1984	Sarah O'Hare	2011
Mark Scofield	1998	Kevin T. Burke	2012
James Robertson	1991	Carol A. Langley	2012

The following Connecticut Section Members have completed the Long Trail. If your name is not on this list and you have completed the Long Trail please send an e-mail to cosmical14@yahoo.com or call Carol at 860-621-2860. Thank you for helping me to keep the historical records accurate for your section!!



Club Information
<http://www.conngmc.com>
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Please direct all inquiries regarding the Club to the President.

The Trail Talk is published four times a year Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. 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:

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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:

The Green Mountain Club

4711 Waterbury-Stowe Road

Waterbury Center, VT 05677-9904

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

Connecticut Section Of The GMC

Post & Receive Messages, Photos, Other Activities

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ct_green_mountain_club/

DONATIONS TO CT SECTION

Sherrill & Ruth Collins

David Cullen

Carol A. Langley

Donald Woodbridge

Thank you for your support!!!!

TRAIL TALK – if you are presently receiving your newsletter in the mail and would like to receive an electronic mailing please e-mail me. I will gladly add your name to our list.

Thanks, Carol

Week Day Sunshine Hikers & Backpackers a new group has formed. Unscheduled activities, there is usually a 24 hour notice sent via e-mail. If you are interested please contact Carol Langley at cosmical14@ayhoo.com or 860-621-2860. Thank You!

Another Set of Eyes

Throughout the year, many GMC members head up to the Long Trail for hikes on your own, with other GMC'ers or with other groups.

As Section VP for Trails and Shelters, I'd like to ask each of you to act as my "eyes on the ground" when you might be hiking on our section of the Long Trail. Please observe the status of the trail, shelters and privies. I'd like feedback on blowdowns, condition of blazes, brushing needs, drainage problems, replacement needs of brooms and logbooks, general building conditions and any other item you feel I should know.

This information helps me schedule our maintenance trips. Thank you.

Dick Hart, Vice President, Trails and Shelters

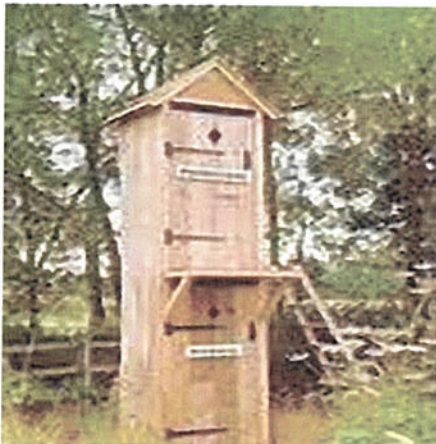
**STORY SPRING TRAIL MAINTENANCE
TRIP
OCTOBER 5-7, 2012**

We had two work crews head up north for the weekend. Kevin Breton, Sven Englund, Peter Finch, Larry Keckler, Kevin Vann and Dick Hart went. It was a very productive weekend.

Sven and Peter headed south from the shelter on Friday afternoon. On Saturday, Sven, Larry and Kevin V worked from the shelter to FS 71 where one car was parked and Kevin B, Peter and I worked north from FS 71 to Kelly Stand Road where a second car was waiting. We removed the blowdowns, cleaned out/re-contoured the waterbars and did the brushing from Kelly Stand Rd south to near Lydia's Rest.

The privy at Story Spring Shelter is a different situation. It was constructed with a double-wide base; one side is covered by the house itself and the other by a plastic cover. Every few years, the folks at the US Forest Service shift the house from one side of the privy to the other. This allows good composting without having to construct a second privy.

This summer, the privy was shifted to the east end of its base. However the steps were not shifted--they are still at the west end of the base. Sven said this resulted in a 30" high 'Hillary Step' upon exiting the facilities. This could result in physical injury if someone fell to the ground when leaving the facility so take care until the steps are moved.



**NEW YEAR'S DAY HIKE
JANUARY 1, 2013**

This New Year's Day only two hikers showed up Don Hagstrom & Jim Robertson. The day was cool and overcast. The Rails/Trails was clear in some spots and others we had to negotiate snow and ice. Shortly after 11:00 we were approaching Yale Campus. As we walked down Prospect St. we took in the beauty of the architect of the grand old buildings.

Soon we passed by Christ Church where many protests have been held on the front steps. The street was lined with old homes that the rich and wealthy once lived in. Today these homes house the Graduate Club, Admissions, etc. since they are all now part of Yale University.

As we past the New Haven Library, I mentioned it is worth a visit just to see the beautiful woodwork inside. Superior Court had staging up and was under repair. At the point we crossed over to the lower Green which on most days is a BUZZ of activity. Today all was quiet as we walked the perimeter.



