

NEW HAMPSHIRE

103
YEARS

1921  2024

YOUR CONNECTION TO THE OUTDOORS

Highlights...

Sustainable Hiking Practices.....1

Notes from the Editor.....2

Village that Created Franconia Notch.....5

History of NH 4000-Footers List.....8

Scaling New Hampshire's 4000 Footers.....10

Observe as You Hike.....13

People of the Whites: Laban Merrill Watson.....15

Becoming a Hike Leader.....16

Trip Report from 55 Plus Group.....17

2024/25 AMC NH Skiers Schedule.....18

Where in the Whites?.....19



NEW HAMPSHIRE CHAPTER
YOUR CONNECTION TO THE OUTDOORS

Sustainable Hiking Practices: Enjoying New Hampshire's Fall Foliage Responsibly

BY: DIANA MOORE

New Hampshire's fall foliage is a breathtaking spectacle that attracts visitors from all over the world. The vibrant colors of the leaves, the crisp autumn air, and the serene landscapes make it a perfect destination for nature enthusiasts. Along with the allure of abundant orchards and tax-free shopping, New Hampshire attracted 3.6 million visitors last fall according to the New Hampshire Division of Travel and Tourism Development. As this number continues to increase each year, it is essential that we adopt and maintain sustainable hiking

practices to minimize our impact on the environment and set an example to others.

Follow Leave No Trace Principles¹

The easiest way to actively conserve our natural habit here in New Hampshire is to apply the seven Leave No Trace principles whenever you are enjoying the outdoors. The Leave No Trace principles are a set of guidelines designed to minimize the impact of outdoor activities on the environment.

Continued on page 3

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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Photo Credit: Diana Moore - View From the Summit of Mt. Major

Notes from the Editor

Being a fall issue from New Hampshire, leaf season, our annual “breathtaking spectacle,” is top of mind. Diana Moore counsels us on how to sustainably hike the trails we treasure, AMC or otherwise, as we trek to the vistas. And Keith Gentili chronicles his experience tramping above a polychromatic Crawford Notch during a fall excursion to conquer Mts Webster and Jackson, part of his longer quest to earn his 4,000 footer patch. But other topics relating to New Hampshire and the AMC’s contribution to its growth and development are in our view too. We include a history from the AMC files of the origin and governance of the AMC 4,000 footer list, one of the earliest and most enduring lists of hiking goals in all of mountaineering. Bob McLaughlin schools us on four stages to recognize in the maturation of a New England forest and how study of forest succession helps identify the remaining areas of “old growth” forests in New England. Frances Richardson recounts the life of Laban Merrill Watson as part of her ongoing series on “People of the White Mountains.” Joe D’Amore writes about “compass and map” training in his quest to become a level 3, all season hike leader. And I recount the 1920’s campaign to purchase, establish and “preserve” Franconia Notch State Park. Among its many year round attributes, Franconia Notch, with its easy access and extensive trail network, is one of the most photographed vistas of fall foliage.

- Ham Mehlman

Appeal for your writing contributions to *Mountain Passages*

Mountain Passages is an AMC-NH member-volunteer managed and produced publication. We welcome (and need!) articles or “letters to the editor” from AMC-NH members interested in writing on topics they think relevant to the missions, activities and interests of AMC-NH members. (All submissions subject to editorial review.) Please send a Word or Google Doc file to newsletternh@amcnh.com. Be a published author!

NOTICE: We are DISCONTINUING DELIVERY BY REGULAR MAIL. Future issues will be sent to all subscribers via email as well as being available on the AMC-NH website: <https://amcnh.org/newsletter/>

As noted in the summer issue, printing hardcopies and delivering by regular mail is costly and requires significantly more staff/volunteer time at all levels of the process. More than 90% of subscribers already receive *Mountain Passages* exclusively by email. AMC-NH has been the only chapter to continue distributing its journal/newsletters via regular mail for at least two years now. For those still receiving *Mountain Passages* by regular mail please contact member services - (603)-466-2727 or amcmembership@outdoors.org - to ensure that you are signed up for email delivery and that member services has your current/active email address. As always, you can access current and past issues through the AMC-NH website. You will see a button for *Mountain Passages* on the home page under the Resources dropdown - *Mountain Passages*. We apologize for any disappointment.

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Graphic Design: Diana Moore

These principles include:

- 1. Plan Ahead and Prepare:** Proper planning ensures the safety of groups and minimizes damage to the land.
- 2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces:** Stick to established trails and campsites to avoid trampling vegetation.
- 3. Dispose of Waste Properly:** Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Use restroom facilities when available or dig a small hole at least 200 feet away from water sources to bury human waste.
- 4. Leave What You Find:** Preserve the past by leaving rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- 5. Minimize Campfire Impact:** Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a lantern for light. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- 6. Respect Wildlife:** Observe animals from a distance and do not follow or approach them. Never feed animals as it can alter their natural behaviors.
- 7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors:** Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience. Keep noise levels down and yield to other hikers on the trail.

Plan Your Route in Advance

One of the main ways to reduce your impact on your next hike is to plan your route in advance. Research the area you plan to visit, including trail difficulty, length, and terrain. Knowing your route in advance will help you avoid overused paths damaged by numerous visitors. This helps to distribute the impact of hikers more evenly across different trails, reducing the wear and tear on any single path. If you aren't hiking with an AMC group, consider the needs and abilities of your hiking group when selecting a route. Check weather forecasts and trail conditions to prepare for potential challenges. Knowing the trail conditions and weather forecasts can help you avoid dangerous situations that might result in the need for emergency interventions that could lead to environmental damage.

Choose Eco-Friendly Transportation

Reducing your carbon footprint starts with how you get to the trailhead. Whenever possible, use public transportation, carpool, or drive a fuel-efficient vehicle. Some areas in New Hampshire offer shuttle services to popular hiking destinations, which can help reduce traffic and parking congestion. The AMC offers a White Mountain Hiker Shuttle at The Highland Center and Pinkham Notch.³ If you must drive alone, try to combine your trip with other errands or activities to make the most of your journey.

Stay on Designated Trails

Staying on designated trails is critical to protecting the environment. Venturing off-trail can lead to soil erosion, damage to vegetation, and disturbance to wildlife habitats. Bushwhacking is a common practice among experienced hikers, but we should always keep in mind how our treading through wild spaces will impact the environment and natural habitats. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, venturing off a formal trail tramples and destroys protective vegetation and other organic material that affects wildlife habitats and increases water runoff, leading to increased erosion, which is the most significant and long-lasting environmental impact.² It is best to stick to marked paths and avoid shortcuts. If you encounter muddy sections, walk through the mud in your water-proof hiking boots, rather than around it, to prevent trail widening and erosion.

Bring Reusable and Plastic-Free Items

Reduce waste by bringing reusable items on your hike. Use reusable water bottles, food containers, and utensils instead of single-use plastics. Pack snacks in reusable containers and reusable plastic bags instead of plastic sandwich baggies. Carry a small bag to collect any litter you find along the trail to be disposed of later. You can clip the bag to the outside of your pack. By minimizing your use of disposable items, you can help reduce the amount of waste that eventually ends up in landfills or pollutes natural areas.

Wear Sustainable Outdoor Gear

Choose outdoor gear made from sustainable materials to reduce your carbon footprint and help fight climate change. Many outdoor brands now offer eco-friendly options that are durable and environmentally friendly. Look for gear that is Fair Trade Certified or made by companies with strong environmental and social responsibility practices. Investing in high-quality, sustainable gear can also save you money in the long run, as it tends to last longer.

Practice Sustainable Eating

Pack sustainable and locally sourced food for your hike. Choose organic, non-GMO, and locally grown produce as much as possible to reduce your carbon footprint. Avoid single-use packaging by buying in bulk and using reusable containers to purchase produce instead of those plastic bags in the produce section. Consider packing plant-based meals, which have a lower environmental impact compared to animal-based products, or at least reduce the amount of animal-based products you buy. Every little bit counts. By making mindful food choices, you can enjoy a delicious and eco-friendly meal on the trail.

Respect Wildlife

Respecting wildlife helps maintain the natural balance of the ecosystem. Observe animals from a distance and avoid feeding them – this includes gray jays. While they may steal your food, actively offering it to them is doing them a great disservice and negatively impacting our environment. Feeding wildlife can disrupt their natural foraging habits and make them dependent on human food as well as super annoying. Keep your food and trash securely stored to prevent animals from accessing it. Be mindful of your surroundings and avoid disturbing nesting sites or habitats (stay on the trails).

