

NEW HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER

100 YEARS

1921 2021

YOUR CONNECTION TO THE OUTDOORS

# MOUNTAIN PASSAGES

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**NEW HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER**  
YOUR CONNECTION TO THE OUTDOORS

## Development of our White Mountain Guidebooks

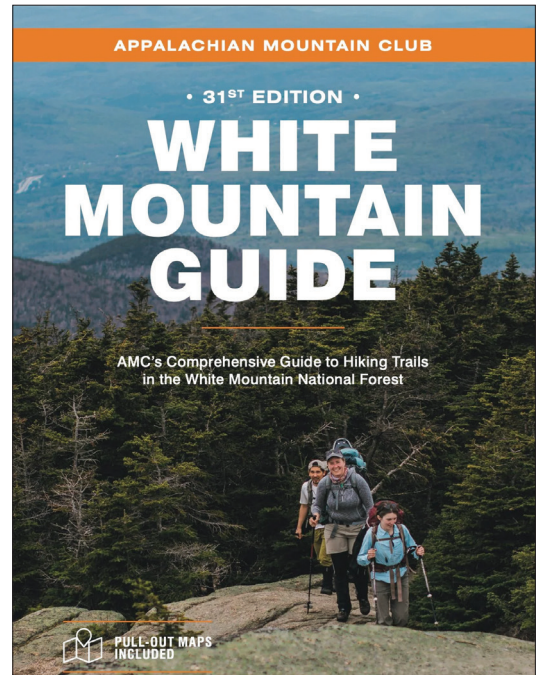
BY: BOB MC LAUGHLIN

We all rely on guidebooks when planning our hikes. It is easy to think guidebooks, like the mountains, lakes and streams, have always been part of the White Mountains experience. That has certainly been true in my hiking years. In fact, I first purchased AMC's White Mountain Guide in its 26th edition and the Guide is now in its 31st edition. It seems the AMC Guide has always been available providing good advice and information to plan your hikes. But, of course, it has not!

This realization encouraged me to question when and how the guides to the White Mountains developed.

The earliest guides were Henry Marsh's *The White Mountain and Winnepissisogee Lake Guidebook* (1846), *Tripp's Guide to the White Mountains and Lakes of New Hampshire* (1850) and Samuel Eastman's *White Mountain Guidebook* (1858). However, the first true hiking guidebook to trails in the White Mountains was published by Moses Sweetser in 1876 with the title *The White Mountains: A Handbook for Travelers*. All these guidebooks are available without charge on Google Books.

Before publication of Sweetser's guide, the guidebooks were more like AAA Tourbooks than hiking guides. The guidebooks aimed to encourage readers to visit the White Mountains by describing roads and railroads, towns, and lodging, and to highlight sites to visit. However, Eastman's, Marsh's and Tripp's guides described few if any hiking trails.



*The AMC Guide is in its 31st edition.*

Marsh's guide provided detail of the towns and geographical features along the roadways and devoted multiple pages of description to the tragedy of the Willey family, including an excerpt from a poem about event, but only described views from the Crawford Path.

Tripp's guidebook disclaimed any description of mountain trails stating "A description of the mountains we shall not undertake to give.... These are a class of things necessarily omitted from a good

## OUR MISSION

The Appalachian Mountain Club is the nation's oldest outdoor recreation and conservation organization, and promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters and trails of the Appalachian region. AMC has more than 100,000 members, 16,000 volunteers, 450 full-time and seasonal staff. The New Hampshire Chapter is the second largest of the 12 Chapters within the Club.

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## Notes from the Editor

Welcome Summer!

I hope you enjoy this issue of Mountain Passages and that it whets your appetite to explore new areas once the rain eventually stops.

We continue our exploration of trails in the White Mountains with Tales of a Trail: Franconia Ridge Trail Network. This article traces the development of the trail network on Franconia Ridge and the cycles of creation and destruction and recreation that have marked this growth for 200 years. Hiking on these trails it is easy to forget what it took to create them.

We also have another article authored by Frances Richardson. This one traces the history of the first Cog Rail locomotive, Old Peppersass, and describes the tragic events of its return to the Cog Rail in 1929.

In researching the development of trail networks for the Tales of a Trail series, I have been reading some very old guidebooks and this led me to question how the guidebooks we know today came to be. The more I learned the more I became fascinated. All of this resulted in the article "Development of our White Mountain Guidebooks" that describes the earliest guides to the White Mountains and the development of the AMC White Mountain Guide. I hope you find it as interesting as I do.

We also have a plea from Jennie Vander-Hooven, chair of the Conservation & Education Committee, for following the Leave No Trace Principles. Selene Berube describes her goals for the 20s and 30s Committee. Linda Magoon, the author of her new book *Live Free and Hike: Finding Grace on 48 Summits*, describes how she came to write the book and what the book and the White Mountains mean to her.

There is also an article about hiking in the era of wildfire smoke which includes suggestions on where to turn to get information on conditions. Announcements about the next virtual book club meeting and concerts planned for Highland Center are included. As is a new Where in the Whites? puzzle.

We also introduce a new feature. While we generally have run photographs, the earliest known images of the White Mountains were drawings and paintings. The mountain and the wilderness still inspire artists and in this issue you will find two paintings of Cold River Camp by Hilary Williams.

On another topic, I have been editing Mountain Passages since 2018 and am looking for a coeditor who is willing to take on some of the work. Ultimately, I would like to find someone who will be able to become our next editor so that I can be a contributing author. I have found being editor is a challenging but rewarding experience. If you have interest, please contact me at [mtnpassages@gmail.com](mailto:mtnpassages@gmail.com).

Our next issue will be the fall issue and we expect to get it to the printers by late September.

Until then make the most of your summer and enjoy!



*A watercolor of a cabin at Cold River Camp painted by Hilary Williams*

Guide Book” (Tripp’s Guide at page 21). After this categorical statement, Tripp’s guidebook then described in general if colorful terms the Crawford Path and the path to the Flume in Franconia Notch. Tripp focused instead on a detailed description of roads and railways, suggested itineraries and of towns along the way. Tripp’s Guide also shows a lack of attention to detail and contains several obvious errors, such as stating that the Saco River flows through the Flume in Franconia Notch (Ibid at page 38) and that the profile of the Old Man was on Mt Jackson (Ibid at page 34).

Eastman does describe trails but focuses on flowery descriptions of the views and mountains rather than providing any meaningful guidance for exploring the areas. The assumption seems to be that any visitor who wanted explore beyond the towns and roadside attractions would engage a local guide.

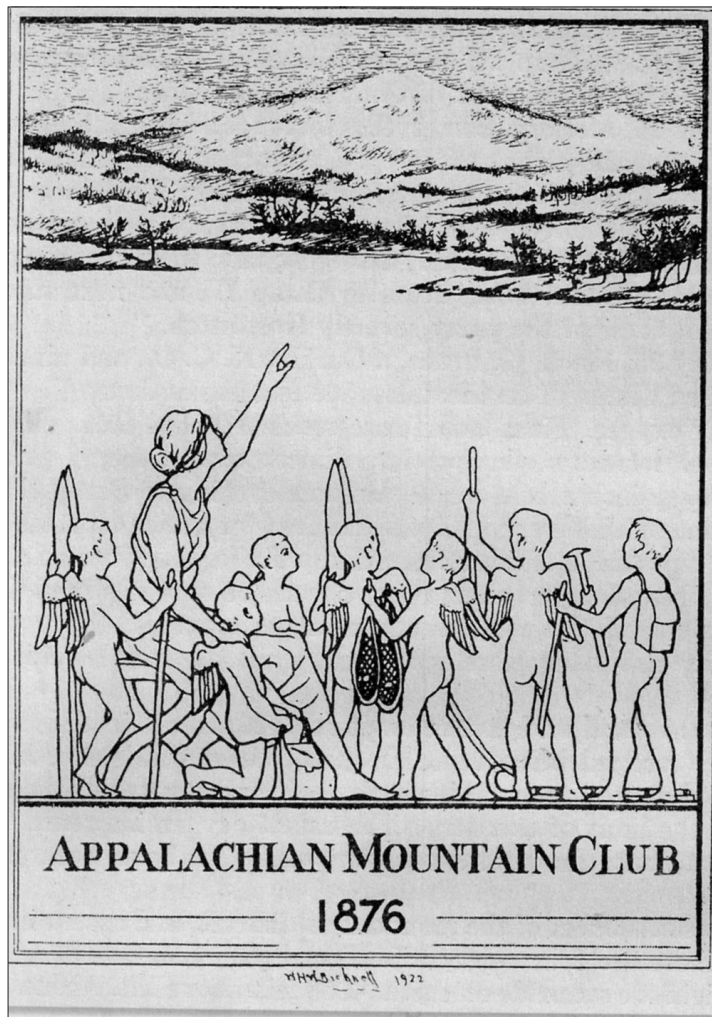
Sweetser’s guidebook published in 1876 took a dramatically different approach; in addition to describing the railways, roads, and towns, Sweetser included detailed descriptions of trails on mountains ranging from Mt Washington to Artist’s Bluff in Franconia Notch.

