



75 Years of Putney Mountain Association!

We are all delighted that we made it through this past year as a community, and the past 75 as an organization! There has been difficulty and struggle, lots of persistence and patience, generosity and commitment and of course lots of hiking. We are optimistic that this summer we can all enjoy the pleasures of Putney Mountain together, perhaps even without damp pieces of cotton plastered on our faces. And we are optimistic that 75 or 175 summers from now, hikers will be enjoying the trek to the summit from far and near. We'll see you out on the trails!

Stewardship

PMA's incredible volunteers make so much possible. From GPS-tracking trails to final maps, from trail layout to finished footbed, from brush cutting to brush clean-up (thanks to the fifteen folks who came out in April!), from hauling material for bridge construction to finished stream crossings, and of course ongoing trail adoption, maintenance, and trail-clearing work.

Ten years ago, it seemed such a remote dream that the PMA trail network would ever reach Prospect Hill in Dummerston that our map maker had given up hope and shrunk the maps. Through purchases, easements, trail licenses, grants, ingenuity and the extraordinary generosity of our members the acquisitions team has forged Missing Links, a route that reaches from PMA's southern tier trails on Holland Hill south to Prospect Hill in Dummerston. During the COVID summer of 2020 an extremely dedicated group of volunteers opened the first trail sections off Hague Rd, and now in the summer of 2021 volunteer trail crews continue their work, and we hope to connect the trail on both ends later this year. Sometimes dreams do come true!

Late fall 2020 found us addressing the muddy sections of the main trail to the summit of Putney Mountain. Sections of "turnpike" - locust log edging and gravel infill designed to raise the path above the water table - were made viable by a very generous contribution of crushed stone. The onset of winter halted work until May, but as this newsletter goes to press the gravel is being hauled into place. The last two sections have yet to be addressed so look for a call for volunteers as work continues.

A big thank you to our trail adopters!

The task of maintaining the PMA trails grows as the trail network expands. We are incredibly grateful to PMA trail adopters who maintain and observe trail conditions throughout the year (If you would like to join this program email Richard Fletcher at rafletch5@gmail.com). The adopters' contributions emphasize the community-centered nature of this organization, and we want to make sure that community extends to you too!

If you notice a problem - broken signage, downed tree, invasive species, sheep outside their fencing, or even special wildlife sightings, please let us know! We are opening a new portal on our website (putneymountain.org/trails) for reporting, or you can comment on our Facebook page.

With your help we can focus our time and resources on fixing problems rather than finding them!

75 years of PMA!

February 1946 PMA founded to "To establish and maintain a civic organization in Putney, Vermont, for the general purpose of civic development..."



Phil Chase passes hat at town meetings to pay taxes. In 1966 he convinces town to exempt PMA from taxes

March 8, 1947 Summit pasture purchased from Jennie Pierce for \$500 (~\$6000 adjusted for inflation)

The dark ages begin...

1961 Putney/Brookline town line moved East, putting the summit in Brookline

1956 - Chicken barbecue draws 100 people to summit for "clearing and cleaning party"

Early 1970's Doug Wilson helps launch a hawk-watching project

1910 "Flagpole Hill"



40 acres

0 acres

Finally, we are working on plans to assess the ecological communities of the PMA lands. Building on a comprehensive ecological survey done in 1999, we will monitor vernal pools, document rare plants, map forest types and study correlated songbird concentrations. In addition, we are completing the mandated Conservation Management Plan for the Missing Links parcels with the help of a consulting forester. In so doing, we also hope to gain a better understanding of how best to manage and protect these lands from invasive species and promote healthy diverse forests. Efforts such as these will inform our stewardship as we manage our holdings for biodiversity, or in the words of our mission statement, "for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations and to protect the natural habitat and wildlife."

Thank you Pat Shields!

After serving as president of the PMA board for 5 pivotal years, Pat Shields has chosen to step back from that role. PMA has flourished under Pat's leadership. The organization added a total of 215 conserved acres to its holdings and the Missing Links project opened the door to trails connecting the PMA trail system south to Prospect Hill in Dummerston and from there, (hopefully) to Black Mountain and beyond. Pat managed numerous aspects of PMA operations. One of her key contributions was her expert grant writing in pursuit of land purchases however she also stayed on top of a myriad of other details including management plans, Vermont Land Trust agreements, responsibilities to donor organizations, and forging a good working relationship with USFW and negotiating the use of the Conte lands.

