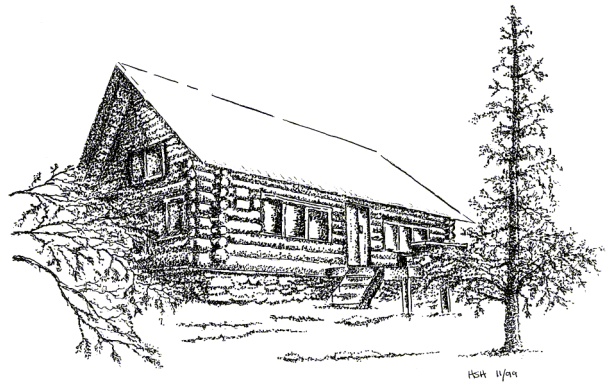


RIDGE LINES



GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB
BURLINGTON SECTION

www.naturecompass.org/gmcburlington

FALL - WINTER 2006

THE BURLINGTON SECTION DOLLS

Sometime in the 1960's, art teacher Anne Clark decided to decorate the tables at the Burlington Section Annual Meeting with hiker dolls. GMC members made almost a dozen dolls depicting adventures and misadventures along Vermont's hiking trails. There's the jaunty trekker, hiking along in his stocking cap and colorful wool shirt. There's the smiling volunteer heading out for a day of maintenance work on one of the Long Trail shelters, armed with a roll of roofing paper, a bucket of paint and (we think) a toilet seat for the privy. There's the self-portrait of Dot Myer heading up a mountain to touch up the white blazes on the LT. And there's the birdwatcher. She doesn't have a pack and she's not carrying any gear, so she must have taken the Toll Road up Mt. Mansfield to look for the mountain's famous Bicknell thrushes.

Burlington Section member Herm Hoffmann sketched four of the dolls for us. (Herm also did the drawing of Taft Lodge used in our masthead.) There are many other dolls in the collection. One shows a snowshoer with her face buried in the snow and her legs and snowshoes waving in the air. There's a woebegone hiker sitting hunched over with his boot off, inspecting his blistered heel. There's a hiker on crutches, a tribute to teenager Joel Page who hobbled to the dedication of the Duck Brook Shelter with a fractured leg. There's also a woman with dark glasses and a turtleneck, reclining on her sleeping bag as she soaks up a few warming rays of winter sun.

(This area contained a sketch of several of the dolls, done for this issue by Herm Hoffman.)

All of the dolls started out as skeletons made of bent wire. The artists then added layers and layers of newspaper and masking tape, molding the layers with their fingers to make realistic arms, legs and torsos. The dolls' heads were made of styrofoam, with carved and painted features. Hair was made from yarn or steel wool, depending on the age of the character being portrayed. All the dolls were given complete outfits, right down to little leather boots made out of the fingertips of old gloves.

Today, after decades in storage, the dolls of the GMC are showing their age - but their charm and liveliness are still there.

**Look for the GMC dolls at
February's Annual Meeting!**

Safe hiking during fall and winter

Hunting Season

Almost all the land crossed by the Long Trail and Appalachian Trail is open to hunting. Many other Vermont trails also cross prime hunting land. Hikers should be aware that there might be hunters in the woods for much of the fall and winter. Deer rifle season is a time of particular concern because there are so many more hunters than at any other time. The exact dates of hunting seasons change each year. Here are the dates of some of this year's hunting seasons. (This information is from the 2006 *Vermont Digest of Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Laws*, available free from game wardens, places that sell outdoor equipment, and country stores. Many veterinarians and pet food stores also have cards with hunting season dates.)

Deer Rifle Season November 11 - 26	Muzzleloader and Archery Deer Season December 2 - 10
Youth Deer Hunting Weekend November 4 and 5	Moose Season October 21 - 26
Bow and Arrow Deer Season October 7 – 29 <i>and</i> December 2 - 10	Black Bear Season September 1 - November 15

There are also fall or winter seasons for hunting ducks, geese, grouse, turkeys, squirrels, rabbits, beaver, otter, mink, raccoons, fishers, fox, skunks and bobcats.

Wear blaze (fluorescent) orange. Make sure you're easily seen from every angle. Cover your head with blaze orange. *Never* go out into the woods dressed all in brown, tan, or black. Don't wear clothing with patches of white that might be mistaken for the white tail of a deer. Any pets that hike with you should also wear blaze orange, in the form of good-sized harnesses or "saddle blankets".

Make noise. Sing, whistle, hike with someone you love to chat with. The GMC warns hikers to be especially careful in valleys and within a half mile of trailheads or roads.

