

# WONALANCET OUT DOOR CLUB

Newsletter

November 2004



*Caring for the Sandwich Range since 1892*

## WODC Advocacy: A Brief History

In this article selected projects will be described that illustrate activism by Wonalancet Out Door Club (WODC or Club) members during 100 years (1892-1992). Even a cursory examination of the record leads to recognition of three periods during which Club advocacy was vital and strong: (a) 1900 through 1925 when critical issues were the protection of forests and water resources from exploitation by "timber barons", and the consequent formation of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF); (b) 1960 through 1975 when a roused public began to protest the prevailing inadequacies and inequalities of forest management procedures in use by the U.S. Forest Service; (c) 1975 through the early 1990s involving Congressional designation of the Sandwich Range Wilderness and its protection from users of motorized vehicles. These projects will be described as fully as modest space allows.

Advocacy during the first one hundred year history was irregular — years and issues when members were active, as well as periods of non-involvement. Similar fluctuations of activity are seen in other aspects of the Club program. As an illustration, trail construction and maintenance were in abeyance during the Great Depression and the World War II years.

### The Early Years: 1892-1925

The immediate role of the young Club was to cut and maintain paths and hiking trails. Paths were developed at low elevations throughout the Intervale for walking; trails were blazed to the higher peaks. The majority of early visitors came to vacation in the Intervale: to enjoy the comforts of the guest houses with their scrumptious meals and feather beds, to meet and converse with fellow visitors, to fish for trout in valley streams, and to visit local attractions. Walking trails were cut from rooming houses to nearby features such as Wonalancet Falls, the vista from The Ledges (now Mount Katherine), and the low-bush blueberry patches on the Blueberry Ledges.

Although a major purpose of founding the Club was to build and maintain paths and trails, a persuasive case can be made that its chief purpose was economic. WODC was a village "Chamber of Commerce". The initial paragraph of the 1901 Guide lends credence to this interpretation:

"This Guide is prepared and issued by the Wonalancet Out-Door Club to increase interest in Wonalancet as a mountain resort for all seasons of the year and to serve as a souvenir for those who have visited Birch Intervale. For the former purpose maps and descriptions of the paths and trails are given; for the latter, illustrations and some historic material are added."

By-Laws from the 1908 Guide reenforce the above interpretation:

"Its purpose shall be the building and maintenance of paths, to improve the place and develop its natural beauties for the attraction of summer guests."

Even so, by 1908 members realized that the welfare of the Club and community depended upon a broad interpretation of the word "place." "Place" must be extended to include the whole of the White Mountains. This awareness led WODC to include the following statement in the 1908 Guide:

"The trains of logs which daily run to the huge mill at Conway lead us all to hope that Congress will pass the Forest Reserve Bill."

*Advocacy, Page 4*



The Wonalancet flume may never garner as much attention as its north-western neighbor but for one adventurer, the challenge of the hunt is reward enough. Story on page 7.

### *Also in this issue . . .*

<b>Trails Report</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Annual Meeting</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Keeping Track</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>A Stormy Night</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>A New Life Member</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Wonalancet Flume</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Order Form</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>The Outlook</b>	<b>Page 8</b>

## TRAILS REPORT

The 2004 trail season began with the completion of the new Ferncroft kiosk. A joint undertaking of the WODC and US Forest Service, the new kiosk is positioned at the entrance to the parking lot in order to maximize viewing by the majority of hikers who are heading for the Blueberry Ledge or Dacey's Mill Trails. The angled corner placement also allows for easy snow plowing, so the kiosk can serve hikers in all seasons.

The actual kiosk display consists of three panels: A brief history of the WODC trail system, an enlarged image of the current WODC Map, and a panel of guidance for hikers and other visitors to the Sandwich Range. In many ways, the panels reflect the central objectives of the WODC: Historical interpretation and preservation; Recreational information; and Wilderness stewardship.

As the new kiosk opened for business, the old kiosk was carefully extracted from the ground and transported to its new home in Whiteface Intervale. With a renewed WODC map in place, the kiosk will now serve hikers bound for the Flat Mountain Pond and McCrillis Trails.

The Ferncroft parking lot has also received some basic maintenance: The protruding rocks which bedeviled the snow plow were crushed by Pierce Beij and his rock hammer, and the Forest Service added a fresh layer of gravel. And the encroaching trees and brush were pruned back, preserving the 24-car capacity of the parking lot.

The May 15 trails day marked the start of the summer trail work season. About twenty people turned out to clear blow-downs from the major trails, avoiding the side-paths which would quickly develop if these obstacles remained until the Memorial Day hiking surge. At day's end, the hungry group of volunteers enjoyed a stream-side potluck supper hosted by Ann Rogers.

