

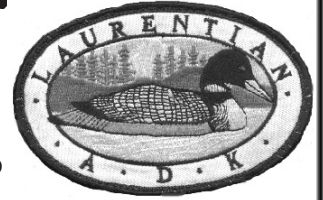


North Wind

The Laurentian Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club

St. Lawrence & Ottawa River Valley Region

October - December 2019



Trail Markers

When Ebenezer Emmons and his party climbed Marcy in 1837, they didn't have a clear path with trail markers guiding them. I presume they bushwhacked the entire route. Today, admittedly, the trails are so frequently trod that the hiker probably doesn't need markers most of the time. But at junctions, it's nice to know that blue goes that way and red goes that way... And on snowy winters before a snowshoer passes through, sometimes the only indication of the trail is a marker. So what's the marker's story?

For the Forest Preserve's first three decades, there weren't any official trail markers. The state's conservation commission, the predecessor of DEC, thought of itself as timber protector; it didn't make an effort to enhance outdoor recreation until after World War One. In 1922, a new activist DEC commissioner, George D. Pratt, began spending money on trails, campgrounds, and lean-tos in the Adirondacks. That year he also joined forces with some other New York notables to found the Adirondack Mountain Club, which further accelerated development for hikers and other outdoor enthusiasts.

In ADK's first magazine, *High Spots* (Vol 6 no 2 June 1929) we learn that as it began this flurry of trail building, the state recognized the need for a relatively inexpensive and foolproof system of marking the trails. It decided that traditional paint blazes would not work to guide the inexperienced public, because surveyors, trappers, property owners, and lumbermen all used blazes, so confusion would result. (The White Mountains trails today still have only paint blazes, no trail markers, but those trails are very well defined, and the blazes often continue onto open rock above tree line, providing consistency of marking).

An early trail guide (*Trails to Marcy* by A. S. Hopkins, published by NYS Conservation Department, 1927, p 6) informed the reader that the state was posting three-inch round metal markers that read "State of New York Conservation Commission - TRAIL MARKER", one intentionally similar in shape and size (but not image) to the markers put up where ADK was maintaining trails (Figs. 1 and 2). ADK's markers were initially embossed as well as printed. Today on club property the markers are made of plastic.

Northville-Placid Trail by William G. Howard (published by ADK in 1924, page 10) reports that the N-P Trail set up the year before also had three-inch circular metal ADK markers— these in blue on white, with an image similar to this contemporary one (Fig. 3).

By 1929 the standard marker was a circular metal disk in bright color reading "Conservation Department Trail Marker" (the commission had become a department) nailed to trees where blazes used to be painted (Fig. 4). Some markers were made of leather or coated paperboard, probably due to wartime shortages. Most were aluminum, because they wouldn't rust.

Markers came in three colors: blue for trails tending N and S, red for trails tending E and W, and yellow for diagonals. This color-coding eventually broke down somewhat as trails proliferated.

Tony Goodwin, my go-to guy for history, reports that in 2000 the DEC decided that only state markers could be posted on Forest Preserve. This is probably because many volunteer groups were helping with trail work and each wanted to post its own logo.

Today, besides generic trail markers the state also posts cyclist, snowmobile, horse trail, ski trail, nature trail, and carry trail markers, each with a slightly different image (Fig. 5). Adirondack Trail Improvement Society (ATIS) posts its own small round metal disks at Ausable Club (Figs. 6 and 7). The Olympic Regional Development Agency (ORDA) has nailed up a few small round metal markers with its own logo to mark its trail up Bear Den near Whiteface—so few I've gotten lost twice. The Champlain Area Trails System (CATS) uses diamond-shaped pieces of yellow plastic with a cat paw or an arrow (nice idea!).

I am indebted to Tom Wheeler, Laurentian Chapter, for sharing his extensive Adirondack book collection for this research. I also found a fellow enthusiast at the website "Hiking New York Adirondacks" (hikingnyad-irondacks.blogspot.com).

John Omohundro

Fig. 1 A marker from before 1926 when the commission was changed to a department. See other illustrations on subsequent pages.