Minimize Campfire Impact

If you plan to camp overnight, minimize your campfire impact by using a camp or backpacking stove for cooking and

a lantern for light. Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires. Keep fires small and burn only material that has already fallen to the ground. Never cut live trees or plants, and never leave a campfire unattended. Make sure it is completely extinguished before leaving. By minimizing your campfire impact, you can help prevent wildfires and protect natural habitat.

We can all enjoy the beautiful fall foliage here in New Hampshire responsibly by adopting and maintaining these simple and logical hiking practices. Doing your part as an individual hiker makes a difference. The example you set influences others in your hiking groups or people you see along the way to also act responsibly. Educating others when necessary is a duty with a beautiful reward. With a small amount of effort, you can help preserve the natural beauty of our state and surrounding New England for future generations. Wise words rang true when Lee Talbot said, “We have not inherited the earth from our parents, we have borrowed it from our children.” Let us all do our part to protect the environment while enjoying the stunning colors of fall this year.

Resources & Further Reading

1. Leave No Trace: <https://lnt.org/>
2. Leave No Trace this Summer as You Explore the Outdoors: The USGS is Studying How to Enjoy the Wilderness Without Impacting the Environment: <https://www.usgs.gov/news/featured-story/leave-no-trace-summer-you-explore-outdoors>
3. White Mountain Shuttle Schedule: <https://www.outdoors.org/shuttle/>

Diana Moore is an AMC New Hampshire Chapter hike & paddling leader, an ambassador for LGBT Outdoors New England Chapter, and the Chair of the AMC NH Conservation Education Committee. She has an MFA in creative writing and a PhD in educational technology. She is a perpetual student of nature — including plants, trees and local wildlife, and an avid environmentalist with a deep-seated desire to protect the natural world and all the beauty, secrets, and natural cures she holds.



Photo Credit: Diana Moore

"Sawed or Saved"

The Village That Created Franconia Notch State Park

BY HAM MEHLMAN

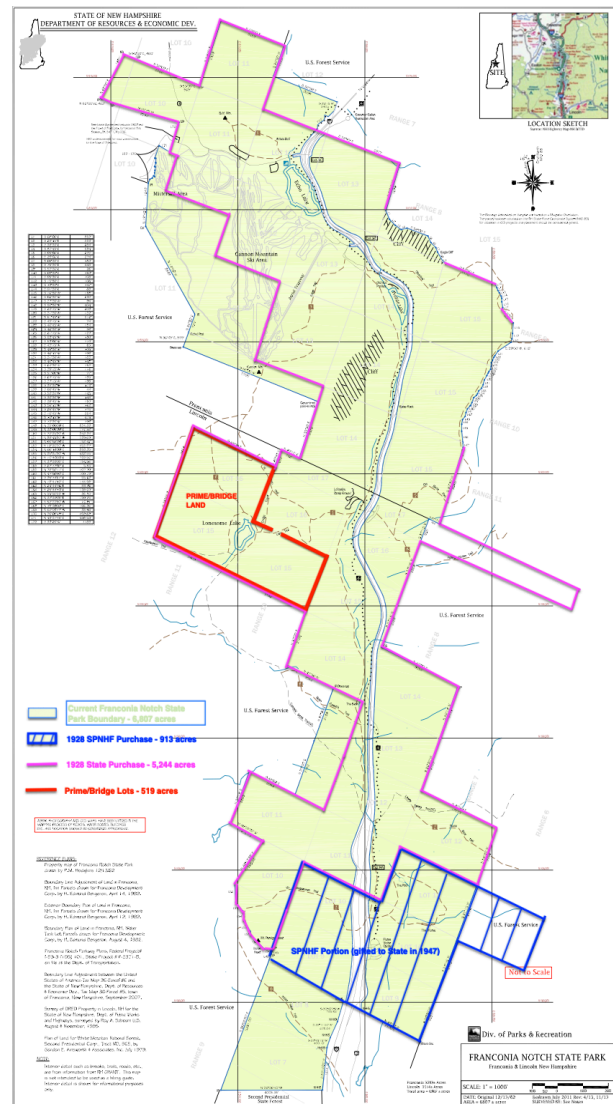
On August 3, 1923, an inferno, culminating with the explosion of 800 gallons of fuel, leveled Profile House, a grand hotel located under the gaze of the "Old Man" between Profile Lake and Echo Lakes at the top of the Notch. The fire burned for only four hours, but set in motion a remarkable five-year campaign to preserve under public ownership one of the most sublime and featured landscapes in the Northeast, Franconia Notch.

Profile House was a product of the gilded age and the Notch was something akin to Newport, RI, for the wealthy, outdoors set of the day. In its final incarnation, Profile House could accommodate 600 guests, boasted a dining room for 400, and could board 350 horses. It built a 9.5 mile private rail line from "Bethlehem Junction" to bring guests to the grounds. The Profile House also maintained a farm with its own dairy cows, a greenhouse, a power plant, a steam launch and the most modern conveniences including indoor plumbing and electricity. It was pretty much a self-contained playground of the grandest order.

But its main asset was the Notch itself: Profile House owned Franconia Notch. Over the years since opening in 1853, Profile House's principal owners, Richard Taft, until his death in 1881, and Charles Greenleaf, until selling to Frank H. Abbot and Son in 1922, accumulated 6,157 acres stretching seven miles along both sides of the Daniel Webster Highway from the town of Lincoln north to the far side of the current Mittersill property. The towering Eagle Cliffs of Mt. Lafayette and the severe granite face of Cannon framed a sublime vista harboring popular natural curiosities including Flume gorge, the Pool, the Basin, three glacial lakes, huge glacial erratics and miles of hiking trails, all under the "severe expression" of the "Old Man." In preserving the Notch in its natural state, Taft and Greenleaf were early pioneers in profiting from their version of eco-tourism in a period when most saw economic value only in exploiting Nature for resources, principally timber in this area of NH. Travel brochures dubbed the Notch "The little Yosemite." By the 1920's, as the Notch opened its access to the public, more than 100,000 people a year were paying admission just to explore the Flume.

The fire was a financial disaster for the Abbots. They had borrowed to purchase Profile House just a year earlier. They shared in the vision of preserving the Notch and were amenable to creating a state park with their land holdings - but for a price. And timber interests made ready buyers or lessors for the mature stands of beach, birch, chestnut and white pine.

In 1925, the NH State Legislature unanimously approved "An act to preserve for the acquisition by the state of the Franconia Notch, so called, lying in the towns of Franconia and Lincoln, as a forest reservation and state park." The act provided for "the governor with the advice of council ... to acquire on behalf of the state by purchase, if in their judgment they can be purchased at a fair valuation, such lands lying in Franconia and Lincoln, including all or part of the properties



Composite overlaying Prime's land, the Profile House land purchased for the park in 1928, the SPNH parcel and current park boundaries. Credit for composite: Ham Mehlman

of the Profile and Flume Hotels Company and the wood and timber standing thereon and constituting a part of the Franconia Notch and Flume properties, so called, as the governor and council, aided by the advice of the Forestry Commission, may deem necessary for the preservation of the forests and scenery, and to accept deeds thereof in the name of the state." The legislature allocated \$200,000 for the purchase.

But they needed \$400,000.