For New Hampshire Trails Day - July 17<sup>th</sup> - WODC focused on the critical task of cleaning the many water-bars which protect our trails from erosion during heavy rainfalls. With a turn-out of two-dozen volunteers, good progress was made on this annual task of clearing the 600+ water-bars and drainage dips. A small group also detoured to the neighboring Gleason Trail to build ten rock water bars and drainage dips below the junction with the Flat Mountain Pond Trail. While not a formal WODC trail, lower Gleason forms a valuable loop with the Bennett Street Trail, and is equally worthy of our attention.

NH Trails Day was concluded with an evening BBQ at the Mead Conservation Center in Sandwich. This historic property is owned by the USFS and operated by the Squam Lakes Association, primarily as a base for summer trail crews.

This year, our collaboration with the SLA expanded to include a co-operative trail crew. The combined effort allows us to share the training and administrative work, while the wider range of experiences increases the appeal for the crew leader and crew members alike.

The collaboration began with the hiring of Jeff Boudreau - a former WODC crew member - as the SLA/WODC crew leader. Of the overall six-month SLA trail season, the five-person crew would spend eight weeks on WODC projects. Although somewhat shorter than our traditional 12-week season, it still held the promise a significant accomplishments, but with reduced administrative demands.

After many years of deliberation, the trail crew was targeted for the long-overdue restoration and preservation of Lawrence Trail. Although a relocation is still being considered in the vicinity of the Overhang, the final mile near Mt Paugus is unlikely to be moved, and was a logical place to begin this multi-year project.

Unfortunately, the project got off to a bumpy start, with two crew members leaving in the first weeks. After the delay of recruiting a (single) replacement, work resumed with excellent quality and quantity, especially considering the scarcity of rock at the work site. But just as we reached peak productivity, two more crew members quit, and the work came to a full stop. These problems resulted in a 40% loss of crew time, and only about half of the expected work was completed.

Why did these problems occur? Probably because of inadequate Trails Committee participation in the crew recruiting, selection, and intake process. As a result, the crew members were less prepared for our

demanding back-country project, and not fully aware of the critical role each would play in our trails program.

Where do we go from here? Except for this year, SCA volunteers have been an excellent source of trail crew members. Of our previous *twenty* regular crew members, the WODC suffered only *one* early departure. We believe we can continue this success (within the model of a co-op crew) by restoring our previous involvement in crew affairs.

Of the \$20k trails budget, approximately \$12k has been expended, primarily for expenses related to the trail crew. The US Forest Service has also pledged \$4k towards this year's work, leaving the WODC with a final trails expenditure of \$8k. When you consider the 1800 hours of essential trail work that was completed, it's a great deal for everyone. It's also important to remember that 75% of the work was done by volunteers. Only the crew leader was compensated for his time, but we still owe Jeff the biggest "Thank You" for his tireless devotion to the summer crew.

Safety is always a top-priority for trail work, and the WODC has been fortunate that our only accident in the last ten years involved a knife cut at lunch time!

Since most WODC trails are within Sandwich Range Wilderness, motorized equipment is prohibited, and all work must be done with hand tools. While the Forest Service does allow chain saws outside Wilderness, they can only be used by those with formal FS training and certification.

For your own safety and to preserve the accident protection afforded to FS volunteers, please leave your chain saw at home. If you do encounter something too big for a hand saw, give the Trails Committee a call. The Forest Service will also be glad to send out a certified sawyer for the occasional non-Wilderness blow-down.

Before the last of our trail crew departed, we took the opportunity to complete a rather unusual and interesting project: The placement of stepping stones where the Old Paugus Trail crosses the Paugus Brook. This crossing has been troublesome for many years, with ongoing trampling of the stream banks as each hiker attempts to find the best way across. Many have crossed on a fallen tree, which stops a little short of the opposite bank, resulting in at least one unexpected dip.

With the trail crossing located at an old ford, stepping stones were an attractive option, especially compared to the cost of a 40' bridge. With the "Minimum Impact" wetlands permit already on file, the water low and warm, and the remains of the crew at loose ends, it seemed an ideal time to

The Newsletter is published semiannually by the Wonalancet Out Door Club. Submissions for inclusion in future issues should be sent to:

WODC Newsletter Editor  
HCR 64, Box 248  
Wonalancet, NH 03897  
Or,  
Articles@wodc.org

WODC was established in 1892 for maintaining trails and promoting conservation.

WODC web site: [www.wodc.org](http://www.wodc.org)

Printed on 100% post-consumer, processed chlorine free, non-de-inked, recycled paper.

tackle the project. Although the partially submerged rocks were easier to move than on dry land, they were exceptionally large, and required four people, three rocks bars, and a grip-hoist to drag some of them into place. After two days of work in sneakers and knee-deep water, rock stepping stones were in place.

The finished crossing is a joy to use, and will reduce the impact of hikers in the riparian zone. Of course, high water, ice jams, and floating logs may have their own ideas about where the rocks belong. Before the winter sets in, be sure to check out the crossing on the Old Paugus Trail.