After lunch we walked past the Museum of Art, Theaters, School of Drama and the Dining Hall. And possible places to eat on a return trip to New Haven. Our last stop was the Old Cemetery where Don found a large bell at the entrance and was tempted but refrained from ringing it. Jim found several prominent people listed on the Cemetery

Roster. Soon we were back on the Rails to Trails headed north. Thanks for joining me!!!

**WHEELER POND CAMP SNOWSHOE TRIP
HADSEL-MARES CABIN
JANUARY 25-27, 2013**

A nice group of folks went back up to Wheeler Pond for another snowshoe adventure. The weather cooperated well with no precipitation. The daytime temps were single digit variety and didn't get up to double digits until midday on Sunday. Nighttime temps dipped to double digits below zero.

Jim Moore got to the cabin first and had a fire going by the time the rest of us arrived. Six of us rode up in Tim Brink's Suburban. Jim Fritz got there Friday after putting in a full day at work. While in Barton, Jim picked up a tarp from the hardware store to block the draft coming from the alcove. It made a nice difference.

We really did fill up the cabin. It has bunk space for four and loft space for another two. Mandy slept on the bench (as she did last time) and Tim slept on the floor.

Although there was plenty of snow on the ground, none of it was recent. It was fairly packed down so we didn't need snowshoes. Microspikes were more than sufficient. Friday night, after dinner, some of us walked up to the end of the plowed part of the road at the trailhead to Wheeler Mt. On Saturday we all hiked up to the peak (2,648') of Mt. Hor and both of its outlooks. Sunday we did a steeper, but shorter, hike up to Mt Pisgah (2,751'). Both of these biblically-named mountains form the fjord-like sides of Lake Willoughby. Views from Pisgah include Canada to the north (20 miles away), Mt Washington to the southeast and Mt Moosilauke to the south.

Look at the trip pictures on our website for the one ("Please keep dogs on leach") warning people about the steep cliffs on Pisgah. We've all seen a

dog on a leash and some of us have seen a leech on a dog but I can't even begin to envision what a dog on a leach looks like.

As usual, we all ate very well. Homemade chili, stew, baked oatmeal and blueberry pancakes kept everyone healthy and happy. We were also well entertained. Mandy brought her Outdoor Trivia game and some played a spirited game of Spades (in good part because no one remembered all of the rules). We had some heavy grey matter discussions about the Coriolis Force which Jim Moore said is an effect, not a force, and may really be fictitious. We left undecided what caused water in both square and round pans to do a "wiggle dance" as it heated on the stove.

On the way home we had to make the requisite stop at the Miss Lyndonville Diner for brunch, a great, friendly place. Mandy was squeezed into the rear seat of the Suburban so tightly on the way home that equipment fell down on her head every time she leaned forward.

Hikers: Scott Black, Mandy Brink, Tim Brink, Jim Fritz, Jim Moore, Mike Shaw, Mark Stone.
Leader: Dick Hart

**LESSONS IN THE WOODS
JANUARY 6, 2013**

We met at Pachaug Pond, parked a car and headed to the beginning of our hike at the Lowden Brook area. It was gray and overcast but not too cold. It was a perfect day for a hike and would turn out to be a day of interesting discovery.

The first sign of wildlife was a flock of turkeys running off the trail as we parked the car. The second spotting of interest was what appeared to be specks of dirt all over the snow. Sarah said they were snow fleas. None of us had ever heard of such a thing. Sure enough, on close inspection, each little dot was moving and jumping all around in the snow. There were thousands of them. Sarah and Dick did some research after our hike and this is what we learned about snow fleas.

Hikers: Jim Robertson, George Jackson, Don Hagstrom, Bob and Mel Michaud, Sarah O'Hare, Fred Riotte, Carol Langley, Karen Wells.
Leader: Dave Wells

**RACE WITH THE STORM: OUR
ADVENTURES TO SNOWSHOE IN
VERMONT
FEBRUARY 8-10, 2013**

The trip was cancelled due to the "perfect storm blizzard" that was to hit New England. I was feeling pretty blue as the anticipation of hanging out with the gang at Greenmont Farms was much more fun than the prospect of sitting alone all weekend at home. I was bracing myself with long awaited projects when the phone rang at 11:30 on Friday morning. It was Mike Shaw asking if I was still interested in trying to get to Vermont. He thought if we left ASAP, we might be able to outride the storm. My adrenaline kicked, I was a maniac throwing stuff into my bags. I got to Mike's and he had the car running. We were off.