Sweetser’s description of Moat Mountain in the 1876 edition which appears on pages 87 to 92 contains detailed information about the mountain and the routes to its ridgeline. The description of the northern approach from Diana’s Bath on pages 87 to 88 will provide a flavor of the descriptions provided by his guidebook:

*Moat Mountain is the fine ridge which borders the Saco Valley on the W., opposite N. Conway, and is a very conspicuous feature in the views from that village. It has been burnt over several times, and even the soil has thus been destroyed, so that it presents a remarkably bare and rugged appearance. The crest-line of the ridge is about 3 M. long, consisting of the N. and S. peaks and several intervening rocky hummocks, separated by shallow ravines, in which are burnt and fallen trees. The N. peak is 3,200 ft. high, and the S. peak 2,700 ft. The walk along this noble ridge is one of the most fascinating among the mountains, and gives views of scores of famous peaks, with the villages and fair meadows of Conway on the E. The people of N. Conway should have a path cleared and definitely marked to the summit of the N. Peak, and thence S. through the tree-strewn hollows on the ridge.*

\* \* \* \*

*The usual route up Moat Mt. is thus marked out: Follow the cart road up-stream from Diana’s Bath . . . , crossing two fences and a corduroy bridge, and for the next mile avoid swinging to the l. Take the footpath at the end of the road, and after a long stretch of good walking cross the Cedar Brook at a ruined bridge, and recross it about 100 yards beyond. Then ascend the S. bank through light underbrush to the lower ledges near a tall tree, whence the knoll is seen and aimed for ahead. Thence a bare ledge conducts up on the shoulder, the way leading between two large boulders. From the crest of the shoulder the top is visible, but an area of burnt and fallen trees must be crossed, and also a swamp, in which water can be found, either in the brook (which should be followed) or in the pitcher-plants. A gentleman of Salem, who has ascended by this route eight times, thinks it is about 4M. from Diana’s Bath to the summit. He has made the ascent and return (to the Intervale House) in 5½ hours.*



The Bookplate that accompanied the 1922 edition of the AMC Guide

Sweetser then described two alternative approaches from the south, detailed time and distance measurements for the trails and provided a comprehensive description of the views from the Moat Mountain ridgeline.

In preparing the book Sweetser and Charles Hitchcock reportedly climbed to over 80 summits many without marked trails. The book contained descriptions of the routes they followed and detailed descriptions of the views. Interestingly, Sweetser commented on the Franconia Ridge noting that “[t]he scenery is more beautiful than that of the White Mountains.” At the turn of the century in 1900, the term White Mountains apparently was reserved only for the peaks of the Presidential Range. Other mountains, such as those of Franconia Ridge, were not considered to be in the White Mountains, but instead were described as in the White Mountain region.

Publication of the Appalachian Mountain Club’s Guides to the White Mountains marked the next major change. The AMC guidebook was based on the experience of AMC members and published at a time when the Sweetser guide was out of print. Initially, the AMC guides were the work product of a committee of five volunteers from the Department of Improvements. In 1906, the committee members for the initial AMC guidebook committee were: Harland Perkins, Ralph Larrabee, Warren Hart, Henderson Kellogg, and Richard Hale.

Continued on page 4

The members of the committee were drawn from the ranks of the Club's trail builders and maintainers and the guidebook was a major additional project. As Harland Perkins, the committee chair, described it: "Night after night these men met, wrote, discussed, and criticized the material at hand, until it was at last threshed into proper shape for publication." In addition, Louis Cutler with the assistance of Robert Blakeslee developed a new map for the Guide relying on US Geological Survey maps and their own measurements. Cutler's map was excellent and served as the basis of the maps in the AMC Guide to the White Mountains through the 25th edition in 1992.

The first edition of the AMC Guidebook appeared in 1906 with the title of "Guide to the Paths and Camps in the White Mountains, Part 1." In addition to providing a description of the trails in the eastern White Mountains, the first edition focused on the AMC trails and camps. The first edition was 224 pages long and set the pattern for future editions by organizing the trails by dividing them into 11 geographical sections. The Guide also contained a bibliography, maps and a complete list of club paths and camps. Only 600 copies were printed and all were quickly sold. Although a Part 2 addressing the western White Mountains (primarily Moosilauke and the mountains paralleling Franconia Notch) was planned, it was never published. Instead, a draft was compiled in "loose leaf form" which was available in the AMC office. In addition, AMC issued annual updates to the guidebook to make corrections and add new information.

Following publication of the first edition, a free-standing guidebook committee was established, but the committee members remained unchanged. Because the members of the guidebook committee had full time jobs and voluntarily took on significant trail work, the guidebook was put aside and it was not until 1916 that the second edition was published. The second edition covered many more mountains, including "the entire mountain region of New Hampshire, from Monadnock northward, even lapping over into the mountains along the Maine border," and bore a new name: "Guide to the Paths in the White Mountains and Adjacent Regions." This ten-year gap was the longest between editions of the guidebook.

It only took another year before the third edition arrived in 1917. The coverage of the guidebook was increased again including description of the trails on and around Katahdin which was spelled "Ktaadn."

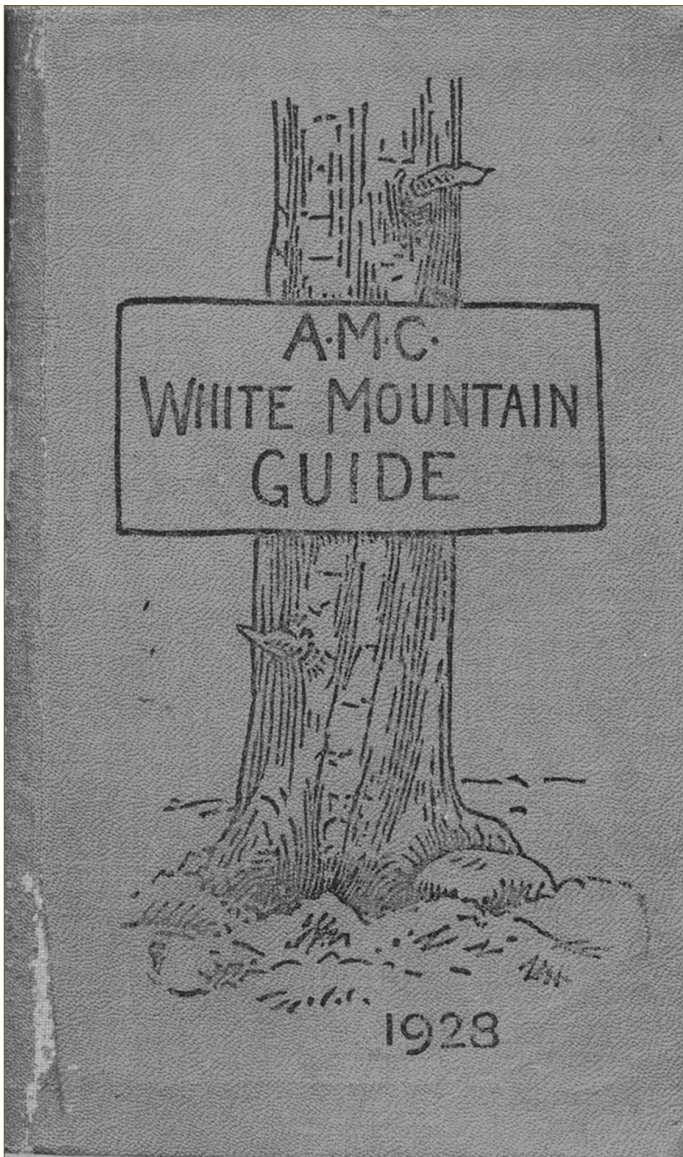
From that point on a new edition appeared every two to six years and the AMC Guide to the White Mountains has become the oldest continuously published trail guide in the United States. Through this time, new trails were added, and the White Mountain National Forest came into existence and the AMC Guide to the White Mountains evolved into the reliable source of information and advice that it is today. Some highlights were:

- The 1922 edition contained a new section concerning "Emergencies in the Woods" which offered advice on situations ranging from broken bones to diarrhea to homesickness. This section continued to appear in the guide until the 1966 edition and was then removed. Concurrent with the 1922 edition, the Club introduced a new bookplate featuring seven cupids and a seated female figure pointing at mountainous ridgeline which could be used to identify ownership of the guide or any other book.