In a time-honored rite of Fall, WODC volunteers spent another weekend on the remote Kate Sleeper Trail. Clearing blow-downs and brush at 3500' can be surprisingly peaceful, with only a few hikers (or runners!) crossing the trail on any given day. Sleeper is also home to a small cache of trail tools, which are setting the record for the slowest traverse from Whiteface to Tripyramid. Each year the tools move a short distance to the next set of rock steps or water bars, before being stashed in woods for another winter. So far, we manage to locate the cache each year. But I think of those tools often, and of the wonderful place where they pass the years.

*Peter Smart*  
**WODC Trails Chair**



Workers on the September Sleeper Trail weekend met up with this spruce grouse and three other members of his family. He tagged along with the crew for a while but wasn't much help with brushing. Photo by L. Labrie

## ANNUAL MEETING

On Sunday, August 15, WODC's annual meeting convened at 6:30 pm with 29 people in attendance.

**Membership:** Sandy Cole reported that the club currently has 400 dues paying members, 16 of whom are new this year. The mailing list is at 469.

**Merchandise:** Sharon Nothnagle gave the following statistics for this year:

T-shirts: 46 sold.

Maps: 128 sold, 500 on hand.

Patches: 8 sold, 213 on hand.

1901 Guide reprint: 50 sold.

**Trails:** Peter's year-end report is printed in full in this newsletter. See page 2.

**Old Blueberry Ledge Trail:** Twelve people reported using the original route of Blueberry Ledge Trail between Squirrel Bridge and the junction with Blueberry Ledge Cutoff.

**Treasurer's Report:** Dick Daniels reported for Tom Rogers. The Club ended fiscal year 2003 with a \$9,785.41 surplus, with total assets of \$63,707.46. The surplus was mainly due to a lack of a paid crew leader and a greater than anticipated reimbursement from the Forest Service.

It is projected that WODC will end fiscal year 2004 with a \$3000 deficit. (We did have a paid crew leader and funding arrangements with the Forest Service have been changed.)

**New Map:** Cartographer Mike Bromberg reported that the GPS survey of trails is 51% complete. It is projected that the new map will be ready in 2006.

**Archives and Historical Activities:** Barbara Sidley reported a few responses to the historical materials inventory survey. It is hoped that when the Jean Ulitz Genealogy

and History Center is completed at the Cook Memorial Library in 2005, WODC will be able to store archival materials there.

**Liability Insurance:** The annual premium is now \$1000, double what it was a few years ago. It was decided to keep the insurance for now and to shop around for a better rate.

**2005 Budget:** Executive Committee proposed that \$30,350 be budgeted for next year's expenses. It is anticipated that some of this expense would be offset by Forest Service funding. The proposed budget was accepted.

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were nominated and elected: President - Chris Conrod, Vice President - Dick Daniels, Secretary - Sharon Nothnagle, Treasurer - Tom Rogers.

**Volunteer Search:** Dick Daniels reported that 37 people responded to his appeal for volunteers. A few have already been incorporated into the fold and the rest will be given plenty of opportunities to participate.

**Brochures:** Two new "Leave No Trace" brochures have been published by WODC and are now available at the kiosks. Thanks go to Sandy Cole (editing) and Peaco Todd (graphics).

**Club Motorsports Racetrack:** Dick Daniels reported that, after urging from many club members, the Executive Committee voted to publicly express concern about the possibility of excessive noise from the proposed racetrack in Tamworth. This was accomplished through letters to the Army Corps of Engineers and NH Department of Environmental Services, and by testimony at the NH Wetlands hearing by Dick.

It was moved and voted to authorize Dick to testify at the Army Corps hearing and to write to state legislators encouraging them to repeal Senate Bill 458, which exempted the racetrack from Tamworth's racetrack ordinance.

**501(c)(3) Status:** The Club bylaws were changed at a special WODC meeting on February 7 to better reflect the mission of WODC and to comply with federal tax laws concerning 501(c)(3) status. The application forms for change of status are being reviewed by counsel before being sent to the IRS.

**Bylaw Change:** It was moved and voted to revise Article 5 of the WODC bylaws to read: "There shall be an Executive Committee, comprised of the Club officers and committee chairs. In addition to these members, the President may appoint three members-at-large."

**Life Membership:** Life membership in WODC is a status of honor given by vote of the membership. To date, there were three members who had received this honor: Mike Bromberg, George Zink and Steve Harris. It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to make Peter Smart the fourth Life Member in WODC's 112 year history. Peter was recognized for his ongoing contributions to the Club's trails.

**Brook Path Parking:** Chris Conrod reported that Melissa Myers and Margaret Rieser offered to set aside an area on their land at the east end of Brook Path for public parking. Signs designating the parking area will be installed soon.