By 1923 there were many forces allied in the goal of conserving natural spaces and they quickly rallied, spearheaded by The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests led by Phillip Ayres. The Society for the Protection of New

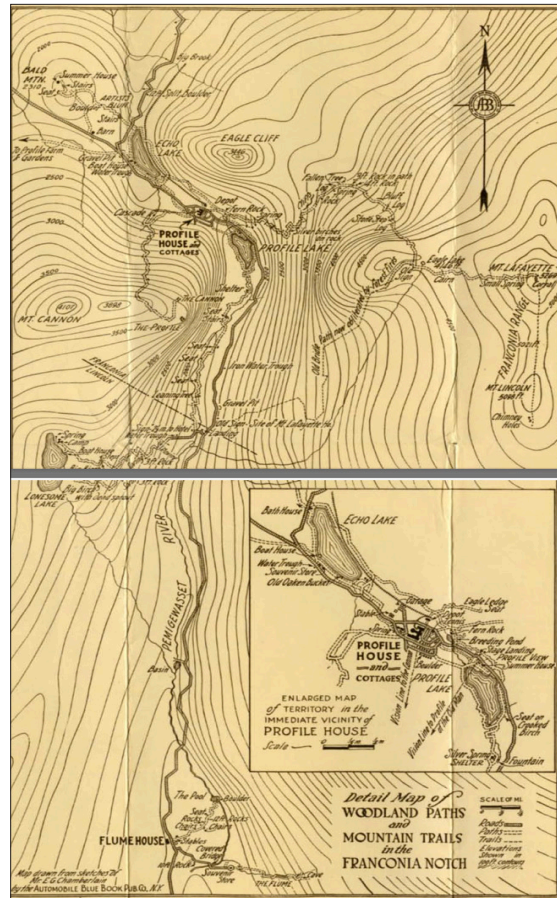
Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) was formed in Concord, NH in February 1901 “...to preserve the forests of New Hampshire, to protect its scenery, to encourage the building of good roads, and to cooperate in other measures of public improvement in the State.” They had been instrumental in securing passage of the Weeks Act in 1911 providing for the federal acquisition of “forest lands on the headwaters of navigable streams.” The Weeks Act is the enabling legislation for the entire National Forest network and enabled the establishment of the White Mountain National Forest. SPNHF also led efforts for the state to acquire properties such as Crawford Notch in 2013 and land around Mt. Sunapee in 2011. Among its early leaders was Allen Chamberlain, journalist and a future president of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC).

On September 11, 1924, “the SPNHF’s Executive Committee took up the cause and set a meeting with Karl Abbott eventually agreeing to purchase all the Abbott property for \$400,000. SPNHF convinced Governor Winant, after some haranguing, to support legislation for \$200,000 on the condition that SPNHF would raise the other \$200,000. This was a significant commitment, the equivalent of approximately \$3.5 million in today’s dollars.

In 1926, Boston financier James J. Storrow and a founding member of SPNHF, pledged \$100,000 significantly brightening the prospects. The sources for the remaining \$100,000 are a remarkable tribute to leadership and collective effort. They faced a March 1928 deadline to complete the fundraising, later extended to June 1, 1928. Edward Tuck, benefactor of Dartmouth, sent a check for \$10,000. The Appalachian Mountain club contributed \$7,000.

But it would fall to the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs (NHFWC) to raise the bulk of the remaining funds. NHFWC had a particular long-standing interest in conservation. Ellen McRoberts Mason was a founding member of SPNHF back in 1901 and now chaired the Forestry Committee for NHFWC. Through remarkable organization and dedication, NHFWC would ultimately raise about \$70,000 with \$7,000 from other states. Support was broad-based, ultimately receiving donations from more than 15,000 contributors. The club set goals for its 12,000 members in 151 New Hampshire towns. With SPNHF they launched a campaign to “sell” trees for \$1.00 in return for a “certificate of Purchase.” “The Notch would be saved tree by tree.”

On June 15, 1928, the SPNHF reported that “On June seventh arrangements were concluded for the acquisition of the entire Franconia Notch property, including the Old Man of the Mountain, Echo and Profile Lakes, the Flume, and about six thousand acres of land in Franconia and Lincoln. This was only possible through the prompt and generous response of the fifteen thousand contributors to our fund.... The appreciation and thanks of the Society are due to those public-spirited citizens whose contributions have made it possible to bring this marvelous property into public ownership and save it for all time from destructive lumbering and exploitation for profit. In particular the State Federation of Women’s Clubs and other organizations which have co-operated in this project with the Society are entitled to the gratitude of the State and forest lov-



Map of Franconia Notch drawn in 1870’s

ers everywhere for their effective leadership in the campaign which has been so successfully concluded.”

Today, Franconia Notch State Park is 6,807 acres. Per agreement, in 1947 the SPNHF turned over the 913 acres it managed, to be included in the park. Over time, the state added terrain particularly west of the Basin, at the southern end in Lincoln and to the western portions of the Cannon and Mittersill ski areas. It also transferred several parcels on the east side to US Forest Service jurisdiction.

The following articles might be helpful if you are interested in learning more about the effort to establish Franconia Notch State Park:

1. “The Preservation of Franconia Notch: The Old Man’s Legacy,” Kimberly Jarvis. Historical New Hampshire, Fall/Winter 2003 vol 58, no’s 3 & 4.
2. Franconia Notch: “Sawed or Saved?” Howard Mansfield, Forest Notes, Autumn 1998
3. “The New Hampshire Women Who Launched a Conservation Movement,” Emily Newcombe, *Governing*, March 28, 2022.

Ham Mehlman is Editor and Chief of Mountain Passages and an AMC-NH member. He skis, hikes and bikes New Hampshire’s backcountry, trails and roads when time allows.

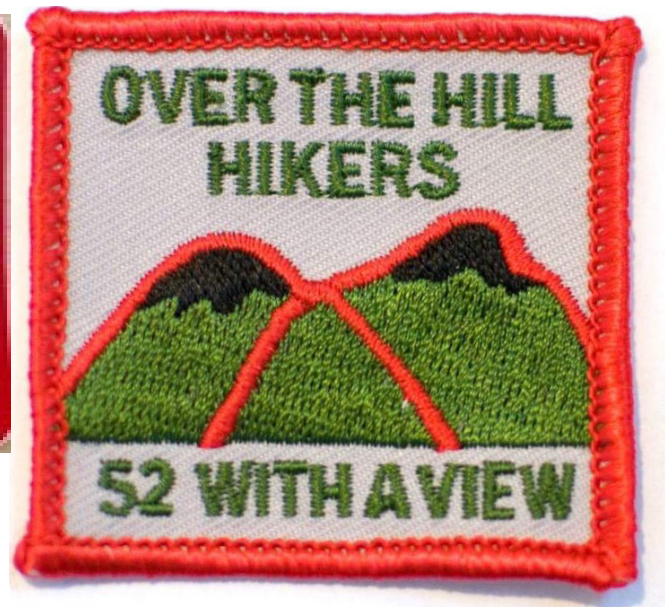
Origin and Importance of Lists in “Tramping” and Mountaineering

Checking off lists of mountains, organized according to some theme, seems to motivate hikers/climbers. Completing a recognized list gives a sense of belonging to a club, a select, sometimes elite, group. Globally, for examples, people refer to the fourteen 8,000 meter peaks and the highest peaks of the seven continents - the “Seven Summits Club.” As usual in New England, the AMC initiated the concept of a list as a goal, most notably with a list of 4,000 ft peaks in the White Mountains. The AMC 4,000 Footer Club maintains two lists: “The New England Four Thousand Footers,” - probably the most recognized - and “The New England Hundred Highest.” Since 1990 a group called Over The Hill Hikers has maintained another popular list called “52 with a view,” a list of 52 New Hampshire peaks below 4,000 feet with a view.

This issue of *Mountain Passages* reprints a history of the AMC 4,000 footer list compiled by AMC staff and posted on the AMC Outdoors.org website. An excerpt from AMC member Keith Gentili’s recent book about his experience completing the 4,000 footer list follows.



Among the mountains apparently the ultimate acknowledgement of your accomplishment is a patch...



A History of the New Hampshire 4,000-Footers List

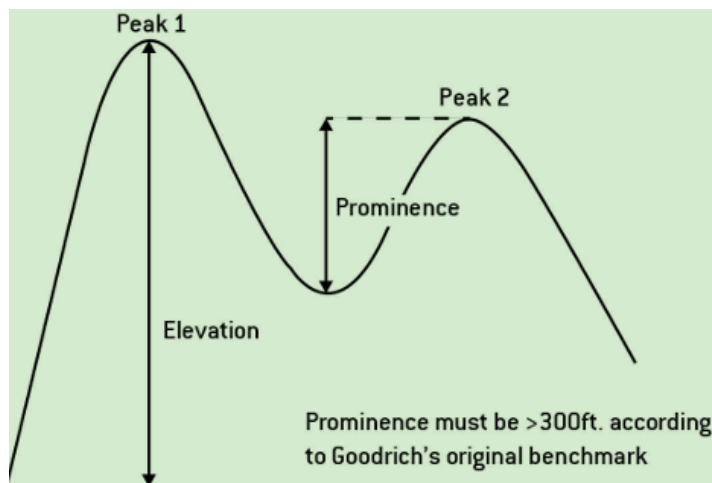
BY: AMC STAFF



Tuckerman's Ravine

Peakbagging is the concept in which hikers and climbers attempt to reach a specific set of summits as defined by a list or a set of criteria. Some peakbaggers, known as “highpointers,” try to reach the highest point in every state, country, continent, or national park, while other peakbaggers attempt to climb all summits over a certain elevation threshold in an area. Peakbagging has been popularized around the world – some of the most notable lists include the 14,000-foot peaks of Colorado, the 8,000-meter peaks of the world, and the 4,000-foot peaks of New Hampshire.

