



Trail Crew Association eNewsletter

Updates for alumni and current crew.

May 2018

Breaking Trail

Forgotten stories from the rich history of trail development in the White Mountains on the eve of AMC Trail Crew's Centennial in 2019.

These stories may become historical scholarship, a web resource, a book, or even part of an interpretive installation at Camp Dodge. The crack team of researchers and writers includes Lee Burnett, Bob Proudman, Bob Watts and Tim Davis, PhD.



This month's installment:

Bushwacking through blowdowns, lowering horses with block and tackle, and the evacuation of a bloodied Ethan Allen Crawford. [Read on ...](#)

(Image courtesy of White Mountain Art & Artists at www.whitemountainart.com.)

AMC TC Centennial Celebration Update

The 100th anniversary of the founding of the AMC Trail Crew is just around the corner **(August 23-25, 2019)**.



You and your spouse or significant other and children are invited!

We hope you mark your calendars and reserve the weekend to gather with your former crew mates to celebrate this occasion. There will be an agenda of activities with ample free time to reminisce with former crew mates or share stories with crews of different years.

Since the last newsletter we have recruited Nik Santagate (1976-1979) to manage the Centennial commemorative hats, T-shirts, and polar fleece jackets, each bearing the AMC TC 100th anniversary logo. These products will be shown with logo on the website when the details have been completed. They will be available for ordering at cost.

The logo design is still under construction, with a few artistic alumni working on designs. We look forward to sharing the logo design with you soon.

Additionally we have hopes of creating a high quality poster with spectacular graphics and the names of all crew through the 100 years of our history, as a frame-able, commemorative item. We'll keep you posted.

Lee Burnett (1974-1976) and Bob White (1975-1978), along with Bob Proudman are working on grants to help fund the research and fabrication of history tablets telling the story of trail development in the White Mountains. They have engaged with Andrew Norkin, AMC Director of Trails, to make this a TC-AMC joint venture. This is just one of three Camp Dodge enhancements the Centennial Planning Group has initiated to celebrate our 100th anniversary. The tablets are expected to be mounted under the pavilion at Camp Dodge. They will serve as an educational gift from the AMC TC to those with a love of the Whites.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

The planning and execution of the Centennial celebration requires detailed logistics---we need your help-we need lots of volunteers where each will manage one small aspect of this event-to help make it a success. Please contact Jake at (bruce.jacobson.42@gmail.com). **I am hoping to hear some peeps from across the wilderness.** We'll plug you in-at the level you want to commit. Don't be shy!

Best,
Jake (Bruce Jacobson)
TC 1975-77, TM 1977, Virgin Island Service Trip 1986

Centennial Initiative: Calling veterans of the AMC White Mountain Professional Trail Crew

Get your Professional Trail Crew Shirt !

These shirts may now be purchased by any former member of the AMC Professional White Mountain Trail Crew. Below are links to two documents that will describe the shirt options in detail, but in summary:

[First](#), is an LLBean catalogue that shows the shirts, the logos, the logo color choices, sizes available and the catalogue stock numbers that identify each of the options. It also includes the LLBean size charts for men and women. **Please note that the prices shown do not include a \$6.95 shipping fee per shirt, and any sales tax appropriate to the location of the purchaser.**



[Second](#), is an Excel spreadsheet order form. This form can be used by an individual buying one or a few shirts as a work sheet to simplify organizing the information needed to place an order by phone at the number shown at the top of the form. If ordering a large number of shirts the form can be filled out and a screen shot of the form emailed to LLBean at business@llbean.com LLBean.

In filling out the form each row in the form must be filled out from left to right, so that the proper drop-down menus appear in the cell next to the right. These drop-down menus allow quick and easy choice of all the options available in the shirt of your choice.

Important: There are separate styles for men and for women, all in the same Hunter Green color, with a choice of two different logos - one that fits only on the men's shirt, and one that fits on either the men's or women's shirt; and finally, in addition to the choice of two different logos, each logo is available in a choice of three thread colors: white, mint green and brown.

This initiative was launched in collaboration by 2017 Trail Master Sam Kilburn, and carried on by 2018 Trail Master Marshall Pontrelli, with assistance from Ben English. This initiative was managed by Bob Watts and a member of the TCA Board of Directors, with the assistance of the LLBeanbusiness staff.

While the TCA is responsible for having launched this initiative, we're delighted to report that the AMC has agreed to buy each new first-year hire his or her own shirt at the start of each season - so we now have a valuable tradition in the making. All returning members of the crew this year already have their shirts, as will returning crew members in the years ahead. Only one shirt will be purchased for each member of the crew, though they may certainly buy additional shirts.

The TCA Board challenges all veterans of the AMC Pro Trail Crew to order a shirt and to wear it to the Centennial Celebration August 23-25, 2019!