**Compiled from WODC Secretary Sharon Nothnagle's draft minutes.**

## Advocacy, from page 1

In some copies of that Guide were inserted loose leaf messages entitled "An Appeal To Help Save The White Mountain Forests" which read in part:

"Are you fully awake to the irreparable damage being done to our New England heritage? You are of course aware of the present status of the general measure to save our forests which has been before Congress in one form or another for the past five years. The Senate has thrice acted favorably, but again and again has the unanimous will of the people suffered defeat at the hands of the few men in the House of Representatives who control the Committees. At the short session of the Sixtieth Congress, to be convened early in December next, a storm of public opinion should sweep aside this unjust opposition. Each one of you can materially aid in the crisis. See to it that your nominees for Congress are pledged to the active support of this vital cause. Immediately after Congress convenes, write personal appeals to your Senators and Representatives urging prompt action..."

Member concerns and advocacies were motivated by the fact that most of the nearby forests, streams, and mountains north of the Intervale were owned by lumber companies; companies formed to cut trees, build roads, operate saw mills, and sell timber products. Widespread in the State at the time was citizen anxiety for the condition of the forests: desecrated vistas, smoke and haze from forest fires, and rapid stream runoff. The great textile mills of Manchester, Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill were dependent upon steady stream flow from the Merrimack River - fed by numerous tributaries with origins in the White Mountains.

Advocating Congressional passage of the Weeks Act — "enabling legislation" — that would allow the expenditure of Federal funds for the purchase of private forest lands might make possible creation of a federal White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). So advocacy did not end with appeals to individuals. In order to assure timber in the forests of the Sandwich Range would not be cut prior to the proposed purchase by the Federal Government, the ingenious and persuasive Kate Sleeper Walden obtained a "purchase right of first refusal" from the Publishers' Paper Company, owner of the property in and surrounding the "Bowl." Ultimately, an agreement with the timber company was signed for three thousand acres

of land, at a price of \$50,000. Kate pledged with others in the community to raise \$25,000 of that amount, and they did so. Fortunately, passage of the Weeks Act in March of 1911 made Federal funds available. Privately raised funds were not needed!

Kate Sleeper was by no means the sole advocate for protecting the forests and wetlands of the Sandwich Range. Edgar J. Rich on July 27, 1914 led a group of WODC members to the Sixth Annual White Mountain Forest Conference in Gorham, NH. As reported in a Gorham newspaper:

"An interesting feature not on the program was the arrival of a delegation of sixteen from Wonalancet, headed by Mr. Edgar J. Rich of Boston and Mrs. Walden of Wonalancet, asking for aid in their efforts to save the southern slope of the Sandwich Range. 'We are a cry, a plaintive cry, from Wonalancet,' said Mr. Rich, when introduced; 'we are in danger, and we ask your help. Geographically, Wonalancet embraces the choicest parts of four towns. But Wonalancet is not a geographical expression, it is a spirit...'"

Worries of WODC members did not end in 1914. At the Annual Meeting in 1915 moneys were appropriated to send a member to Washington, D.C. to confer with Senators about further appropriation of funds to purchase lands in the White Mountain National Forest.

There were in addition several less significant actions. In 1925 members opposed the erection of a fire tower on the peak of Mt. Chocorua. Ultimately a compromise was worked out whereby a tower was erected on a nearby peak; the view of Mt. Chocorua as viewed from the south or west remained pristine. This was not a major issue, but indicates the successful Club response.

The point is clear. From its earliest days members were activists when it came to protecting the Sandwich Range and the White Mountains.

### The Middle Years: 1950 - 1975

Club advocacy during these years was stimulated principally by an increased conflict among National Forest users. The general public was dissatisfied by decisions of Forest managers who seemed to favor businesses - most notably timber interests. At the same time, a nationwide "Back to the Earth Movement" of the post World War II years arose — of Americans seeking the physical and emotional rewards of exposure to the natural environment — and an increasing awareness of the growing science

of ecology. An active public wanted more land for recreation use and ecosystem protection.

Congressional delegates were barraged with demands for action. In 1960 Congress enacted the Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act that embodied the multiple-use concept in statutory language. The act demands an analysis of the environmental impact of each management activity upon all other legitimate activities. On September 3, 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson signed an act that established the National Wilderness Preservation System - more familiarly known as The Wilderness Act. Henceforth a decision to designate a wilderness area will be an act of Congress, not a decision by the federal agency that manages the area. The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act became law in 1965. This act authorizes federal recreation agencies to acquire land for outdoor recreation. In 1969 the National Environmental Policy Act was enacted that requires public participation in decisions affecting public interests. As an outcome of this act and others, "One of the changes now recurring in policy-planning and decision-making processes within the Forest Service is increased emphasis upon public participation. This is partly the consequence of internal reforms in planning and decision making, but mainly it is the result of external demands for increased public involvement in governmental decision making." (Glen O. Robinson; *The Forest Service: A Study of Public Land Management*, 1975)

In the early 1970s the Forest Service announced an intention to prepare a Forest Plan to guide future activities within each of the National Forests. Interested citizens were urged to participate. WODC members began to take part in discussions at "Working Group" meetings in NH and MA concerning issues related to management of WMNF. A three-phase planning procedure was initiated in 1972 that would terminate in 1980 with a completed Forest Plan.

