FALL PROJECTS AT GRAY KNOB
By Pete Antos-Ketcham

October 2012 saw the completion of improvement projects at Gray Knob: a new high-efficiency woodstove for energy conservation, and an exterior vestibule to protect the entry.

A helicopter airlift was arranged to deliver the materials for both projects. Over the course of several weeks in September, fall caretakers Mike Jones and Becca Loeb alternated between splitting and stacking wood and pulling together trash, junk, and old materials from all four camps so it could be flown out when the new stove and vestibule arrived.

On airlift day in late September, Mike and Becca were joined by camps committee member Al Sochard, RMC carpenter John Tremblay, Becca’s boyfriend Antonio Perales, as well as several guests at Gray Knob. The stove and building materials arrived without incident despite some challenging weather, which included sleet and high winds.

Over the month of October, the caretakers and John Tremblay worked to prepare Gray Knob before winter arrived. More firewood was cut, split, and stacked in the woodshed. The new woodstove was installed and “broken” in, and John built the new vestibule. This addition to the camp will greatly conserve heat while also reducing moisture levels, giving hikers a place

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Randolph Mountain Club Newsletter

Winter 2012

“… sharing in the collective knowledge of its members …”

RMC ARCHIVE REPORT
By Al Hudson, RMC Archivist

Recent acquisitions and projects. In the summer of 2010, Ed and Claire Blatchford donated the first three volumes of the Gray Knob logbooks (1907-1943) to the RMC. These original logbooks were kept by the Hincks family and, on the death of Caroline Hincks in 1986, passed to the Blatchfords. Over the last two years your archivist has transcribed and edited the logbooks, and, adding some enhanced features, will publish the work under the Randolph Mountain Club Archive imprint. A hard copy will be donated to the Randolph Public Library in July 2013; on request, a CD digital version will be available.

In the summer of 2012, Harry Adams donated 15 old trail signs to the RMC Archive. One of these, a small 3”x9” sign, is an historical rarity, apparently one of the original signs put up by William Gray Nowell along Lowe’s Path in the late 1870s.

As of 2012, the RMC archive collection, which for some years had been housed in Gail Scott’s basement, has found a new home in Randolph’s old library building.

Photograph collection. The photo archive currently contains 1,539 photographs, held as digital files, from 46 donor collections. While we are happy to have the holdings currently on tap, we are always looking for more. Readers who have photos they

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Above: Gray Knob in the early twentieth century, unattributed watercolor, Hincks-Blatchford archive.
2012 has been a busy and productive year for the RMC officers and Directors, and as in the past several years we have been working hard to live within our financial means. And I am pleased to report that we have successfully done so. Our revenues and budget have been pretty much the same for the past 3-5 years, even though our expenses—mainly in the area of wages for our camps and trails crew—are inching up a bit each year.

That being said, we intend the hold the line and do the best job we possibly can with the revenue that we are able to generate, through the annual dues paid by our members’ gifts or grants received, and through fees charged at our camps. And the board continues to explore ways to increase our membership, which right now averages about 750 members year to year. In the near term I think we would like to see the membership grow to about one thousand, which would help spread the cost sharing of maintaining our trails and camps across a wider spectrum of those who utilize these important resources in our community and the mountains we enjoy. So with that thought in mind, I again ask you to invite friends, fellow hiking companions and other users of the trails and camps of the RMC to become members. I encourage you to give that first membership as a birthday, holiday or graduation present, so that as many folks as possible can become contributing members of the club.

Building our membership and revenue base is important because we continue to see significant funding challenges, especially focused on the maintenance of our trails as federal and state cost sharing grants disappear. For example, this year New Hampshire saw the Federal Recreational Trails Program funding designated for the state slashed 100%, due to a change in the funding calculation. This deleted $800,000 for trail improvement work throughout the state. Only through a significant lobbying effort by all in the recreation community were about half of these funds re-dedicated to the state in the year 2012. We are concerned however that future public funding could again be cut.

