



Photo: Bob Yates

HALFWAY THERE: THE QUARRY DRIVEWAY REBUILDING CAMPAIGN HAS MET 50% OF ITS GOAL



Photo: Dick Katzman

The destroyed Bolton Quarry driveway shortly after the April 26 flood.



Photo: Dick Katzman

A trekking pole provides perspective on just how significant the damage was.



Photo: Ross Perry

The reconstructed driveway restores access to multiple climbing areas and helps protect against future washouts.

Flash flood limits access to some of the best rock and ice climbing in Chittenden County

Heavy rains on the night of April 26, 2011, caused severe damage to the driveway leading to the popular Bolton Quarry climbing area. The driveway is also the primary access point for the 82 Crag and the recently acquired Carcass Crag. In June, CRAG-VT incurred a \$16,295 expense by hiring a professional contractor to repair the driveway and restore full access. The Spence Brothers crew was out there fast and did an excellent job. This solid repair withstood heavy rains from Tropical Storm Irene.

To cover this major unexpected expense, CRAG-VT dipped into its “rainy day fund” (and boy, did we have a rainy day!) and also was the recipient of an emergency loan through the

Access Fund Land Conservation Campaign. Thanks to the Access Fund loan, CRAG-VT was able to pay for the roadwork and jumpstart fundraising efforts to rebuild its financial reserves for ongoing land management and stewardship.

Strong member, sponsor and organizational support has been key to this effort. To date, CRAG-VT has covered almost 50% of the project cost. This includes a \$3,500 grant from the Access Fund Climbing Preservation Grant Program (applied to the principal of the loan), \$2,000 from the American Alpine Club’s Cornerstone Crag Conservation Grant program, and a generous \$1,500 anonymous donation. Thank you to

those who have donated for your tremendous support of Vermont’s climbing future!

But help is still needed to complete this campaign and restore CRAG-VT’s funds to sustainable levels. Please donate online today (www.cragvt.org/membership) or mail your donation to CRAG-VT, P.O. Box 614, Richmond, VT 05477. If you’re not already an active member, please become a member or renew now to support ongoing stewardship and protection of our local crags—plus get discounts at several local outdoor shops. These discounts are so good, your membership will probably pay for itself with a single purchase!

—Paul Hansen

UPCOMING CRAG-VT EVENTS

Keep an eye out on our website, www.cragvt.org, and online forum for upcoming area events, some of which will benefit our efforts to pay the bill for the recent repairs to the Bolton Quarry access road. Currently what's coming: Smuggs Ice Bash 2012, Banff Film Festival, and a fundraising event at Petra Cliffs on March 21, 2012 - exciting details currently in the works. Stay tuned.



Photo: NYSBOT

Champlain Bridge Reopens

After two years of demolition, removal, and reconstruction, the new Lake Champlain Bridge, also known locally as the Crown Point Bridge, opened to vehicular and foot traffic on November 7, 2011. The new bridge reconnects the towns of Addison, VT and Crown Point, NY via Route 17. The historic old bridge formerly allowed Vermont climbers a quick trip over Lake Champlain while on their way to climb in the Adirondack region. After a long two-year wait, easier access is now back!

The brand new 2,200-foot, \$76 million bridge replaces the old bridge originally built in 1929. It was planned to have been completed and opened by early October 2011, but a cold, snowy winter followed by spring flooding and late summer's Tropical Storm Irene delayed the project one month.

—Ross Perry

A FEW THANKS

CRAG-VT wouldn't exist without an engaged community of members and supporters – *like you*. It's that support that makes it possible for this organization to undertake important access, conservation, education, and acquisition projects. This issue, the following folks deserve particular thanks:

- Outdoor Gear Exchange – for \$290 in donations received from their nickel-for-saving-a-bag campaign;
- Access Fund – for their \$8,000 loan to CRAG-VT;
- Access Fund – for their \$3,500 contribution for the Bolton Quarry access road repair;
- American Alpine Club - for their \$2,000 Cornerstone Grant contribution toward the Quarry access road repair;
- An anonymous donor – for their recent contribution of \$1,500;
- Dick Katzman – for his many visits and work on flagging the trail to the 82 Crag;
- Everyone who contributed to the Bolton Quarry Trail Day, especially Kel Rossiter for planning it all, Dennis Delay for directing trail crews to needed areas, and the 27 volunteers who showed up to work on a raw, soggy day;
- VYCC for their ongoing willingness to loan us tools for trail maintenance;
- Liv Perry, for the construction of the 10' wooden ladder which was placed in the upper Quarry;
- Bill Menning, for his donation of the picnic table at the Quarry; and
- Town of Richmond/Camels Hump Middle School – for allowing us to use the school year after year for our monthly meetings.