An even handed and capable leader, Pat ran meetings with efficiency and ease, incorporating suggestions and promoting good ideas. During her tenure the board evaluated and overhauled the mission statement, addressed some much-needed bylaw changes, and paved the way for more intentional stewardship of PMA lands.

We on the board are just beginning to understand how much Pat did for PMA, and our appreciation grows as we discover in the responsibilities she took on her deep commitment to the organization. In fact post-Pat, solo leadership of the board seemed impossible. Instead we found a way for co-chairs Cat and Geordie to split the chair responsibilities as they do their best to meet the quality level of leadership that Pat so consistently displayed. We are all so appreciative of all that she did as chair, and we know that appreciation will continue as she passes on her title, but not her place on the board or her commitment and dedication to PMA. Thank you Pat!

Grazing

This will be our 8th season tending sheep on Putney Mountain to control invasive buckthorn. In the area most frequently grazed over the years, the buckthorn is so weakened that stalwart volunteers have been digging it out by the roots! Sign up for the July 24 Invasives Control and Strategy session to see what has happened.

Sheep will arrive on the summit some time in early summer and stay until they run out of buckthorn to eat. Check the PMA website or Facebook for the exact arrival date as the time approaches. The Grazing program requires that each day the resident sheep, on loan from David Major's farm, are visited and tended by one or a pair of volunteer shepherds. We are currently putting together a schedule for this year. Tending the sheep takes one or two hours and can be done morning or afternoon. Volunteers can sign up for a once a week, or less often. Because folks come and go in the summer, those who can fill in occasionally are important, as are folks who like to set up fencing. New volunteers will be trained by those who are experienced.

Volunteer shepherds can often be heard saying how good it is to have a reason to get up to Putney Mountain, it's always so beautiful up there! If you're interested in being a shepherd please be in touch with Kai George (kaijorge42@gmail.com). This program depends on volunteers; we welcome your support!



1977 Money in bank account used to pay Brookline taxes is exhausted, PMA is delinquent



Southwest from summit, 1970s

40 acres

February 22, 1983 Brookline part of summit sold at tax sale to developer

Part of Mountaintop Sold for Back Taxes

Putney Association Tries To Rescue Lost Land

By MARILYN JACKSON
PUTNEY - A group of local residents has revived the Putney Mountain Association.

They hope to raise enough money to pay the organization's back tax bill of about \$3,600, reclaim the land they lost atop the mountain and then maintain the area once again.

1986 Annual meeting held at summit attended by nearly 200 people!



1987 Discussions begin over trail south to Prospect Hill

March 28 1983 Robert Rosegrant transfers leadership to Dick Richardson, Laura Heller and Gene Godt as interim trustees until fall annual meeting

0 acres

August 15, 1983 After heroic fundraising effort, land repurchased from developer for \$3111.27 (\$8,342.14 today)

40 acres

Programs, Walks, Talks, Treasure Hunts, and Buckthorn - Join us for events this summer!

We missed seeing all of you last year! We are delighted to be presenting 12 programs this year, all compliant with current COVID guidelines, and we hope that with vaccination proceeding apace we will have no issues. Please visit our website for more information on each of these programs: putneymountain.org/events.

June 26 (27 rain) 7 am - Birding with Richard Foye

Join Richard Foye, avid birder, for a walk along Hinton Trail. Learn to identify birds through song and sight. Bring your binoculars and your best ears. Limit 12. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

July 10 (no rain date) 9 am - Trail building class with Roger Haydock

Walk and talk about trail building with Roger Haydock and learn to see the terrain like a blank slate. Meet at the Dummerston Church at 9 am to carpool to the Missing Links parking lot (parking at the trailhead is limited). Bring a mask for the car ride. Limit 15. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

July 17 (18 rain) 10 am - Sheep and the invasives they eat, with David Ritchie and Sam Quintal

David Ritchie will discuss our fine fleeced friends' feeding preferences at the summit, and Sam will join with shared zeal for eradication of buckthorn. Meet at summit at 10 am. Limit 15. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

July 24 (25 rain) 9 am - Landscape photography with Brent Seabrook

Taking pictures seems like it should be such a snap. Learn to look, learn about light, and take home some remarkable images from the Missing Links trail. Limit 12 (carpool if possible; parking is limited). RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

July 31 (August 1 rain) 9 am - 400 million years in 1/2-a-mile - geology with Roger Haydock

Roger will lead a short geology field trip to Putney Mountain summit looking at evidence of mountain building from 400 million years ago and glacial impacts from 20,000 years ago. The total walking distance is about 1 1/2 miles. We will be out about 2 hours. Limit 15. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

August 7 (8 rain) 12:30-4 pm - Sketching workshop with Nina Salvatore

By looking at light and shape, anyone can draw in nature. Packets of supplies provided for \$15/person (incl. drawing pencils, eraser, sharpener, and quality paper). Please bring a clipboard if you can. Meet PM parking lot. Limit 10. Please email n.sara.salvatore@gmail.com to register by July 30.

