

## ***Hiking trail shelter named for North Country businessman and advocate Neil Tillotson***

PLYMOUTH — A handcrafted log shelter erected in Plymouth State University's Museum of the White Mountains (MWM) has been named and dedicated to a native son, beloved business owner and benefactor of New Hampshire's North Country.

The late Neil Tillotson of Dixville championed the rugged woods and mountains of northern New Hampshire, as well as its citizens. On June 10, PSU held a ceremonial dedication of the Neil Tillotson Shelter for the Cohos Trail, the centerpiece of the MWM's current exhibition, Trail Clubs: Connecting People to the Mountains. After the exhibition ends in March 2016, the shelter will be dismantled, transported and rebuilt by the Cohos Trail Association in Pittsburg.



COURTESY

PSU's Museum of the White Mountains recently hosted a ceremonial dedication of a log shelter for eventual use on the Cohos Trail in Pittsburg. The shelter is named after longtime Dixville Notch resident and hiking enthusiast Neil Tillotson. From left, Kim Nilson, Cohos Trail Association, Catherine Amidon, MWM Director, Steve Barba, PSU University Relations, PSU President Sara Jayne Steen, Woolsey Conover, MWM Advisory Council, John Nininger, Wooden House Co. and Rick Tillotson.

Sharing stories of his father's own hiking experiences, Rick Tillotson said, "He would be humbled by something being named after him ... but he certainly would appreciate the purpose of the shelter and the fact it would help get people out into the woods that he loved."

PSU President Sara Jayne Steen emphasized the connection of the University and its Museum of the White Mountains to northern New Hampshire.

"This is evidence of our strong regional partnerships, especially with other individuals and organizations who share our commitment to the White Mountains and North Country, to outdoor education, physical fitness, environmentalism and sustainability," Steen said. "It is an important aspect of Plymouth State as a 'University of place.'"

Kim Nilson, the founder of the Cohos Trail Association, said the shelter is a critical addition to the 165 milelong trail, because the area is so vast.

"Pittsburg is the biggest township in the eastern United States; it's almost the size of Cape Cod," Nilson noted. "There are few places to shelter people on the trail and there are only two campgrounds that are far apart, too far to hike to in one day. This shelter will serve a great need to many people."

Catherine Amidon, director of the Museum of the White Mountains, said the museum seeks to be the gateway to the White Mountains and to do more than just provide visitors with information about the White Mountain region.

"By donating a trail shelter to the Cohos Trail Association, we're not just allowing people to study and learn about the White Mountains, we're actually having impact on it," Amidon said. The shelter was designed and donated by John Nininger of the Wooden House Company of Newbury, VT; it was constructed by an Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) crew. A video of the construction is viewable on the Museum of the White Mountain's Facebook page at [facebook.com/MWMPS](https://facebook.com/MWMPS)