WODC members were active in public meetings concerning every phase of forest planning beginning in 1972. At one time or another, or phase of another, active participants were Martha Chandler, Ted Sidley, Stearns Smalley, Ralph Weymouth, and George Zink. Each devoted literally hundreds of hours to this work, and traveled many miles. An Area Guide For Managing the National Forests in New England (1973) was the first accomplishment, followed by Forest Plan for the White Mountain National Forest (1974). There then followed a series of Unit Plans — management plans for smaller sections of the WMNF. Martha

Chandler, Ted Sidley, Stearns Smalley and Ralph Weymouth were members of "Working Groups" that developed the Waterville Unit Plan; George Zink was active in development of the Kancamagus Unit Plan. Each final report is partial evidence of their dedication.

Not all Club activism was directed toward planning. In 1960 the Club approved funds in support of effort by the Nature Conservancy to acquire a 400 acre island in Lake Nubabusit in Nelson and Hancock, NH. In 1972 WODC advocated and gave financial support to the acquisition of Sandwich Notch, a 6,000 acre addition to the WMNF. Members approved a support donation of \$150 — 25% of annual income that year. During this period the Club annually voted funds to support The Society For The Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF) and the New England Trails Conference.

In 1973-1975 a proposed timber cut along the drainage of Spring Brook in Wonalancet met with strong opposition from WODC members. At best the proposal was poorly conceived and poorly planned. Every available means to stop it was pursued; professional foresters as well as powerful organizations such as the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) supported the Club's opposition. Public disapproval upon completion of the cut so infuriated the public that the Forest Supervisor issued a decision that all future timber cutting in the Wonalancet region was to be suspended. WODC lost this battle, and strengthened its reputation.

#### The Later Years: 1975 - 1991

In the above examples most Club conservation efforts were in support of

initiatives raised by other organizations; WODC played a minor role. In later years the Club played major roles in passage of the NH Wilderness Act of 1984 (Act of 1984) establishing Congressional designation of the Sandwich Range Wilderness (SRW), and the appeal of the Flat Mountain Pond Decision. Successful passage of the Act of 1984 was the culmination of a nine year Club effort. Beginning in 1974 members raised the wilderness issue for the SRW while serving on working groups for the Kancamagus and Waterville Unit Plans. Members advocated placing major portions of these two units into a classification that would remove them from activities of road construction, timber harvest, and motorized use. Efforts increased sharply during the Forest Service Roadless Area Review and Evaluation II (RARE II) when members worked cooperatively with the New England Chapter of the Sierra Club, AMC, NH Audubon Society, and the SPNHF, to win public support for an increase in Wilderness acreage within WMNF. To give one example of the important role of the WODC, when SPNHF appointed a Sandwich Range Wilderness study committee of six, five were Club members (David Bowles, Martha Chandler, Stearns Smalley, Fred Steele, and George Zink).

When the time arrived to persuade Congress to support the NH Wilderness Act of 1984, WODC was well situated to exert its influence. George Zink was appointed to the White Mountain National Forest Advisory Committee - chief sponsor of the Act, and was sent to Washington by WODC to give testimony before the Senate Committee On

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry. Support of Club members on this issue was practically unanimous; only three members expressed any dissension. Members were interviewed on the Conway radio station, then composed and financed publication of a 4-page brochure describing the importance of designation. George Zink addressed an annual meeting of the NH Snowmobile Association; Weymouth and Zink two spoke at an annual meeting of the New England Trails Conference. The act was finally approved by Congress and signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1984.

The final issue to which the Club gave its fullest effort was its "Appeal" of the Flat Mountain Pond Decision — the WMNF decision to construct a seven mile roadway stretching from the Sandwich Notch Road to Flat Mt. Pond in order to provide motorized access for disabled Americans. Initially, of the appellants, WODC stood alone. Its customary allies — the AMC and SPNHF — were either silent or decision supporters. Fortunately, WODC secured support for the appeal from the National Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and the Conservation Law Foundation. These three provided the financial and legal resources which resulted in a final withdrawal of the Decision.

In addition to a long and continuous history of building and maintaining trails and shelters, WODC has been involved in protecting the natural resources of New Hampshire and the nation through its strong advocacy/activism. May the Club never lose that commitment.

*George Zink*

## KEEPING TRACK GROUP FORMED

A true test of commitment is to meet at the Moultonborough Central School at 4 am to commence an eighteen-hour day of travel and classes. On a recent Saturday morning, a hearty group of wildlife enthusiasts passed this test in great style and began their first of six full-day training sessions with Keeping Track, a Vermont based organization dedicated to the long-term stewardship of wildlife habitat.

