

THE RESUSCITATOR

Maine End-of-Winter Special Stimulus Edition



THE OH ASSOCIATION 17 Brenner Drive, Newton, New Hampshire 03858

The O H Association is former employees of the AMC Huts System whose activities include sharing sweet White Mountain memories

THE THIRD ANNUAL OH SKI TRIP starts in Greenville on Friday, February 27 with the drive up to the plowed end of the logging road for the six-and-a-half mile cross-country trip into the AMC's Little Lyford Ponds Lodges. It's a wonderful way to say goodbye to winter, though Maine kind of likes to hold on for just about another month, which makes for great skiing without the bone-chilling cold experienced in January. This year, the OHA has just about filled the beds at Lyford on Friday and Saturday nights. On Sunday, about half the group will ski the seven-mile trail to Gorman Chairback Lodge which will be opened just for our group. On Monday, March 2, both groups will ski out.

For some of the OH skiers, this will be their fourth trip into the lodges since the AMC bought Lyford in 2003, followed by the purchase of 36,000 acres of the surrounding woodlands called Katahdin Iron Works. By this summer, a protected corridor of land roughly parallel to the 100-Mile Wilderness of the Appalachian Trail will have the final 29,000 acres purchased by the AMC to form a conservation framework about the size of the White Mountain National Forest: some 750,000 acres. It's a remarkable accomplishment of cooperation among conservation organizations working together to protect the land parcels from



AMC's Walter Graff shows map of land purchases around Lyford

the town of Monson to Baxter State Park, the biggest conservation tract east of the Mississippi River.

The AMC played a leading role in the negotiations with Plum Creek, a timber company and landowner that owned nearly a million acres of former paper company land. What is remarkable is that the OHA's OH Fund, as part of the AMC's 125th Anniversary Capital Campaign raised enough money from its membership to purchase Lyford, the first of three camps. Since then, Medawisla Wilderness Lodge and Gorman Chairback Lodge have been purchased to create a lodge-to-lodge skiing network, which will be fully operational in the winter of 2010 once improvements have been made to these last two lodges.

Meanwhile, the OHA just keeps rolling along with the generous support of the AMC's second phase of capital fundraising. More than \$800,000 has been raised to date by OH as part of the AMC's \$45 million campaign to buy the land, improve the facilities and create a trail network that has already received the national acclaim of *Outside* and *National Geographic Travel* magazines as top-notch recreational destinations. Though the ranks of the OHA are small in comparison to other groups within the AMC such as Chapters and Camps, no other constituency comes close to having as direct an impact on this project in terms of dollars raised, participation, and having fun!

Hence, this special digital edition of the *Resuscitator*, which is being emailed to this year's OH and friends ski group as well as to all the OHA, including participants of previous ski trips. There are some inter-



Linda McLane and Jill Hamilton relaxing by the fireplace in Lyford's dining room

esting comparisons to be made with the AMC's current involvement in Maine and the development of the hut system during the Joe Dodge management years of 1928-1959. Remote log structures seem to play an important part of building the hut system since the Pinkham Notch camps in which Joe started his storied career were originally several log cabins reached only by skis in the winter since the roads from Jackson and Gorham weren't plowed. Later, as business increased and the Pinkham Notch Highway was plowed, the log Trading Post was created by pushing two of the original cabins together to gain the necessary space for a kitchen, dining area, reception area, and crew sleeping quarters.

The original hut system consisting of Carter, Pinkham, Madison and Lakes were expanded by Joe when he developed the western division to link with these older huts. In 1929, he identified a log cabin formerly owned by the Profile House hotel then owned by the state of New Hampshire, which became Lonesome Lake Hut. Over the next three years, three new huts were built: Greenleaf in 1930, and in 1932 Galehead and Zealand, both out of logs cut from the surrounding area.

Fast-forward to the AMC's seeking another trail-networked facilities system as part of the 125th Anniversary Campaign. OH Gerry Whiting owned vacation property on Moosehead Lake and was familiar with the old sporting camps in the area. When he heard that the AMC was looking to hire an expert to identify land, at sites possibly in western Maine where the club could expand, he applied for and got the job because he made the case that the northern woods would be far more logical site near where the



Pinkham's Trading Post



Jed Davis and Linus Story on pots and pans



Original Lyford sign

Appalachian Trail ran its final remote 100-mile leg through this forestland. He knew paper companies were eager to sell off their sources of domestic pulp and get out of the land-ownership side of the business. Gerry also had the unique qualifications to get along well with the local Maine folks, having spent his career in the forestry business and having lived year-round in Yarmouth, Maine.