Chair

John Barron

Spring and summer have been a period of highs and dramatic lows for me. In June I took part in the first session of this year's ADK Cycle Outing, and we had a great time over five days touring varied cycling routes around the North Country. Then, less than four weeks later, I had a sudden heart attack. I've been doing very well considering what has taken place. Worst is the abrupt change in my medical risk status. Unless things change I'm going to have to stay in Canada for the foreseeable future.

I'm very grateful for the good wishes and support of many people in the chapter. I especially thank David Katz for being acting chair, and Joan Trivilino and Marianne Hebert who have taken on my specific roles in Publicity and the Educational Affiliate Program. I've been very fortunate to have enjoyed the chapter and the Club so much. I'll continue as best I can from here but will have to step back from most active roles for now.

We're privileged to have as our guest speaker for November's annual meeting and Fall pot luck party Neil Woodworth, who is nearing the end of his service as Executive Director of the Adirondack Mountain Club. We'll look forward to hearing Neil's thoughts about the Club and to welcoming him and Holly to our region as they look forward to retirement in Wanakena.

Electronic Distribution of the North Wind

We now think we have the new electronic distribution of the *North Wind* working well. Each season the new issue will be posted on the chapter web site at the same time as the printed version goes to press. The electronic version will be reachable any time from the web site, www.adklaurentian.org by clicking "Resources" and "North Wind". A brief e-letter message will be sent to members for whom we have e-mail addresses advising that the new issue has been posted.

We hope members will like this new mechanism, and we hope members will voluntarily opt out of receiving the paper version by post. Every opt-out will save the chapter a significant amount in postage costs and a considerable amount of manual effort in inserting in envelopes (where necessary) and applying labels and stamps. It will also reduce use of resources and will be environmentally beneficial.

The *North Wind* mailing list is maintained centrally by the Adirondack Mountain Club in Lake George. To opt out of the paper distribution:

Send a message to membership@adk.org, identifying yourself as a member of Laurentian Chapter and asking to be taken off the mailing list for a print copy of the newsletter; or phone ADK Headquarters at (518) 668-4447; ask the the Membership Team; and make the same request.

If you have difficulties or questions and would like a contact in our own Laurentian Chapter, you may contact John Barron at (613) 828-2296 or johnbarron@sympatico.ca.

We will continue to send printed newsletters to our mailing list for the foreseeable future, but it is our hope that we'll receive more and more requests for opt-out. Ultimately we may be able to go nearly all electronic, as some chapters already have. Thanks for your understanding, and if you can, please do an opt-out at your convenience.

Executive Committee

Chair: John Barron
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Morristown's Red Barn Preserve

Home-Grown Conservation

How do you preserve a parcel of land and open it for public use? Sometimes it takes years of planning, negotiation with multiple state and local authorities, contention among parties with conflicting interests, and wads of money. The perseverance and patience required can be discouraging.

The Red Barn Preserve provides a refreshing reminder that sometimes conservation efforts can be uplifting and encouraging.

Four years ago, Allan and Lorraine Bogardus donated their former home to the Morristown Gateway Museum. It consisted of 160 acres of woods, wetlands, meadows, and four ponds, along with an 1835 farmhouse, barn, and outbuildings. Two years ago, the museum's board decided to develop a trail system. By last summer the first loop trail was completed. This summer saw completion of a second loop trail, along with a kiosk, trailside benches, and two wheelchair-accessible boardwalks. Renovations on the house and barn are underway, with plans for public use of both buildings in the works. A third trail is being laid out this fall, as well as a viewing stand for the blue heron rookery on Pond Four.

The Red Barn Preserve started with half a dozen volunteers. Since then, many volunteers have contributed hours of unpaid labor. The Thousand Islands Land Trust has provided technical advice. Students and teachers at St Lawrence-Lewis BOCES constructed boardwalks. A Morristown Explorer Scout designed and built a stream crossing. Students and faculty from SUNY Potsdam conducted an invasive species study. Trailblazing days draw more participants each year.