This steadfast group, currently going by the name of Bearcamp Trackers, was the inspiration of Chele Miller, WODC's own wildlife writer and summer program coordinator. Chele's call to action was answered by 16 other like-minded individuals to form a diverse and impressive group. The membership includes NH Fish & Game staff, professional consulting foresters, staff and officers of local land protection organizations, past and present local conservation commission members, hunters, birdwatchers and land preservation activists.

The training provided by Keeping Track will provide expertise in identifying tracks,

sign and habitats of six or more focal species. These animals include area-sensitive carnivores, threatened and endangered carnivores, and species with rapidly shifting populations. Determining the health of these animal populations can serve as an indicator of the overall health of the wildlife community. There is also extensive training in the science of research and monitoring protocol. Upon completion of the course, Bearcamp Trackers will be capable of providing qualitative habitat analysis and will be certified to participate in and contribute to Keeping Track's long-term habitat monitoring program.

For its general focus, Bearcamp Trackers has chosen habitat connectivity between the Sandwich Range and the Ossipee Mountains. The group is inventorying numerous areas and hopes to make its services available to local conservation organizations and landowners for long-term monitoring, two-year inventories and "snapshot" detection surveys.

WODC is proud of the club members

willing to make the investment of time and money to this worthwhile cause and is proud to have supported the genesis of this group by funding a local presentation by Keeping Track's Susan Morse, providing tuition assistance, and acting as Bearcamp Trackers' fiscal agent. The WODC Executive Committee recently voted to continue support of the group and is delighted to have such a positive and worthy outlet for WODC's "other" mission: promotion of local conservation.

Bearcamp Trackers encourages anyone who would like to learn more about the group to contact Chele Miller at 323-8328 or Chris Conrod at 284-6686. Although it is too late to join this year's training series, the group hopes to have future training opportunities and invites all to participate in field trips. To learn more about Keeping Track, visit their website at [www.keepingtrack.org](http://www.keepingtrack.org).

*Chris Conrod*

# A Stormy Night on Whiteface

## The Odyssey of two Young Boys and one Light-Blue Hat

*Hikers ascending the Blueberry Ledge Trail or Dicey's Mill Trail usually start at the Ferncroft parking area, near the site of an old inn of the same name. Walking toward the mountains, about three hundred and fifty yards past the kiosk – a hundred yards before the Squirrel Bridge – a hiker will see a patch of grass where the main house of Ferncroft stood.*

*Many remarkable moments have passed at that Inn. Wonalancet resident Philip Schuck recounts his own Ferncroft adventure below. The time: a half a century ago, in the waning days of Ferncroft. The inn was then being managed by Jane M. Jennings, a relative of Ferncroft's founder. Philip was a friend of Jane's son, Bill Jennings, and the two spent the summer at Ferncroft doing odd jobs under the command of that formidable woman.*

**Doug McVicar**

I was not a paid employee, because I was a little young. But Bill and I lit fires in the morning for the hot water system, filled the tanks, did odd jobs for the kitchen and for the laundry. There was a handyman who worked out of the barn, so we were at his disposal too.

We decided one day we would take the day off, go up Whiteface, spend the night and come back down the next day. Jane was not particularly happy about that because it meant we were unavailable for whatever chores we had to do. The older people at the inn were witness to our negotiation with Jane over whether we were going to go, whether we were going to spend the night, how soon we'd be back the next morning. They were all sort of cheering for us to go ahead and be adventurous. And we prevailed.

So we went around and scrounged camping equipment – a little pup tent, and a canteen, and a backpack – and we headed up Whiteface.

Several people were witness to our departure – which seemed to me *great*. Bill was wearing a circular hat with a brim, and it was light blue so everybody could see it.

We headed off across the Squirrel Bridge and up the Blueberry Ledge Trail. We got up. We made a little camp. Pitched our tent. But on top of Whiteface there are not a lot of good tenting spots. So we found a little boggy, shallow place where we could actually put some pins in. We had a World War II pup tent, which is two shelter halves that pin together at the center, and we put it up. It was sort of flimsy because there was nothing really to stake into.

We ate. We were looking around, bored. So we decided to go to bed. We had two sleeping bags, real thin little things that somebody had lent us.

Some time during the night I was awakened by a cannon. It was a flash and a roar as if somebody had put a cannon right inside of the tent. It was lightning. And then Ka Blam!! More lightning. And then rain. Just sheets of rain. And the wind must have been going sixty miles an hour.

We were in the middle of a thunderstorm on top of Whiteface – and it blew the tent away. And with the tent all of our clothes. Including our boots, which we had very neatly placed outside the tent. So we've got undies and a tee shirt. And you couldn't see. But we got up and tried to hold on to the shelter that was blowing away.