The New Hampshire 4,000-footer list was created as a way for hikers to explore new areas of the White Mountains – a goal that thousands of people have completed throughout the course of their lifetimes. The original list was made in 1931 by Nathaniel L. Goodrich, a librarian at Dartmouth College, a mountaineering enthusiast, and a renowned AMC trailman. In the December 1931 issue of *Appalachia*, Goodrich proposed a list of 36 White Mountain 4,000-footers that he had climbed. The criteria that he used for putting together his list was that each peak must achieve a 300-foot topographic prominence, though Goodrich admitted that this 300-foot benchmark was arbitrary. In other words, each peak must rise 300 feet above any ridge connecting it with a higher 4,000-foot neighbor. A peak could be over 4,000 feet in elevation, but if the prominence was not at least 300 feet, the peak did not officially count.



In 1934, AMC member Francis B. “Mully” Parsons became the first person to finish Goodrich’s original list of 36 peaks – even climbing Hancock and Owl’s Head – which were rather inaccessible at the time and required a great deal of bushwhacking. Dana C. Backus, a member of the AMC trail crew who completed Goodrich’s 36 peaks in 1953, described the ascent up Owl’s Head: “My clothing was ripped to ribbons. Scarcely enough was left of my shirt to flag a wheelbarrow, but I had at last reached the top of Owl’s Head.”



Hikers on Mt. Isolation in 1934

Throughout the mid 20th century, several people attempted to climb Goodrich's 36 peaks, and many tried to expand or alter his original list. Goodrich himself expanded the list to 51 peaks, though some of these were selected not because they met the 300-foot prominence rule, but because they met the elevation criteria and were dignified by names (as opposed to several unnamed mountains at the time). In 1956, AMC member Roderick Gould also added Mount Willey and Mount Bond to the list, claiming that they had met the 300-foot criteria.

Edwin Scotcher proposed the creation of the Four Thousand Footer Club (FTFC) at an AMC General Outings Committee meeting in 1957. The new group would help organize and finalize this list of 4,000-footer peaks as well as introduce climbers to new areas of the White Mountains. Members of the FTFC sent a letter to the AMC Council requesting approval for this idea and included a design for a shoulder patch created by artist, Mark Fowler. The AMC Council approved the idea under the stipulation that the list of peaks be modified using benchmarks like prominence, rather than selecting mountains merely on the basis of having a name.

As a result, members of the FTFC met at Parsons' home to create a list that utilized more scientific conditions. After analyzing the 1955 AMC White Mountain Guide and the latest U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps, the group decided to use a 200-foot prominence rule. That is, each peak must rise 200 feet above any ridge connecting it with a higher 4,000-foot neighbor. The FTFC ended up with a list of 46 peaks that were approved by the AMC Council – coincidentally, the same number of 4,000-footers as the Adirondacks.

On May 26 of 1957, Robert Gould became the first person to finish the new list of peaks. The next to finish, on September 14, were Miriam Underhill and Robert L. M. Underhill, two of the most prominent Northeastern mountaineers of the time. In 1958, the official list of 4,000-footers was published in *Appalachia*, along with climbing directions for the then eight trailless peaks on the list. Following the official publication of the list, a wave of enthusiasm for peak bagging swept the Northeast, with a *Boston Globe* headline in 1958 reading: "AMC 4000-Footer Club Spurs Climbers."

In 1967, following the publication of the South Twin quadrangle by the U.S. Geological Survey, Galehead Mountain was added to the 4,000-footers list. In 1980, Bondcliff was added, rounding out the list at the 48 peaks known today. However, there is some speculation over whether all 48 of these actually meet the criteria. According to AMC Cartographer, Larry Garland, Mount Tecumseh just narrowly misses the margin at 3,995 feet.

Today, the 4,000-footer list continues to inspire hikers to explore various parts of the White Mountains. The AMC Four Thousand Footer Club is still going strong, with members advocating and working for the preservation and wise use of the land.



Hikers on Crawford Path in 1948

Editor's note: A slightly more detailed history by Mike Dickerman and Steve Smith excerpted from their book *The 4000-Footers of the White Mountains* can also be found on the AMC Four Thousand Footer Club website: www.amc4000footer.org

Notes From Scaling New Hampshire's 4,000 Footers: Peak Fall Hiking in Crawford Notch

BY: KEITH GENTILI



Crawford Notch North - Photo Credit: Ketih Gentili

The following is an excerpt from Chapter 19 of “White Mountains State.” Published by TMC Books in Conway, NH, the book details a four-year journey summiting New Hampshire’s 48 highest peaks and uses a college analogy to illustrate the education of a Granite State hiker. Thus, “White Mountains State,” which was recognized at the New Hampshire Literary Awards in 2023, includes frequent references to curriculum, maturation, and recreation.

Chapter 19 spotlights a September 26 trek in Crawford Notch via the Webster Cliffs to the Southern Presidential summits of Mount Jackson (4,052 feet) and Mount Pierce (4,310 feet). Featuring peak foliage, this 10.5-mile thru-hike began on the Webster Cliff Trail, stopped at the Mizpah Spring Hut, and concluded at the AMC Highland Center.

Just as I did during both my “freshman” year (The Kinsmans) and “sophomore” year (The Hancocks), I put a birthday hike on the calendar. I had to as I was building the completion of my entire NH 48 journey around finishing by my 48th birthday—September 27, 2015—that was now a year away. It also was a nice time to evaluate my progress each summer, kind of an annual report card as the hiking season was winding down. I targeted the Southern Presidential peaks of Mount Jackson and Mount Pierce.

Individually, these two mountains can be among the easiest 4,000 footers to climb for hikers taking them on as straight out-and-back treks. The summit of Jackson is just 2.6 miles from the Crawford Notch Depot, with a very moderate elevation gain of

2,152 feet. On November 19, 2019, I took my daughter Julia, then 18 years old and wearing Microspikes, to the summit of Jackson for her first 4,000-footer.

The direct route to Pierce features what is considered the oldest continuously maintained hiking path in America, the Crawford Path, as it dates back to 1819. This trail also has a very moderate grade, and the summit of Pierce is just 3.1 miles from Route 302 in Crawford Notch.

However, I wasn’t interested in those routes. Just as I mapped out the Willey-Field-Tom hike with a start at the Crawford Notch floor and a finish up top, this was my goal here. I had read a lot about the Webster Cliffs and the aptly named Webster Cliff Trail. It was a longer, more-extreme adventure featuring additional scenic overlooks as it brings hikers along the edge of the cliffs for a couple of miles. This became the plan and, it being a Friday, I had just one taker when the invitations went out.

“This was just two weeks after the Wildcats-Carters hike. I knew coming out of that hike that I had always wanted to hike the 48. I had talked about it, but it seemed like this unachievable thing,” said Jason Unger. “But the idea of getting these two peaks in, after getting the Wildcats, Carters, and Moriah would put me at eight of 48 and it was like ‘Game On.’ The drive didn’t seem as long anymore, and everything was coming into focus. That was a big part of it for me.”

I picked up Unger in New Boston and we made the traditional stops in Goffstown to get supplies including gas, food, and drink. The drive was smooth, and we were in Crawford Notch two hours later ready to get on trail. We parked at the bottom of



Jason Unger (left) and Keith Gentili (right) - Photo courtesy of Keith Gentili

Crawford Notch, elevation 1,275 feet, about a mile south of the Willey House site, which served as the trailhead to the Willey-Field-Tom hike (Chapter 12).

“It was a beautiful fall day. Just a bluebird day,” said Unger. “We parked in the area off Route 302 directly across the street from the Webster Cliff Trail.”