In October, think moose. Moose don't usually attack people, but both males and females can be dangerous during rutting (mating) season. Bull moose are in rut from late August till October. If you see a moose, stay away. Be careful when driving to and from the trailhead, too. Rutting moose aren't thinking about cars when they're crossing a road in search of a mate.

Cold Weather Hiking

Always be prepared for Vermont's notoriously changeable weather. Remember that conditions are much less stable high on a mountain than down in the Champlain Valley. Even on lovely fall days, carry the 3 W's with you: Wick, Warm and Wind. Have a layer that wicks moisture away from you (not cotton), a layer that's warm (fleece), and a layer that protects you against wind and rain. Pack a hat, gloves and extra warm clothing.

Carry enough water and high-energy snacks to keep you going all day and overnight, even if you're planning to be out for only a few hours. (If you haven't done a lot of hiking, carry more water than you think you'll need. Stop for a few swigs of water often, before you feel thirsty.) Never drink from a stream. That sparkling water looks so tempting, but water that looks perfectly clean can be loaded with giardia, a nasty intestinal parasite. Be safe. Don't drink any untreated water.

It's a good idea to have a small first aid kit and a loud whistle. You might want to carry a space blanket; they take up no room, weigh nothing and could save your life.

Before heading out for a winter hike, read pages 21-22 and 24-26 of the Long Trail Guide.

More Tips about Winter Hiking from Seasoned Backpackers (excerpts from January '04 *Ridge Lines*)

- Don't use your stove in your tent unless you have very good ventilation.
- An old wool sock around your thermos helps keep your soup hot and prevents your fingers from freezing when you pick the thermos up.
- Before going to sleep, open the laces and tongues of your boots. If the boots freeze, you can still get your feet into them in the morning.
- Days are short in the winter, and lights are notoriously unreliable. Carry two.
- A handful of gorp at 2AM is like stoking the fire and putting on an extra wool blanket.
- If you're backpacking in the winter and you have enough fuel and water, boil some water at night and put it in your water bottle. Put the hot water bottle in your sleeping bag. Just make sure the lid is screwed on tight!

MUSINGS AT THE END OF A LONG DAY'S HIKE

Did you ever write in a shelter log? Did you know the logs are collected and stored at GMC Headquarters in Waterbury Center? Many were lost when the Hiker Center burned, but remaining logs from Taft, Taylor and Butler Lodges contain a rich mixture of philosophy, whining, humor and whimsy. Here are selected entries.

Two common themes in shelter logs are the weather and the physical challenges of hiking.

Coming down the Forehead on the LT was nice ... if you like sheer terror!! I haven't done this hike in 35 years. I must have been braver *or dumber* back then!

Oh, Profanity Trail,

Profanity Trail,

Where no one will care if you swear.

This state has way more hills than Oklahoma! - and we still have to go *down*.

Yesterday we had to walk in the rain. The path was like a stream. We got an ocean in our shoes. At night, my dad tried to dry my shoes by a lantern.

Thru-hikers smell bad.

Written in late November: At what point does it become beneficial to drink antifreeze?

Many hiker-writers shared their powerful reactions to the natural beauty around them.

The full moon was shining on the deck as the clouds that had hovered over Mansfield all day cleared out to the west. I could see the mountain emerging from the surrounding fog. Food forgotten, I stood spellbound. Then stars popped into view in the black blanket of the sky. After a few minutes, the clouds swept back in. I'd experienced a brief, mystical window, a hole in the clouds for my eyes.

I like birch trees. The color is like the inside of shells.

Fell asleep under a moon shadow and awoke to pink sun. Clouds blanketing the Worcester Range, sipping green tea, sitting in the rocker. Does life get any better? [*Many hikers wrote about the rocking chair at Taft Lodge.*]

Hiking can be a life-changing experience – or at least it can help put things in perspective.

She came up the mountain my girlfriend. She's coming down my fiancée.

Sometimes taking the wrong trail can be a good thing, leading to ponds and crazy caves. Life can be like that.

Sometimes you take the wrong path but it turns out for the best.

Seven wild and crazy Colchester moms gave up golf and a dentist appointment, laundry and bills for a hike. Sunny calm day, warm colors beginning to change. We'll do this again another day!

I predict I'm going to become a famous writer soon. Or I'll win an Olympic medal in TaeKwon-do. But for now, I'm going to sit here and finish my Nutella sandwich.

I am happy like the raven coasting in the wind currents.

My friends told me I couldn't hike the Green Mountains of Vermont because they are very hard – but I thought, I am a native South American Indian and my relatives have climbed the Andes! And it turned out I didn't need special equipment to climb in Vermont - just my heart and my desire.