As I mentioned last year—and it still holds true today—the positive news is our trails are in very good shape from all of our past work, and our camps are also in very good condition. We hope to continue raising the funds necessary to keep the trails and camps in good order. Also for our trails, a very successful initiative organized by Michele Cormier has been the Saturday work parties. Attendance has been great, and a whole bunch of work has been accomplished. Thank all of you who have participated, and also a special thank you to Michele who has organized these Saturday hikes. (See article page 8.)

In the area of Search and Rescue in the Mountains, we continue to meet periodically with our partners in the effort, including NH Fish and Game, AMC, Mt Washington Observatory, the NH Outdoor Council and the volunteer search and rescue groups, and we hope to offer solutions to the legislative committee empowered to look into this matter, and report back to the full legislature and Senate at the end of the year.

Till then - John
Welcome New RMC Members!

Names and locations of new members in 2012.


New RMC Directors
By Sarah Gallop

At the 2012 Annual Meeting on August 11, members elected three new directors to three-year terms on the board. The members also elected directors Pete Antos-Ketcham and Randy Meiklejohn to second three-year terms, and re-elected John Scarinza as President. John acknowledged outgoing directors Keith Dempster (the new Randolph Foundation president) and Cristin Bailey (who continues her work with the US Forest Service) and thanked them for their service to the club.

Jeff Bean spent most of his youth with his family in Randolph hiking, running, and cross-country skiing, and recently purchased his own house in Randolph. He served on the RMC trail crew and as Gray Knob caretaker in the early 70’s, as well as winter caretaker on weekends. Since then he has completed NH’s four-thousand-footers in summer and winter, winter peak-bagged in the Adirondacks, and on visits to family in Korea hiked in national parks like Jirisan, Seoraksan, and Bukhansan. In 2006 he was able to summit Denali. Jeff lives in Connecticut where he works in healthcare. He is looking forward to serving the RMC in whatever way he can.

Lynn Farnham has been a yearround resident of Randolph since 1991. He recently retired from working as a physician at Androscoggin Valley Hospital. He has a long time interest in outdoor activities such as hiking, bicycling, skiing, and sea kayaking. The second person to complete the “RMC 100” challenge, he has completed the Appalachian Trail and the Long Trail, and this past spring, he walked the entire Camino de Santiago across northern Spain. He has been a volunteer with the Maine Appalachian Trail Club for decades where he is a trail corridor monitor in the Baldpate section.

Meg Norris grew up in New England, hailing from the flatlands of Connecticut. She first caught sight of Mount Washington from her uncle’s childhood home in Jefferson, NH on vacation as a young girl. Years later she returned to work at the AMC’s Lakes of the Clouds hut. She has been living in the Mount Washington Valley ever since, and commuting to work in the backcountry for the Appalachian and Randolph Mountain Club, until joining the staff at the Mount Washington Observatory this spring, at the Weather Discovery Center. Meg lives in Jackson, NH with her two favorite hiking partners, Helon and Buster. When not at work you can find her on ski and hiking trails around the Whites, in her garden attempting to grow a green thumb, or curled up with a good book.

RMC Annual Picnic Centennial in 2013
By Sarah Gallop and Barb Phinney

Save the date: The 100th RMC Annual Picnic will be held on Saturday, August 17, 2013. Watch the newsletter and website for picnic centennial news and events, and see also page 9 of this issue.

At the end of another year, as I think about the role of the trails committee, I smile with a satisfaction credited to a season of good work and good fun. The trails chair position is similar to that of an EMT or firefighter—long hours of quiet and solitude with periods of frenzy and panic. This year was no different. It all began in the fall of last year when Tropical Storm Irene hit, and we frantically went to work assessing the damage to our trails. Next came the call from the U.S. Forest Service asking if we could spend a $15,000 cost share grant in one season to make the repairs. I had 20 minutes to answer—and agreed.

Once the 2012 crew was on board, we set about flagging the work to be done during the season, but we couldn't get the necessary specialists from the Forest Service due to their shortage of staff and increased demands from last year's storm. That left us wringing our hands in anticipation, finding alternate but qualifying work to do and ultimately progressing onto the scheduled work just in time to finish it for the season.

