

2012 Schedule of Events

Weekend Strolls, View Clearings and More



- May 5** **Wildflower Walk** with Libby Mills and Carol Westing. A favorite stroll to discover the ephemeral spring flowers of the hardwood forest. Meet at the WW Church at 2pm.
- June 2** **Early Morning Birding Walk to the Pinnacle** with Richard Foye, birder extraordinaire. Great opportunity to fine tune “birding by ear” skills. Meet at Holden Trail parking area EARLY - 7:00 a.m. (when birds are most active.)
- July 7** **Athens Dome Spruce Bog Area.** Leader TBA. Meet at Nature Museum at Grafton At 10am. Plan on a longish hike (3+ hrs.) Bringing water, lunch, and bug dope!
- August 4** **Clearing Day at the Pinnacle.** Please help to keep the spectacular view at the Pinnacle open! Bring loppers and gloves, water lunch/snack. Meet at 10am at the Pinnacle shelter.
- September 15** **Accessibility Day** - This is a once-a-year opportunity for a vehicle ride to a special site for those who are unable to hike, along with those who can hike, to be led by Arthur and Carol Westing. Meet at 11am at the WW Church. Please call 387-5737 to register for a ride.
- September 29** **WHPA 20th ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EVENT**
Celebrating with Vermont Housing & Conservation Board and Vermont Land Trust, our partners. To be held near Wild Shepherd Farm in Athens. Guided walks, special guest speakers from the conservation movement, music, luncheon and more!!! More details to come.
- October 21** **Long Distance Hike** with Rebecca Nixon. Day hike to traverse the northern section of the WHPA trail system from the Holden Trailhead to Athens Cemetery. Bring water, food, and good footwear for 4 to 5 hour hike. A shuttle will be provided back to your car. Meet at Holden Trailhead at 10am. Call 722-9047 to register.
(rain date Oct. 28)
- October 27** **Clearing at Paul's Ledges.** Please help to keep the beautiful view open at Paul's Ledges in Athens. Bring loppers and gloves, water, and lunch/snack. Meet at 10am at Pauls' Ledges.
- November 3** **Bald Hill Hike** with Randy Major. Discover earthworks and other places of interest on Bald Hill. Meet at Bellows Falls High School parking lot at 1pm.

For more information visit our website: www.windmillhillpinnacle.org

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Hill Association Annual Meeting

April 28, 2012

At the Westminster West Church

Agenda

9:30 Gather for refreshments and socializing

10:00 Business Meeting begins

State of the Association – Camilla Roberts, Chair of the Board

Committee Reports

Finance

Outreach

Program

Trails

Land Management

Acquisitions

Bald Hill

Athens Dome at Grafton

Board Development

Election of Board Members: Renewing and new trustees

Speaker: Chris Petrak

Birds to Look and Listen For When Hiking on the Trails

Awards

12:00 Meeting ends: Carpooling to the trailhead for hiking to the Pinnacle for a picnic

1:00 Picnic at the Pinnacle

Chris Petrak is an avid birdwatcher and photographer who is also a writer. His column “Tailfeathers” is a regular feature in the Commons, Brattleboro’s Independent News-source. His recently published book “Tails of Birding” will be available at this program.



Chris’ presentation will be “Tropical Birds of Vermont” - A look at a variety of tropical birds that come north from Central and South America for the summer to breed: vireos, flycatchers, warblers, thrushes - including the Hermit Thrush, Vermont’s State bird - as well as many songbirds. Chris will be showing slides and talking about these long distance migrants and the challenges they face on their travels.

FOUNDERS continued from front page

tions the natural character of those lands, the wild plants and animals they support, and their aesthetic and inspirational values. And it was that visionary approach that was to make it possible to write successful grant proposals to private foundations and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board for most of the funds needed for the sizable costs of acquisition, management, and insurance.

— Arthur H. Westing
Putney, Vermont
8 March 2012

Note: The author was fortunate to be able to contact all of the other seven founding members for their suggestions regarding this historical note, and is grateful for their contributions. This document complements his 2008 *A Brief History of the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association*.