### First 28 Editions of AMC White Mountain Guide

Year	Edition	Price	Pages	Copies Printed
1907	1st Edition	\$1.00	244	600
1916	2nd Edition	\$2.00	420	1,000
1917	3rd Edition	\$2.00	440	1,000
1920	4th Edition	\$3.00	224	1,000
1922	5th Edition	\$3.00	516	1,500
1925	6th Edition	\$3.00	544	1,000
1928	7th Edition	\$3.00	546	2,000
1931	8th Edition	\$3.00	550	2,000
1934	9th Edition	\$2.50	580	2,000
1936	10th Edition	\$2.25	578	3,000
1940	11th Edition	\$2.25	580	3,000
1946	12th Edition	\$2.50	560	2,000
1948	13th Edition	\$3.25	558	3,000
1952	14th Edition	\$3.75	556	3,000
1955	15th Edition	\$4.50	542	6,000
1960	16th Edition	\$4.50	512	7,500
1963	17th Edition	\$5.00	528	11,000
1966	18th Edition	\$5.00	544	15,000
1969	19th Edition	\$6.00	552	28,000
1972	20th Edition	\$7.00	576	25,000
1976	21st Edition	\$8.50	528	35,000
1979	22nd Edition	\$9.25	553	45,000
1983	23rd Edition	\$12.95	576	60,000
1987	24th Edition	\$15.95	624	72,800
1992	25th Edition	\$16.95	672	95,400
1998	26th Edition	\$21.95	576	75,700
2003	27th Edition	\$22.95	624	45,200
2007	28th Edition	\$24.95	656	27,000

- The 1925 edition introduced color printing and the maps took on the look that continued until 1992. This edition also contained an outright plea for help in preparing future editions stating as "a member of the Club you are under an obligation to help the [guidebook] Committee." Although this request for help was toned down in subsequent editions, the guidebook committee continued to rely on readers to provide feed back noting corrections and clarifications.
- In the 1928 edition, the title of the Guide was simplified to "AMC White Mountain Guide" and the description of trails of Katahdin were removed with the promise of a new guide dedicated to trails of Maine.
- The 1934 edition provided descriptions of suggested walking trips and advice for winter hiking.



Cover of the 1928 Edition

- The 1948 edition introduced the first water resistant maps to accompany the Guide.
  - The 1960 edition introduced “peak bagging” lists: in the 1960 edition the Four Thousand Footer list was added; in the 1966 edition the New England Four Thousand Footer list was added and the list for New England’s Hundred Highest Club was added in 1976.
  - The concept of a Wilderness Ethic evolved in the various editions. For example, early editions cautioned readers “not to cut live trees within sight of the camp,” the 1972 edition introduced the concept of “Carry In; Carry Out” and starting in the 2003 edition, recent editions contain advice to “leave no trace.”
  - The 1987 edition introduced the geography sections describing the topography and history of the geographical sections covered by the Guide.
- The covers of the Guide took on a new look. While the original editions bore simple line drawings or Club logos, in 1983 for the first time a color photograph was used on the cover. Unfortunately the photo of Franconia Ridge on the cover of the 1983 edition was inverted so that the Franconia Ridge curved in the wrong direction.

During the Guide’s evolution, major changes were happening in the White Mountains. The road network replaced the railroad as the critical access route, ice storms and hurricanes (in 1938 and again in 1954) swept through the region and destroyed trails, the AMC huts were opened, the Appalachian Trail was created, lumbering continued to threaten trails and then eventually diminished, the Kancamagus Highway was conceived, opened as a dirt road and eventually paved, the White Mountain National Forest and New Hampshire State Parks became the major landowners and the number of trails greatly increased as well as the people hiking them. Each new edition had to be substantially revised to account for these changes.

As time went on, editing the guidebook became a greater and greater chore for the guidebook committee. You can sense the exhaustion of the committee when in the 1934 edition they wrote: “Never before has a new edition required such extensive additions and alterations as are now made necessary by the explosive increase in the popularity of skiing and the intense activity of the Government in the construction of new trails and highways.” Nonetheless, compiling and publishing the AMC guide remained the responsibility of the committee of volunteers until the 1992 edition. Starting with the 1998 edition, a professional crew of writers and cartographers took on the task of Guide revisions.

While the guide has continuity, it also has evolved with the years. The current guidebook, the 31st edition entitled simply “White Mountain Guide” is the successor to its predecessors and has evolved to account for the changes that have occurred in the last 115 years.

While the AMC White Mountain Guide is the definitive trail guide in the Whites, other guidebooks have appeared to address special needs. For example, AMC also offers “AMC’s Best Day Hikes in the White Mountains” and other publishers offer books catering to particular interests, such as the best day and loop hikes, the 4000 footers, hikes to waterfalls, and paths less traveled.

We, the hikers of 2023, have a treasure trove of resources to consult when planning our outings but it is interesting to read the early guides to appreciate how much we have gained and to add a new (old) perspective to the areas we are hiking.

In drafting this article I relied heavily on *White Mountain Guide; A Centennial Retrospective* edited by Katherine Worth and published by the AMC in summarizing the development of the AMC Guide as well as various articles from *Appalachia*. I would like to thank Becky Fullerton, the AMC Archivist, for providing access to these materials and for her other invaluable assistance.

# Tales of a Trail: Franconia Ridge Trail Network

In the last issue, we started the “Tales of a Trail” series with a description of the Crawford Path which runs from the Highland Center in Crawford Notch to the summit of Mount Washington. The Crawford Path provided a clear linear story of the history of the single trail, the oldest continuously used hiking trail in the United States and probably North America. This article takes a different approach considering the development by starts and stops of the intricate trail network that leads to and crosses the Franconia Ridge.

As you may already know, the Franconia Ridge Trail runs the length of the ridgeline over the crests of Lafayette, Lincoln, Little Haystack, Liberty and Flume. It is reached through several other trails:

- Garfield Ridge Trail running from Mizpah Hut over Garfield to Lafayette;
- Skookumchuck Trail from route 3 joining the Garfield Ridge Trail about a mile north of the Lafayette summit;
- Greenleaf Trail from the Cannon parking area to Greenleaf Hut and then to the summit of Lafayette;
- Old Bridle Path leading from Lafayette Place to Greenleaf Hut;
- Falling Waters Trail leading from Lafayette Place to the summit of Little Haystack;
- Liberty Spring Trail from just north of the Flume parking area to the ridgeline north of Mt Liberty;
- Flume Slide Trail to the ridgeline near Flume; and
- The Osseo Trail from Lincoln Woods to the summit of Flume.

As occurred in Crawford Notch, resort hotels developed in Franconia Notch in the 1800s. In 1835, Stephen and Joseph Gibb, a father and son, built a hotel, the Lafayette House, near the shores of Echo Lake in the northern end of Franconia Notch. The Gibbs had earlier cut a trail which ran from their hotel to the summit of the highest mountain, Mount Lafayette. This trail passed the cliffs of Eagle Pass and generally followed the path taken by the current Greenleaf Trail. This trail was likely the first to reach the Franconia Ridge summits. Indeed, the first recorded ascent of Lafayette was by Forrest Shepard with an individual from Dartmouth College with the surname Sparhawk and an unnamed local guide. Clearly, these hikers were not the first to climb Lafayette, since the hike followed an established trail. However, this hike on August 7, 1826 was reported in the *Concord Monitor* and the *New Hampshire Statesman*, and later in the *American Journal of Science and Arts*, so the hikers get the credit of first recorded ascent.



*The Franconia Ridge from Lafayette. Photo by Bob McLaughlin*

In 1846, Benjamin Knight built another hotel, the Flume House, in the southern end of the Notch. About the same time, the road through the Notch was improved and a regularly scheduled stage coach made trips between the two hotels on either end of the Notch. In 1852, a third hotel opened in the Notch, the Profile House which like the Lafayette House was in the north end of the Notch.