As we geared up and stretched out next to the car, we got a visit from a hiker coming off the trail. He was middle aged, had an accent, and was chatty. This section has the Appalachian Trail (AT) running through it and, during this time of year, September in the White Mountains, it’s common for AT thru-hikers to descend upon New Hampshire. After a nice discussion about trail conditions, the state of New Hampshire hiking, and each of our plans for the day, we parted ways.

“We walked across the street, got right on trail, crossed the Saco River, and began climbing the Webster Cliffs,” said Unger. “It’s a cool trail. A lot of exposed rock and some scrambling. It was a lot different than we had done two weeks earlier along the Wildcats and Carters. I packed a lot smarter. It was a day hike, so I was traveling much lighter. I definitely learned something coming out of that first hike.”

The 4000-Footers of the White Mountains says, “This is the longest and hardest but most scenic approach to Mount Jackson, including a traverse of the spectacular Webster Cliffs and summit of Mt. Webster, with numerous (sic) views over Crawford Notch.”

The footbridge over the Saco River was built in 2007 and provided us with a nice view upstream. The fall colors were dominant, and we were both excited about the day. Then, we began climbing. The Webster Cliff Trail ascends quickly. At 1.1 miles, we were at 2,075 feet. We continued to climb, thanks in part to the trail’s switchbacks, for another .7 miles, where we got our first big view down into Crawford Notch. This was 1.8 miles in and at 3,205 feet.

“We got up to there and all the leaves were popping,” said Unger. “We saw the leaf-peeping train cross the trestle and I got a picture of it. Just a prime fall day.”

For the next 1.6 miles, the Webster Cliff Trail delivered. We went in and out of the forest, along the cliffs, got great views, and just frolicked our way to the summit of Webster (3,910 feet). During this stretch, I noticed Unger taking a lot of pictures as well as setting a very nice pace. I knew it was going to be a full day on trail, and our two targeted peaks were still miles away.

And while not a 4,000-footer, Webster has earned its way on the 52 With a View list.

“Looking down on the Mount Washington Hotel and the entire valley was cool,” said Unger. “It was great to be up there and to see all that.”

From the summit of Webster, we had 1.3 miles along the Webster Cliff Trail over to Jackson. It was a nice stretch, and we were in a great mood as we neared our first 4,000-foot summit. Although we had celebrated atop Webster for a little time, it was on the Jackson summit (4,052 feet) that we would really fuel up.



Webster Cliff Trail - Photo courtesy of Keith Gentili

“We had lunch and a beer on Jackson,” said Unger. “And took in that view of the Presidential Range and Washington.”

It would be 2.6 miles before we reached Pierce and our day’s final summit. However, in between our two peaks, sits the AMC’s Mizpah Spring Hut. This would mark my third straight hike featuring a hut (Chapter 17, Madison Hut; Chapter 18, Carter Notch Hut). Combined with the Greenleaf Hut (Chapter 1), Lonesome Lake Hut (Chapter 3), and Zealand Falls Hut (Chapter 15), this visit would mean my NH 48 travels got me to six of the eight AMC White Mountains high huts so far.

“We stopped at the Mizpah Hut,” said Unger. “We got a brownie there, maybe some lemonade, and talked to the caretaker.”

The Mizpah Hut, elevation 3,800 feet, has a bit of a vacationland feel to it. Instead of big mountain views to salivate over like some of its peers, there’s a small green lawn for sitting. It’s sort of a break from the mountains, designed for relaxing. We did just that before getting back on the trail for our final .9 miles to Pierce.

Unger continued to take photos throughout our adventure, and he continued to set a nice pace. I felt comfortable with him taking the lead, as we were now more than seven miles into our hike. We reached the summit of Pierce (4,310 feet) cleanly and agreed it would be our final break of the day. We sat there for a bit, staring off at the majestic summit of Mount Washington. Assuming we would get down fine, Unger was now at 8/48 and I just hit 38/48.

Then, we banged out our 3.1-mile descent along the Crawford Path. Just like the day’s first 7.4 miles, this section went smooth. As we reached the end of our hike, we saw the monument on a rock honoring the Crawford Path National Recreation Trail as the “The oldest continuously used mountain trail in America.” Unger took a photo, then we hopped out onto Route

302 and crossed the street. We found a patch of grass to sit on at the AMC Highland Center.

“When we got back down, you had to hitchhike back to your car,” said Unger.

It’s true. That was my plan. I told Unger, I would hitch a ride to my car, as it was only four miles south along Route 302. I hitched a bit (possibly a bit too much) during my high school and college years, times when I was carless, or my vehicle was broken down. I always thought of it as an adventure, but it did come with its risks.

In the fall of 1985, I hitched from Fitchburg State to the University of Massachusetts for a weekend that included a Fools concert in the Orchard Hill Bowl. I got a ride all the way from Route 2 in Leominster from a dude on his way to UMass as well. It was a great night that ended the same way the following morning started, with Kate Bush’s “Running Up That Hill” playing on a linear tracking turntable. We fell asleep with it on repeat, and it just kept playing. Some 36 years later, my daughter Sarah is hooked on the television show *Stranger Things* and Bush’s “Running Up That Hill” is a cultural phenomenon.

I once hitched home after a closing shift at Lechmere. It was sort of a Best Buy of its day, a superstore of electronics, home goods, and sporting goods. It was during the summer before my senior year in high school. My home was about 11 miles away in Holliston, but the direct route went through some bad sections of Framingham (Mass.). I got picked up along Route 126 near the center of town and instantly got a bad vibe from the driver. He took me all the way into my neighborhood before he started asking me questions that I was not going to answer. As we went into a tight corner, the car slowed, and I jumped out. After a small tumble, I ran straight into the woods as I knew I’d find my own way home.

On this day, I knew folks departing the Highland Center were heading either north or south. I just needed to find some hikers heading my way.

“You got a ride in the back of a pickup truck from a couple who just finished their hike,” said Unger. “They were in the parking lot and were headed in that direction. You just jumped in the back and 20 minutes later returned with your car.”

We then began our return drive to New Boston with one more stop. I was getting pretty good at post-hike meals. The Woodstock Inn always delivered. Between brewing its own beers including a 4,000-Footer IPA, and a monster menu including Death By Sandwich and Death By Burger, we always left there satisfied. Black Mountain Burger in Lincoln was another spot that provided just what we were looking for after hikes—a great burger and IPA.

I had also heard great things about Biederman’s Deli in Plymouth. Word had it they made a great sandwich and poured killer craft beer. We stopped at Biederman’s and drank Maine Beer Company’s The Other One with our sandwiches.

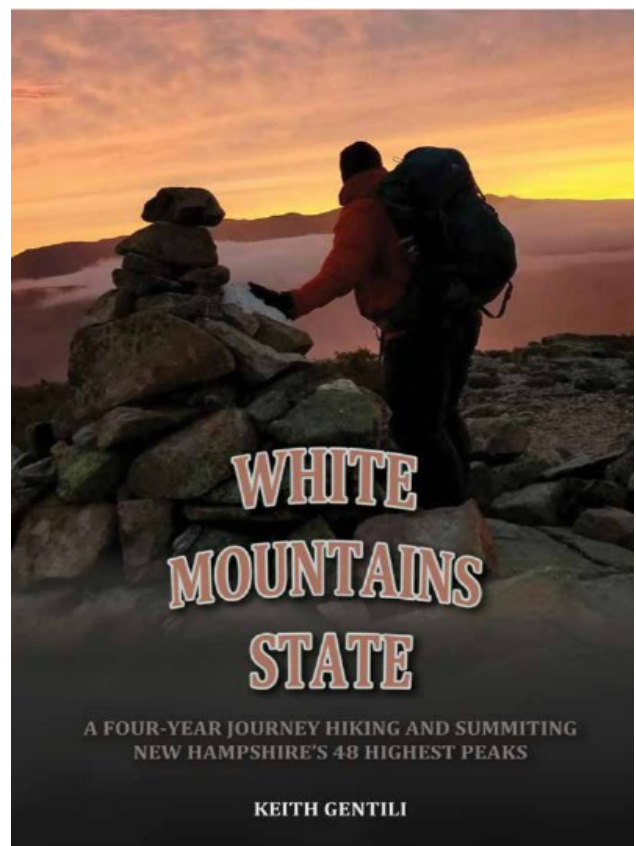
“That hike was notable for me. It was the springboard for me to get to the 48. After that, my run of hikes started,” said Unger. “The desire had always been there, and it became real after that. I had heard about the 48 for a long time just from talking to people at work or whatever. For me, well before we ever did the Wildcats-Carters hike, it was something I was interested in. But it just seemed so far away, and I never knew when I was going to get the time. All these different hurdles. By going

up there and doing it, it made it all feel within reach.”