August 14 (15 rain) 10 am - Fern walk with Lynn Levine

Join Lynn Levine, author of *Identifying Ferns the Easy Way: A Guide to Common Ferns in the Northeast*, for a ramble through the woods of the Beatrix Aiken Preserve. Limit 15 people. Email forester.lynn@gmail.com to preregister. Bring \$10 to purchase book (reduced price) for reference during walk.

August 21 (22 rain) 10 am - Kids on the mountain - a natural treasure hunt with Sam Quintal

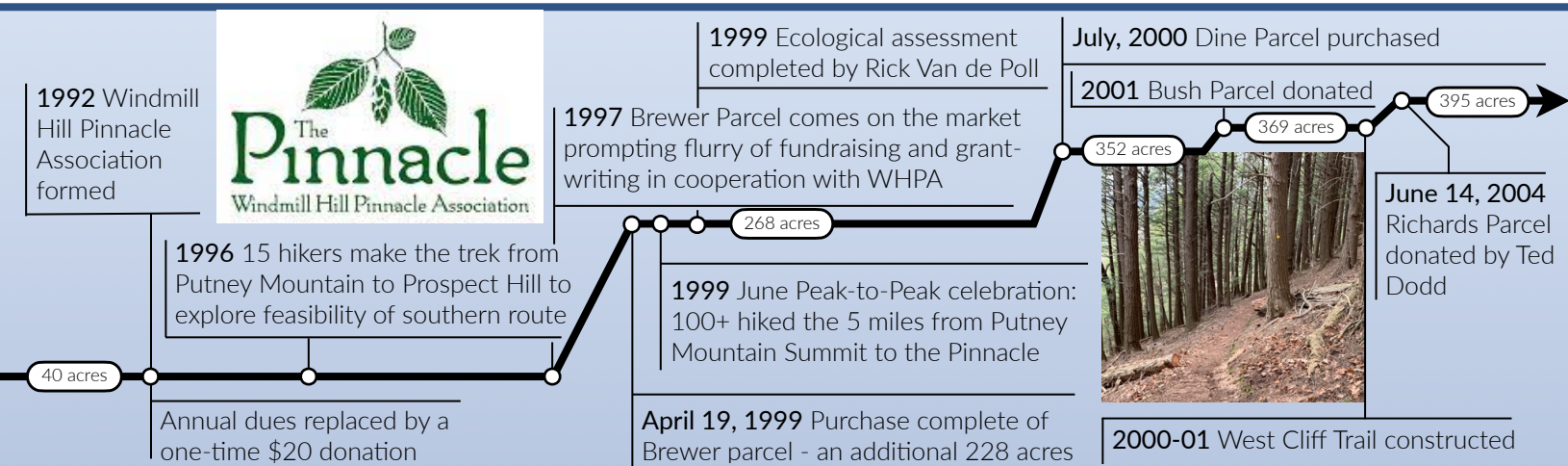
Join Sam and his daughters for a 2 1/2 hour 1 mile hike to the summit of Putney Mountain and back, geared to children ages ~4-10. Limit 12 families. Snacks will be provided at the summit. One parent per family is asked to accompany their kids. Meet at PM trailhead. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

September 11 (12 rain) 10 am - Orienteering for 6th graders with Andrew Morrison

Learn direction finding in the woods, how to read a map, and gain confidence in finding your way through the world. Limit 12. Meet at Putney Mountain Trailhead. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events.

September 18 (19 rain) 10am - 2pm - Hawk Watch explainer with John Anderson

Take a peek under the hood of the Putney Mountain Hawk Watch with John Anderson. Limit 10. Email ncooper17@comcast.net by September 16 to preregister. Bring binoculars. Meet on the PM summit, ask for John.