The camps he identified were built in the latter part of the 19th century when large-scale logging operations required that logging crews be housed in a series of log cabins close to their work. At the beginning of the 20th century, the camps were converted to hunting and fishing sporting camps, catering to clients who would arrive on the Amoskeag and Bangor Railroad in Greenville and spend several weeks. The timing was just right that Little Lyford Pond Camps owner Bob Leroy preferred selling his business to a conservation-minded organization rather than to a potential developer. Later, his brother Larry Leroy sold his Medawisla sporting camp north of Lyford to the AMC. The linkage of lodges was completed when the AMC bought Gorman Chairback .

OH who have visited the lodges find the remoteness and laid-back atmosphere an interesting comparison to their beloved White Mountains. Normally a weekend in the Whites starts with a brisk hike to a hut on Friday afternoon, maybe an overnight at one or two huts, and a return home on Sunday. Getting to the northern woods of Maine requires one more day to get to Greenville,



Gerry Whiting and Bob Leroy on Greenville road



Logging operation in spring



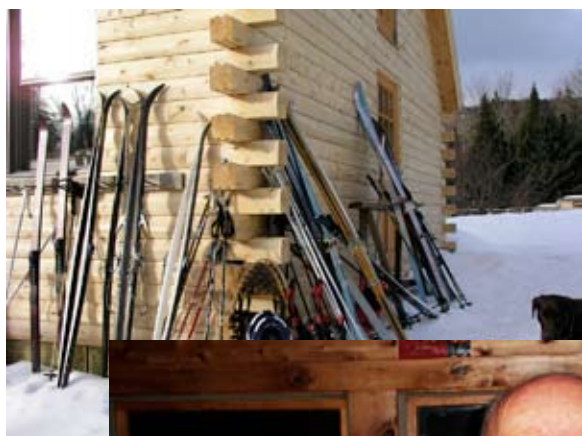
Plowed section of road from Greenville

an overnight in town and then heading off for three nights before returning on Monday, essentially adding two more days to a weekend getaway. But ask anyone who has made the trip, experienced the essence of northern Maine (some say like New Hampshire thirty or forty years ago), and they will tell you it's well worth the trip to take that extra time. Thoreau called it "the tonic of wilderness." The mountains in Maine

aren't as big as the Whites, but the woods are deeper, and if one climbs to Laurie's Ledge on nearby Indian Mountain and looks north to Katahdin on a clear day, there are no signs of mankind: not a building, not a power line, just trees.

A typical five-day trip starting on a Thursday and ending on a Monday involves driving the five hours from the Boston area. Carpooling makes good sense, not just for the economy and energy efficiency, but also for the conversation with friends. A convenient rendezvous place is the bus parking lot just south of the Portsmouth, New Hampshire circle on route 95, Exit 3 to Greenland. Because the exit takes one up and over Route 95, when coming back south it's easy to pickup the car.

On the approach to Greenville, the expanse of the lake unfolds to the north, so large that it can spotted from jets flying at 30,000 feet. The town is at the bottom of the hill at the southern-most tip of the lake, but first check into the Indian Hill Motel where many of the group spend Thursday night. Don't miss visiting the Indian Hill Trading Post south of the motel across the street. It is a rambling 35,000 square-foot building



Above: Skis lean on new kitchen addition to Lyford Lodge Below: Molly Ruffle and Chuck Kellogg



Indian Hill Trading Post
and Auntie M's



combining a large grocery store, small liquor store, heavy-duty working gear clothing, camping gear, a hunting and fishing tackle shop and virtually anything that you forgot to bring. Allow plenty of time to mosey about.

Thursday night, the group meets at a Greenville restaurant that will serve everyone, but don't be too late for dinner because the sidewalks are rolled up early. Check the desk clerk at Indian Hill Motel for an update which restaurant is serving the group.

Friday, the muscle power you'll soon be calling on requires a nourishing breakfast at Auntie M's, a local restaurant where snowmobilers, game wardens and other locals start their day. The Northwoods Outfitters is next door where we meet and greet. Here, the AMC staff supplies trail lunches and trail maps and briefs all skiers going in. Snowshoes and ski packages can be rented here, but it's worth calling ahead at 207 695 3288 and getting the gear on Thursday if possible or at least an hour before departure time. Northwoods has coffee, muffins and a little internet café for checking email before departing. They also have a full selection of more ski-oriented gear. Their changing rooms are convenient for getting into ski clothes. All-wheel drive cars are recommended to drive the 10 miles of road to the trail head, most of those miles being packed snow on dirt. Skiers are encouraged to car-pool from downtown Greenville, leaving