And this went on almost all night. Then in the morning we were totally fogbound, inside a cloud. You couldn't see six feet. We had no idea where we were.

In between near crying – both of us – Bill was quite inventive and said, "Well my mother always said go downhill, eventually you'll reach Boston." So we headed downhill.

But we didn't know *which* downhill we were going. And we had no shoes. And there was no trail to follow. We headed downhill and we weren't making much headway. We had to stop every twenty seconds because our feet were getting jabbed and poked, or we'd slip a twig up under a toenail.

We're stumbling and it's raining, foggy. Going down hill, no idea where we are, and then . . . it's night again. So we sort of lean against a rock, and wait the night out. Neither of us slept.

The next morning we find a little brook. Ahhhhh. So we follow the brook down. Turns out we're over in Whiteface Intervale. We're going down some little brook that comes off of the mountain – the *other* side. Finally we see a bridge. Eureka!! So we get on the road – we're in underwear, no shoes – and we put out our thumbs, and somebody stopped and picked us up. Wouldn't drive us to Ferncroft. Dropped us at the Post Office. So we had to walk up the road in our underwear.

Now we thought the world would have stopped, and they would have mounted the National Guard. We got to Ferncroft and Mrs. Jennings's remark was, "Why are you *late*? Where have you *been*?" No concern that we might have been lost, or eaten by a bear. That was it: *Get to work!*

One of the old folks who had seen us leave came up to us as we were making our way back to our cabin and handed Bill the light-blue hat. He said: "I found this hat on the croquet court the next morning after you left. I *knew* you were in trouble."

It had blown from the top of Whiteface onto the croquet court in front of Ferncroft.

*Editor's note: For more information about Ferncroft and its historic significance, see George Zink's article "What is Ferncroft?" in the May 1998 issue of this newsletter. I recorded Philip Schuck's reminiscences last summer in Wonalancet, as part of the Ferncroft Oral History Project. Philip's well-spoken language converted to written text with little editing. If any reader has memories of Ferncroft to share, please contact me: Doug McVicar, Peacefield, Wonalancet, NH 03897, or by phone 603-323-7302.*

## Peter Smart: Life Member

After a dozen years of service to WODC; including ten years as Trails Chairman, revitalizing our maintenance efforts, establishing and upholding high standards, introducing new techniques, building an awesome and mobile tool inventory, creating an ambitious and respected summer trail crew program, and inspiring us all to give our best efforts toward trail and wilderness stewardship, the Club decided Peter deserved a pat on the back. The life membership and plaque presented to Peter at the 2004 annual meeting is but a trivial reward for the service rendered, and a small token of our gratitude. Here Peter displays the plaque, along side his good and faithful friend, Pemi, whom Peter says "is the true life member."

Photo by Judy Reardon



## SEARCH FOR THE WONALANCET FLUME

I suppose it goes without saying that times have changed. During the era of Kate Sleeper, at the turn of the twentieth century, a summer vacation was just that: a sojourn for the entire summer. Vacationers from Boston and points beyond would fill the local inns to spend a month or two or three, enjoying the pastoral setting and exploring every nook and cranny of the region.

It didn't take an ambitious trampler long to exhaust the list of local major peaks and viewpoints and to turn to some of the more esoteric destinations. Thus, when examining old maps of the area, we find labels such as Carrigain Outlook, Paugus Falls and Potato Rock; all being points rarely, if ever, considered to be present-day destinations.

There are those of us today who, having spent many years exploring the hills that embrace Wonalancet, can't resist the challenge when learning of a "new" point of interest. So, it was only natural that my curiosity was piqued when I found the following statement when reading an 87-year-old description of a WODC trail: "... a short blazed trail to the S. leads to an interesting flume." I knew the area well. I knew that there was no such trail in existence today, nor had I ever heard before of the existence of an "interesting flume" in the area. The fact that it was early March and an icy crust capped the two feet of rotting snow coving the steep and rocky

slopes did not discourage me. The following weekend I grabbed my bushwhacking snowshoes and began the quest.

Finding the general area was no trouble, but determining which "level place" was the proper starting point proved to be problematic. I chose the lowest point I thought might be a likely candidate and planned to strike off to the south and then parallel the main trail. A hundred yards on this course put me in the middle of a dense spruce thicket (no surprise) that was steeply perched above a cliff. I decided to angle back toward the trail and regroup. The path of least resistance nudged me toward an oblique course and before I reached the trail, a deep chasm just a little too wide to jump blocked my route. Ahhh. Could this be the flume?

It appeared to be about 15 feet deep where I was and got deeper and wider downslope. I headed uphill and in a short distance came to the head of the crevice, where it abruptly ended at a headwall which appeared to be six feet deep. As enticing as it was, I chose not to climb in. I had no idea how deep the snow was at the bottom nor was I sure I could climb back out. It would be best to save further exploration for the summer. I headed up toward the trail and, to my surprise, found it twenty feet above the head of the flume. I had passed this spot dozens of times before and never noticed it.

