

RMC at THE MUSEUM of the WHITE MTS.

by Judith M. Hudson

The RMC and various Randolphians have contributed to the newest exhibit at the Museum of the White Mountains in Plymouth. Entitled “*Trail Clubs: Connecting People with the Mountains,*” the show features eleven current White Mountains trail clubs, and will run until March 6, 2016. The exhibit is well worth a visit.

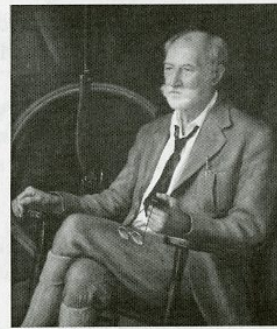
Exhibit curators Mike Dickerman and Steve Smith visited Randolph in the summer of 2014 to ask Al and me about materials from the RMC’s archive that might be used. What did we think would interest the general public? We thought newsletter readers would be interested in the history of these items, and how they came to the RMC.

First on our list was the **goatskin register** that had been pinned to the wall of Crag Camp between 1925 and about 1931. The supple skin is roughly 4 feet high and 3 ½ feet wide, with large red letters “CRAG CAMP—Camp Register”; it is covered with partially legible signatures or initials of more than 300 visitors and the dates they were at Crag. We have transcribed the names, although some are too faded to decipher.

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Above: Crag Camp goatskin register. John Hession photo, courtesy of the Museum of the White Mountains.

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Clockwise from left: Thornton Page at Crag Camp dedication, 1994 (D. Mayer); Peek and Cook puppets at 2013 charades (G. Scott), George Flagg's 1908 sketch of Louis F. Cutter (courtesy of the Sandin family); Cutter's measuring wheel (John Hession photo, courtesy of the Museum of the White Mountains; Miggy Woodard's 1938 portrait of Cutter (Cutter Archive); Pre-RMC Randolph Path trail sign (RMC Archive).

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Do you have a relative there? We recognize many names: Alan Waterman (Guy's father), Bernard Koopman, Edith Tucker's parents, A. Marston Pinkham, Jane Bridgman and her brother Robert. Judy looked in vain for her parents, who stayed at Crag during the 1920s.

Prominent among them is T. L. "Duke" Page (no date, only "often"). Anyone who attended the dedication of the new Crag Camp in 1994 will remember Thornton Page, who tottered slowly up to the celebration, arriving long after the ceremony had begun. With bright red crusher hat and black eye patch, he was jubilant to have reached Crag one last time. In the mid-1920s while he studied at Yale, he was the self-appointed caretaker at the camp. We presume he was the person who had provided the skin (neither Crag's builder, G. Nelson Smith nor his wife had signed it).

Page's 80+ year-old legs gave out part way down the Spur Trail after he departed from Crag, and a rescue party carried him most of the way back down to Randolph. Some time later, the RMC received a package containing the goatskin, and it has resided in the club's archive ever since.

Next, we thought the RMC should offer the Museum a **trail sign**. About three years ago, we received a large box from Kansas City, containing old trail signs. Harry Adams, who died this past December, had accumulated these as a young man; they had been adorning his walls ever since. We were most taken with an old Randolph Path sign, and as it is not identified as an RMC path, predated the club:

RANDOLPH PATH
FOR WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON
ADAMS VIA DIVERS PATHS
MONTEVIDEO, ISRAEL RIV^R CASCADES,
LOG CABIN

Finally, we also suggested that the exhibit display two other items owned by current Randolph residents: Louis F. Cutter's **bicycle wheel** and Tad Pfeffer's wonderful **puppets** from the 2013 Midlands charade.

Cutter used a modified bicycle wheel, his own creation, for measuring distances as he traversed trails while creating his maps. The wheel in use was sketched by George Flagg in 1908; it has been stored for many years in Louis F.'s attic at Echobank (now the cottage of his grandson Louis and his wife Ann). Judy had borrowed it a few years ago to illustrate one of her slide lectures, and thought it would be a natural for the show. Edith Tucker lent the Museum the wheel, on behalf of Louis F. Cutter's grandchildren.

Tad Pfeffer's huge puppets of Eugene B. Cook and J. Rayner Edmands add a touch of fun to the exhibit. Midlands' word was "Lowe-commotion," and "commotion" is what occurred as the two early pathmakers (who notoriously disagreed about the proper way to build paths) simultaneously tried to cross Tim Sappington's version of Memorial Bridge. Tad was happy to loan them to the Museum, saying, "Cook and Edmands will be pleased to be let out of our attic. They've been quietly squabbling up there all summer."

If you visit the exhibit you will also find other RMC materials scattered around: the first register from the Torreys' Spur Cabin, a copy of Charles Torrey's map showing the extent of logging in 1905, some photos, another sign, and several Flagg sketches, courtesy of Eric Sandin and his mother Carol. And Doug Mayer has written a wonderful introduction to the exhibit brochure, which can be viewed online (box below).

The Museum of the White Mountains is located on the campus of Plymouth State University, just off Route 93 sixty miles south of Randolph. Online exhibit, brochure, visitor and membership information at the website: www.plymouth.edu/museum-of-the-white-mountains