Friday morning orientation at Northwoods Outfitters

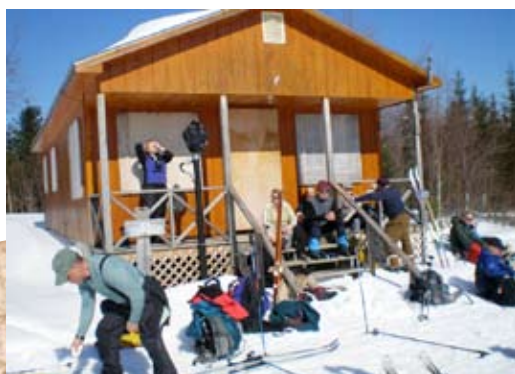


Bob Leroy loading trailer with weekend's wine



Not stylish, but effective downhill control

Lunch stop at Hedgehog Gate



their cars at the town parking lot across from Northwoods. At the end of the plowed road, AMC staff sees that the cars are parked so that they can be picked up on Monday without being hemmed in. All gear, which includes duffle bags and snowshoes, is loaded on a trailer pulled by an AMC snowmobile and shuttled into camp. Skiers have only to carry a small backpack with water, lunch and extra clothes depending on the weather forecast. Quick energy bars or power gel in a squeeze packet are recommended, particularly for that last hour when the legs sometimes feel rubbery. Hand warmers are good to carry because they stow easily in a pocket.

Now comes the fun. Groups push off together, most on skis, but some on snowshoes on the unplowed dirt road to Lyford, mostly moderate grades of ups and downs, except for one long downhill stretch that starts a couple of hundred yards from the parked cars. Depending on the snow conditions, even experienced skiers will take their skis off and walk down if it's icy. That first hill and the last stretch, which is the entrance road to Lyford, are the only two downhills that require walking if there's any doubt about one's ability to master the technique of downhill skiing on cross-country skis. Everyone skis on the road until reaching the Hedgehog checkpoint gate where one can choose to ski on the Hedgehog cross country trail, which has a slightly higher degree of difficulty and is about a half-mile longer than skiing on the road

Either way, once into camp, hot chocolate awaits the weary skiers before stowing gear in one of the cabins. Each cabin has a welded steel woodstove that with a bit of deft fiddling with the

drafts can hold a fire throughout the night and day. Propane lights provide adequate illumination, but it's a good idea to bring a headlamp for rummaging around in duffle bags, reading, and taking that midnight walk to the outhouse. All the cabins have their own outhouse or one can walk to the bathhouse for more creature comforts: hot showers, composting toilets, photovoltaic lighting and a wood-fired sauna.

Dinner is preceded by a gathering in the dining lodge for a bit of socializing before clearing off the appetizers to make the space available for a buffet. Dining tables are the same family-style as the huts, but chairs instead of benches provide a bit more comfort and function, better for after-dinner chatting and entertainment. A large fireplace and a few armchairs attract the few who want to debrief, but just about everybody calls it a day after the long day outside.

Saturday, after breakfast, everyone checks the weather report and makes a trail lunch from the generous selections laid out on the buffet table. The variety of day-trips include skiing to Gulf Hagas, an impressive gorge through which the Pleasant River flows. Skiers bring their snowshoes for walking along the rim trail to view the course of the river as it tumbles through the granite cuts. It's amazing to learn that the river was once used for floating logs during spring log drives, which required one of the narrower cuts to be blasted by dynamite to prevent logs from hanging up.

Other trips include snowshoeing up Indian Mountain to Laurie's Ledge, which offers the wilderness panoramic view to the north. Peter Grote will attempt to capture the view this year with his computerized



Lyford bathhouse and sauna



Jill Hamilton outside a Lyford cabin



Relaxing inside a Lyford cabin



wide-angle camera. Other choices for day-tripping are skiing around the Lyford Ponds or heading north toward the West Branch Camp, a privately-owned sporting camp halfway to the AMC's Medawisla Wilderness Lodge. It's even possible and acceptable to just put up one's feet, have a leisurely read in the dining lodge and be the first to the afternoon sauna.

Saturday night, after-dinner entertainment has become *de rigueur* for OH trips. This year promises several DVD presentations and James Draper's rendition of Robert Service's *Cremation of Sam McGee*.

Sunday, the daytrips that weren't selected on Saturday can be the order of the day, while half the group skis seven miles south to Gorman Chairback Lodge. Personal gear is transferred by snowmobile to ensure a light trip between the two camps. The Gorman cabins are similar to Lyford—rustic log structures facing Long Pond, one of which is octagon-shaped. The story goes that it was built by a one-armed Civil War veteran using smaller logs that he could handle more easily. The newly-renovated dining lodge and kitchen provides a cozy gathering spot for dinner and after-dinner companionship.