ATTENTION ICE CLIMBERS:

Because of financial constraints and the high cost of keeping snow cleared during heavy snow years, CRAG-VT will not be plowing the access road to the Bolton Quarry during the 2011-2012 ice climbing season. The best location for parking this winter is the Smilie School. Simply walk along Route 2 and up Green Mountain Drive to the Quarry - it's a great warm-up!



THE CRAG RAG is the official membership newsletter of Climbing Resource Access Group of Vermont (CRAG-VT).

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CRAG-VT is run entirely by volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering or Board membership, please contact us!

CRAG-VT BOARD MEMBERS

- Seth Maciejowski – *President*
- Ross Perry – *Vice President, Conservation & Stewardship Committee Chair*
- Maureen Whalley Beck – *Treasurer*
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- Pam Moreau
- Alden Pellett
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MEETINGS

CRAG-VT typically meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm at the Camels Hump Middle School in Richmond, VT. The public is welcome to meetings. Please call or email to confirm the time and date.

Website hosting provided Ecopixel
www.ecopixel.com

Newsletter design by Kevin Karn
www.kevinkarn.com

The Choss Pile

Vermont Climbing News

As we move into the 2012 season, we have the opportunity to reflect on the great climbing that has gone on around Vermont in the past year. Once again, right when you think Vermont and New England is tapped out, someone discovers a great line right in front of you. We can only eagerly imagine what this year might uncover.

December 2010 produced many new ice lines due to heavy rains during the fall. Local Matt McCormick teamed up with New Hampshire guides Kevin Mahoney and Bayard Russell to climb an elusive new line on the renowned south face of Frankenstein in Crawford Notch. *Pole Dance* (WI5) climbs two pitches adjacent to the *Bragg Pheasant*. The second pitch tackled a bottomless hanging tube of ice, which Mahoney sent to the top of the cliff. Capitalizing on his momentum, McCormick repeated the Mahoney thin ice testpiece *Pump and Dump* (M6) at Poke-O-Moonshine. This is one of a very limited number of repeats of this ephemeral line. Way to go, Matt!

As the winter of 2010/2011 moved on, Mainer Josh Hurst worked to establish a new mixed line at Lake Willoughby. The resulting two pitch line, *Tiny Dancer* (M8), tackles steep rock between *Plug and Chug* and *Call of the Wild*. Bolts and gear were used to protect the line, which was established ground-up on aid before being freed. With decent protection and steep climbing, this line is destined to be popular.

On the competition scene, Vermonters made a good showing at the Ouray Ice Festival once again, with Josh Worley pulling a 5th place finish and Will Mayo taking 2nd place. Worley went on to sweep the Mount Washington Valley Ice Festival "Face Off with the Pros," taking home a 1st place finish. Locally, Petra Cliffs hosted the first-ever indoor mixed climbing comp during the 2011 Smugglers' Notch Ice Bash. While New Hampshire Bayard Russell took home first place, everyone was in agreement that Ivan Tighe's impressive skin-of-the-teeth send was the highlight of the evening.

It was evident from the persistent snowfalls during the winter that there was bound to be a great ice season at Poke-O-Moonshine, and once again, Matt McCormick teamed up with Bayard Russell and Adirondack guide Mat Horner to establish a significant new



Derek Doucet on *Kid Charlemagne* at the 82 Crag.

variation on Jeff Lowe's fabled *Gorillas In the Mist*. For years, "Daks locals have been lusting after the third ascent of Lowe's famous line, and this year the ice formed a fantastic two pitch tube just right of the original line. McCormick, Russell, and Horner saw an opportunity and took advantage of it to establish *Endangered Species* (WI5+ M6). Russell suggested that the second pitch was one of the best he had ever climbed.

As the season wound down, the ice continued to hang in, with people climbing routes such as *Blind Fate* and *Grand Illusion* well into April as rock climbers were beginning to dust off the rock shoes on south facing pitches in Bolton. Travis Peckham, slogging up through late season snow to get a "snow bank assist" on *Kid Charlemagne* at the 82 Crag, scoped out a new pitch immediately to the left. Not long after, Peckham teamed up with Derek Doucet and Matt Salter to establish the new two pitch line *Truffle Hog* (5.10a). This route climbs juggy 5.8 rock up to an anchor left of *Kid Charlemagne*, then tackles the right side of the steep bulge in the center of the main face. Not long after establishing *Truffle Hog*, Peckham added the pitch *Quills* (5.8) immediately to the left of *Truffle Hog*. This pitch forms a nice direct first pitch to *Arms Reduction*.