September 25 (26 rain) 10 am - Moss walk with Sarah Cooper Ellis
 This year we will explore a wet limey outcrop along Brook Road (in Putney). We will meet at an ancient liverwort, put our heads together about ferns and clubmosses, and discuss reproductive strategies of spore-bearing plants. Park at one of several pull-offs on Brook Road and meet where the old water barrel overflows. No dogs please, children welcome. Limit 8. Bring hand lenses or other magnifiers. RSVP @ putneymountain.org/events

January ? (date TBD - need snow) Tracking walk with Philip Hamilton
 Each animal track is a mystery just waiting to be solved. Join Phillip Hamilton to see if, together, we can solve some mysteries! More details on putneymountain.org/events as date approaches .

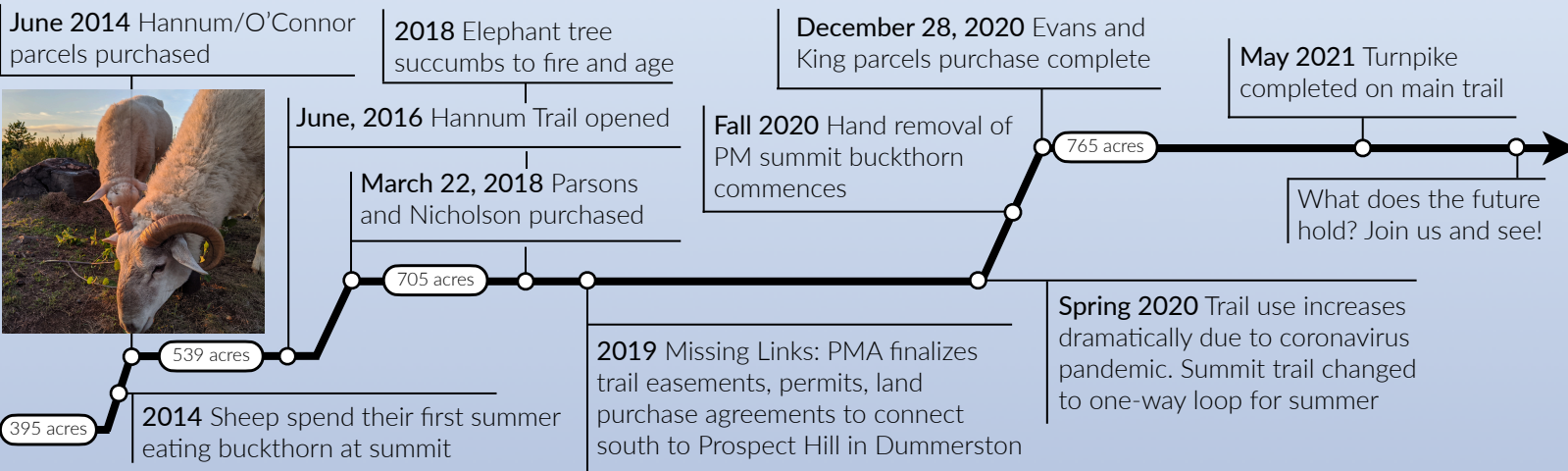
Support PMA! Donate by mail or at putneymountain.org/donate

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Celebrating
75 Years of of Putney
 Mountain Association!



Place stamp here

The Night Sky on the Mountain

The cleared summit of Putney Mountain offers a spectacular viewing spot for astronomical events, both the rare and commonplace. Watching the sunset and moonrise on the night of (or the night before) the full moon is both a beautiful sight and humbling reminder of how the planets and moons move.

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- June 10 - **Partial Solar Eclipse** Sun and moonrise: 5:10 am
- June 21 **June Solstice** Sunrise: 5:11 am, Sunset: 8:33 pm, 15hrs 21 mins of daylight
- June 24 **Full Moon** Sunset: 8:33 pm, Moonrise: 8:56 pm
- July 4 - **Mercury at Greatest Western Elongation** Best time to observe the planet at sunrise.
- July 23 **Full Moon** Sunset: 8:20 pm, Moonrise 8:34 pm
- July 28, 29 - **Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower** Best viewing the night of July 28.
- August 2 **Saturn at Opposition** Brightest and closest approach to earth. Binoculars will let you see the rings! Rises at 8:56 pm.
- August 12, 13 **Perseids Meteor Shower** Best viewing after midnight on August 12. Up to 60 meteors per hour.
- August 19 **Jupiter at Opposition** Brightest and closest approach to earth. Binoculars will make visible the 4 Galilean moons. Rises at 7:44 pm.
- August 22 **Full Moon** Sunset: 7:40 pm, Moonrise: 8:18 pm
- September 20 **Full Moon** Sunset: 6:49 pm, Moonrise: 7:09 pm