The community has also provided financial support. Individual trailusers and museumgoers make donations. Grant proposals have been approved and funded by Sweetgrass Foundation and the St. Lawrence River Valley Redevelopment Agency. The Town Board authorized Morristown's Highway Department to build a parking area at the second trailhead.

Appointed Positions

Chapter Archivist: Carolyn Kaczka
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Social Media Coordinator
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Blue Heron Trail Sign Photo: permission of Red Barn

OUTINGS

Oct. - Dec. 2019

Joan Trivilino

Saturday October 5: Charleston Lake Provincial Park. In Ontario, one hour from Ogdensburg bridge. Several short loops of 1 to 3 km for a total of about 7 km (4 miles). Participants can do one or more loops as they like. No elevation gain. Level 1-2. Pace slow. Contact John Barron, (613) 828-2296 or johnbarron@sympatico.ca.

Saturday October 12: Fat tire (recommended) or hybrid tire cycling on fair woods roads in the Essex Chain of Lakes Complex near Newcomb. Carpool from Potsdam or meet at a Newcomb location TBA at 10 AM, then cycle 10-12 miles on woods roads around Deer Pond and on to Jackson Pond. Views of Deer, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Jackson ponds. Bring lunch, water and repair kit. Bright clothing items recommended. This is not an off-road mountain-biking trip and the pace will be slow. Contact Dick Mooers if interested, rmooers@twcny.rr.com or 315-854-4186.

October 12-14: Columbus Day Weekend at the ADK LOJ at Heart Lake. Join the Long Island chapter for our annual Columbus Day weekend. Bunk rooms are available. <https://www.adkli.org/outing/42nd-annual-columbus-day-weekend-in-the-adirondack-high-peaks/>

Saturday October 19: Hitchens Pond Walk: We'll start just west of Horseshoe Lake, which lies south of Tupper Lake, onto a gated old road that winds through marsh and forest for 2.4 miles to Hitchens Pond, where once A. A. Low ran his maple sugar, spring water, and logging empire. After lunch, we'll return the same way. Little elevation change. Bad weather day on Sunday. A joint outing with North Woods chapter. Contact by Thursday for meeting time and place: John and Susan Omohundro, adknwoutings@gmail.com.

Sunday October 20: Bike ride from Hopkinton to St. Regis Falls via Lake Ozonia, and then back to Hopkinton on the Port Kent Road. 25 miles, level 3. Contact Tom Ortmeyer tortmeyer@gmail.com, 315-244-3707.

Saturday October 26 - Sunday October 27: Trail Maintenance Weekend. Join Mark Simon, coordina-

Foot travel

| Difficulty Level | Feet of ascent | miles |
|-------------------|----------------|-------|
| 5. Very strenuous | over 1500 | 10+ |
| 4. Strenuous | 1000-1500 | 8-10 |
| 3. Moderate | 500-1000 | 5-8 |
| 2. Fairly easy | to 499 | 3-5 |
| 1. Easy | level mostly | 1-3 |

Cycling

Leaders should specify mileage, elevation, and surface.

Check for additions, deletions and changes on our chapter website, www.adklaurentian.org

Please contact the leaders at least a day before the trip.

Car pooling makes sense, as does sharing the cost of gas.

tor of the Stone Valley Trails, and many students and other supporters in a work blitz to maintain and upgrade trails in our region. Projects range from difficult and technical to easy. Areas that have been featured in the past include Stone Valley Trail System, Red Sandstone Trail, Azure Mountain, and the climbing site at Snow Bowl State Forest. Contact Mark Simon at 315-261-8644 or simonm@potsteam.edu.

Sunday November 10: Annual Meeting and Fall Pot Luck. First Presbyterian Church, Canton. Arrive 5 PM for supper to start at 5:30 PM. Bring a dish to share and your own tableware. Brief organizational meeting and presentation of photo contest awards. Guest speaker Neil Woodworth will give us his views of the Club as he approaches retirement as Executive Director of the Adirondack Mountain Club. Contact David Katz at (315) 386-4393 or davidk@slc.com.