As summer came on in full force, it became evident that Smugglers' Notch was due for a new route renaissance. Travis Peckham spent numerous afternoons on reconnaissance, rappelling promising-looking lines and scrambling around in the dense brush near Easy Gully. The end result of this effort was a series of fantastic ground-up ascents. The first to fall was *Snowflake* (5.10b), a nice two pitch line up the left side of the deep end buttress with Seth Maciejowski. The duo also uncovered an old pitch of crack climbing immediately to the right of the second pitch of *Snowflake* that was laced with decaying pins and loose rock. After some cleaning, a direct finish was added, straightening out the line. The pitch was then freed at 5.10a/5.10d. Although clearly an old-school line, this fantastic pitch deserved a name other than *Unnamed Route*, so the moniker *Hummingbird Crack* was settled on. Peckham returned soon after with Dennis Delay to establish the two pitch route *The Brazilian* (5.9+) on the far right side of the Deep End Buttress. Awkward crux moves were protected with brass nuts on the first pitch, and the dirty crux moves made for a memorable experience.

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The Choss Pile

(Continued from page 3)

After getting a quick taste of new rock in the Notch, Dennis Delay was not fully sated. Returning with Maciejowski, they teamed up to establish the wildly exposed *Choss Finger* (5.6R) on the arête immediately right of *Poster Child*. Some punky rock, wild exposure for the grade, and a healthy runout to the anchors makes this pitch a memorable experience. Delay then went on to establish *Swimmy Diaper* (5.7) and *The Assignment* (5.6) with Derek Anderson on the aptly named Shallow End Buttress directly below *The Deep End*, in the woods left of the Easy Gully slide runout.



Dennis Delay wades into the Shallow End on *The Assignment*.

Not to be outdone, Peckham returned to the Notch with Maciejowski to establish *Bloodthirsty Herbivore* (5.11d). This two pitch line hits you with just about everything including the kitchen sink in 200 feet of climbing. The 5.10c first pitch delivers unrelenting steep climbing on heucoed schist, with a steep crack finish. Pitch 2 serves up one of the steepest sections of crack climbing in Vermont with 25 feet of 135° overhanging hand crack to a super steep arête finish.

As summer moved into fall, super strong local climber Patrick Dyess left his mark on Upper West Bolton by cleaning and bolting the enormously scary flake left of *The Roof Crack*. Eyed and feared by many, Pat stepped up to the plate and sent the pitch at 5.12b, establishing *Featherweight Champion*.

Pat also teamed up with Claudine Safar to put up a route to the left of *Oompah Loompah* on the Lower Tier at UWB, calling it *Bilateral Symmetry* (5.11b). While the FFA clearly deserved an R (or X) rating, Dyess returned and added a bolt to the crux – protecting the 30’ ground fall that was likely if the bad RP protecting those moves was to pop.

Further afield, local hardman Peter Kamitses sent a standing project at the newly opened Silver Lake area in the Adirondacks. *Oppositional Defiance Disorder* (5.14a) is a tremendously steep crack line. Check out www.climberism.com for video footage of this wild ascent!

Compiled by Seth Maciejowski, with contributions by TP, DD, SM, MM, PK and DC.



The Shallow End Buttress at Smugglers’ Notch yielded three new routes in 2011: *Amateur Plumber’s Night* (5.7), with variation finish *Plumber’s Crack* (above, 5.8+); *The Assignment* (5.6), and *Swimmy Diaper* (5.7).



Darkness Settles – Perspectives on New Routing in Vermont

It's getting dark, snow is spitting from leaden clouds. In the fading light, amidst the eerie call of coyotes in the brush, there is the crash of rock landing in desiccated leaves. High on the precipice, a lonesome fool dangles from a rope, brush in hand prying flakes of rotten schist free and tossing them into the void. Desperation strains his face as he searches for an elusive line of solid holds. Methodically, he frees the line of debris, slowly miming long reaches and desperate lunges.

Ignoring the siren call of warm house and a cold beer, he soldiers on. Exploration yields sparse gear placements, but solid rock for a bolt placement. Worn out and cold, he reaches the ground, persisting in cleaning to the very end. He pulls his rope. There is a whoosh in the darkness and a rustle in the leaves, and soon the only sounds that remain are the swaying of the pines and the chirp of the wood frogs in the darkness. In the night a new Bolton classic awaits...