Important Dates in 2018

Already
Completed
in May

Crew Leader Training
White Mountain Day
Axe Training Day

	Rock Training Day Patrols
June 1	Tales and Lies
June 4-8	Patrols (7th/8th-Presidentials - Best Patrol Ever!)
Woods Weeks Start	
June 11-15	Crawford Path, Mahoosuc Trail, Mop Up Week
June 18-June 22	Crawford Path, Mahoosuc Trail, AZ-Avalon
June 25-29	Crawford Path, Mahoosuc Trail, AZ-Avalon
July 2-6	Crawford Path, Mahoosuc Trail, AZ-Avalon
July 7-8	All Crew Days (location TBD)
July 9-15	Long Days
July 16-20	Crawford Path, Mahoosuc Trail, AZ-Avalon
July 23-27	Crawford Path, Mahoosuc Trail, AZ-Avalon
July 30-August 3	Crawford Path, Storm repair (location TBD)
August 4-5	Work Weekend At Shelburne Cabin
August 6-10	Crawford Path, Storm repair (location TBD)
August 13-17	Crawford Path, Storm repair (location TBD)
August 18	BASH

BOARD MEETINGS:

May 16, 2018

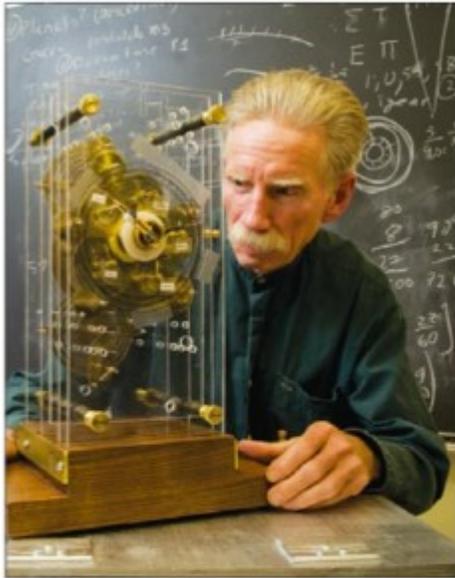
August 8, 2018

Reunion - November 10, 2018 weekend

The Passing of Dr. Alan S. Thorndike

Al Thorndike (Trail Crew 1963-66, TM 1965-66) died January 8, 2018 after a short bout with pneumonia. He was 72. He suffered from Parkinson's disease for 30 years; however, this hardly slowed him. He put more than 11,000 miles on his recumbent bicycle during his last two years of life in Maryland.

Alan was my Trail Master. I joined the crew in 1965, a greenhorn who jumped in feet first, totally enthusiastic. Three years older than me, he became like my big brother and nicknamed me "Bobe" (pronounced 'BOE-be') after the character Bobby Watson from Eugene Ionesco's theater of the absurd play The Bald Soprano... never knew why he picked that name, even 50 years later (when we talked about it)! But it stuck: at the end of that summer, all 11 other members of the 1965 Trail Crew thought my name was Bobby Watson! We



Alan with the model of the Antikythera mechanism, an ancient Greek analogue computer, that he constructed.

Photo by Ross Mulhausen

worked for Trails Supervisor Joe May and chief cook and house mother Sally May in Whitefield, N.H. It was an important and innovative time for Trail Crew.

Joe and others describe how those mid-1960's crews started to discern new trail hardening techniques, two of which Alan helped invent, bog bridging or "puncheon" as it was later called by the Forest Service, first installed through "the giant puddles" on the Webster Cliff Trail, and heavy duty rock work on the Mizpah Cut-off in 1965, the year the new Mizpah Hut was opened, which we later named rock boxes or cribs. (See two paragraphs in *One Hundred Summers*, p. 109, by Joe May and Mark Dannenhauer).

Joe now recalls that Alan always urged him to let the crew create and discover new ways to build and maintain trails, shelters, and other matters, including tool maintenance. While I don't think Al knew it then, they were both passionate teachers, and we're in many ways joined at the hip.

Alan wrote the introduction to *One Hundred Summers*, p. 1, which authors Natalie Beittel & Kyle Peckham snagged from Thorndike's "Trail Crew Thoughts" published in *Appalachia*, Volume 32, December 1965, and reprinted in the 2017 issue of TC's Chips & Clippings.

In that seminal piece, Alan named the Trail Crew "Caretakers of the Great Compromise" (my emphasis): The TFC as maintainers upholding the balance that prevents damage to the land, on the one hand, while providing safe access dispersing visitors to remote mountains, ridges and lakes on the other. Thus, Thorndike in many respects was the Trail Master who ushered in trails conservation during the burgeoning 1970s when thousands of hikers first hit the Whites.