Unger finished his NH 48 the following fall, just 13 months after the Wildcats hike when he and Ron Reimer completed an early October Pemi Loop—a 30-plus mile loop that includes at least eight 4,000-footers. He would go on to complete the New England 67 a few years later. In the summer of 2022, he was close to finishing up his New England Hundred Highest. Unger also made a short movie of our Jackson-Pierce hike and posted it on YouTube. The first time I watched it, I was stunned. It was such a uniquely different contribution to my NH 48 journey than any of the Fitchburg State Hiking Club members had made.

“I’m not sure why I made it. Not sure what really spurred me,” Unger told me. “I was taking a lot of pictures, and I had the 48 bug at that point, which goes back to the whole decision we made at the Carter Notch Hut to go on and to get back out two weeks later on this hike. I stitched the pictures together that weekend. Then I put a soundtrack to it. It was just free music I found online to complement some of the pictures. It was the leaves, the train, a couple pictures of us, and some of the White Mountains-area signs. It was just over two minutes probably. It’s still out there.”

*Keith Gentili is the author of **White Mountains State** and is a two-time New England Press Association Columnist of the Year. He is also the Editor & Publisher of the award-winning New Boston Beacon, an AMC-NH member and a member of the AMC New England Hundred Highest Club (including the 4,000 footers). Gentili lives in New Boston, NH, with his family.*



Observe As You Hike: Forest Succession and "Old Growth"

BY: BOB MCLAUGHLIN



Graphic by Bob McLaughlin

I was hiking with friends in the Dix Mountain Wilderness area in New York's Adirondack Mountains when we were surprised to smell smoke and to hear the unusual sound of low flying planes and helicopters. When we reached the summit of Dix, we understood why. North of Dix we could see billowing smoke as an uncontained forest fire swept up the side of a mountain. Aircraft were dumping loads of water to try to control the fire but still it blazed on. Ultimately, the fire was brought under control and extinguished when the remnants of a hurricane swept through the mountains a week later effectively drenching the forest and extinguishing the fire.

The real point of this story became apparent a few years later when I was hiking in the fall in the forest north of Dix Mountain. The guidebook described the route as a trail through dense woodland that led to a cliff-face with a spectacular view, and that is how I remembered it from a previous hike. However, as I climbed, I discovered an open birch forest with spectacular golden light which was perfect joy except perhaps for the charred remains of the old forest beneath my feet.

It was the most dramatic example of forest succession that I can recall experiencing. However, I have seen other examples while hiking near logged forests, when I encountered large blow-downs, and while hiking on trails through old farmland returning to forest.

Forest Succession

This led to my interest in understanding the biology of forest succession. Essentially, the natural state of New England and New York is forest. After any event that destroys the existing forest, such as a fire, logging or a windstorm, the forest starts over. It is like healing a wound except that each step in the forest succession process introduces new beneficial elements that are lost as the process advances and other beneficial elements are added. Following a fire, the first stage in reestablishment of a forest is planting grasses and wildflowers which reintroduce organic ma-

Forest succession following a wild-fire in the White Mountains passes through distinct steps. First, following a fire or other event destroying a forest, the first pioneers are grasses, wild-flowers and other herbaceous plants. Second, bushes and sun loving plants follow. Third, First Stage trees such as paper birch, aspens and white pine dominate. Fourth, after another century, the mature forest establishes itself. Mature forests in the south of New Hampshire or on lower slopes are made up of beech, yellow birch and sugar maple, and in the north or on higher slopes, spruce, balsam and hemlock.

terial into soil that has burned. Once some vegetation is established, sun-loving bushes including raspberries and blackberries, wild grapes and staghorn sumac, establish themselves. When an area is logged or an old farm field is left to nature, the sun-loving bushes are the first step in forest succession. These plants further protect the soil from erosion and increase the volume of organics introduced to soil depleted by fire. They also provide habitat for many animals including rabbits, foxes and white-tailed deer and of course birds. Indeed, the habitat at the edge of these forest openings is the most densely occupied area in the forest.

Once the soil has recovered some organic material, and the soil has been stabilized by grasses and bushes, the fast-growing sun loving trees move in. In fire scarred areas, paper birch predominate because their seedlings prefer mineral soils. For the same reason, you may see paper birch stands on sandy and gravelly embankments at the base of cliffs. In other areas with somewhat richer organic soils, aspens and white pine may predominate. All of these first stage trees love light, grow fast and die off relatively quickly, in less than a hundred years. Essentially, these trees are engaged in a race to the light that white pine typically wins.

The first stage trees further enrich the soil by shedding their leaves year after year and create a cool shady environment at ground level. Ironically, the conditions they create leave them at a competitive disadvantage that ushers in the next stage of forest succession.

Trees that require more fertile soils and grow slowly and steadily in the shade next come to dominate the reestablishing forest. These trees vary across our region with beech-yellow birch-sugar maple in the south and spruce-balsam fir-hemlock in the north. Interestingly, you can climb through these different mature forests on mountain sides with the typical southern forests at the base of the mountains and the northern forests closer to the summit. In addition to the dominant trees, you will find paper birch, silver maple, eastern white cedar, white pine and even elms in this stage. This stage is frequently referred to as a

climax or mature forest. Some researchers divide this stage into two or more substages.

Once established, mature forests can continue without substantial species change until disturbed by fire or forest clearing. However, it is a mistake to think they are unchanging. In fact, forests like all living things are constantly changing even if they appear to be in a steady state. Any selective pressure can result in significant change. Climate change, introduced diseases, human activity and other factors may selectively cull one species and introduce significant change to a mature forest. For this reason, it seems better to refer to these forests as “mature forests” which suggests change is possible rather than “climax forests” which suggests an immutable state has been reached and change is ruled out.

Old Growth Forest

Another confusing term is “old growth” forests. These are mature forests which have not been disturbed for hundreds of years. Old Growth Forests are very rare but really not very different from other mature forests. The Forest Service has concluded that of the 4,691,524 acres of forest in New Hampshire less than 46,915 acres are considered Old Growth.

How do you identify Old Growth forests? First, when available, you can examine historical records of an area. Second, if the history is unavailable or ambiguous, look for trees that appear to be 150 years old or older. These trees have large trunk diameters but the only way to accurately determine their age is by boring into the trunk to age them by counting rings. Age-related damage to the core of the trees can prevent accurate dating. In addition, boring or cutting trees without a permit is not permitted in State parks or the National Forest. So, this is not an alternative for the casual observer. Third, examine the forest: large trees and lack of signs of human disturbance - snags and coarse woody debris and pit and mound topography on the forest floor - suggest old growth forest. Don't expect old growth forests to be filled exclusively with tall stately trees in a cathedral like setting. Rather, old growth forests are frequently chaotic with fallen tree trunks and dense undergrowth.

If you are interested in visiting an old growth forest, you will be in luck in the White Mountains. Probably, the most accessible old growth forest can be seen along the Franconia Notch bike path between the Basin and Lafayette Place. Another easily accessible example is the lower stretch of the Fallsway Trail near the Appalachia Trailhead in Randolph, NH. Finally, another accessible old growth forest is found on the north side of Greeley Pond which can be reached by trail from the Kancamagus Highway or in a longer but easier hike from Waterville Valley. The Greeley Pond Forest was saved from the railroad and axes of J.E. Henry by the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests only to be flattened by the hurricanes in 1938 and again in 1950. Nonetheless, since it has not been modified by the hand of man, it is considered an Old Growth Forest.

When you visit Old Growth Forests, please protect them. Stay on trails, do not gather souvenirs, and leave no trace. Old Growth is rare and precious. Do not love them to death. It is up to all of us to protect the remaining Old Growth Forests!

Learn More

There are many web-pages that discuss forest succession and old growth forests that you can find using your favorite search engine. If you are interested in reviewing a technical paper describing forest succession, I found Hibbs, David; Forty Years of Forest Succession in Central New England; 64-6 Ecology pp 1394-1401 (December 1983) (available at www.jstor.org/stable/1937493) particularly useful. This work is a scientific journal article describing observations in a research forest in central Massachusetts. Like most journal articles it gets “deep into the weeds” but provides useful discussion related to the general principles discussed in this article).