—Seth Maciejowski

Photo: Kevin Kamm

Photo: Bob Yates

Photo: Bob Yates



Photo: Ross Perry

Volunteers position trail-reinforcing rockwork during the CRAG-VT 2011 trail day on October 1

Casting a daunting weather forecast to the wind, almost thirty volunteers braved rain and cool temps during the October 1st CRAG-VT Trail Day, and the results were impressive. Fueled by bagels and coffee from KC Bagels in Waterbury, the crew gathered at 9am at the Bolton Quarry climbing area. As with so many places in the state, the Quarry

has seen the impacts of an extremely wet spring and autumn—including a spring road washout and repair that we’re still paying off!—and was in real need for some tender loving trail care. Skilled trail builder Dennis Delay organized the work teams and off they went—this was a hearty crew and they weren’t going to let a steady downpour stand in the

way of the good work to be done. Over the course of the day, the rains came and went, but people’s efforts never wavered.

By noon, everyone had worked up quite an appetite and the crews gathered in the main lot for a BBQ replete with pies, potato salad, and a host of other delights assembled by Maureen and Brian Beck. At lunch, people also got their first chance to see the many items that would be raffled off at the end of the day. But first, there was more work to be done! Out into the elements everyone went again for a few more hours of giving back to the climbing community before returning to the main lot at day’s end to survey the efforts and partake in the raffle rewards. Many people went home with prizes, most people went home wet and tired, and everyone went home with the feeling of satisfaction that comes from persisting against adversity to accomplish great things. In total, during Trail Day we succeeded in:

- Establishing a trail over 600’ long connecting the Quarry climbing area to the Carcass Crag (a crag we succeeded in purchasing and protecting in 2010);
- Putting in some burly water bars on the trail up to 82 Crag - these water bars will help to preserve the existing trail and will mitigate siltation in area streams;
- Clearing out the massive Tropical Storm Irene wreckage on the way up to 82 Crag, opening this up-and-coming crag once again to the climbing community;
- Installing a ladder to connect the two tiers of the Upper Quarry, enhancing climbers’ ability to enjoy both areas;
- Doing some very necessary pruning maintenance in the Upper Quarry Area;
- Laying down stepping stones to allow clean crossing of the water springs on Upper Tier, where ATV damage had created a mud pit; and
- Making substantial improvements to the trail connecting the Quarry climbing area to the Cat’s Ass Crag.



Photo: Ross Perry



Photo: Ross Perry



Photo: Kel Rossiter



Photo: Ross Perry

Clockwise from upper right: a new ladder connects the two tiers of the Upper Quarry; volunteers lever boulders into place to create erosion-controlling waterbars on the Carcass Crag trail; gathering beneath tents for hot beverages, food, and raffle prizes; newly installed stepping stones help protect a marsh area just above the lower tier from foot traffic while allowing easier access.

Indeed, amidst grim weather conditions, it was a chance for the Vermont climbing community to shine. A big thank you to all who participated, as well as to all of the Trail Day supporters: Climb High, Evolv, Outdoor Gear Exchange, Petra Cliffs, Smugglers’ Notch Via Ferrata, Appalachian Outdoors, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Nemo Equipment, KC Bagels, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps, Arno Ilgner, Travis Peckham, Derek Doucet, and Bonnie Katzman.

—Kel Rossiter

IN MEMORIAM **BOB TIMMER** 1964 - 2011



Photo: Bob Timmer collection

The Vermont climbing community has lost a valuable member. Longtime Smugglers’ Notch local Bob Timmer, 46, died at home on May 3, 2011. He courageously battled various forms of cancer for more than ten years, all the while climbing year-round as often as he could (he even once received chemotherapy and went climbing on the same day!). He inspired the disabled as well as able-bodied individuals with his courage, fortitude, and persistence throughout his struggle. Two videos of Bob ice climbing while battling cancer are available on YouTube.

Bob honorably served our country in the US Army and Vermont National Guard for 23 years, and the travels he experienced during this time allowed him to climb in many countries, such as Pakistan, Italy, France, Austria, Spain, and Canada. He also climbed at crags all over the United States, including

North Conway, the Gunks, Yosemite, and an annual trip with friends to Joshua Tree. But most of all, Smugglers’ Notch, Vermont, which spans the towns of Cambridge and Stowe, was his favorite. If you’ve ever seen the original Locals Guide to Smugglers’ Notch Ice, you’ll see Bob on the cover working another bold route with ease. In an interview in the November 2008 issue of The Crag Rag, Bob listed his favorite Vermont ice climbs as Ragnarock (NEI 4+) and Elephant’s Head South Face (NEI 4 M4) at Smugglers’ Notch, and his favorite Vermont rock climbs as The Rose (5.10a) and The Thorn (5.11a) at Upper West Bolton.

Bob is survived by his wife Cathy, sons Jacob and Joshua, and three beloved dogs.

— *Ross Perry*



Photo: Bob Timmer collection

Above: Bob Timmer at the Ouray Ice Park in Ouray, Colorado, during the winter of 2007/2008

Top: Timmer on the still-unrepeated *Beginning of the End* in Smugglers’ Notch, Vermont