By 1850, the Boston, Concord and Montreal (BC&M) Railroad was completed to Plymouth and travel to the Notch was greatly simplified. A traveler could leave Boston in the morning, have lunch in Plymouth, and catch the stage and enjoy dinner in one of the hotels in the Notch.

The stage was set for the development of the trails to the Franconia Ridge.

In 1852, a bridle path following the current Old Bridle Path was built following an older footpath up Lafayette. In 1876, Moses Sweetser in his guidebook *The White Mountains: A Handbook for Travelers* described this bridle path and indicated that hikers were charged 50 cents to follow it, and that a ride on a “sure-footed horse” would cost \$3.50. He also described a trail which apparently followed the current Falling Waters Trail and was created by local fishermen but did not reach the ridgeline.

By 1855, the Summit House had been constructed on the summit of Lafayette. Hikers today continue to shelter in the Summit House’s walls and foundation, but when it was operating it was apparently a drafty uncomfortable place. The Summit House, however, attracted guests who wanted to spend a night on Lafayette and experience sunset and sunrise from the lofty summit. The Summit House continued to operate until 1865 when it was abandoned.



*View from Old Bridle Path. Photo by Bob McLaughlin*

In 1858 a Charter was granted which authorized construction of a cog railway to the top of Lafayette. Fortunately, funding for this project was not obtained and the railway was never built.

The southern summits on Franconia Ridge apparently remained trailless. In 1876 and Sweetser's Handbook recommended a off route to the ridgeline along the sides of Flume Brook but noted that "[t]he journey is arduous, the choice being given of the rolling stones of the brook or the thickets on its side," and concluded that it was "a very rugged route."

However, once hikers reached the summit of Lafayette, continuing down the ridge to Lincoln and beyond would not be an insuperable challenge. Charles Hitchcock, NH State Geologist, in 1871 reportedly walked the Franconia Ridge following a "continuous band of dark, compact feldspar, about five miles long." Sweetser described a "trench-like path that followed the ridge line" and offered the dubious explanation that it may have been created by generations of animals trekking along the ridgeline.

In the mid-1880s, a trail was built from Lafayette to Lincoln, in 1889 it was extended to Liberty and by 1906, the Franconia Ridge Trail had been extended to a logging railroad on the east flank of Flume that followed the Osseo Branch. In 1949, after the logging railroad had been discontinued, the trail beyond the summit of Flume became part of the Osseo Trail. Subsequently, in 1983 the Osseo Trail was rerouted from its original trailhead in Lincoln to Lincoln Woods due to the construction of the Clear Brook development.

When logging came to Franconia Notch in the late 1800s things changed. Logging destroyed many of the existing trails. On the other hand, roads that were cut up the slopes to haul the logs out became the basis of future paths.

For example, the initial impact of logging activities disrupted the few trails that had been constructed up to that time. The Old Bridle Path is an apt example. As noted above the Old Bridle Path was built in 1852 and was a well-established route by 1876. However, by 1897 the Old Bridle Path had been destroyed by logging and was rebuilt in that year only to be promptly destroyed again. In 1901, the Old Bridle Path was once more rebuilt but was again destroyed by logging. Another example, in the 1880s, a steep trail was built from Flume House to the summit of Liberty, known as The Air Line, but this trail too was destroyed by logging. Unlike the Old Bridle Path, the Air Line has never been rebuilt.

However, logging was not all destruction. Many of the logging roads became the paths of current trails particularly at lower elevations. For example, the Osseo Trail was built as an extension from a logging rail line. Other logging roads were abandoned but are still visible on the detailed Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) maps of the slopes.

The Appalachian Mountain Club was involved in a competition with the loggers as the Club would clear and improve a trail only to have it buried by logging. As Frank Carpenter described the fate of The Air Line:

*A path to the summit was cut by the Appalachian Mountain Club some years ago, which followed the path to the Pool, crossed the brook and climbed directly up [Mt Liberty]. The path was clear until the lumbering of the last few years has covered many rods with debris. A temporary path has been marked to this above the log clearings from Whitehouse's mills.*

In 1878, an AMC outing bushwhacked along Garfield Ridge from Lafayette to Garfield and 1883 another group bushwhacked from the Twins to Garfield and finally in 1917 AMC cut the Garfield Ridge Trail along the routes established by these groups. An article from *Appalachia* describing the construction of the Garfield Ridge Trail is posted on the *Mountain Passages* page of the Chapter website ([www.amcnh.org/newsletter/](http://www.amcnh.org/newsletter/)).

In 1906, the Franconia Ridge Trail was extended to Flume and the Osseo Trail was built along the railroad bed of the logging railroad to connect it to the valley of the East Branch of the Pemigewasset. Eventually, by 1915 logging in the Notch had come to an end and it was possible to build trails without the fear that they would be obliterated when the loggers reached the area. In 1928, Franconia Notch became a state park and forest preserve. Shortly thereafter, AMC trail crews began efforts to locate and reconstruct the Old Bridle Path trail. An article by Paul Jenkins in *Appalachia* describes the trail crews' efforts to map the original Old Bridle Path trail by locating the trenches dug by horses in the old trail. *Appalachia* December 1929 at page 359 et seq. In 1929, AMC reopened the Old Bridle Path trail based on this investigation.

In 1917, a new trail to the summit of Mt Flume was constructed along an old slide on the west flank of Flume. Originally named the Mt Flume Trail since 1928 it has been known as the Flume Slide Trail.

Other new trails followed:

- In 1930, AMC constructed the Greenleaf Hut which became a crossroads for the trails;
- In 1937, the Skookumchuck Trail was built to join the Garfield Ridge Trail about a mile from the Lafayette Summit;
- In 1959, the Falling Waters Trail was built extending the previous fishing trail to the summit of Little Haystack; and
- In 1972, the current route of the Liberty Spring Trail was opened.

Over the years, the AMC assumed responsibility for maintaining many of the trails in the Franconia Ridge. See the companion table for the dates AMC acquired the trails on Franconia Ridge. The end of logging, unfortunately was not the end of damage to the trails in the Franconia Ridge. A hurricane in 1938 did extensive damage to the Greenleaf Trail and the Old Bridle Path. In 1948 and 1959 heavy rains caused major landslides blocking Franconia Notch.



Trail sign for Osseo Trail. Photo by Bob McLaughlin

One of the great challenges of the Franconia Ridge Trail is the significant damage to the alpine zone that has resulted from overuse and poorly defined trail margins. By the 1970s the ridge line had deteriorated to dead brown band running along the ridge paralleling the trail. Because there were no trees or natural barriers to channel the 500 or more hikers that might take the path on a summer day, the wandering boots destroyed the alpine plants that had been struggling to survive and grow in the hostile environment of the ridge. One careless boot step could and did destroy a plant's growth of multiple years. It was a losing struggle for the alpine plants.

The initial response by the AMC and the US Forest Service was to better define the trail by building scree walls along the sides of the trail. However, some concerned individuals pointed out that the scree walls were ugly and detracted from the experience of hiking. Among those who felt the scree walls were not the best solution were Laura and Guy Waterman of Vermont.

DATE	TRAIL
1901	Franconia Ridge Trail
1914	Liberty Springs Trail
1917	Flume Slide Trail
1921	Whitehouse Trail
1926	Greenleaf Trail
1930	Old Bridle Path

AMC Adoption of Franconia Ridge Trails





*Falling Waters Trail built in 1959 is one of the most popular routes to Franconia Ridge. Photo by Bob McLaughlin*

When the opportunity was offered in the 1980s, Laura and Guy adopted the Franconia Ridge Trail and took steps to protect the vegetation that they believed were more consistent with the aesthetic of the trail for hikers. First, they took the time to observe hikers on the trail to better understand the problem so that they could craft solutions. Among the solutions they implemented were:

- Building cairns to entice hikers along the desired route;
- Widening the trail at high points and views to give hikers a place to stop out the path of others;
- Eliminating obstacles, whether natural or man-made that hikers were avoiding;
- Keeping the trail clear of loose rock; and
- Planting and placing prickly vegetation along the sides of the trail in addition to the scree walls.

The vegetation had the additional advantage that it sheltered and encouraged the reestablishment of the alpine plants.

Another approach to encouraging reestablishment of the alpine plants was planting non-native grasses such as Kentucky blue grass and fescue. While this approach seems counter-intuitive, it was proposed by Dr. Edmund H. Ketheledge, a retired botanist from the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, NY and former president of the Adirondack Mountain Club, and had been successfully used in the high peaks in the Adirondacks. It seems the grasses establish themselves, improve the soil and shelter the alpine flora and then die off in a few years leaving a healthy population of alpine plants.