More easily accessible articles include:

- Succession: How a Forest Creates and Re-creates Itself by Joe Rankin at https://northernwoodlands.org/outside_story/article/succession-forest-creates-and-re-creates;
- An excellent two part series on the University of New Hampshire website also by Joe Rankin; Finding Old-Growth Forests in New Hampshire and Top Old-Growth Forests to Visit in New Hampshire. The first article in the series is available at <https://extension.unh.edu/blog/2021/04/top-old-growth-forests-visit-new-hampshire> and includes a link to the second article; and
- Old Growth Forest in Franconia Notch State Park, a publication of the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau available at <https://www.nhstateparks.org/getmedia/c258104f-603d-455f-8b47-6d021992363e/Old-Forest-in-Franconia-Notch-State-Park.aspx>

This discussion has focused on the characteristics of New England forest succession, but the same process occurs everywhere forests exist, only the species change. As you travel, you may find it interesting to identify the stages of forest succession you can observe. It is easier than you think.

Bob McLaughlin is a frequent contributor to Mountain Passages and is cochair of the New Hampshire Chapter's Communications Committee. Until recently Bob has been the Editor in Chief of Mountain Passages. Bob holds a Masters Degree in Biology from the State University of New York in Buffalo and is a retired environmental lawyer. Bob is a permanent resident in the White Mountains and is an avid hiker and naturalist.

People of the Whites: Laban Merrill Watson (1850-1936)

BY: FRANCES W. RICHARDSON



Laban Watson Oil Painting by Margaret Arnold

Laban Merrill Watson was the grandson of Stephen P. Watson, a Scotsman, who moved to Waterford, Maine with his family around 1826, and later purchased land and settled in Randolph, NH. Stephen drowned in 1830 when crossing the flooded Moose River. His son, Abel Nourse Watson (1818-1895) married Susan C. Holmes (1820-1862) of Jefferson, NH in 1837, and took over the property.

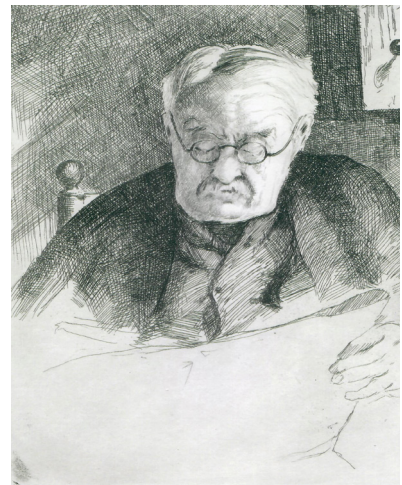
Laban Merrill Watson was born May 14, 1850, the son of Abel and Susan, and in 1876 became the proprietor with his father of the farmhouse subsequently renovating it into a three-room boarding house in 1876, and called it The Madison House. Abel and Laban expanded the Madison House in 1877 to fourteen rooms and renamed it The Ravine House. It faced the Presidential Range and King's Ravine on Mount Adams and offered a much needed overnight accommodation near the trails to Mount Madison.

Abel's wife, Susan, passed away in 1862 and he married Cordelia Wright Burbank (1826-1912) of Shelburne, NH. Cordelia had a daughter, Anna Burbank (1853-1928), from a former marriage whom Laban married in 1873.

Laban continued to add to the hotel to accommodate more guests. He moved the Starch Mill dry house down Durand Road in 1884 to add more rooms and he used the third floor for Town Meetings until 1888. Laban served as Town Selectman from 1874 to 1877 and was in the NH Legislature in 1878 returning again in 1923. He also served as a delegate to the constitutional convention of 1918.

Laban M. Watson joined the two year old AMC in 1878. That same year Laban and his father cut a trail, The Watson Path, from the Ravine House to Salmacis Fall, and continued it to Mount Madison in 1882. Laban supervised the building of

AMC's 1888 Madison Spring Hut, initially a stone hut on an acre of land donated to the AMC by the Brown Mills Company in Berlin, NH. The hut was one room with four bunks, a stove, and a table. Laban and Rosewell B. Lawrence, an AMC founding member and photographer, hiked Mount Madison and stayed in the hut in the winter of 1889. Laban managed a crew to create the Air Line Path, a straight, well-cleared trail. In 1924 Laban was commemorated for his path making at Memorial Bridge, built in 1923-24, that crossed Cold Brook in Randolph, NH. The bridge was built as a memorial to the early path makers. Because of an accident in 1906 when Laban fell off a load of pulpwood and broke his arm in three places between his elbow and hand, and because his children did not want the responsibility of ownership, Laban and Anna sold the Ravine House to William D. Bradstreet of Boston, MA in 1909. It was closed in 1960 and was razed in 1963. After the sale, Laban, Anna, and Cordelia moved to Cold Brook Lodge in Randolph, NH, and Laban continued farming, dealt with hay, and hauled wood to the Brown Mills Company in Berlin, NH.



*Laban Watson
Etching by
Leroy Woodard*

When Anna died in 1928, Laban lived with his daughter and husband, Edith Margaret (1878-1957) and John Henry (1868-1952) Boothman. They bought the Randolph Hill House, built in 1883, which they renamed The Mount Crescent House in 1894. It was torn down in 1971.

Although in his final years, Laban was feeble, he enjoyed playing cards and won a "Five Hundred" game two days before his death on October 1, 1936, at the age of 86. He is buried in the Durand Road Cemetery in Randolph, NH.

For additional information on the life and career of Laban Merrill Watson, you may want to read *Peaks and Paths*, by Judy Maddock Hudson, and Louis F. Cutter obituary for "Laban M. Watson", *Appalachia* 21 (1937) 416 et seq.. A big thank you to Yvonne Jenkins, Librarian, Randolph Public Library and Marcia Ann Gulesian for their assistance in documenting this article.

Frances Richardson has contributed many profiles to Mountain Passages of the people who made New Hampshire.

Becoming a Hike Leader -- Part III

Map & Compass

BY JOE D'AMORE

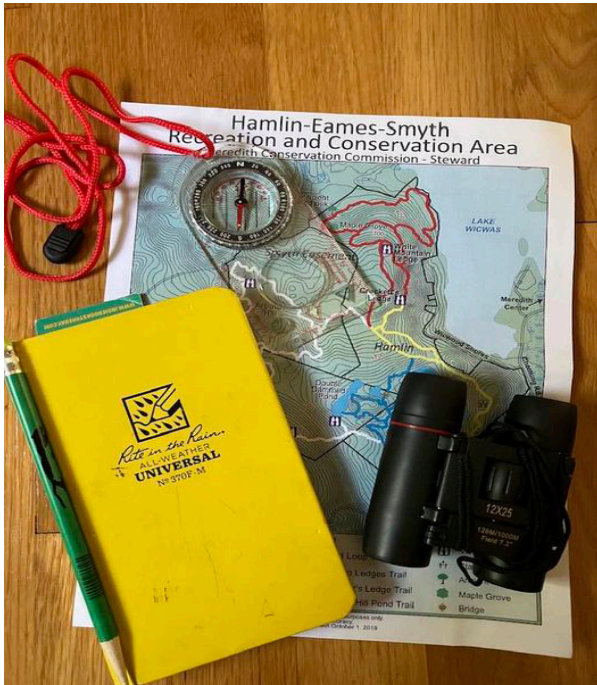


Photo Credit: Joe D'Amore

Per AMC's Mountain Skills Manual, "A map and compass make up two of the 10 essentials recommended for safe back-country travel, but they'll do little good if you don't know how to use them. Misuse could even turn a situation in which you're simply confused into one in which you're totally lost. The bottom line? Learn proper technique before your safety depends on it."

To gain these skills on my journey to becoming a Hike Leader I enlisted my Hike Mentor, Steve Zimmer, to tutor me on the ins and outs of navigating by compass and map. On June 21st Steve invited me to his home along with my hike colleague and terrific Hike Leader Andrew Papalegis for a "private", but official, map and compass lesson.

The course started at Steve's kitchen table and we spent one and one-half hours getting acquainted with the compass and learning about a lot of technical concepts such as "declination". (hint: Per the US Geological Survey the deviation of the compass from true north is an angle called "declination" or "magnetic declination").