In fall 2012, we had a small crew working on the relocation of the Mt. Crescent Trail and the Cook Path. These relocated sections will tie into the future trailhead at the end of Randolph Hill Road. Eventually, the Boothman Spring Cutoff trail from the Mt. Crescent House site will be closed, and access to the Spring will be from the north only. Also, once the new trailhead is complete, it will provide access to the Ice Gulch via the Cook Path, and to Mt. Crescent via the Mt. Crescent Trail. The small parking spot that currently serves as the trailhead will remain, at least in the short term, but the lowest section of the Carlton Notch Trail (below the Jimtown road) will be closed. When the relocation work is complete, we will post an updated map to the website to clarify the changes, which we expect to be a big improvement.

I frequently mention how smoothly the 2012 season went, and usually praise the Field Supervisor for being a major contributor to that success. The Field Supervisor role is critically important to the success of the trails program, as she/he manages the day to day operation of the crew, monitors and ensures the quality of the work, flags the work and schedules the crew, maintains our tool inventory, contains any personnel issues, keeps an eye on Stearns Lodge, gets the trash out, recyclables, hazmat and deals with me on a pretty regular basis. Without a Field Supervisor, it would be difficult to imagine that the RMC could maintain a functioning trail crew. In the past, the trails chair did it all, but gone are the days of trails chairs who live in Randolph and have the time and energy to work daily with the crew.

For this reason, as I near the end of my tenure as trails chair, I've been thinking about how to best preserve the trails program, keep our trails up to the enviable standards they are at now, maintain our critical and harmonious arrangement with the Forest Service and keep to a budget that is a fraction of what other trails maintaining organizations have. I've considered cutting the crew from eight to six, and extending the Field Supervisor season to take on more of the responsibility of hiring, grant writing, invoicing and the meetings with partners. That, however, would be untenable: with a smaller crew, we would have less retention, be less productive and have fewer returning crew to train the newcomers in the RMC way. Therefore, I think it's important to keep the crew size to eight but still somehow extend the Field Supervisor role and season. The trails chair wouldn't go away, but would be supported by the extended season of the Field Supervisor, who would not be a full time employee but would be available to help with camp staffing and maintenance, composting, preseason trails planning and hiring.

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Archive Report, cont’d from page 1

might be willing to share with the Club should contact me. I usually have a scanner at hand so that making digital copies is not a problem. Photos should be of fairly good quality (in focus, good resolution), and descriptive information is always a plus.

To contact archivist Al Hudson:
abhudson@anthro.umass.edu
winter phone: (413) 256-6950
summer phone: (603) 466-5509.

Images from donor collections:
1926 (Lowe)
1936 (Woodard-Richardson)
1949 (Harry Adams)
1956 (Hincks-Blatchford)
1964 (Christopher Goetze)
1970 (Davis Woodruff)
1985 (George Dunham)
1994 (Al Hudson)
2002 (Doug Mayer)
2010 (George Dunham)
Gray Knob Projects, continued from page 1

out of the weather to get the snow off of themselves before coming into the camp. The new woodstove is a Woodstock Soapstone, made in Lebanon NH. It utilizes a catalytic combustor to reduce both emissions and wood consumption. The soapstone material will act as a heat sink and help to smooth out the peaks and valleys in temperatures within the camp between fires.

The Camps Committee would like to recognize some of the folks who made this busy season a success, particularly this fall with all the special projects:

**Frank Jost** from the AMC Storehouse. He took care of receiving the new woodstove from the freight company and storing it at Pinkham until the airlift.

**Charles Muller** from the AMC. He worked with us so we could piggyback on AMC’s airlift to minimize our cost. He and his crew trucked the stove to Camp Dodge and rigged it for the airlift, and also took care of receiving our inload of trash from the camps.

**Carl Svenson**, the pilot from JBI Helicopters, who is a master at delivering loads to high elevations in mixed weather conditions.

**John Tremblay**, for taking care of ordering materials and building the vestibule. John put in plenty of time on the phone and over email planning the logistics for this project. He also coordinated with AMC and Al Sochard to ensure a smooth airlift. His continued devotion to the camps is inspiring.