With a family full of physicists, Alan did not want to follow their footsteps. As an avid hiker, distance runner, mountaineer and alpinist, he decided on geophysics, and got his PhD from the University of Washington in 1978. Thereafter, Alan was one of the early scientists studying the Arctic sea ice and climate change. At the age of 29, he was named Chief Scientist on the ice for the Arctic Ice Dynamics Joint Experiment and was one of the founding members of what is now the Polar Science Center at the University of Washington. Alan is credited with



developing the notion of the thickness of the sea ice as a variable, a concept that is at the heart of most sea ice models used today. While on the ice, Alan was crucial to the scientific planning and field execution, and told me once of being stalked by a polar bear. As it happened, leading the "field execution" included rescuing a colleague who slipped down a snow slope and directing the evacuation of the main Big Bear camp when the runway broke up in October 1975. As on Trail Crew, Alan was an early master discerning and measuring the dynamics of global climate change.

While it took some years, Alan's professional passion finally emerged, teaching. He joined the faculty at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington in 1983, after his time as a geophysicist. At UPS, he became the second University Professor of the Natural Sciences and was awarded emeritus status as a Professor of Physics upon his retirement in 2012. Alan checked all of the boxes as a member of the academy: publishing papers in peer reviewed journals, chairing his department, serving on faculty and board committees, and organizing academic programming such as the Max Planck Symposium, which he hosted in honor of the 100th anniversary of the quantum.

But he was most proud of his contributions as a teacher, often enabled by his skilled craftsmanship of wood and metal. He loved to recreate famous physics experiments, such as the Zeeman effect, with students in his lab. He innovated with teaching both within his department (at one point attempting to teach electromagnetism "backwards") and across disciplines (including courses on the Origins of Life and climate modeling). He designed the multi-story Foucault pendulum that hangs in the university's Harned Hall and built the Pemrose tiling that lies beneath it. But his crowning achievement at the intersection of physics and craftsmanship was the model he built, based on the conceptual theories of his colleague, Jim Evans, of the Antikythera Mechanism - a 2,200 year old device, which went undiscovered for 1,900 years, that has been labeled the world's first computer and is believed to model the movement of celestial bodies. (See picture and look it up in your favorite search engine; it's worth the read.)

Avid lifelong sailor, distance runner (and later biker), trail master, geophysicist, musician, carpenter, professor, loving husband, father and grandfather, Alan died peacefully and, in the words of his younger brother Karl (TC 1967-69), "saved him and his family from the hideous endgame of Parkinson's. He lived with this disease far longer than expected and through his strong will managed to do so many of the things he enjoyed for so long."

Bob

Bob Proudman, TCA President, with aid from the obituary written by Alan's and Louise's son, John Thorndike.

The Passing of Ted Brown

Ted had one of the longest careers on the trail crew having served 6 years in 1943, 1944 (co-TM), 1945 (TM), and in 1947-49.

Significantly, Ted served as a Co-Trail Master in only his 2nd year on the crew, and Trail Master his 3rd year, a reflection of the difficulty the AMC had during the WWII man-power shortage, when many high school-age (and therefore non-draft eligible) men were hired to fill military ranks (U.S. WWII years, 1941-45). This was also an indication of Ted's natural woodsmanship, enthusiasm and leadership ability.



Ted and his wife lived in Jackson, NH for many years, and many TCA members had the pleasure of meeting Ted two years ago when he accepted the Golden Axe Award on behalf of the late Jack Hutton, with whom he served on the crew in 1943. Ted genuinely enjoyed answering the many questions from the assembled TCA members about his years on the crew and working with the legendary John Hutton.

From The Conway Daily Sun, April 2, 2018:



Ted grew up in Providence, R.I., and graduated from Brown University. He came to the White Mountains in his teens to work on the Appalachian Mountain Club Trail Crew. He fell in love with the mountains, coming back each year.

He eventually started working in Jackson, where he met his late wife, Carol, while they were working together at Spruce Mountain Lodge. Although life took the two to other places, they eventually returned to Jackson to settle permanently.

Over the years, Ted hiked almost every AMC trail in New Hampshire. He was an encyclopedia of trail lore and could stand on any peak and name every hill and mountain to the horizon.

In addition to being a life-long hiker, Ted was a skier, outdoorsman, and RVer. He traveled throughout the United States. A history buff, he collected anything (and everything) about woodsmanship. He had a particular interest in his beloved White Mountains.

He spent a number of years researching an obscure half-track logging tractor known as a Lombard steam log hauler. Used at the turn of the twentieth century, this ungainly machine was an early snow tractor, traveling half on skis and half on caterpillar tracks. Ted spent many a trip scouring the sites of old logging camps looking for bits and pieces of the machines.

By Robert Watts (1952-1955) and Robert Proudman (TCA President, Crew 1965-68, Supervisor 1971-78)

**Annual Reunion -
Mark your Calendar!
Saturday, November 12th, 2018**
For reservations a Joe Dodge Lodge:
Call AMC Reservations at

603-466-2727 (Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm)
Ask to reserve for the Trail Crew
Reunion, Reservation #393326
Rates: \$69/pp (family room, shared bath)
or \$60/pp (bunk room, shared bath), includes
dinner and breakfast



**Stay connected--If your address or email changes...
please email bhwhiton@maine.rr.com**



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