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In Memoriam

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In Memoriam

Bruce P. Sloat

Bruce Sloat died August 11, 2017, at 86, after a series of strokes over two years. His wife, Mary, said the final one was accompanied by a stunning thunderclap over the Connecticut River in the White Mountains—a fitting coincidence, for Sloat himself had an overlarge, undeniable effect on the Whites, and on their principal nonprofit steward, the Appalachian Mountain Club. He worked for AMC more than twenty years, including, from 1966 to 1970, as hut system manager, succeeding George T. Hamilton.

Bruce Parmelee Sloat was born in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, on November 16, 1930. He sought the White Mountains in the 1950s as a skier and met huts manager Joe Dodge, who admired Sloat's mechanical abilities. Dodge had Sloat fix all things Pinkham and sent him on mountain assignments, one involving a short fill-in at Carter Notch Hut. Sloat, no cook, inveigled hut guests to prepare meals, an episode recounted in his unpublished memoir.

In spring 1951 Dodge hired Sloat to work at the former Tuckerman Ravine shelter. However, Sloat proved too valuable maintaining Pinkham Notch's hydroelectric plant, and Dodge sent another worker to Tuck instead. The



Bruce Sloat (right) was a superb leader. Here he and workers prepare 180-pound propane cylinders for helicopter transport to huts in 1969. AMC LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

man accidentally burned down the administrative building (also known as “HoJo’s”). Dodge later sent Sloat to the Mount Washington Observatory, where Sloat rose to chief observer. He also tested jet engines atop Mount Washington and worked for the Cog Railway.

Sloat and fellow skier Mary Edgerton—later a Pinkham alumna—met in 1960, introduced by AMCers Jack and Ann Dodge Middleton. “Ann made the decision that Bruce and I *had* to be together,” Mary Sloat said. They married in 1962 and raised three sons (Ben, Willis, Stuart) on their Lost Nation farm, where the visionary and master innovator built two hydroelectric plants and the Sunnybrook Cider Mill. They created the Sunnybrook Montessori School. Bruce built a cabin on a nearby mountain and convinced the state of New Hampshire to rename it Mount Mary.

At least two consequential initiatives marked Sloat’s management: bringing the physical huts to higher ecological standards and expanding the guided hikes program. The latter was supercharged by the subsequent appointment of former Greenleaf hutmaster Tom Deans as AMC executive director, who built AMC’s environmental education programming to national stature.

Sloat directed the construction of Mizpah Spring Hut (1965), and renovated others, in ways sensitive to mountain soils, plants, streams. He believed AMC must practice environmental ideals it espoused. He upgraded water systems, eliminated gaboons (mountainside garbage pits), airlifting residues for proper valley disposal, ended gasoline-powered generators, and developed fly-out toilets (55-gallon drums), which replaced flush toilets. Colleagues at his retirement cited “Sloat Airways” for “honey-dipping and other jobs of rank.” Roasting Bruce’s engineering know-how, chief observer Guy Gosselin remarked, “Now, when you flush the toilets at Greenleaf Hut on Mount Lafayette, the bubbles come up in Star Lake on Mount Madison.”

A huts manager who never held a summer hutmastership or cooked a meal for patrons, Sloat was a superb leader, respected, liked by staff, a genius at keeping remote facilities running, and facile with numbers. He knew pennywise the comparative costs of having AMC burros (called “donks”) pack supplies versus using hutmen. “Two-legged donkeys,” Sloat said, “are less expensive than four-legged ones because you have to feed four-legged ones all year.” Applying a similar calculus to helicopters versus hut croos, he began greater chopper use to reduce tonnage costs and minimize packing injuries.

Sloat studied at the University of Vermont and at Syracuse. Innately an engineer, patently smart, he nonetheless had a medical problem that limited

his reading ability, frustrating him severely, and he left without a degree. Well after his retirement, doctors diagnosed it—dyslexia. The condition did not prevent high life achievements, including his work as a researcher at Sanders Associates in Nashua.

At services in Weeks State Park in Lancaster and Kendal at Hanover, a retirement campus where he and Mary lived parts of later years, friends shared stories, including contingents who worked under Bruce. One theme was frugality, such as his reluctance to install a shower at Zealand Falls, telling croo to wash in the stream. One OH (“old hutperson”) described Sloat’s buying massive quantities of hut toilet paper at a heavy discount from Groveton Paper Company. The fleur-de-lis motif offended some Canadian visitors, a cultural kerfuffle. Pragmatic Bruce, ever the economizer, stood by his plan.

