

# Steps & Scree

E-news from the Trail Crew Association

May 2019

## First campaign is built for now and for the long haul

The \$200,000 capital campaign to raise funds for enhancements to Camp Dodge is attracting strong early support and has been structured to endure beyond the immediate campaign as a legacy of the late Bob Proudman.

The Proudman Opportunity Fund will cover any unanticipated overages related to the Camp Dodge Enhancement Projects, but what's most exciting to me is that for the very first time, TC is launching a fund that knits together our multi-generational brothers and sisters in a cause for the next hundred years. Our goal is to build an endowment fund--a legacy to live on and help future Crew access financial resources to fulfill their mission as trail experts in the White Mountains. So...know that beyond the Centennial Capital Campaign which engages us now, the Proudman Fund will grow as a target of future fundraising efforts and as a receiver of legacy gifts and estate bequests. It's exciting to me to help tap into the hundreds of former TC who have a deep interest and commitment to the White Mountains, trails, and future Crew.

The three Camp Dodge enhancements include a stone plaza and seating wall integral to the new Hutton Lodge, a demonstration trail construction area and interpretive panels celebrating trail building history. Kudos to Bob White, Peter Jensen and Lee Burnett for taking on leadership roles.

You will be hearing more as time goes on from the Centennial Committee (Bruce Moffatt, Lee Burnett, Bob Biddle, and Jake Jacobson, ex-officio). Our 100th Anniversary is, without exaggeration, a once-in-a-lifetime occasion to step forward and show your support for the AMC Trail Crew, which has significantly shaped our lives in so many positive ways. Our goal is for all crew alums to contribute at a level that is personally significant. Please call Steve Rice, Campaign Chair, @ 717-360-2124 to discuss a gift or to connect via [srice2@gmail.com](mailto:srice2@gmail.com). We are also looking for a few additional volunteers to help with the fundraising effort. Please let us hear from you!

Steve Rice, Chair  
Centennial Campaign Committee

## TFC joins powerhouse group to rebuild Crawford Path



AMC Trail Crew worked with a dozen other trail crews on Crawford Path in 2018, taking team work to a new level.



Crawford Path benefited from 31 crew weeks of work during summer 2018. Some 43 crew weeks are planned for summer 2019.

An epic project continues on Crawford Path this summer. Helicopters, alpine rigging, and as many as five crews at a time will be deployed in the top-to-bottom reconstruction of the historic trail. It's a heavy lift, but they're getting it done.

The show of muscle is the kickoff project of the White Mountain Trail Collective, a path-breaking new trail group that is tackling projects only dreamed of before. In its two years of existence, the group has not only tapped new corporate and philanthropic funding but is also attracting participation from all kinds of groups - including the AMC Trail Crew - that have never worked together before. All of a sudden, trail building is entering a new era.

Curious to learn more, I attended the collective's second annual gathering at Plymouth State College in late April. It drew about eighty people. In attendance were trail groups from as far away as Mount Cardigan and Vermont. More surprising were the non-trail-group allies such as REI, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and a professor from SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry studying collaborative organizations. AMC was well represented by Trails Supervisor Zack Urgese, Director of Trails and Outdoor Recreation Andrew Norkin, and VP of operations Paul Cunha.

My takeaways were these:

- Many trail groups can't keep up with deteriorating trail conditions because of the dual whammy of monster storms and a decline in traditional volunteerism.
- Individuals and organizations are stepping up in new ways.
- The collective's strength is both in the brawn it can mobilize as well as the mentoring and skill-building it can spread.

The deplorable condition of many trails was brought home by veteran peak bagger Michael Stonebraker. The sad situation may be difficult to appreciate by those of us accustomed to AMC trails, but we're responsible for less than a quarter of the 1,400 miles in the Whites. Stonebraker was quite persuasive about the "degraded experience" of hiking on stream-bed trails, steep scree slopes and just plain "gnarly trails." Conditions are also worsening because of the diversion of resources necessitated by the frequency of monster storms. The US Forest Service has quantified the deficit of unmet trail needs at \$20 million. Ponder that.

Stonebraker, a big name in data research, is one individual who is stepping up. He announced at the gathering his personal pledge of \$25 K per year toward White Mountain trails. The NH Charitable Foundation is matching that with \$34 K from two anonymous donors for a new source of ongoing support. REI, which is opening a new store in North Conway, has also committed \$100 K each of the first two years. Tempering the good news, no one knows how long the REI support will continue.

There was some real angst at the gathering about how to unlock volunteerism among younger hikers. Dr. Jill Weiss spoke about hikers' changing motivations. "There are going to be more of them and they're going to be different," she said. "They hike for competition. They hike for selfies." Supposedly, the stewardship ethic is weak among this cohort, although fostering one is an absolute necessity given the current situation, said Melanie Luce, the new executive director of collective. "If you're hiking it, if you're using it, you should be helping out," she said. "We're here because you're here."