Saturday November 2: Hike Baker Woods Preserve. Join us while we explore the trails of the Baker Woods Preserve in the Indian Lakes Conservancy near Natural Bridge, NY. We'll visit a cedar bog, various pine forests, and Beaversprite pond (an active beaver pond). Optional side trip to Indian River. Approximately 4 miles RT, a few steep hills. Level 2. Contact Marianne Hebert, hebertm@potsteam.edu or 315-265-0756.

Thursday December 5: Laurentian Chapter Executive Committee Meeting. 6:00 pm, Potsdam.. Contact David Katz, davidk@slc.com, 315-386-4393 for details.

Sunday December 8: Higley Flow State Park. Annual Ski/Snowshoe/Hike and Cookout: Bring you're your kids, their grandparents, and your dogs to this

annual early winter event. We'll choose ski, snowshoe, or hike depending on conditions and do 2-3 miles followed by a cookout at a lean-to. I provide hot chocolate, hot dogs and fixings. Bring a snack to share if you wish. Contact Blair Madore madorebf@potSDam.edu or 315 261 0751.

Saturday December 21: Solstice ski. Ski into Clear Pond in the White Hill Wild Forest in Parishville. It is 1.9 mi. from the paved road (where we park) to the pond, following a snowmobile trail. The trail continues along the north side of the pond. Depending on how far we can go, the round-trip will be 4 to 5 miles. This is a moderately strenuous trip. It will be weather dependent for skiing. We will hike if there is no snow. TL David Trithart dtrithar@twcny.rr.com

Saturday January 4: Winter Celebration at Robert Moses State Park Nature Center. Our traditional Winter pot luck party will take place for the first time at the new Eugene L. Nicandri Nature Center in Massena; and we're holding it on the first Saturday of January instead of New Year's Day. Bring simple snacks like hors d'oeuvres and desserts for a simple pot luck requiring no cooking and no or very limited warming. There are excellent trails for short ski, snowshoe, or hiking trips depending on conditions, starting about 11:00 AM. Brief tour of the Nature Center and its displays at 2:00 PM followed by party, which will end before 5:00 PM. Contact David Katz at (315) 386-4393 or davidk@slic.com.



Fig. 2 When the Adirondack Mountain Club did trail work on Forest Preserve for the state before 2000, it posted its own logo. Now ADK markers are only on ADK land.



Fig. 3 A contemporary plastic marker on the N-P Trail.

I was out paddling on the second to last Sunday of summer-- Carolyn Kaczka, Greg Smith, Cyndi Grover and I paddled up the Oswegatchie to Big Rock for lunch, and it was so nice we continued up to Griffin Rapids before turning around.

We had just a bit of color—yellows of the ferns and the older white pine needles, the reds, blues, and yellows of the late summer blossoms, and an occasional bit of red among the hardwoods. And of course, much green everywhere. I was thinking ahead to the coming seasons, the full fall colors and the hiking we'll do then, and the winter with its snowshoeing and skiing. Not that I want it to snow now, but I am looking forward to its coming. Maybe a bit like late winter, when the seed catalogs arrive, and we think ahead to the gardening season even though we know it is a ways off.

I just had my annual physical a week ago, and my doctor told me he's leaving—moving south. When I asked why, he said his wife (and perhaps he as well) were tiring of our winters. I think we all know some who feel that way. And I always wish I could better tell them about the joys of each of our seasons.

And as some leave, others arrive. Two notable arrivals to our area have been Neil and Holly Woodworth. Neil is retiring as ADK Executive Director, and he and Holly are in the process of moving to Wanakena full time. Neil will make the presentation at our Fall Potluck, and I hope you all will be able to be there to thank him for his service to ADK as well as to welcome them both to our chapter. And I can tell you for sure, we do not need to explain the joys of winter to either one of them.

Nominating Committee

The following positions were up for election for 2020 are as follows

Director: Tom Ortmeyer is timing out having served three times.

Chair : John Barron

Education: Jeanna Matthews is timing out

Secretary: Blair Madore's term is ending and he is eligible for one renewal

Due to the recent illness of John Barron the positions that John held will be vacated until John is able to return to full participation in the chapter activities.