The Watermans continued to adopt the Franconia Ridge Trail until shortly before Guy Waterman's death on the ridgeline in 2000. During this time, they concluded the most effective way to protect the alpine vegetation was to talk with and educate hikers about what they needed to do and to avoid doing to protect the environment along the side of the trail. They also pointed to the information signs posted along the trails leading to the ridgeline as effectively encouraging hikers to direct their steps to protect alpine vegetation.

There is little doubt these steps have been successful. As you hike the Franconia Ridge Trail today, you will see little of the devastation that marked the ridge 50 years ago.

Where there were once barren slabs of rock and dusty dirt there are now green growing alpine plants and flowers if you are there in the right season.

Thank you to the trail builders, the Watermans and everyone else who made Franconia Ridge what it is today!

## Where in the Whites?

Where was the photographer and what mountains appear in the photo? Be as specific as possible!



In the Spring 2020 Edition of Mountain Passages, we introduced a new photo identification contest, “Where in the Whites?”. We asked readers to guess where the photo was taken and what mountains were in the photo. We promised to print the names of the first 10 respondents with the correct answer.

Last month’s photo is reprinted here. It is a view from Monroe looking south along the Presidentials. This photo was probably too easy especially when combined with the article about the Crawford Path, except perhaps for the number of mountains in view. The first 10 readers to properly identify the photo are:

- Samantha Homan
- Carsten Turner
- Loretta Boyne
- Scott Sliun & Ted Zona  
(joint credit given in the submission)
- Alan Stein
- Larry Denton
- Chris Northrop
- Annette McKenney
- Georg Feichtinger, and
- John M. Allard

We will have to wait and see how much of a challenge this issue’s photo is! I suspect the mountains will be easy, but think the location of the photographer will be the challenge.

Identify the mountains in the photo and where it was taken. Be as specific as possible! Take a guess and submit your answers to [WitWamcnh@gmail.com](mailto:WitWamcnh@gmail.com). By the way, Wit is not a name it is the initials of the first three words in Where in the Whites.

We look forward to seeing your submissions.



*Monroe looking south along the Presidentials. Photo by Bob McLaughlin*

# Summer Concerts at Highland Center

**Saturday  
July 15, 2023**

**An Evening  
with Della Mae**

AMC Highland Center



**Saturday  
July 22, 2023**

**Dwight + Nicole**

AMC Highland Center



## CONCERTS AT THE HIGHLAND CENTER

Once again this summer, the Appalachian Mountain Club will be holding the Lynda Cohen Performing Arts Series at Crawford Notch—Music in the Mountains Concerts. Four live concerts are planned this summer at AMC's Highland Center in Crawford Notch in the New Hampshire White Mountains.

These free of charge concerts are designed to be family friendly events. The performing arts series seeks to create a genuine sense of connection to stewardship and conservation through a celebration of the natural world and performing arts. Concerts will start at 7:00 pm and wrap up about 9:00 pm.

The concerts are:

July 15—Della Mae;

July 22—Dwight + Nicole

August 5—Jim Kweskin and Friends with

Jim Goodhue and Roland Clark; and

August 19—Serene Green.

**Saturday  
August 5, 2023**

**Jim Kweskin  
and Friends**

*With Geoff Goodhue & Roland Clark*

AMC Highland Center



**Saturday  
August 19, 2023**

**Serene Green**

AMC Highland Center



# What's on Your Trail?

BY: JENNIE VANDERHOOVEN

I love Mother's Day. As a mom to three very active children who would rather be at an ice rink or in the pool than on the trail, I love that they absolutely cannot complain on our traditional Mother's Day hikes. The normal "how much farther?" or "this is SO steep, mom" are forbidden statements on my sacred day in nature with my offspring. Luckily, the weather in the past few years have been very favorable for hiking. The trails I've chosen to hike with my husband and kiddos have included Mount Ascutney, Mount Pierce, Mount Pemigewasset and this year, a local to me, Mount Monadnock.

Mount Monadnock is one of the most climbed mountains in the world. It's strange to have something so globally popular, so close to home. We selected the favored White Dot & White Cross trails for my 2023 Mother's Day outing. We got there early, loaded up our backpacks with our ten essentials and headed up the mountain. It was a beautiful day - the birds were singing, the chipmunks rustling in the leaves and the hikers were pleasant in wishing me a "Happy Mother's Day" greeting. As enjoyable day as it was, one thing that I kept noticing was all of the things that shouldn't be on the trail. Can you guess what that might be? You got it - trash!

I started keeping track of what those trash items were. If it didn't seem too much like a biohazard, I picked up the trash and stuffed it in my backpack. The items I collected included a snickers wrapper, orange peels, a keychain, a small cotton glove, a sandwich bag and a pen. I decided to leave the tissues, cigarette butts, a foam bra insert (yes, really), and I couldn't get all of the pistachio shells up out of the dirt. You might think, what's wrong with food scraps like an apple core, a banana peel or pistachio shells? They're compostable! They'll disintegrate and make the soil richer!

That might be somewhat true. However, if a food item wasn't sourced from the environment in which you're hiking, it doesn't belong there. Leaving food scraps in nature that didn't grow there could do more damage than you realize by attracting wildlife who might not be able to digest the foreign food items, thus making them sick or potentially killing them. If it doesn't make them sick or kill them, they might find that your discarded food is really yummy and continue to seek it out, keeping close to that hiking trail. They might stop seeking their own food in nature. You've read about the black bears in our White Mountains that have become brazen in their attempts to "steal your picnic backpacks." It's dangerous for both us and the bears.

Also, the food scraps could take many years to decompose. For example, an orange or banana peel can take up to two years to decompose. On popular trails, such as the White Dot & White Cross, this could encourage littering by those hikers who are not familiar with the Leave No Trace Policy.

Leave No Trace policy in the wilderness means just that - to hike your trail, cycle your path, climb your rocks, ski your trail & paddle your waters all while making it look like you were never there at all. Dear reader, as you have accepted the Appalachian Mountain Club into your lives, I recognize I am probably preaching to the choir. I am sure that you appreciate getting out into nature to get away from the human made environments in which you reside. While you are out enjoying nature on your trail, path, rock or waters, you do not want to see the discarded leftovers that people have left behind.

So what can be done? What can we do as outdoor enthusiasts?

For me, on an individual level, I plan to continually educate myself about the Seven Principles of the Leave No Trace Policy. They are:

1. **Plan ahead & prepare**
2. **Travel & camp on durable surfaces**
3. **Dispose of waste properly**
4. **Leave what you find (except for trash)**
5. **Minimize campfire impacts**
6. **Respect Wildlife**
7. **Be considerate of others**

To read more about the details of these policies, I would encourage you to review them on the Leave No Trace website: <https://lnt.org>. You may also want to reread the articles on Leave No Trace that have appeared in past issues of *Mountain Passages* (see for example the Summer 2021 and Fall 2021 issues on the Chapter website ([www.amcnh.org/newsletter/archive/](http://www.amcnh.org/newsletter/archive/))).

The NH-AMC Chapter also frequently has conservation & education activities such as paddle clean ups, loon preservation paddles, trail maintenance, a conservation book club and more. Check out the calendar on the <https://amcnh.org/calendar> to find out about how you can help preserve and learn more about our natural world.

One thing I know I can consistently do is to pick up trash others have left behind. I hope my example will rub off on others, especially my children.

I'm not sure which mountain I'll choose for my next Mother's Day outing. However, I do hope that next year there will be less trash on my trail so I can focus more on my growing kids and help them observe and preserve our wonderful wilderness for years to come. What can you do?



*Chipmunks were rustling in the leaves on our hike up Monadnock.*  
Photo by Bob McLaughlin

# How to Get Lost in the New Hampshire Woods in Ten Easy Lessons

BY: REBECCA B. TOWLE

Hunter Safety Coordinator, NH Fish and Game Department reprinted from the June 1981 issue of *Appalachia*.