Take it as a good sign that recruiting and managing volunteers is a strong suit of one of the collective's leaders. Cristin Bailey started as a volunteer at Camp Dodge, rose to become AMC trails supervisor and now serves as US Forest Service trails manager in the Saco District where she has

supervisor and now serves as US Forest Service trails manager in the Saco District, where she has built up volunteer corps. She was project manager of the Crawford Path project last year. For Bailey, the collective is as much about mentoring and sharing skills across organizational lines as it is about mega projects. "It's all about leveraging skills," she said.

Take it as another good sign that ED Luce owns a marketing, branding and social media business. Instagram-worthy photos, such as the those above taken by Joe Klementovich, are valuable currency in this new era.

The AMC Trail Crew is already playing a big role in the collective, accounting for more crew weeks last summer than any other organization. Crew is also well-positioned to play a bigger role with the move next summer to new quarters at Camp Dodge. Camp Dodge is being upgraded to serve as a regional trails training center.

How does TCA fit in this new era? I like to think the Centennial Capital Campaign is our way of stepping up. It's a first for us and many of us are outside our comfort zones. But we're getting to know each other better. We're figuring it out. And we're getting stronger as we go. Minus the blackflies, isn't that a good description of the crew experience? It's a heavy lift. Let's get it done. -- Lee Burnett

**We want to hear from you. [Write a few short sentences here](#) about your post-crew life. Your friends will thank you! In the meantime, read some Centennial news flashes below:**

**Name:** Mark Morrow

**Current hometown:** Jamaica Plain, MA

**Years on crew:** 1973-1976 (TM '76)

**Career:** Currently deputy senior managing editor at Boston Globe. Earlier, as projects and investigations editor at the Globe, I was part of the supporting cast that won two Pulitzers. I'm the editor involved who doesn't appear in the movie "Spotlight," if you were wondering.



**How did crew affect your career**

**choice/approach to work?** My crew years were a proving ground in fellowship, discipline, and leadership which helped form the adult me. So, in that sense, while my work choices didn't directly grow out of the TC experience, they were surely affected by it, because everything was. I also retained a taste for brute force labor in my off hours, now mostly manifest in work on the NH farm my family has owned for 60 years.

**How do you use trails in your life**

**Name:** Sam Kilburn

**Current hometown:** Boulder, Colorado

**Years on crew:** 2014 - 2017

**Career:** Ranger, Ski Patrolter, Firefighter



**How did crew affect your career**

**choice/approach to work?**

Being on crew changed my work ethic and ability to endure suffering. A shit day as a ranger or a rainy day on ski patrol has nothing on spending all week in a mud pit on the Mahoosuc Trail. The AMC Trail Crew solidified that I want

to spend my life working on improving public



**How do you use trails in your life today?** Not nearly enough! Beyond a series of annual father-son excursions, I haven't been nearly as much in the mountains as would have been good for me. Part of that is a function of falling pretty badly out of shape, a sorry trend line aggravated by a sedentary job, a severe arm injury that sidelined me for a good while, and late-life sloth, I guess. I see the young me who chased Steve Rice up Garfield, essentially at a run, for miles, and wonder where that dude went.

**How often do you get together with crew friends and what do you do?** I ran into a tough stretch, personally, right after my Trailmaster summer ended, and, in the darkness, lost track of several layers of friends, including my crew friends. Aside from very occasional contact with a few good souls who have reached out to me over the years, I have been completely off the crew grid. It is something I deeply regret. I'm especially sick at heart that I didn't see Bobe, who entrusted so much to me and whom I so admired and loved, before he died.

**Most vivid crew memory?** There are so many that stick vividly in memory, including a couple that border on juvenile delinquency - like Dynamite at the bash, or pry-barring a truly massive boulder off the Lafayette ridge and watching it bounce and crash through the woods below. Also almost anything to do with Vara. But I think my summary memory might be of my first week on the crew, which began with the nervous, expectant ride in the back of the Doggy, heading off for the 20-mile "Death Hump" clearing blow-downs from the mouth of the Gale River Trail to the end of the Wilderness Trail, if I recall right, and ended with the all crew meal Friday night at Hutton, where the gods - Jon Coe and the other fourth-year men were shoulder-to-shoulder at one end of the table and in their manly hilarity, mostly-true tales, strange private argot, and loud camaraderie epitomized what it was all about, and what might be in store for me.