The void left by the untimely incapacitation of John Barron is felt deeply by the members. The chapter in unison has John in our thoughts and we are grateful that he is able to be involved, at present by long distance communication.

The following names are submitted by the Nominating Committee

Director Holly Woodworth

Chair David Katz

Education Jim Burdick

Secretary Blair Madore

Respectfully: Mary Mackinnon Neal Burdick Jeff Miller

BACKTRACKS

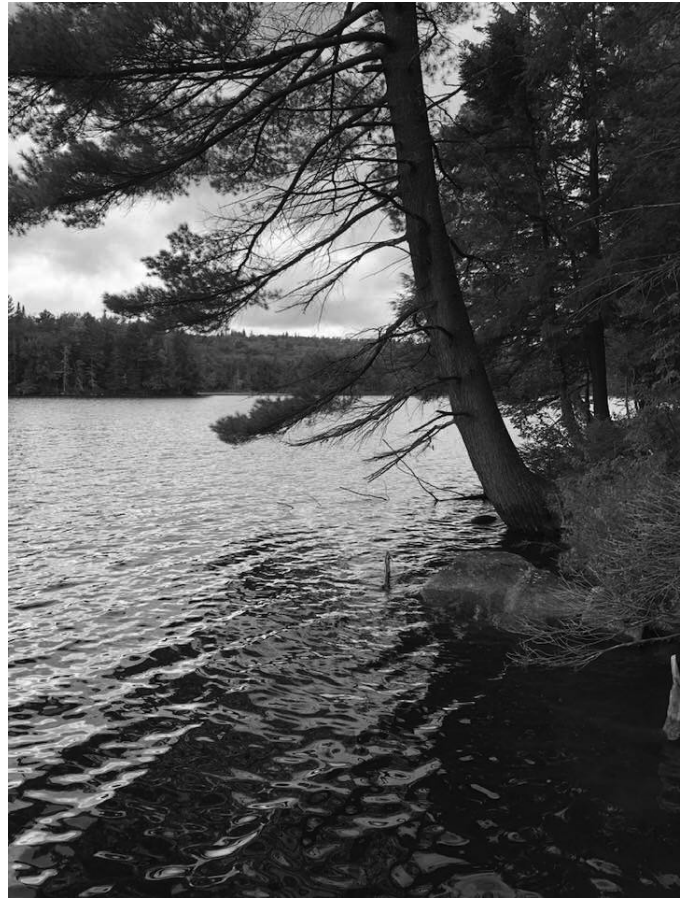
Compiled by Joan Trivilino

July - Sept. 2019

Saturday August 24: E. Branch of the St. Regis River - David Katz, Anne Czete, Janet Wakefield and 7 North Woods chapter members, John & Susan Omohundro TL. This paddle is not often on the chapter schedule, so it was new to some in the party. It enjoys relative obscurity, so weekend visitors are few; we saw one other pod of four boats going up as we floated down. Everything was mellow at first, as we enjoyed the Joe Pye weed and cardinal flower in bloom. Then we came to the riffles, through which we had to walk our boats. The underwater rocks were slimy, and the water deep and dark enough we couldn't see what we were stepping through. No one fell! There were two of these riffles, but then smooth paddling to a lunch spot in the trees high on a piney bank, 4-plus miles and 2-plus hours into our voyage. The return to takeout was comparatively swift and relaxing. Everyone ran the riffles going downstream, and again, no flips!

Saturday August 17: Ampersand Mountain. Did not work out.

Saturday Sept. 7: Big Pine and Lost Pond Loop. The forecast was cloudy then rain, so we opted for an early start. The hike to the "big pine" was pleasant and we had no trouble finding the jumbo tree. Side excursions to a hidden bog and the Oswegachie river rounded out the trip. After a quick stop at the Wanakena farmers market we then caravanned to the new Lost Pond trail head near Cranberry Lake. We made quick work of the 2 mile loop as the clouds were beginning to spit. Jennifer Mitchell, Mary Jane Watson, Marianne Hebert (TL)



Oswegatchie River. Photo: Marianne Hebert



Fig. 5. Four ways to say it: recent (post-1970) markers.

