



Pinnacle News

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association FALL 2016

The 2nd Great Transformation

The restoration of our stone-and-wood cabin at the Pinnacle overlook is well underway! Built in 1964, given to WHPA in 1997 by the Littmans, and transformed into the present-day shelter in 1999, the cabin has succumbed to the ravages of time and weather. Work beyond the scope of even our most amazing Pinnacle volunteers spurred the creation of a cabin-renovation committee and a special campaign to fund essential repairs for the cabin's 2nd Great Transformation.

The plan is to complete all work this fall. Along with initial support from a core of enthusiasts, grants were secured from Mascoma Bank and the Windham Foundation. Those first contributions encouraged the WHPA Board to make a gigantic leap of faith and start repairs before all necessary funds were in hand.

In addition, Master Builder Phil Pellerin had time to start work in August. Weather was dry, and Pinnacle had amassed sufficient donations to responsibly commit to the work. Thus that leap of faith while WHPA appeals to supporters, people who have stayed at the cabin, and people who welcome the shelter's refuge from sun, heat, and storms for hikers, overnights, and students.

Still to go: Finish the west wall; add new windows, fireplace repair, escape ladder.

We're asking all Pinnacle supporters and cabin lovers to send a donation now, either online or by mail, to help us finish the project before winter. Please visit our website to discover what will be done, what has been done, pictures of the renovation process, and ways to help us improve our beloved rustic landmark and protect it for generations to come.

Below left: Isaac and Phil Pellerin dismantle the cabin's stone west wall.
Below right: West stone wall is completely removed, and foundation is being repaired prior to rebuilding the stone section.
Right: Rebuilt stone corner.
Far right: Fairy House Pinnacle Cabin, built by Lois Barber, shows the old west stone wall and was WHPA's entry in The Nature Museum at Grafton's 2016 Fairy House Festival.



Recent Highlights

Trails. As always, our trails are in excellent shape, thanks to our trail stewards, who will take care of any remaining downed trees caused by dry conditions this summer. One new project is to reroute a steep, eroded section of the Headwaters Trail. In addition, a small core of determined workers continues their efforts to remove invasive plants – particularly both common and glossy buckthorn.

Athens Dome. Roger Haydock, trail blazer extraordinaire, has re-disced all trails in this section.

Did You Know...

WHPA voluntarily pays property taxes on every acre of land that we steward? The Pinnacle Association is conscious of the importance of tax revenue for the five towns in which our properties are located: Athens, Brookline, Grafton, Rockingham, and Westminster. Our tax policy increases local support for our conservation efforts.



Volunteer of the Year

At the 2016 Pinnacle Association Annual Meeting, retiring Pinnacle Chair Susan Roman presents a thank-you gift to retired sheet metal worker, WHPA volunteer, and dedicated trail steward Joe Richards of Westminster West, who was proclaimed Pinnacle Volunteer of the Year. An avid bike rider, Joe regularly rides Pinnacle trails and became a trail steward for his favorite: the Latham Trail, which, because of Joe's hard work, is ALWAYS in perfect shape. Joe is also Pinnacle's go-to man for chain saw work, new trail building, water bar and structural trail maintenance, and brush cutting of seasonal growth at Paul's Ledges and various parking areas. Joe also designed and fabricated the Iron Ranger donation box at the Holden Trail kiosk to encourage hikers and overnights at the cabin to donate to the upkeep of the cabin and its surrounding lands. Congratulations, Joe. You are an amazing volunteer and help keep Pinnacle trails safe and inviting for all hikers.

From the Board

Board Changes. Hayden Lake went off the Board of Trustees; Paul Rodrigue was elected to a one-year term at the Annual Meeting. New officers are Rick Cowan, Chair; Sarah Waldo, Vice Chair; Alison Latham, Treasurer; and Molly Wilson, Secretary.



Aims for the Pinnacle Year. The Board is united in pride for the almost 2000 acres preserved in the 25 years since WHPA's founding and is enthusiastic about continuing to expand our protected lands over an even larger swath of unfragmented habitat that supports healthy plants, animals, people, ecosystems, and watersheds.

WHPA recognizes the need to foster a new generation of conservationists by luring them onto our trails to experience nature's beauty and power first hand, as well as the need to grow our membership by becoming better communicators via both traditional and electronic media and by engaging potential participants with new programs.

All involved look forward to the completed renovation of our signature structure, the Pinnacle Cabin, the most popular destination for thousands of hikers who enjoy our 23-mile trail system. Progress is being made at an impressive rate. While we're still seeking funds to do all we feel is necessary, we're proud to announce that support for this project has 100% Board participation. If you haven't contributed yet, we urge you to support this project now.

Rick Cowan, WHPA Chair



New officers Rick Cowan and Sarah Waldo get ready to check out progress on the renovation of the Pinnacle cabin.

Schedule of Events: Weekend Strolls

For more information and directions, visit www.windmillhillpinnacle.org or contact the program person listed below.

October 15, Saturday, 1-4 PM. Athens Dome Bear Hill Hike to Grafton Overlook. Bill Brown of the Grafton Improvement Association and Camilla Roberts and Paul Wilson of WHPA will lead hikers from Turner Hill Road steeply uphill over ledges to the summit, through spruce groves and fern glens on a beautiful trail with a northwest view of Target Rock. The hike will end at Kidder Hill Road, and participants will be shuttled back to the parking area. Dress warmly, wear sturdy shoes, bring water. Meet at the parking lot opposite The Nature Museum, 186 Townshend Road in Grafton. Because of carpooling, reservations are required. Contact Camilla Roberts at 802-869-1388 or camil@vermontel.net.