Four months later, on a beautiful summer day, Doug McVicar and I returned to the flume. Entrance at the headwall was only a minor challenge. Two shear walls, about 5 or 6 feet apart, rose from a steeply pitched floor. At the bottom, where the flume opened into a steep gully, the walls were as much as twenty feet high. From there, a scramble to the left up a loose ledge provided an intimate view of the surrounding hills and valleys. Below, the gully offered a wide array of rock formations, overhanging ledges and boulder caves formed from the plucking action of the last glacier.

The terrain was so inviting that we decided to bushwhack down rather than return to the trail. There was some tough going but it was well worth the effort. A chaos of glacier-strewn boulders in every direction begged to be explored. An open talus slope served as finale before we entered a dense forest of spruce and hardwoods.

Will the Wonalancet Flume ever again become a popular destination? I doubt it. But for those whose curiosity is whetted by obscure references in old trail guides, it provides a fun and challenging day's diversion. All it takes is a little searching, which is half of the fun.

*Chris Conrod*

## Wonalancet Out Door Club

Please mail completed form and payment to:

WODC Member Services  
HCR 64, Box 248  
Wonalancet, NH 03897

Name:.....

Street:.....

City, State, Zip:.....

Phone:..(.....).....

Email:.....

## Merchandise and New Member Order Form

Qty.	Description	Price	Amount
	WODC Trail Map & Guide	\$5.00	
	WODC Flat(unfolded) Trail Map & Guide	\$7.00	
	1901 Guide to Wonalancet (Reprint)	\$10.00	
	WODC Patch	\$3.00	
	Coolmax T-shirt (grey) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medium</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Large</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> X-Large</li> </ul>	\$17.00	
	Coolmax T- shirt (blue) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medium</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Large</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> X-Large</li> </ul>	\$17.00	
	New Membership (Do not use this form for renewing existing memberships.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pathfinder</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Steward</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trail Blazer</li> </ul>	\$15.00 \$25.00 \$50.00	
Additional Contribution (tax deductible)			
All prices include shipping.		Total Enclosed:	

# The Outlook

Ideas and Observations

## WODC Advocacy: Present & Future

George Zink's article on the history of advocacy within WODC (see page 1) is a well-timed review of an integral component of the club's legacy. The question of how and when WODC should exercise this key element in our mission statement – promotion of conservation in mountain and forest lands – came to a head when Tamworth became embroiled in the permitting process of Club Motorsports' (CMI) proposed racetrack on the north slopes of the Ossipee Mountains.

The issue was discussed at the 2003 WODC annual meeting. Various views were expressed and no vote was taken but the consensus seemed to express a "wait and see" attitude. During the following months, the Executive Committee (EC) remained reluctant to take a public stand because WODC's membership included both proponents of and opponents to the proposed development. In addition, there was concern that the Club lacked the expertise needed to address the highly technical questions being raised by an ever growing army of scientists and land use planners who were weighing in on the issues of environmental impact. Meanwhile, a few prominent WODC members were individually involved in various aspects of the permit review process.

It was in the early summer of this year when EC began receiving strong recommendations from numerous members to take a public stand on CMI's proposed racetrack. One member went so far as to resign from the Club due to lack of action on the part of the Club's leadership. Because all input received was against the racetrack, EC

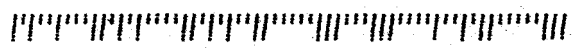
voted to publicly express concerns pertaining to CMI's proposal. Subsequent discussion and votes at the 2004 annual meeting empowered our President to publicly take specific positions against the racetrack and recent legislation affecting the racetrack. (Specific details can be found in the annual meeting report on page 3 of this newsletter.) These actions have been and will continue to be taken.

WODC is an active organization involved in various pursuits: landowner relations, education, local history, national forest planning and management, cartography, and (of course) trail maintenance. This full plate of responsibilities is assumed by a handful of volunteer activists. A visit to an annual meeting will demonstrate just how small is our active team. We each have our own interests, our own strengths; and we each try to support other team members' interests and projects. In fact, it's this willingness of WODC to actively support motivated individuals who propose worthwhile and relevant projects that has kept me bonded to the Club for the past 16 years.

My request to those who would like to see WODC take a stronger approach to advocacy on a particular issue is to ask themselves these questions: Am I willing to actively support this cause? Am I willing to attend regular meetings? Am I willing to do research, contact others, write letters, stuff envelopes? If the answer is yes, call me at 284-6686. With strong participation from our members, WODC can continue its legacy of conservation advocacy.

*Chris Conrod*

Opinions expressed in The Outlook are those of the individual and not necessarily the views of WODC. We invite reader participation in this forum. Submissions of 600 words or less may be sent to: WODC News Editor, HCR 64 Box 248, Wonalancet NH 03897.



02417#0350

NOV 23 2004