**What life lessons did you learn from crew?** That young people can organize themselves quite amazingly and do remarkable things; that really hard work can be weirdly fun; that a rather modest teen-aged frame can lug an amazing amount amazingly far; and that among life's sweetest possessions are well-worn Limmers (mine have long-since rotted away) and the double-blade that was - somewhat incredibly in retrospect - entrusted to my 18-year-old hands. It felt like Excalibur.

to spend my life working on improving public land.  
**How do you use trails in your life today?** I walk on trails every single day when I'm out working as a ranger.

How often do you get together with crew friends and what do you do?

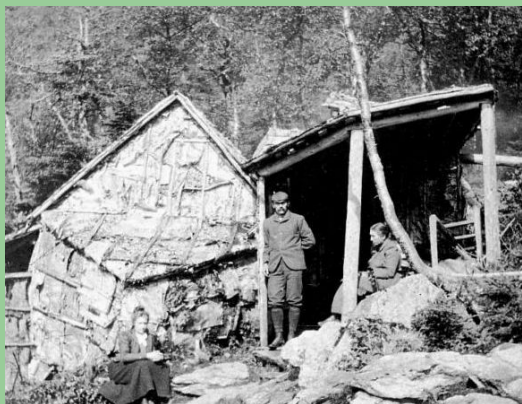
**How often to you get together with crew friends and what do you do?** Both Thor (14-17) and Uni (15-16) live out in Colorado near me, and we try to get together every month for beers or a hike.

**Most vivid crew memory?** The Fourth of July 2017 from the summit of Eisenhower. We had watermelon, Budweisers, burgers, hot dogs, and an American flag flying from the summit cairn. BFG ate a season-high 6 bacon cheeseburgers and 5 hot dogs. Smathers, Nova, Wrench, BFG and I watched hundreds of firework displays explode around us, had a rock fight, and then fell asleep.

**What life lessons did you learn from crew?** You can push yourself a lot further than you previously thought. Trail crew glory is forever, but so is your body: take care of yourself.

## Gimme Shelter!

A unique vernacular architecture - with many variations - developed in the White Mountains in response to site conditions, the needs of hikers and the creativity of builders. The text and photos below are drawn from the White Mountain trail building history project to be permanently installed at Camp Dodge. A mock up will be ready for display at Centennial Reunion Aug 24.



In the 19th century, hiking shelters were little more than provisional bark shelters developed by hunters and anglers. The Perch, pictured here in 1901, blew down in the 1938 Hurricane and was replaced by something sturdier.



By the early 20th century, classic Adirondack-style lean-tos became the norm. In 1935, the federal government standardized the design by publishing architectural drawings, which were used to build Coppermine Shelter, pictured here.



Some 17 shelter styles have been documented in the White Mountains. Ethan Pond Shelter, built in 1957, shows unusual vertical log construction necessitated by small timber in the area



A contemporary rustic design is featured in the replacement of Speck Pond Shelter in 2017. Massive pine logs were cut to fit off site, then flown in and assembled under direction of Wooden House Company of Newbury, Vt., owned by TFC alum John Nininger.

## Capital Campaign picks up steam

The Centennial Campaign Committee continues in the early stages of the TCA's \$200,000 Centennial Campaign to fund three Camp Dodge Enhancement (CDE) projects, and to establish the Bob Proudman Opportunity Fund. Bob White has done a terrific job designing a campaign brochure and a campaign logo, with solid help from several contributors. CDE project leaders (Lee Burnett, Historical Interpretive Panels about the history of trail design, development, and maintenance in the Whites; Bob White, the Stone Plaza and Seating Wall to be integral with the new Hutton Lodge; and Peter Jensen, Demonstration Trail Building/Maintenance techniques) are in early stages of project planning and contract design. And, we are working closely with AMC to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or "road map" to guide our collaboration.

The Centennial Committee (Bruce Moffatt, Lee Burnett, Bob Biddle, and Jake Jacobson, ex-officio), is pursuing leadership gifts in the early stages of fundraising, and while our goal is large, we are encouraged that with hard work and your generosity as a TC alum, we will achieve it! Our 100th Anniversary is, without exaggeration, a once-in-a lifetime occasion to step forward and show your support for the AMC Trail Crew, which has significantly shaped our lives in so many

show your support for the AMC Train Crew, which has significantly shaped our lives in so many positive ways.

The Committee's goal is for all TC alums to participate in the Campaign at a level that is personally significant. Please call Steve Rice, Campaign Chair, @ 717-360-2124 to discuss a gift or to connect via [srice2@gmail.com](mailto:srice2@gmail.com). We are also looking for a few additional volunteers to help with the fundraising effort. Please let us hear from you!

Steve Rice, Chair

Centennial Campaign Committee

**How are your tech skills? Are you handy with editing, web development or data base management? Apply here for a top-tier volunteer role.**

**And meanwhile, stay connected--If your address or email changes...**

**[please email leeburnett\\_maine@hotmail.com](mailto:leeburnett_maine@hotmail.com)**