Monday, both groups ski out to their cars. Veterans of several trips are still discussing whether the trip in has more uphill than the trip out since they both seem to have more uphill legs than downhill.

To answer the question about skiing ability: The logging road in and out of Lyford is about six-and-half miles and is an easier choice than the Hedgehog trail for skiers or snowshoers. Now that several OH have snowshoed the distance, they can attest



Peter Grote's camera



James Draper, poet-in-residence



John Gross, Gerry Whiting, Sue Gross, and Ken Olson harmonizing

to enjoying the outing as much as the skiers, just at a slower pace. The Hedgehog trail was recently cut specifically for skiers and rated as intermediate with the trail turns cut at a wide enough angle so that the average skier can negotiate them. The same gentle turn trail design was utilized between Lyford and Chairback and is about seven miles.

This year, Chuck Kellogg and Dick Stetson, both accomplished skiers, will ski down from Medawisla to Lyford with a lunch stop at West Branch Camps. The lodge-to-lodge trip is about fourteen miles. A walk in the park for them.

Driving directions: From Boston (260 miles), travel north on I-95 to Exit 157 (old 39), the Newport exit. Take a left on Route 7 to Dexter. In Dexter, take a left on Route 23 north to Guilford. Keep a sharp eye out and check your map. The roads should be marked, but it can be confusing, particularly at Guilford where the Route 23 right hand turn is just before another right turn that will send you off in the wrong direction. At the end of Route 23 take a left on Route 15 north to Greenville. Northwoods outfitters is on the right in the center of town across from the Greenville municipal parking lot.

From Bangor (70 miles), take Route 15 north to Guilford. Turn right onto Route 15/Route 16/Elm Street. Continue to follow Route 15 to Greenville.

From Portland (155 miles), take Route 295 north to Route I-95, follow Boston directions.

Written and designed for web by Jim Hamilton. Edited by Peggy Dillon. Photographs from past OH trips and from AMC files. Sepiatone prints reproduced from *Men of the Autumn Woods, the Golden Years, 1885-1935* by Gerry Parker.

OH and friends who are coming

Josh Alper, second trip, CC and Lonesome 1969, partner Sherin & Lodgin

David Baker, first trip, dentist, President's Society member

Mike Bridgewater, second trip, Greenleaf 1966-67, Carter 1968-69, Tuck 1972, building contractor

Steve Bridgewater, first trip, Lakes 1968, Mizpah 1970, irrigation contractor

Jed Davis, fourth trip, Lakes 1964-67, retired gemologist, volunteers in huts

Mike Dudley, third trip, huts 1962-Greenleaf 1964, marine claims adjuster

Roger Foster and **Baiba Grube**, their first trip, Lakes 1953-56, retired surgeon and health administrator, celloist; Baiba, surgeon, Yale Medical School

Chuck Kellogg, third trip, Lakes 1955-60, Global Partners, US Biathlon champion 1965, US Olympics 1968, World Masters Champion 1998

Doug Hotchkiss, third trip, Mizpah 1964, banker, active on OH steering committee

Gerry Whiting, AMC Director of Special Projects (Our Man in Maine), Madison 1960-61, Greenleaf 1962-63

Jim Hamilton, fourth trip, Greenleaf-Zealand 1959-63, retired printer, AMC board member, Editor, *Resuscitator*

Clare O'Connell, Special OH 2009, AMC Director of Development

Celeste Miliard, AMC Director of President's Society

Phil Preston, first trip, Madison 1956, retired teacher, education director Squam Lake Association

Peter Grote, first trip, Lakes 1957, professional photographer specializing in mountainscapes

Sandy and **Becky Saunders**, their second trip, Zealand 1947, Carter 1948, two-time AMC president, partner Nichols & Pratt

Dick Stetson and **Bridgette Qualey**, their third and second trip, Carter 1965, Galehead 1966-67, retired computer specialist; Bridgette cooked on windjammers

Mary VanDusen, second trip, Pinkham 1953, retired teacher, runs a meditation center and conservationist

Linus Story, fourth trip, Greenleaf 1961-64, retired surgeon, wood-fired residential heating expert

Richard and **Marion Thornton**, their second trip, Dick is retired MIT professor and CTO of MagneMotion, Marion is a conservationist

Merce Wilczek, first trip, Boston graphic designer

Pat Peterson, first trip, Managing Editor, *NE Journal of Public Policy*

James Draper, third trip, owns cabin on AMC's Long Pond near Gorman Chairback, long-time AMC member currently serving on Board of Advisors, Lyford poet-in-residence

Rein Beeuwkes, first trip, owns cabin near Baxter State Park, active in Nature Conservancy, one of AMC's Maine conservation framework partners