**Al Sochard** from the Camps Committee. At the last minute, when on site coordination help was needed, Al hiked up to Gray Knob to oversee the airlift with John and the caretakers. He was very helpful in working out the final details and of course in photo-documenting all of the work.

**Deva Steketee**, our Field Supervisor. She did an outstanding job supporting the camps volunteers and the caretakers this field season and we are very pleased that she plans to return in 2013 for a second season.

**Our Trail Crew**, for their support of the camps program, whether hauling firewood or simply making the caretakers feel welcome and part of the team at Stearns Lodge.

**The anonymous financial donor** whose gift supported the projects at Gray Knob.

And last, the **RMC Board, membership, and the community of Randolph** whose support of the club and love of the White Mountains makes our work possible.
Summer / Fall Camps Report

By Pete Antos-Ketcham

After a spring of wild weather fluctuations from hot to cold and back again, the Northern Presidentials settled in for a refreshingly average summer. In the rainfall department this was a relief after the last few years of very wet summers. At the camps the summer caretakers arrived in early June after field season orientation with the Trail Crew. Will Tourtellot was at Gray Knob and Jack Markowski was at Crag Camp. Both had a great season welcoming guests and accomplishing much-needed tasks. Basic summer maintenance projects included oiling the floors of the cabins and the sill logs of the shelters. At Crag Camp, a gravity feed water system was established. Jack cleaned up several dead and down trees and did light brushing around Crag. At the log shelters, the caretakers worked to scrape around posts and sill logs of the Log Cabin to remove build up of organic material to help prevent rot of the sills.

The toilet systems received a fair amount of attention this summer, with the caretakers and Field Supervisor Deva Steketee composting nearly 650 gallons of sewage. Several improvements were also made to the composting system infrastructure including new drying racks and screens.

Continued on page 9
Volunteer Trail Work Days

By Michele Cormier

This summer, the second year of volunteer trips concentrated on Mt. Crescent. Over four Saturdays in July and August we brushed and cleared the Mt. Crescent Trail, both north and south loop trails, the Crescent Ridge to Carlton Notch, all of the Carlton Notch Trail, and—because we have such a great bunch of volunteers—we continued the work along the ridge to the Underhill Trail and another half mile down that trail to the National Forest Boundary. (See map this page.) Thanks to all the great volunteers, many of whom showed up multiple times to participate. A special thank you goes out to Brian Roberts and Barbara Cutter, who were substitute leaders one weekend. We also recognize the RMC Directors who took time out of their busy lives to join in. It is a perfect way of leading by example.

Map, above right, shows two years of volunteer effort: Trails brushed and cleared by volunteers in 2012 are indicated in bold; trails from 2011 are indicated with dashed line. Below: Volunteers on the Crescent Ridge Trail, July 28, 2012. S. Weber photo.

Participants included: George* and Renee Dunham, Jeff Bean*, Steve Weber*, Beth Krusi, Sandy Harris, Barbara Cutter*, Brian Roberts*, Andy Wiley*, Mary Adams, George Brown, Reed Henderson, Henry Meiklejohn, Randy Meiklejohn*, Bob Drescher*, Chris Campbell, Joan Shipman, and trail crew volunteers: Deva Steketee, Maggie Demleinski, Hart Minifie and Matty Zane. (*indicates: multiple participations)

It's not hard to imagine how much fun it is to get together with a group, go for a hike and work for a common good. We work in teams or partners, learn about each other, have lunch together and at the end of the day, know that we have done more than brush a few miles of trails. We have made a statement about how we feel about the RMC and the importance of the work the Club does. It's just a little way we can give back and say thanks to the Club.

2012 is a follow up to the successful volunteer work trip effort of 2011, when we scheduled eight volunteer work trips, concentrating on the “hill” trails. They were held every Wednesday morning beginning after the Fourth of July. The largest turnout was 13 people with 3 volunteer dogs and the smallest group was 3. Although there were many who showed up every week, we saw lots of new faces as well. As an incentive, each attendee got their name placed into a raffle drawing, which took place after the final work trip on August 24. Just to prove that the more times you enter, the more chances you have to win, George Dunham was our grand prize winner. He joined us on seven of the eight trips! Congratulations George! As a special prize, he was presented with a retail item of his choice.