—*W. Kent Olson and Douglass P. Teschner*

Joseph Brooks Dodge Jr.

Joseph Brooks Dodge Jr., an Olympic skier, mountain devotee, retired businessman, and the son of the Appalachian Mountain Club institution Joe Dodge, died at home in Jackson, New Hampshire, on January 17. He was 88 and was preceded in death by his wife of 61 years, Ann Schaefer Dodge.

The younger Dodge was born in North Conway, New Hampshire, in 1929 and had a rugged upbringing in Pinkham Notch below Mount Washington with his father; his mother, Cherstine; and his sister, Ann. Brooks Jr., or Hiram, as his dad called him, began working on the AMC hut croo at age 13. From 1943 to 1946, he worked at Madison Spring Hut and was hutmaster in 1945 and 1946. Summers from 1947 through 1953 he worked on a construction crew throughout the hut system. He and the late William Putnam were the alleged pranksters who during that period “bearded” the crag on Cannon Mountain called Old Man of the Mountain by hanging pine trees from his chin.

Brooks Dodge was brought up in an era when alpine skiing was just taking hold in America. His passion for skiing began at an early age and ended up landing him in the U.S. Skiing Hall of Fame and with the reputation as one of the pioneers of extreme skiing. While still a teenager in the 1940s, Brooks completed several first descents in Tuckerman Ravine, including “Dodge’s Drop.” He added eleven skiable routes in Tucks by the 1950s.

Dodge raced through college on the ski team at Dartmouth College, where he studied civil engineering on a scholarship, washing pots on the side. He started with the class of 1951 but graduated in 1953 due to leaves of absence

for three semesters to compete in the 1950 Federation International du Ski and the 1952 Olympics.

He served in the U.S. Army from 1953 through 1955, and on his second assignment to Garmisch, Germany, he raced on the Army ski team. He participated in the 1952 and 1956 Olympics, achieving a sixth place in giant slalom in Oslo in 1952 and a fourth place in slalom in Cortina in 1956. In these years, he also helped develop innovations in tighter skiwear and safer bindings for racers. In the mid-1950s, he was part of a team that started developing the Wildcat Mountain Ski Area.

After his marriage, he earned a master's degree in business administration from Harvard in 1958. He worked for Polaroid and then many years for Cabot, Cabot, and Forbes, a commercial real estate development firm in Boston of which he became senior vice president. He and his wife continued to ski and lead trips to Europe. They also brought the first groups of skiers in 1965 to heli-ski in the backcountry of the Canadian Rockies with Hans Gmoser.

In middle age he flew gliders competitively, and he and his wife became licensed pilots, running a soaring center in Glen, New Hampshire. In 1978, though, Dodge suffered a serious accident during a glider competition. With his wife's help and encouragement, he started bicycling. Despite a fused ankle, he continued to ski and developed new techniques to accommodate his limitations.

His love for the mountains and the outdoors pervaded his life. He had an analytical mind, and he loved to create model railroads. He had a competitive spirit, always going after the elegant form.

Former AMC hut crew member Sheldon Perry adds,

Brooks's success in skiing came from a keen attention to detail. In his mind, skiing was less a sport and more a dance to be performed with grace, power, and precision. Before any run his routine would begin: relaxing and flexing his hands, then his arms and shoulders, casting away any tension in his torso. As music is to a dancer, the slope and the snow conditions before him became his choreographer: a few quick and light turns here, then an expansive and reaching arc to utilize the broader terrain, never stopping his performance until the slope itself justified it.

Brooks enjoyed mentoring teenagers (like me). He taught by example, skiing down first, and then stopping to see how he might have challenged them. In April and May, those fortunate youngsters often

followed him up the narrow, steep, and rock-walled chutes on Mount Washington. His initial descents down these no-fall gullies earned him the reputation as the first extreme skier. But his approach was smart and calculating, never daredevil, fully understanding the consequence of hubris. It was here, on the ridge with the chute before him, that Brooks would honor this dramatic landscape with his clear, crisp, melodic yodel, as if to say, “I live for this!”

—Sources: *Conway Daily Sun* and *Sheldon Perry*

David Hardy

The New England Trails community lost a champion when Dave Hardy died peacefully on November 6, 2017, surrounded by family and friends after a year of battling cancer. Since the early 1990s, Dave served the trail community of the Northeast, the majority of that time spent as the director of trails programs at the Green Mountain Club, a position that is the epicenter of trails for the Green Mountains but also deeply connected to the entire region.