We were riding up Route 2 and beginning to wonder if we were a bit crazy. The snow was coming at a pretty good clip and settling onto the road. Should we turn back? Let's see what I-91 is like. I-91 wasn't so bad so we kept going. We'd see how it was in MA. MA wasn't so bad but we talked to John from Greenmont Farms who informed us that he had heard the roads in VT were getting pretty bad. We decided to make a decision once we were into VT. VT wasn't so bad. The challenge kicked in, it was an adventure and we were going to go for it. We discussed equipment if we had to sleep in the car, a full tank of gas to stay warm and we were going to northern VT despite the steadily falling snow. We called John and told him to warm up the hostel. Mike was an awesome driver in this snowy weather. I was almost awesome at keeping my mouth shut and not being a front seat driver although an occasional squeak or gasp came out when it seemed a bit slippery and I did at one time asked Mike if he knew he had just breezed by a snow plow. Honestly Mike did such a fine piece of driving that we arrived to the hostel only about 45

minutes later than it would have usually taken us. At one point as we closed in on the hostel, the snow had actually stopped for about an hour. We must have just outraced that storm by a narrow window because by the time we unloaded the car, the snow was coming steady and there was an inch of snow accumulated on the car.

We settled in and called Jim Moore to get the scoop on our options for hikes the next day. After studying all the options, we decided to tackle Mt Abraham. We chose a trail that was longer by a couple miles but gentler on the ascent. Good thing too because even on this trail, getting to the summit was a challenge. Our other plan was a sunrise hike in the Stowe area for Sunday morning.

On Saturday morning we were at the trailhead and ready to hike by 10am. We drove as far as we could on Lincoln Gap Road till the gate stopped us. From there we hiked in about 2 miles to the Long Trail. It was cold but sunny. Sadly no one was earlier than us on the trail so we had the honor of breaking trail through about 12-18 inches of snow. It was a slow and steady walk with Mike taking the lead most of the time, thus doing a lot of extra work. There were those moments where the woods were beautiful and you can't help but think "life doesn't get much better than this" and then there were those exhausting moments when you think "we ought to have our heads examined". We were 0.8 miles from the summit where we stopped at the shelter to rest a minute and grab some lunch.

Getting to the summit was the challenge. We had worked too hard to get to this point and not make it. The snow was deep and sliding on steep rocks became the norm. We were both nursing along leg cramps. At one point, I abandoned my poles because I needed to use both arms to pull myself up on small trees by the side of the trail. It was hard to get any foot grips. Above tree line got much colder and windy. We were so happy to get to Mt Abraham's summit, 4006 ft. The wind was whipping pretty good. The views at the summit were clear and beautiful but we were too cold to

Snow fleas belong to a primitive insect group called Collembala, commonly called spring tails. They use these spring like tails to move around. They contain a glycine-rich antifreeze protein that allows them to survive cold weather. They are active from November to March. Their black color allows them to absorb heat from the sun. They congregate in great numbers on sunny days to feed on microscopic algae, bacteria and fungi found on the surface of the snow. They also do their mating at this time. As the snow melts away from the trees, the snow fleas move to the leaf litter and deposit their eggs. The young hatch in late spring. Snow fleas are part of the complex of organisms that break down leaves and other organic matter. They are soil builders. They are not harmful to pets or people and do not contaminate food stuff if brought into the house.

We hit the Pachaug Youth area where they were running dog sled races and hoped to see some racing but we were too late. Still it was fun to see the sleds and all those beautiful dogs. We walked down through the rhododendron sanctuary before we hit the trail to Mt Misery. We had also decided to review Dave Hardy's write up from his 50 hikes in CT book. It matched very closely to his description for the trail. There was a snowman to greet us just below the summit. We had a lovely view while eating lunch.

Dave Hardy described a singular misshapen wind-twisted pitch pine growing at the summit outlook. We were unable to distinguish just one tree matching this description. There were actually several trees that were wind twisted pines. We learned that these pines are the only three needled pines and the wood contains so much resin that it lights easily and was used as a torch in days gone by. The common name for this pine is candlewood. It was another interesting lesson in the woods.

After lunch we continued to Route 201. At the 201 junction we found what we thought was the trail, but what appeared to be blue blazes were all blacked out. We backtracked thinking the trail had been re-routed but no luck, no blue blazes,

and no re-routes. We decided to follow the painted over blazes. Part of this section was in the woods but the last bit was a road walk and not so pretty. We arrived back to the cars. Sarah did some research later and learned that this 2.7 section of trail is no longer being maintained so we were glad we were able to say we completed the whole Pachaug Trail. Mileage for the day with our extra explorations totaled 8.5 miles.

Pachuag Pond is quite a nice spot and we discussed that kayaking there this spring or summer would be a good plan for the calendar. Stay tuned.

Hikers: Mandy Brink, Sarah O'Hare, Dick Hart, Alec Dwyer

PENWOOD STATE PARK FEBRUARY 3, 2013

A week before Storm Nemo this hike traversed trails well trodden with old snow. The day was sunny but cold and felt more so as we hiked below the north-south ridge and in its shadow. We passed a pretty waterfall along the way and those who carefully ventured to the trail edge got a peek of it.