The intent of the project was to train volunteers in basic trail maintenance and to

Trails Report, continued from page 4

In this extended role, the field supervisor would be a professional to support the volunteers and keep the RMC at the top of the heap in terms of productivity and value. For this, the RMC would need additional funding in order to continue to be productive on the trails. I think that the best way to fund this would be internally, through member and other donations and in the next few months, this plan will be refined, discussed and refined some more. The field supervisor job description will be re-worked and with luck and generosity we will get the trails program onto solid financial ground and move successfully to the next phase.

Please keep these changes in mind and think how important the camps and trails are to you now and how they have shaped your life and the life of your family members. Think how you can help to preserve the Club’s programs that mean so much to so many and in the meantime, take a walk on your favorite trail, join a group hike or give one of the RMC directors a call with your thoughts, suggestions or compliments.

Happy trails! - Mike Micucci
“What was the charade word that year?”

By the RMC Annual Picnic Centennial Committee

The Annual Picnic Centennial Committee has begun preparing for some special events in August 2013, and one early project underway—it may take some time—is to develop and publish a list of all of the words ever used in the charades. Perhaps you can help the RMC remember some of them!

You may ask: do we not already have a record of the words, for example in the methodically archived annual reports of the Social Events committee? Well—consider that the annual reports have always been submitted at the Annual Meeting, traditionally before the Picnic, and that the words are kept secret until the day of the Picnic. So the records are somewhat incomplete, but perhaps Randolphians’ memories are better.

Fortunately, the Hudson family has maintained a list that gets us off to a very good start, showing most of the words used since about 1972. You can find it at the RMC website, at www.randolphmountainclub.org/charades. No need, then, to speck-ewe-late about the 1982 Hill word; you can look it up!

How you can help: Look at the list on the website, and send any missing words that you can remember. For each, indicate what year (or your best guess), whether Valley, Midlands, Hill or Mountain, and any other information such as how the syllables were performed, the charade leader or rounds leader that year; and attach a photograph from that year if you have one. On the web page is a link to the e-mail address below. Before you send words, please do review the list first; it will be updated periodically as contributions come in.

Send e-mail to: charades@randolphmountainclub.org; or mail to postal address on back cover of newsletter.

If you would like to help with the Picnic Centennial, contact anyone on the committee: Sarah Gallop, Barb Phinney, Clover Koopman, Randy Meiklejohn, and Judy & Al Hudson.

Below, Picnic charade photos in the RMC Archive.
Left: Peek archive; (5) others: Woodruff archive.

Camp Report, continued from page 6

Another major task this summer was locating a new stand of dead wood to use for firewood for the upcoming winter. The caretakers, along with our Field Supervisor, located a new stand of dead trees off of the Hincks Trail in early August. The Trail Crew cut and hauled nearly a cord of wood up for splitting and stacking at Gray Knob. The remaining wood needed for the winter came from leftover log ends from the Perch reconstruction project. This winter we will work with a consulting forester to establish additional new cutting areas for approval by the U.S. Forest Service so as to ensure a sustainable supply of firewood for the future.

The summer staff left in late August and the fall caretakers moved in. Returning caretaker Becca Loeb was joined by new caretaker Mike Jones. Mike was no stranger to backcountry work, having spent the previous winter over with the Maine Hut and Trails. The fall crew jumped right into work, preparing for two major fall projects. (See page 1 article this issue.) Becca and Mike finished the fall season during the first week of November. For the winter, the camps will be ably staffed by returning caretaker Jenny Baxter, who spent last winter working for Maine Hut and Trails at their Flagstaff Hut. She will be joined by Caleb Jackson, who comes to us from the AMC where he has most recently managed the backcountry caretaker and ridgerunner staff on the Appalachian Trail in Massachusetts and Connecticut. For the spring, JP Krol will return for a second spring season and will be joined by new caretaker Cheryl Byrne. Cheryl comes to RMC after several field seasons in the backcountry with the Northwoods Stewardship Center and Green Mountain Club.