After coming up to the mountains from "real life" in the valley, for the first day my mind is still trotting along at a brisk clip, full of the semi-delusional chatter that tends to keep us occupied in our daily lives. After a day, my mind adjusts to the schedule of the woods: sunrise, hunger, work, sunset.

In the woods there is peace. Here, we are free to be ourselves. There is the peace of beauty, untouched and mysterious. Everything around you is older than you are, and it will be here when you are gone. There is the peace of quiet.

Several humorous entries emphasized how very far from civilization a person can feel while spending a night in a mountain shelter.

The night is cold. Something is happening to the animals. They've attacked and killed John, for he slept on the bottom. We've all taken refuge in the top bunk. Linda and Gracie volunteered to be sacrificed to the animals, but this didn't work ... These are our last words. The animals have built an animal pyramid to reach the top bunk. It's too late now. Goodbye, world.

New Edition of *Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont*

The Green Mountain Club has just released the 5th edition of *Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont*, a comprehensive description of the state's hiking trails outside the Long Trail System. Trail conditions change over time, so the new edition was needed to keep maps and directions up-to-date. The new Guide also includes trails built since the last edition. The 5th edition provides all the information you need about more than 200 day hikes off the Long Trail in Vermont, including: detailed directions about how to drive to the trailheads; full color maps; information about distance, hiking time, and elevation gain; lists of Vermont's trail organizations; and helpful hiking and equipment tips.

The volunteers who contributed to the creation of the *Day Hiker's Guide* have great passion for hiking in the Green Mountain State. As a result this guide offers tried and true ways to explore Vermont's high peaks on foot through natural and historic areas, state parks, and recreational paths. The 5th edition is dedicated to the clubs, associations, camps, and other volunteer groups that build and maintain many of the footpaths enjoyed by Vermont residents and visitors.

The *Day Hiker's Guide to Vermont* and other GMC publications are available through GMC's online store or by calling Marvin B. Gameraff Center toll free at 1-877-484-5053 extension 10. The guide is also available through local hiking retail outlets and bookstores.

For more information and a photo of the new cover, go to <http://www.greenmountainclub.org/news.php?id=62>

Discounts for GMC Members

Green Mountain Club members get a 10% discount at Outdoor Gear Exchange, on 152 Cherry Street in Burlington. The store has a wide selection of new and used equipment for camping, backpacking, paddling, biking, rock-climbing and other outdoor activities. There are also knowledgeable clerks available to answer questions.

Hiking Trails and Cliffs Re-Opened After Peregrine Nesting

In the July 2006 issue of Ridge Lines, we listed areas in Vermont that were closed because of possible peregrine falcon nesting. All those trails have been reopened by the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Project, a joint venture of Vermont Fish & Wildlife, National Wildlife Federation, Vermont Institute of Natural Science and other groups.

The elimination of DDT, combined with active monitoring and protection of nesting sites for two decades now, have successfully restored Vermont's peregrine falcon population. Between 1985 and 2005, over 500 peregrine falcon chicks have taken flight from Vermont cliffs. In April 2005, the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources removed the bird from Vermont's Endangered and Threatened Species List.

One exciting piece of news happened in April 2004, when a falcon that was banded in 2002 as a nestling on Mount Horrid was found in Nicaragua, about 2400 miles from where it was hatched. (Unfortunately, the bird collided with a fence while chasing prey and was killed. A local farmer brought the bird to a Peace Corps volunteer in a nearby village. She found the name of the band manufacturer on the inside of one of the falcon's leg bands, contacted the company, and the manufacturer forwarded the information to the Vermont Institute of Natural Science.)

Activities, Activities, Activities

Did you know that the Green Mountain Club offers scores of outings every single month? The Burlington Section activities are described in Ridge Lines. You can find information about every other section's activities at www.greenmountainclub.org. Go to *News and Events* and then *Events Calendar*. All GMC sections welcome trip participants from other sections.

New Members

The following people have recently joined the Burlington Section of the GMC: Edward Albers, Andre Auclair, Marie Badger, Richard Bonnett, Robert Burke, Alex Clay, Sharon Corey, Tim Curtin, Keri Evjy, Dave and Ben Farrington, Carol Frary, Heide Fritz, Greg Goetsch, Mia Hockett, Sally Howe & Rick Hubbard, Evan Jackson, Linda Jones, Pete Jones, Stephanie Leftwich-Needham, Kathy Magill, Sharon Merola, Kathleen Martin, Claire Menck, Brad Minor, Susan Parker, Martha Perkins, Jeffrey H. Ramsey, Adam Risi, Kevin Ryan, Ann Taylor, Jennifer Towne, Ryan Walker, Barbara and Jim Wanner, Tim Welsh.

Welcome!