Photo Credit: iStock.com/bonciutoma

1. Tell no one else where you expect to hike or how long you will be gone. If no one knows your location, you can keep your favorite spot a secret and have a better chance of getting "the wilderness experience" ALL BY YOURSELF.
2. Never mind bringing along a topographic map or a compass on your hiking expedition. After all, you know that land like the back of your hand--every tree, every hill and every brook for miles. Besides, a compass points in only one direction and you may not want to go that way.
3. Don't prearrange signals or meeting places with your hiking companions. It is more fun to surprise them by popping out from behind a tree, or by not showing up at all. When your family or friends worry, it's a sign they care about you, so encourage their concern.
4. Wait until darkness settles in before making that long trek back to your parked vehicle. It is a more exciting way of getting home, going from tree-to-tree or ravine-to-ravine on a pitch-black night with no flashlight. This method gives more of a challenge to your family, friends and members of the search and rescue team as they try to locate you.
5. Don't bother with survival gimmicks and "doo-dads" which clutter up your pockets. If you leave matches at home, you can practice lighting fires with two sticks. A 6 oz. emergency space blanket is too bulky to cart around if you're not planning to spend a night out anyway. Extra food occupies space in your pack so don't bring it. You've never needed a first aid kit, an ace bandage or an inflatable splint before: why start now? Don't carry a flashlight, flare or a whistle for signaling purposes. They are for people who don't know these woods.
6. Remember that "clothes make the person" and a pair of tight shorts, tank top and sandals will look terrific when the news photographer meets you and the rescue party at the roadside. Looking great is a priority and will give you confidence to overcome the embarrassment of having to camp out overnight. Besides, wool clothing, long-handled underwear and insulated boots are for sissies.

Continued on Page 19

# The Tragic Fate of Old Peppersass

BY: FRANCES WOODARD RICHARDSON

The Mount Washington Cog Railway was the first mountain climbing cog railway, and Old Peppersass was its first locomotive. Old Peppersass was a strange looking locomotive; It was constructed at an angle, used trunnions that would maintain its boiler upright and its boiler was fully exposed. Based on these characteristics, it was quickly determined that it looked like a pepper sauce container on a tray. Peppersass is the phonetic spelling of “pepper sauce” as rendered by a thick New Hampshire accent, and so the locomotive originally named “Hero” was quickly rechristened Peppersass.



*A post card of Old Peppersass on July 20, 1929*

Old Peppersass began its career in 1868 and it reached the summit of Washington when the railroad was completed in 1869. Old Peppersass was retired in 1878 from the cog railway and began a tour of the United States being displayed at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, then in Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St Louis and finally at the Fair of the Iron Horse at Halethorpe, Maryland. Following that Peppersass again went into storage at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company.

The Rev. Guy Roberts of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Whitefield was interested in the White Mountains and was inspired to find Peppersass and bring it back to New Hampshire. With the help of Col. W. A. Barron, proprietor of the Crawford House, they located Old Peppersass. Old Peppersass was then refurbished in Concord, NH, and returned to the Base Station in Bretton Woods.

A joyful celebration was scheduled on July 20, 1929, to mark the return of Old Peppersass to Mt Washington. In celebration of the return of Peppersass, Rev. Guy Roberts arranged for it to climb Mount Washington for a final time. The event drew the attention of Governor Charles W. Tobey who was to host the Annual Conference of the New England Governors at the Bretton Woods Hotel in July 1929. For publicity, the Governor planned a ceremonial lunch for six Governors and other dignitaries

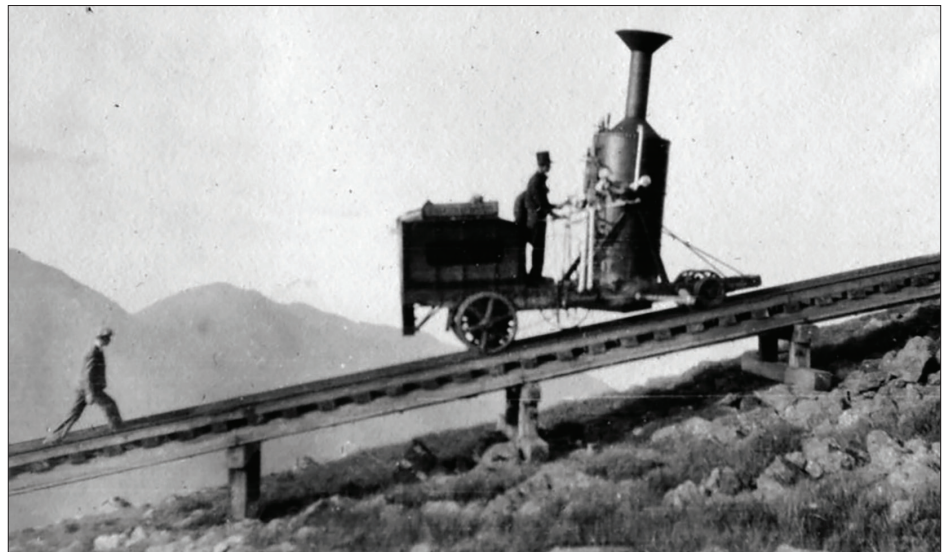
who would be taken by the Concord Coach (drawn by six horses) to the train station in Bretton Woods for a trip to the Base Station for the ceremony.

The station was decorated with flags and bunting and a thousand people gathered at the Station where the Whitefield Band played music. It was a perfect day with a blue sky and a warm temperature. Reporters, photographers, and motion picture cameramen were there to record the event.

A Google search will turn up multiple films taken of Peppersass.

At two o'clock, Col. Barron presided as toastmaster and gave credit to Rev. Guy Roberts for locating Old Peppersass and returning it to the mountains. J. J. Cornwell, General Council of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, presented Peppersass to George Hannauer, President of the Boston and Maine Railroad who then presented it to Charles E. Tobey, Governor of New Hampshire, who accepted it on behalf of the State of New Hampshire. Mr. Hannauer then christened Peppersass with water from the Lake of the Clouds for its dedication to furthering recreational interests in the White Mountains.

Six cog railway engines with decorated carriages loaded with people started up Mount Washington followed by Peppersass with engineer Jack Frost, and fireman William Newsham both from Concord, N.H., dressed in red shirts and tall beaver hats. They were accompanied by Lawrence Richardson, Chief Mechanic Officer of the Boston and Maine Railroad company, Winston Pote, photographer, Daniel Rossiter, official reporter and photographer for the State of N.H. Publicity Bureau and the Boston and Maine Railroad Company, and Frost's sixteen-year-old son, Caleb, who climbed aboard without authority.



*Old Peppersass ascending Mt Washington*

Continued on Page 19

## 20s and 30s

BY: SELENE BERUBE



*NH 20s & 30s at Lakes of the Clouds Hut. Photo by Jeff Comstock*

I could just give statistics about how much we've done as a group in the past year. If I did, it would sound something like: "The 20s & 30s of the AMC NH Chapter have hosted over 15 events consisting of weekend trips, hikes, socials and meetups, 4 of which sold out and maintained waiting lists. We have more than 15 events drafted and ready to go live on the website for the rest of 2023 with a variety of overnight hut stays, hikes, backpacking trips, socials, and activity nights." But, I'm not going to bore you with the success of pulling the 20s & 30s out of the pandemic limbo that's kept people from coming together. Instead, I'm just going to talk about our goals.

Our primary goals similar to every committee are simple: retain old members, attract new members, and engage all members and have fun. We also recognize that we need to develop members. Members that pay their dues, show up regularly to our events, sometimes even all of them, and remain a familiar faces. These members can then become leaders and the new generation of the AMC. Simultaneously, the newer members become enthralled by our events and eventually establish themselves as the familiar faces, and the cycle continues.

Currently, we have two qualified hike leaders in the NH 20s & 30s; additionally we have about five social event leaders. Rather than interrogating our people on why they don't want to lead, with the few leaders we do have we strive to regularly host desirable events that provide a variety of experiences for our members at accessible costs. In turn we hope this sparks the "fear of missing out" and these regulars want to start creating these experiences for others, but that's the long term strategy. The short and medium term goal here is to simply maintain this consistency.

What does maintenance have to do with growth? If we can't maintain, how can we grow and expect to be successful? I think it's great that we have retained our leaders for years. We have developed a camaraderie that is unmatched by some of the larger leader-filled chapters, and NH's small state charm is reflected in the 20s & 30s. However, we want to avoid stagnation and obsolescence.

We're expanding our comfort zone and hosting 3-4 interchapter events that get ourselves, Boston, Worcester, Maine, NY/NJ etc. exposure to one another. This has been super successful in membership turnout and just a lot of fun! We are also hosting camping trips in Vermont, white water rafting in Maine, indoor climbing around the region, a quadruple chapter trail work party in the AMC 100 Mile Wilderness and AMC High Mountain Hut stays. These new events cause our participants to pause and say "this is great, I want to be a part of creating these one day". We don't have the luxury of a pool of 300+ young members and only 5% would like to pursue leadership, so how do we develop the next generation of the AMC?