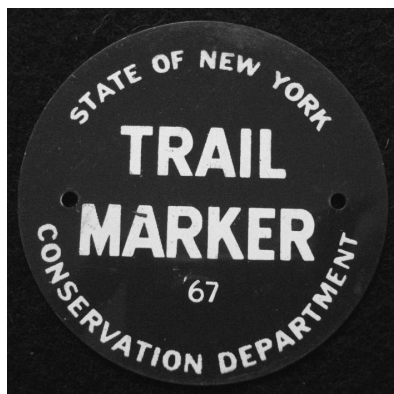


Fig. 4. The DEC of today was created by legislation in 1970, so this older marker had to go: the name is changed.



St. Regis Paddle Photo: John Omohundro

Donations

Our chapter donated a bear barrel to the Potsdam library. Anyone, including members, can check it out to keep food and food smells away from bears and other critters. New York State law states that, “during the period April 1 through November 30, no overnight camper in the Eastern High Peaks Zone shall fail to use bear-resistant canisters for the storage of all food, food containers, garbage, and toiletries.”

We are hopeful that people who might be deterred by the \$80 cost of owning their own (or the space needed to store it) might check one out for use when they need it.

It will be part of Potsdam Library’s North Country Collection. Trail guides, memoirs of the Adirondacks, books by local authors. The whole collection is well worth a look for members. It is just on the right as you go in the door of the main library entrance. Some photos are available on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/adklaurentian/permalink/2705330119497043/>

Indoor/Outdoor talk series

We have new coordinators for these winter events.. Daqing and Xiaoli are taking over from Danielle and Bob in coordinating the Indoor/Outdoor talk series.

Some exciting talks are in the works. Details will appear in the next issue of North Wind, and will be posted to the Laurentian Chapter website. .



Paddlers preparing to paddle on the St. Regis River. Photo: David Katz



Fig. 6. An old white ATIS marker and a modern red one. White was deemed too hard to notice on some trees.



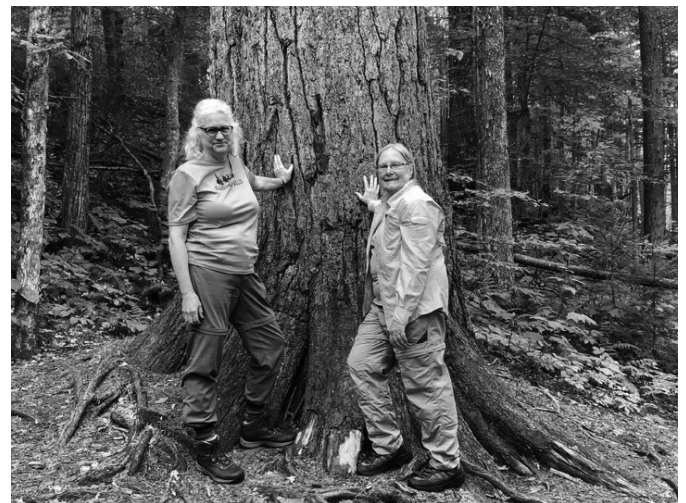
Fig. 7. A recent ATIS marker for easement lands— a new category arising in the 1990s. The land is privately owned but the state owns the right to allow the public on it.

Membership

Marianne Hebert

New Members - Welcome.

- Colin Campbell
- William and Marianne Casey
- Holly Chorba
- Joanne and Eric Gustafson
- Rachelle Hayes
- William Romey



Jennifer Mitchell & Mary Jane Watson at the Big Pine. Photo: Marianne Hebert



North Wind

The Newsletter of the Laurentian Chapter
of Adirondack Mountain Club
7 Barclay St. Potsdam, NY 13676

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Just Connect

VISIT the chapter website, ably maintained by David Katz, for color photos, trail maps, updated officer reports, and outings:

www.adklaurentian.org

LIKE US on Facebook, edited by Marianne Hebert:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/140013066028774/>

FOLLOW US on Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/#!/ADKLaurentian>



Indian Falls Climbing. Photo: Blair Madore