November 5, Saturday, 10 AM-noon. Bald Hill Hike. This moderate hike will explore both uplands and the river path of Bald Hill Reserve, as well as a new trail. Meet at the Bald Hill kiosk on Covered Bridge Road in Westminster. Wear waterproof shoes, bring water. Contact Vanessa Stern at 802-463-4948 or davidandvanessa@gmail.com.

Improvements at the Monadnock-Sunapee Viewpoint By Jeff Nugent

Whether or not you've ever been to the Sunapee-Monadnock Viewpoint, about 1.5 miles south of the Pinnacle, you should consider making a visit on your next hiking trip. Trail stewards have been making improvements with the goal of creating a complementary destination to the more well-known Pinnacle. They've felled numerous large and small trees to open up the rapidly disappearing view, particularly towards Mt. Sunapee. They've constructed a small bench to encourage visitors to sit and enjoy the scene. Last, they installed two interpretive signs highlighting key features visible in the now expanded view. Dedicated volunteers Hubey Folsom and Arthur Westing did much of the heavy chainsaw work, with additional help from Geordie Heller (Putney Mountain Association's Trail Crew Chair), and yours truly. Other volunteers over the years have included Randy Major, Carol Westing, Libby Mills, Martha Stitelman, and John Field. Sarah Waldo, WHPA's Trails Chair, assisted every step of the way.

On a visit to the viewpoint during a sunny summer weekend, we commented on its east-facing vista, wooded setting, and serene lack of visitors. The spot was quiet, cool, and shaded, and the forest filled with birdsong. It was indeed a different and complementary experience to the Pinnacle's west-facing, open, sunny, and sometimes crowded view. We encourage you to visit the Sunapee-Monadnock Viewpoint and, in this newsletter, suggest a variety of ways to enhance that journey!

The Monadnock-Sunapee Viewpoint has a helpful diagram on the tree at left that frames the magnificent view. This is another option to the nearby famous view at the Pinnacle. The next page gives you three different ways to get there.

Pinnacle Trustees & Officers 2016-2017

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John Field, Putney
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Paul Wilson, Cambridgeport



Ways to Visit the Monadnock-Sunapee Viewpoint

By Jeff Nugent

You can access the Monadnock-Sunapee Viewpoint from the popular Holden Trailhead, but why not arrive from a different, potentially new start? (For directions to the trailheads, see the "Access to Trailheads" Map on the WHPA website.)

Ed Dodd Trailhead, Holden Road, Westminster – 2.8 miles round-trip, about 500 feet of climbing

From this Putney Mountain Association (PMA) parking area, walk 0.8 miles on the Ed Dodd Trail's gentle grades to Five Corners, at the top of Windmill Ridge. Turn right and follow the white-marked Ridgeline Trail 0.6 miles north to the viewpoint. The Pinnacle is 1.8 miles farther along the trail.

Grassy Brook Trailhead, Grassy Brook Road, Brookline – 3.4 miles round-trip, about 1000 feet of climbing

Easily accessible from the West River Valley, PMA's Grassy Brook Trailhead is the beginning of the Windmill Hill Trail. Follow this trail, which climbs steeply 1.1 miles to Five Corners. Turn left and follow the white-marked Ridgeline Trail 0.6 miles north to the viewpoint. The Pinnacle is another 1.8 miles farther along the trail.

Holden Trailhead (WHPA), Windmill Hill Road North, Westminster – 3.6 miles round-trip, about 500 feet of climbing

Follow the Holden Trail 0.5 miles and continue straight on the blue-marked Headwaters Trail (the Holden Trail turns right). 1.2 miles from the trailhead, at the top of the ridge, turn left on the Ridgeline Trail and follow the white markers

south 0.6 miles to the viewpoint. On your return, you can continue on the Ridgeline Trail past the Headwaters Trail to the Pinnacle, then follow the red-marked Holden Trail back to the trailhead, for a total hike of 5.0 miles.



Online Information

The Resources section on the Pinnacle website lists the three Pinnacle nature guides that are also available at the Holden Trail and Dunn Nature Trail kiosks. These guides are a great way to make any visit more informative and special.



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Wanted: Your Email

If you haven't sent us your email address, please do. Then we can send you our newsletter and updates or last-minute notices about special events. This means faster contact with you while saving time, money, and trees.



The Saga of the Shelter

The shelter above Creature Rock is truly a Scout haven for the Boy Scouts of Troop 206 from Chester, VT. This will be the third summer for these busy young men to work on the shelter as an Eagle Scout project. The first Eagle Scout project was Earl Grennan's planned construction of the log walls. The second was Lliam Charlton's project to construct the gable ends, rafters, and purlins in preparation for the placement of the metal roof. The most recent Eagle Scout project this summer was headed by EJ Bromley and involved bringing up the materials for the roof and adding the wood base and metal sheathing. By mid-September the last section of the roof was done. Above, two Scouts work on the larger back section. Below, the front section completed first shows clearly the underneath of the back section visible inside. After some additional chinking and caulking, the floor will be the next project. We'll have more information on this summer's project as details and pictures come in. We are all eager to have this wonderful structure completed for hikers to enjoy.