We drew on maps using rulers and #2 graphite pencils. I reveled in the old-school aspects of this discipline. Steve is a highly experienced hiker and consummate leader. I've been on hikes with him and he always has a map and compass at the ready. He was passionate about imparting this concept to us.

After spending time at the kitchen table with him we plunged into the beautiful woodlands of the Hamlin-Eames-Smyth Recreation and Conservation Area. The sky was dark and rain poured in sheets. The bugs had the ability to bite through rain coats. Yet in this difficult condition, Andrew and I marveled as to how he could quite literally leave us in a dark forest

---off trail--- and challenge us to find our way out. We did. No rescue calls were made! Steve does not rely on electronic devices. Therein, is the most important lesson of all we learned: batteries fail, cell and internet connections can be spotty, but a good old map and compass with a pencil can navigate the path out of any wilderness.

As we were driving home, Andrew and I excitedly talked about our bushwacking experience. We felt a surge of appreciation for Steve and his tutelage and openly declared that we could never get lost in the woods again.

Let me conclude this report by suggesting you take a Map & Compass course a few times and practice it with commitment - on every hike - to be as skilled as Steve.

Leave your electronic devices at home in the process.

Joe D'Amore is chronicling his experiences and lessons on a quest to become a class 3, all season, hike leader.

Reflections Poetry

By Joe D'Amore

*On My Way To Chocorua
She sends her offspring with much fuss.
Gurgling rivulets, springs and brooks.
Cold streams to cross flow underfoot.
Put there by her to greet or stop us.*

*The watery source is finally found.
That mother's voice is oh, quite loud.
The plunging flows arrest the soul.
The quest to climb is not yet bound.*

*With bated breath, resolved to reach.
That rocky crown beyond the trees.
The limbs assaulted, senses blunted.
Roots, rocks and forest must all be breached.*

*Breathtaking views provide the prize.
Stark whispering pines and mountain etches.
Sun splashed and wind across our faces.*



*Encountering
Champney & Pitcher
Falls on the way to
Mt Chocorua by way
Champney Falls trail
from Kangamangus
Highway
Photo Credit:
Joe D'Amore*

Trip Report: Fall Weekend for Over 55 Group is a Big Thumbs Up!

BY STEVE ZIMMERMANN

☞ This past September, 50 Over 55 Group hikers convened in Evan's Notch at AMC's Cold River Camp for a weekend of hiking and fun camaraderie. Great food, wonderful people, beautiful hikes and amazing music on Saturday night. No wonder everyone's smiling in the photos!

☞ Consider joining us next fall. *The dates are already set, Friday, September 12th through Sunday, September 14th, 2025.* Registration will open next May 1st, so mark your calendar.



Photo Credits: Steve Zimmermann

2024/25 AMC NH Skiers Calendar

🔗 Date/locations are tentative! Please check with leader and online for more info including other leaders at: <https://activities.outdoors.org>

🔗 **Ski committee:** casycalver@gmail.com / jillian.willard@gmail.com / cpeter14@gmail.com.

EVENT KEY:	Trip	Clinic	Social Event	Trail Work
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Date	Event	Where		Activity	Style	Level	Contact Leader
11/10/2024	Cardigan trails workday	Alexandria	NH	Trail work	Trail Work	All	Ritchie
12/8/2024	Ski leader training day	Cardigan	NH	Clinic	Leaders only		Scott
12/21/2024	Target date for on the snow clinics	Loon	NH	Clinic	Leaders only		Ted
12/22/2024	Target date for on the snow clinics	Loon	NH	Clinic	Leaders only		Ted
1/1/2025	Sunapee Sunrise Spectacular	Sunapee	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	Adv/Int	Brian
1/8/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
1/15/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
1/18/2025	Womens Resort to Backcountry 101 at Magic	Londonderry	VT	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	Beg	Jaimee
1/22/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip		All	Nik
1/24 - 26 /2025	Winter School 1	Alexandria	NH	Clinic	Light BC, BC Downmountain	Beg to Adv	Scott +
1/29/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip		All	Nik
2/1/2025	Bretton Woods High Country Tree Clinic: tree sking practice and coaching	Bretton Woods	NH	Clinic/Trip	Light BC/BC downM	Int/Adv	Ted
2/1/2025	Brandon gap	Rochester	VT	Trip	BC Downmountain	Adv	Nik
2/2/2025	Womens Resort to Backcountry 102 at Cardigan	Alexandria	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	Beg	Jillian
2/5/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip		All	Nik
2/8/2025	Light BC at Amity Pond	Barnard	VT	Trip	Light BC	All	Erik
2/9/2025	Franconia Falls	Lincoln	NH	Trip	Light BC	All	Scott
2/12/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
2/15/2025	Light BC in Lyme, NH	Lyme	NH	Trip	Light BC	All	Darrell
2/16/2025	Light BC in Lyme, NH	Lyme	NH	Trip	Light BC	All	Darrell
2/16/2025	Bill Hill	Gorham	NH	Trip	Light BC	Beg/Int	Marty?
2/17/2025	Presidents Day Trip?						
2/19/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
2/22/2025	Maple Villa Glades GBA	Intervale	NH	Trip	BC downmountain	Int/Adv	Ted
2/22/2025	Pike Glades	Haverhill	NH	Trip	BC Downmountain	Adv	Nik
2/23/2025	Tucker Brook	cannon	NH	Trip	BC downmountain	Int/Adv	Ted
2/23/2025	Black & White Glade	Rumford	ME	Trip	BC downmountain	Adv	Chris
2/26/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip		All	Nik
2/28 - 3/2 2025	Winter School II	Alexandria	NH	Clinic	Light BC, BC Downmountain	Beg to Adv	Scott +
3/5/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
3/8/2025	Little Mount Washington	Grantham	NH	Trip	Light BC		All
3/8/2025	Bolton Valley- Cotton Brook	Bolton	VT	Trip	BC downmountain	Adv	Matt
3/8/2025	GBA Glades TBD- All ages	TBD (west?)	NH	Trip	BC downmountain	All	Sarah
3/8 to 3/16 2025	Gaspe	Quebec	QC		Deep Powder		Amber
3/12/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
3/15/2025	Womens Resort to Backcountry 3 at Pike Glades	Haverhill	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	Int/Adv	Jillian
3/15/2025	Killburn loop	Pisgah State Forest	NH	Trip	Light BC	Beg/Int	Darrell
3/19/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
3/22/2025	Greeley Ponds	Waterville Valley	NH	Trip	Light BC	All	Sean
3/22/2025	Bronson Hill- All ages	Sugar Hill	NH	Trip	Light BC	Beg	Sarah
3/26/2025	Whaleback Dawn Patrol	Enfield	NH	Trip	AT/Tele/Split	All	Nik
	GBA Wild Corn weekend?						
4/12/2025	Presies- Oakes Gulf	Presidentials	NH	Trip	BC downmountain	Adv	Chris
4/20/2025	J. R.'s Birthday Spectacular ;-)						

Where in the Whites?

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



Hill Conservation Area in Sugar Hill, NH, an Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) property. From left to right, Garfield, Lafayette and Lincoln are visible along the far ridge. The nearer ridge is the Kinsman ridge including Cannon, the “Cannon Balls”, North and South Kinsman. In the distance in the field stands the Gibbs cabin.

Four readers correctly identified both the location and the peaks:

Lynn Kenerson
Chris and Wendy Thayer
Amy McKeever

Loretta Boyne earns honorable mention for being the first to identify the location Garfield and the Franconia Ridge peaks but needs “Peak Finder” to help with the Kinsman Ridge mountains!

Identify the mountains in the photo above and where the photo was taken. Be as specific as possible! Take a guess and submit your answers to WitWamcnh@gmail.com. By the way, Wit and Wi tW are not names, they are the initials of the first three or four words in Where in the Whites?

We look forward to seeing your submissions.

In the Spring 2020 Edition of Mountain Passages, we introduced a 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 below. It is a view looking southeast from the Overlook Farm Loop trail at the Bronson



View looking southeast from Overlook Farm Loop trail at the Bronson Hill Conservation Area in Sugar Hill, NH. Photo by Ham Mehlmann



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Contact: Diana Moore at dianatmoorephd@gmail.com