Cedar Ridge Overlook and the Pinnacle afforded wide views over the Farmington Valley, Simsbury and the hills beyond. At both these points we saw artifacts that might be from Curtis Veeder's time and his ownership of the property prior to his donation to Connecticut in 1943. The pins could have been used for sighting aids.

Along the Metacomet Trail we passed a rock garden containing numerous sculptures of all sizes and shapes, some even balanced between the trunks in surrounding trees. Sarah and Fred added stones to various features.

Two picnic tables at the end of Lake Louise made for a fine lunch stop. A mile or so north on the Metacomet Trail we returned to our meeting point at the north end of the park, completing an enjoyable hike and a distance of 5 miles.

do anything but get our summit pictures and head down.

On the descent we stopped at the shelter once again to crack a few hand warmers and rehydrate, another challenge with frozen water bottles. We were a bit envious of a couple of hikers going up who were enjoying our broken in trail. It was a steady hike down with a few moans from our cramping legs whenever we had to do anything that resembled a slight uphill. We arrived back at the car at 5 pm. We had hiked 7 miles in 7 hours.

We spent the evening relaxing. We felt pretty lucky as we learned that most of CT was without electricity while we were warm and dry, watching a movie at the hostel. We were both pretty tired, too tired to pack up the car or clean the hostel for a sunrise hike. We decided instead to just spend Sunday morning leisurely packing before heading home. It was interesting to watch the snow mounds get higher and higher as we headed to CT.

I was so happy for that phone call on Friday and Mike's crazy spontaneous decision to give it a try. It was a great adventure, this weekend in Vermont, racing a storm.

Hikers: Mike Shaw, Mandy Brink

AT SOUTH TO RIVER RD FEBRUARY 26, 2013

The morning was sunny and temp. in the mid thirties. The trail was mud-ice and up to six inches of snow. The plan was to have lunch at Stewart Hollow Shelter. Since we had an early start 9:45, even with trail conditions we arrived at the shelter by 11:15. "Brain Storm have a quick snack and head to South Gate for lunch.

It was Jim Robertson's birthday and he treated us to brownies for dessert. It was quickly decided that Jim could celebrate his birthday on every hike if he brought brownies. The return trip to the cars was wet and sloppy but no bumps or brusies were received. When we reached the cars Pam shared cookies with us which she made and it was also

her birthday. We hiked 9 miles which was a good day for a late winter hike.

Hikers: George Jackson, Jim Robertson, Carol A. Langley, Pam Samsen with her two dogs.
L. Don Hagstrom

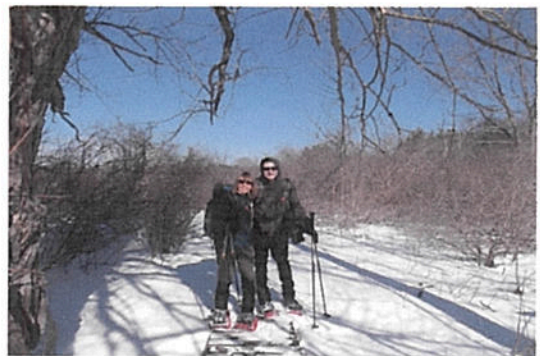
WHITE MEMORIAL SNOWSHOE FEBRUARY 14, 2013

The sun shone on us from a cloud less beautiful blue sky, a perfect setting for a snowshoe trip. As we arrived at the parking lot we were relieved to find it plowed. Snowshoes on off we went on the Little Pond Trail.

This trail follows the Boardwalk which winds through the marsh and over the Bantam River. Animal tracks could be seen on the snow that covered the river. Rabbit, deer, dogs, etc. Looking over the marsh and seeing cattails trimmed in white was quite a site. All to soon we reached the junction of the, Pine Island Trail which led to the Mattatuck Trail.

The Blue Trail follows a dirt road a long side the Bantam River. Soon we saw the open field which we crossed over to reach a dry picnic table in the sun outside the Museum. After lunch we visited the museum and purchased books and spoke with the woman in the office who was very informative. We were given info about camping and star gazing.

Walking back on road and trail the day was soon over. Thanks for joining me Bob & Mel Michaud.
L. Carol A. Langley



JOIN THE CONNECTICUT SECTION OF THE GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB

The Connecticut Section offers a wide range of outdoor activities all year around: Hiking, backpacking, canoeing, snowshoeing and work parties in VT to maintain our section of the Long Trail. Members will receive Trail Talk our section newsletter and The Long Trail News, a quarterly publication of the Green Mountain Club, published four times a year, and discounts on GMC items such as books and shirts, etc.

ANNUAL DUES	
Individual	\$40.00
Family	\$50.00
Senior/Student/ Limited Income	\$22.00
Lifetime Membership	\$1000

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Please make checks payable to the Green Mountain Club. Mail your payment with form to:
Green Mountain Club, 4711 Waterbury-Stowe Rd., Waterbury Center, VT. 05677

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