We inspire, bring people together, provide new and accessible experiences and work with our predecessors for cross-generational engagement. The challenge? making people excited about something they may not know much about. Education about the club, the Appalachians and the core values through these aforementioned strategies may just be the ticket to instilling a new passion within our participants and inviting them into the future of the AMC NH Chapter.

# One Day Class 3 Trip Leader Training

Oct 22 2023 8:00 am – 5:00 pm  
at AMC Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH and pre req Oct 17 7:00 – 9:00 pm on zoom

Training for those interested in becoming leaders for hikes and walks at lower elevations in three seasons. This session will allow you to become a class 3 leader for NH chapter. Exercises in group dynamics, trip planning and logistics, Participant screening, communication, handling difficult behaviors, and how to post your trip for approval. Outdoor practice in leading and basic map and compass. This training is a good introduction to leading hikes and has been of interest to those who are thinking of becoming trip leaders for the first time.

Up to seven participants will work in a small group with two instructors to understand the methods for planning and leading trips to smaller mountains or natural areas and the sea shore. The group members will use different learning techniques to try out and understand the many roles of leader and how to apply these to outings. Come prepared to spend the day outdoors learning by doing.

Bring your pack for a fall day hike, hiking cloths, boots and a trail lunch. Morning snacks, maps and instructional materials will be provided.

Training at AMC Cardigan lodge Alexandria NH Oct. 22 8:00 am–5:00 pm and by Zoom on Oct 17 7:00-9:00 pm

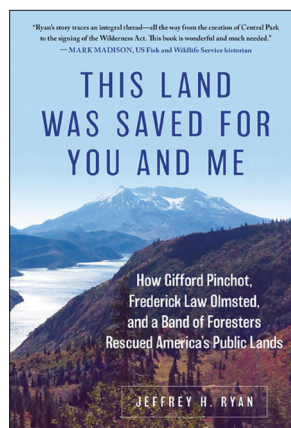
Instructors Rick Silverberg and Bob Humphery \$25 for members \$30 for nonmembers

Register: <https://amcnhexcursions.regfox.com/amc-nh-fall-leadership-2023-class-1-trip-hike-leading>

Call 603 455 9119 with questions between 7-10pm

## NH Chapter Virtual Book Club

Most of us love our outdoor adventures. But, how do you spend your downtime? If you enjoy reading as one of your non-active past times, why not join our virtual book club? It's a great way to connect with like-minded folks. This past June 7th, the Conservation & Education first ever bookclub went underway and it was a huge success. We met by Zoom and had a fun and engaging conversation, all while connecting with each other by sharing our experiences in the great outdoors. We'd love to have you join our next book club, which will take place on Thursday, September 14th at 7pm. We will be discussing *This Land Was Saved for You and Me* by Jeffrey H. Ryan. Check out the listing on the calendar. Hope you can join us!



### AMC NH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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**Vice-Chair** ..... vicechairnh@amcnh.org  
Selene Berube  
**Treasurer** ..... treasurernh@amcnh.org  
Rick Rosania  
**Secretary** ..... secretarynh@amcnh.org  
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**Biking** .....  
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**Membership** ..... Open

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**Address changes and membership renewals:**  
AMC Member Services  
10 City Square, Boston MA 02129  
617-523-0636 or  
[www.outdoors.org/membercenter](http://www.outdoors.org/membercenter)



# Hiking in the Era of Wildfire Smoke

This hiking season a new hazard has been added to those that hikers have traditionally faced: the dense smoke from wildfires in Canada and the United States. At its mildest, this wildfire smoke has created “haze” that ruins views, and at its most severe, it can be a hazard to the health of any one venturing out of doors.

What can you do? Knowledge is the first and most important response. But how can you really know what conditions are until you have reached your hiking destination?

Fortunately, there are on-line sources that you can turn to.

First, a website ([www.firesmoke.ca](http://www.firesmoke.ca)) provides a map showing current and predicted smoke levels. While very useful when it is working, I have found the website to be quirky and prone to bugs. Nonetheless, it can provide extremely useful information when it is working.

Second, the US Environmental Protection Agency provides a website that reports pollution level and fire and smoke map on zip code level. This site is available at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov). You do need to know the zip code in the area you intend to visit to use this site. Zip codes in the White Mountains are:

- Lincoln 03251 • Franconia 03580 • Twin Mountain 03595
- Waterville Valley 03215 • Gorham 03581 • Jackson 03846
- Conway 03818

Just as you should check the weather before you head out for a hike, this summer you should also check the smoke and pollution forecasts. Once you know the facts, you can better judge whether a hike will be worthwhile or whether it might be hazardous to your health.

## MOUNTAIN PASSAGES

Volume 49, No. 2  
Summer 2023

Mountain Passages is published four times a year by the New Hampshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

**Submissions.** Members may submit articles or photos (hi-res jpegs) to [MtnPassages@gmail.com](mailto:MtnPassages@gmail.com). Articles may be edited at the discretion of the editor to meet space and style requirements. Publication is on a space-available basis. While Mountain Passages does not pay for submissions; a byline or photo credit is given. Contact Mountain Passages for reprint permission.

**Advertising.** The AMC NH Chapter members enjoy the outdoors year-round by hiking, paddling, skiing, backpacking, climbing and biking and more.

For information and the Ad Rate Sheet, send an email to [MtnPassages@gmail.com](mailto:MtnPassages@gmail.com).

We reserve the right to refuse any submission, photo or advertising that is not consistent with the mission of the AMC.

**Address Changes.** Address changes or other changes to your membership must be made through AMC Member Services at 10 City Square, Boston, MA 02129; 800-372-1758; [outdoors.org/membercenter](http://outdoors.org/membercenter)

Please note: Member address updates cannot be handled by AMC-NH officers, committee chairs, or the newsletter editor.

**Mountain Passages Online.** If you're receiving Mountain Passages through the mail, please consider signing up to get the electronic version instead.

You'll get added resources not available to print subscribers: direct links to emails, forms and online information, color photos, online registration forms.

To sign up, go to [www.outdoors.org/membercenter](http://www.outdoors.org/membercenter) and set your AMC-NH Chapter newsletter preference to online.

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**Editor:** Robert S. McLaughlin  
[MtnPassages@gmail.com](mailto:MtnPassages@gmail.com)

**Graphic Design:** Bill Covino

## Help Wanted: Volunteer Opportunities

### Bicycling Committee Chairs:

If you are interested in biking with like-minded members of the New Hampshire Chapter, you may have noticed that there are no trips listed. The group used to be so active! What's up? Well, the answer is easy, there are no chairs of the Bicycling Committee to sponsor the trips. You can solve this problem! We are looking for members who are interested in Biking to step forward and resurrect the committee. If you want to have Chapter sponsored Bike Trips, we depend on you to volunteer. It really is not a lot of work, but your participation can make it happen.

### AMC Chapter Program Committee Co-chair

The Programs Committee plans and executes fun and informative events for the NH Chapter of the AMC by finding and booking interesting speakers and organizations. Typical events include Zoom and live speaker presentations as well as the Annual Meeting. The Programs Committee also works with other Chapter officers and committees, such as Excursions and Paddling, to jointly plan events. Committee members will help create events by finding and booking speakers that will appeal to AMC members. Previous speakers have included conservationists, hikers, authors, scientists,

the Mt. Washington Observatory staff, and Game Wardens - there are so many possibilities! In addition, members will assist in planning and executing the Annual Meeting each year and may be asked to attend a monthly Executive Committee meeting if the Chairs are unable to attend.

Time commitment: 2-3 hours per month plus extra time leading up to the Annual Meeting in October. Most of this time would be spent booking potential speakers, then scheduling and advertising the events through AMC channels. Members in this committee get to meet incredibly interesting people across a broad range of nature related interests and organizations!