Winter caretaker Caleb Jackson. Courtesy photo.
The ‘RMC 100’ is a trail-hiking challenge launched at the Club’s centennial in 2010. The total length of RMC trails is approximately one hundred miles, and members have been invited to celebrate the Club’s anniversary by hiking the entire distance. More information and the challenge logbook can be found on the website at

www.randolphmountainclub.org/trailsinfo/hikerslogbook

and ‘Wall of Fame’ photographs of previous finishers are at

www.randolphmountainclub.org/trailsinfo/walloffame.

It’s always interesting to see how members organize their trips and keep track of the routes they follow. Below is the tenth entry from Jeffrey Schenkel’s journal of twenty separate outings, from October 26, 2011—a real clean-up day.

Fallsway to Valley Way, Valley Way to Brookside to Inlook Trail, Inlook Trail to Kelton Trail, Kelton Trail up to Brookside and then back down to Howker Ridge Trail, Howker Ridge Trail to Sylvan Way, Sylvan Way to Air Line, Air Line to Appalachia. Fallsway to Brookbank to Fallsway, down Fallsway to Maple Walk, Maple Walk to Valley Way to Appalachia. Move car. EZ Way up to Randolph Hill Rd., back down to Pasture Path, Pasture Path to Wood Path, Wood Path to Durand Rd. and back to car. Move Car. Town Line Brook Trail to Evans Falls and back down.

Barbara Cutter, Cedar Falls IA; at Grafton Notch. She began the challenge on July 2, 2010 and finished on August 2, 2012; note that in doing so she has become the first woman to complete the RMC 100. Brian Roberts photo.

RMC Merchandise
By Barb Phinney

Ho! Ho! Ho! The RMC Merchandise Elves have been busy and would love to help you with your holiday shopping so you can look sharp, be smart and stay warm on those well-maintained trails!

1. We are OUT with the OLD fleece hats and IN with our NEWLY designed hat, with updated RMC logo in trendy new colors. One size fits most and the interior is lined for a smooth feel. Choose from Paprika, Reign (a really fancy name for purple Eggplant), navy blue and periwinkle. (Not shown.) Available Dec. 1st. $20.

2. Back by popular demand, we’ve re-issued the long-sleeved performance T-shirt. Made of COOLMAX ® fabric, this shirt features a Tim Sappington sketch on the back, and our updated RMC logo on the front pocket area, white lettering on navy blue. The effect is very striking! Available also at Crag Camp and Gray Knob. $30.00.

3. High-quality color reprints of Roy Woodard’s ‘Randolph’ poster take you back in time to a vision of King Ravine in 1938. Unframed 12” X 15” $20.00.


5 and 6. RMC window stickers ($1.50) and sew-on embroidered patches ($3.00) are the perfect stocking stuffers.

Order merchandise on the website: www.randolphmountainclub.org; click on “Stuff We Sell".
To order by mail, download the printable order form at the website.
For membership also you may use the website, or the form at the bottom of this page; complete it and send with your check in U.S. dollars to
Randolph Mountain Club, PO Box 279, Gorham NH 03581

Membership Form

| Name: ____________________________________________ | Please choose: |
| Please choose: | |
| ( ) I am a new member | ( ) $25.00 for single membership enclosed (1 year) |
| ( ) I am renewing my membership | ( ) $50.00 for family membership enclosed (1 year) |
| How many adults? _______ | How many Children under 18? ______ |
| | |
| ( ) I’d like to make an additional donation of $_________. | |
| Postal address and preferred phone number: | E-mail address: |
| ________________________________________________________ | ________________________________________________________ |
| ________________________________________________________ | |
| ________________________________________________________ | Check below if you would like to: |
| | ( ) Receive the newsletter by e-mail only. |
| | ( ) Receive occasional RMC e-mail announcements. |

The Randolph Mountain Club is a diverse organization, committed to equal opportunity in employment and program delivery. The Randolph Mountain Club prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political affiliation and familial status.
Have you included the RMC in your estate plans?

For more information:
www.randolphmountainclub.org/preserve