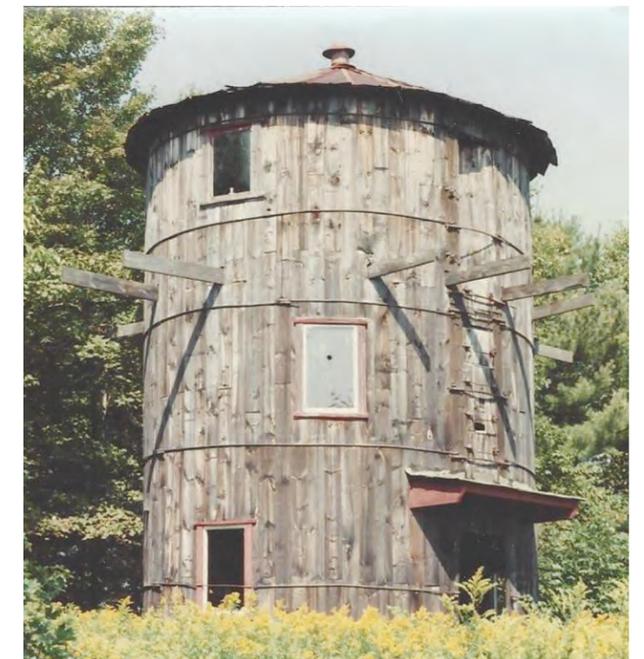


Photo by Matt Condon

This old wood staved silo, just north of the Holden Trail and the old road up through the Littman’s property, was built as a camp by the Bissell family. From the top the view was spectacular; even now, from the remaining cement base, there is a sweeping view to the north. Eventually the structure became unsafe, and under Pinnacle direction it was intentionally burned to the ground. In its time, the silo was a distinct part of the Westminster West scene. Write us with your memories!



WHPA News

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WHPA: the Founders and their Early Struggles

When Jamie Charles Latham (1968-1991) of Westminster West died in a tragic accident, his family and friends concluded that permanent access to the Pinnacle on the western boundary of Westminster (a traditional local hiking destination, although then in private hands) would make a most fitting memorial to this lover of the outdoors in general and that beautiful landmark in particular. So it was that Jamie's mother Alison Latham, together with seven other local residents

and good friends of either Alison or Jamie, began what was to become an arduous several year mission to acquire the desired public access to it. Thus, the original group of eight was comprised of Robert Haas (a farmer), Alison Latham (an accountant), Sean Long (then a medical salesperson), Beverly Major (a kindergarten teacher), Michael McKernan (a musician and then an anthropology graduate student), Arthur Westing (an ecology professor), Carol Westing (a special education teacher), and Ellen Zimmerman (a special education paraprofessional).

The group soon decided that in order to best achieve their aim of public access to the Pinnacle it would be necessary to establish a formal organization. So in 1992 they founded the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association, with Beverly Major serving as its President, Alison Latham as its Secretary and Registered Agent, and Ellen Zimmerman as its Treasurer. The Association adopted a Charter and Bylaws in July 1992, became a Vermont non-profit corporation in 1993, and then both a federally and Vermont tax-exempt corporation in 1994 and 1995.

This fledgling Association met at least monthly, struggling continuously for the ensuing several years to find such access. Every southerly and easterly abutting landowner to the Pinnacle (some quite hard to locate) was approached for permission to establish a trail for public access over



October 1997 ribbon cutting on Jamie Latham Trail
L-R: Roger Haydock, Bob Haas, Alison Latham, Carol Westing, Bev Major, Doris Fredericks, Sean Long, Marie Wright

their land, although without success. The stalemate was finally on its way to being broken when in September 1994, through the good will of Winifred Bissell, the Association obtained an option to purchase her 48 acres lying immediately to the north of the Pinnacle. Then in early 1995 a most welcome offer was made to the Association by the then owners of the Pinnacle, Jonas and Elizabeth Littman, to actually donate that peak with its surrounding 47 acres if access to the Pinnacle could, indeed, be found away from their house site. Thus in

June 1995 Alison Latham, through an act of determination and daring, privately purchased 175 acres lying on the ridge somewhat to the north of the Pinnacle, although not contiguous with the Bissell parcel — with her hope that the Association would in time be able to acquire both what she had just bought and the intervening land. Then in January 1996, the Association made its own first purchase, that of Bissell's 48 acres, with its old, wood staved silo. Thus it was that in August 1997 everything did finally fall into place to achieve the long sought for access to the Pinnacle. It was in that fateful month that the Association was able to augment its prior purchase of the 48-acre Bissell parcel by additionally purchasing Latham's 175 acres as well as 140 acres from the Littmans, which together closed the gap — and thereby having the Littmans graciously donate the Pinnacle with its cabin and surrounding 47 acres. And the rest is history!

Finally it is important to mention that Judith Anderson (a land trust consultant who had grown up in Westminster West) joined the Association Board in 1996. And it was she who steered the Board in the direction of "thinking big", that is, for the group to not merely strive toward acquiring the Pinnacle itself, but rather to expand its vision to save in perpetuity as much of the Windmill Ridge as feasible, not only in order to make it accessible, but at the same time to protect for present and future genera-

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Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association



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