Contact: [programsnh@amcnh.org](mailto:programsnh@amcnh.org), [chairnh@amcnh.org](mailto:chairnh@amcnh.org), [vicechairnh@amcnh.org](mailto:vicechairnh@amcnh.org)

### AMC Chapter Membership Committee Chair

AMC NH Membership Chair responsibilities:

- Organize and host outreach events - both in-person and online.
- Send welcome emails to new members
- Help manage the Chapter's Facebook Group

Contact: [membershipnh@amcnh.org](mailto:membershipnh@amcnh.org), [chairnh@amcnh.org](mailto:chairnh@amcnh.org), [vicechairnh@amcnh.org](mailto:vicechairnh@amcnh.org)

# Live Free and Hike: Finding Grace on 48 Summits;

*A Journey of Healing and Self-Discovery Atop New Hampshire's White Mountains*

BY: LINDA MAGOON

I can't believe I'm lost. How could I have wandered off the trail? My mother was right. I am going to die in the White Mountains!

*Spoiler alert: I didn't die.*

I rediscovered my love for hiking in my mid-50s after ending a 20+ year toxic marriage. On my own for the first time in decades, I was no longer walking on eggshells. The idea that I could express a want or desire without the familiar pit-in-the-stomach dread of telling my husband was fresh and new and exciting.

## The Healing Power of Nature

The first few peaks were tough. I was in poor shape, wore improper clothing, and carried an outdated, heavy canvas pack that should have been hanging in a museum, not on my shoulders. With each summit I grew stronger physically and emotionally. I joined the Appalachian Mountain Club, enrolled in workshops, and educated myself so when I wandered off the trail, I was able to quickly become "unlost." Walking among the beech and maple lessened my anxiety of re-building a new life.



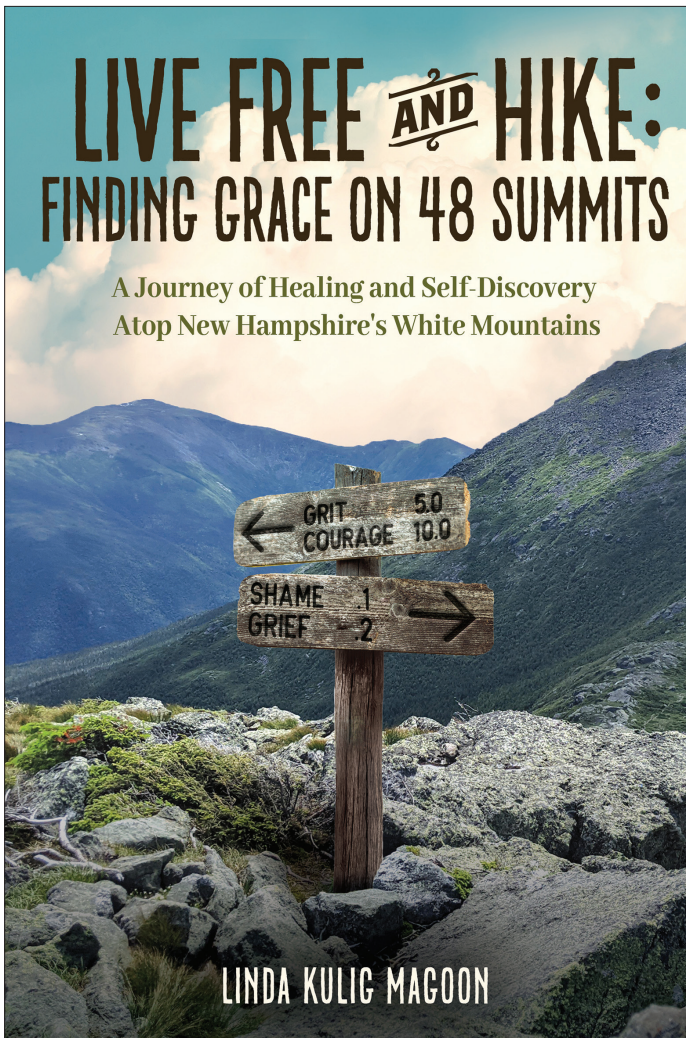
*The Author looking north on the Franconia Ridge Trail*

There is something magical about being above treeline. I drew strength from the resilient spruce and fir, dwarfed and stunted, found at higher elevations. Hiking above treeline across Franconia Ridge, I felt like I was on top of the world.

## One Step at a Time

A few months after my divorce, I enrolled in a six-week workshop on defining your dreams and creating the life you imagined. It was so far out of my comfort zone, when it came time to introduce myself to the class, I told them that I was there because I thought it was a wine and cheese tasting. (There was no wine and no cheese.) On the first night, we wrote out our dreams on festive note paper. For the first time, I expressed my dream to the universe: "To hike the 48 White Mountain 4,000-footers and write a book to inspire others." It took almost three years to complete the list and another three years to write the book, *Live Free and Hike: Finding Grace on 48 Summits*, which was just published in June 2023. Many of the "mountains" I climbed to overcome my ex-husband's abhorrent behavior were far more difficult than any 4,000-footer I hiked. But with the love and support from friends, family, and hiking 48 peaks, I rebuilt my life, one step at a time.

About the author: Linda Magoon is an environmentalist and outdoor enthusiast. She has been a member of the New Hampshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club since 2015 and has participated in the AMC's "Writing From the Mountains" workshop. You can reach her at [lindamagoonauthor@gmail.com](mailto:lindamagoonauthor@gmail.com) or visit her website at [www.lindamagoon.com](http://www.lindamagoon.com).





"Old Peppersass" is on display on a trailer at the entrance to the Cog Rail parking areas.  
Photo by Bob McLaughlin

The engine climbed easily, stopping for wood and water several times. At the Gulf Tank, a half mile below the summit of Mount Washington, Peppersass started its descent. Just above Jacobs' Ladder, a cracking noise was heard and Peppersass jumped the track and could not mesh with the cog. Instantly, Peppersass rushed down the long trestle at great speed. Attempts were made to apply the hand brakes but failed. Mr. Frost shouted for everyone to jump. His son went first followed by Pote, Newsham, and Frost who escaped but sustained broken bones. Mr. Rossiter stayed on the engine for 1572 feet before he dropped off and crashed on the jagged rocks to a sudden death at the foot of Jacobs' Ladder.

Peppersass continued on before it left the track and landed in Burts' Ravine. Parts of the damaged engine were salvaged and reassembled in Concord, N.H. to be returned in 1930 to the Base Station as a permanent display.

Five of the six carriages of people were stranded atop Mount Washington. One train had started its descent but saw the damage to the track on Jacobs' Ladder. Joe Dodge, AMC Hutmaster, was on the carriage, and led those passengers down the mountain on foot. Nathaniel L. Goodrich who was on that first train authored an article describing that day which appeared in the December 1930 issue of *Appalachia* and is posted on the Mountain Passages page on the Chapter website ([www.amcnh.org/newsletter/](http://www.amcnh.org/newsletter/)).

The passengers on the other trains stayed on the summit until morning when they were taken down the Mount Washington Auto Road to the Glen House in Pinkham Notch, on the other side of the mountain from the Cog Railway.

It was a slow ascent for Old Peppersass but a rapid descent which abruptly ended a celebratory day on July 20, 1929.

#### References

- "Old Peppersass" by Rev. Guy Roberts
- The Story of Mount Washington*, by F. Allen Burt
- Not Without Peril* by Nicholas Howe
- New Hampshire-Then and Now* by Winston Pote

## Ten Easy Ways to get Lost in the Woods... Continued from Page 13

7. Keep "peak-bagging" foremost in your mind at all times. Be intent on forging ahead and don't be distracted by little pesky details like the terrain, time of day, weather or your condition. It is vitally important to rack up the miles. The more ground you can cover, the more impressed everyone else will be with your hiking skills.
8. If you do get lost, start running at top speed immediately. You'll get out of the woods faster. It doesn't matter which direction you go. You'll eventually come out somewhere. Don't hesitate to work yourself into a panic. They say a rush of adrenalin in the system can clear out your sinuses. Convince yourself that if you run fast enough you will escape danger. Run until you become exhausted. You will sleep better when you get a lot of exercise.
9. Don't admit you might be lost: it would be a sign of weakness. For goodness sake don't sit down, and try to collect your thoughts or calm yourself down. A person passing by might see you and think you are some sort of religious fanatic.
10. Once the Conservation Officers, volunteer searchers, your family and friends have located you, remember to remain aloof, distant and cool. Tell them in no uncertain terms that you didn't need their assistance. You were just on your way out when they came along. Better yet, don't say a thing. Specifically, avoid saying "thank you" or expressing anything which could be misinterpreted as gratitude. After all, they probably were out in the woods anyway and they get paid to do this sort of thing, don't they?



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*A watercolor of a cabin at Cold River Camp painted by Hilary Williams*