In his role at GMC, Hardy served as a protector and maintainer of the Long Trail. He always had the best interests of the trail in mind and took his role seriously. He was able to take a long-term view and had the patience to navigate complicated projects involving a diverse set of partners and constituents. He touched almost every mile of the Long Trail, through treadway, shelters, and outhouses. The extensive GMC system of historic shelters remains partly due to his drive to preserve them. Hardy’s reputation throughout New England’s Appalachian Trail management community was one of practicality and camaraderie, and he had an ability like no other to parse out, and tear apart, new regional or national trails policies.

He leaves an extraordinary trail legacy. It includes the monumental achievement of the Long Trail relocation through the Winooski River Valley, realizing a 100-year-old vision for the trail, including the construction of a 224-foot steel suspension bridge. It includes restoration of historic shelters and lodges, including Taft and Butler Lodges on Mount Mansfield. It includes trail relocations through Smugglers’ Notch, Stratton, and the relocation of the Appalachian Trail in the Thundering Falls area. It includes implementing new designs for accessibility into trail boardwalks and the first accessible backcountry outhouse in the Northeast. It includes editing multiple editions of the *Long Trail Guide* (Green Mountain Club). It includes mobilizing and training staff and volunteers to maintain and manage the Long Trail.



Dave Hardy on the trail. He managed trail relocations, shelters, bridges, and caretakers and was a friend to the Appalachian Mountain Club. COURTESY OF GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB

During the time I managed the Appalachian Mountain Club's Backcountry Campsite Program, Dave Hardy was a helpful colleague, my friend over in the Greens. He shared staff applications and boosted my confidence in advocating for higher wages for caretakers. The year I was without leadership for senior positions, Hardy shared two of his best incoming staffers with me. Dave's mindset was one of abundance, one of supporting and compensating the staff he worked with, and of stewarding all mountains and forests.

Hardy's impacts extend to quiet corners of the AMC world. Visitors to Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, New Hampshire, will see a series of wooden

signs hanging in the hallways, depicting Cardigan Lodge crews over the years. If you look closely, you will find Dave's face among them from the years he served as the assistant manager.

The mountains ache for the loss of Dave Hardy. He led in a practical way rather than philosophically. He could just get stuff done in a club that relies so heavily on volunteers. He was uniquely formed for the place he served. I already miss knowing that over in Vermont is this honest, shy, thoughtful, dedicated, and sometimes stuck in his ways person.

Hardy's family and the GMC formed the Dave Hardy Memorial Fund to support the trail he loved. To paraphrase Mike DeBonis, executive director of the GMC, there is no better way to remember Dave than walking the Long Trail in his memory. Buffalo check wool jacket and purple shirt optional.

—*Sally Manikian, with Jocelyn Hebert and Pete Antos Ketcham*

Frank Carlson

Francis Elliott Carlson, 97, whose essay "The Great Bicycle Expedition: 1936" appeared in *Appalachia* Summer/Fall 2017, died July 8, 2017, at home in Hingham, Massachusetts. He was a life member of the Appalachian Mountain Club and a former croo member at what was then called Pinkham Notch Camp (1939), as well as at Carter Notch Hut (1940) and Lakes of the Clouds Hut (1941). Frank cofounded AMC's Washington, D.C., Chapter (now Potomac Chapter), serving as its chair and a hike leader for several years. He was also a member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, one of the groups that helps maintain the Appalachian Trail.

He hiked into his 90s on many trails in the United States, Europe, and Scandinavia. He was also an accomplished artist and often depicted the Appalachian Mountains in his works. He was born in Winchester, Massachusetts, in 1920. He graduated from Harvard College in 1942. He served in the U.S. Army in four European campaigns and was awarded two Silver Stars, the Bronze Star, and the Croix de Guerre. Two days after his death, his family was notified that he had been awarded the French Chevalier d'Honneur for his World War II service. He was a certified public accountant and worked as audit manager at the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., until his retirement. He also worked in the Office of the Comptroller of the Navy and in private practice in Boston. He leaves two sons, Francis Jr., of Steinmaur, Switzerland, and William of Derwood,

Maryland; two daughters, Julia of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Amelia Maddock of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his first wife, Marguerite Moll Carlson, in 1987, and his second, Patricia Wagner Stallsmith Carlson, in 2012. Memorial donations can be made to AMC.

—*Christine Woodside*