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## BLOG: THE OMNI MOUNT WASHINGTON & BRETTON WOODS

02 Feb 2017 3:25 PM | [Kelly Bryer \(Administrator\)](#)

By: Michelle Gittleston, NHGSA Intern

The tour at the [Omni Mt. Washington resort and Bretton Woods Ski](#) resort was nothing short of amazing. It was a pleasure to put together this tour, and I want to thank Kelly for the opportunity, along with Travis, Craig and Jen for providing the tour and wonderful experience of playing on the mountain.



Setting up tours for the New Hampshire Granite State Ambassadors benefits the tour host by giving them the opportunity to provide intimate information about themselves that is marketed to visitors in the most unique and direct of ways - via our volunteers. Our volunteers gain unforgettable experiences around the state, inspiring the guests that come to visit the same places we've toured!



We started off meeting in the lobby of the Omni Mount Washington Resort, where we were greeted with the utmost hospitality! Thank you again for greeting us, Travis! Craig, the hotel's marketing manager delighted the group with a rich timeline of the grand hotel's history, it's original owners, and its changes through time. As we toured each room, we learned of the unique architecture and detailed,



italian artisans interior work. It certainly is a grand hotel, with 200 rooms, and 1,200 associates on the property who all play key roles in helping it run as a well oiled machine. Although the hotel itself has undergone many changes in the last century, there are special details throughout that preserve and showcase its rich history, including "Caroline's Table", where the late French wife of the first owner sat to watch over her dining room. If you take a tour, you will see for yourself how each section of the hotel accommodates modern day needs while keeping pieces of the 1900's intact. The chairs in the dining room are completely original, and the Audubon artwork is exquisite. We also visited their tea room, where you can reserve a table for authentic tea time with scones, and loose leaf tea blends made from Mt. Washington botanicals, and their prohibition era bar called "The Cave". You'll

just have to see for yourself!

During the hour long tour we were able to ask questions about the hotel and property itself, but also gain advice from Craig regarding what would be helpful to tell visitors prior to their stay. He suggested that the Granite State Ambassadors advise guests to book reservations for things they want to do ahead of time. They offer a plethora of activities to engage in, no matter what the season! During the winter they offer alpine and nordic skiing, snowshoeing, tubing, sledding, and a zipline canopy tour (Yes, all year long!). Craig stressed that in order for guests to have the best experience possible, booking ahead of time allows a guaranteed spot on the list and ensures a wonderful vacation! For a hotel that believes in the value of hospitality, seeing guests miss out on an adventure is never something the staff wants to see.

After the morning tour of the hotel, we transitioned to Bretton Woods Ski Resort, where we were each provided a delicious hot meal from their cafeteria. The burgers were delicious! More fun followed afterward when we all split into our separate activities.



They also graciously provided rentals to all who didn't have their own gear. Thank you again!

It's clear that every GSA who attended this tour had a great time participating in each activity. You can find their comments at the end of this article. Some visited the slopes and trails while others enjoyed the spa, and we even had one person do the canopy tour as well! As Craig told the GSAs - "You guys are the point of the spear!" As New Hampshire Granite State Ambassadors, we have quite a privilege to encounter visitors and enlighten them on all our state has to offer - and it is especially meaningful when we can draw from our own delightful experiences. We are thankful for the opportunity to gain intimate knowledge of this admirable estate!



For more information on upcoming events and activities offered at the Omni Mount Washington, check out their events & activities calendar on their website! <http://brettonwoods.com/activities/event>

You do not have to be a guest to participate in specific activities, including hour long hotel tours offered at 10 am and 3 pm, tea in their historic tea room, and much more. Just make sure you call to reserve a spot!



### GSA Impressions of the Omni Mt. Washington & Bretton Woods Ski Resort:

"I loved the history and magnificent beauty of the building. I have always wanted to visit there. It was interesting to hear about the history of ownership and its construction. I did not realize there was so much more going on there than just a hotel. It really is a resort filled with a variety of fun things to do. While on the tour I did beginners alpine skiing. The slopes were very wide and gentle. The staff at the chair lift were very accommodating to beginners. If I were to go again I would probably try the canopy tour. Although the spa and pool looked very inviting. Thank you so much for the opportunity to experience this beautiful resort."

~ Rosemarie C

"The Mount Washington Hotel is always awesome, but hearing about the history and how that is intertwined with the community and expansion of the community of Bretton Woods was great. Craig, our hotel guide, was full of so many good stories. We could have sat with him the whole afternoon. Our stroll through the main lobby was like going back in time. The Spa area was calm and relaxing. Staff were so welcoming and were anxious to make it a great experience. Very private and personal. A big THANK YOU to everyone!! The day was perfect. ~ Mary O

"Thank you for the opportunity to attend the Mount Washington Resort tour. I was very impressed with the history of the hotel and the innovations and forethought that went into the building of the hotel. I almost wish I was a guest way back when! But now, I will surely return to stay at the hotel, especially when the Glenn Orchestra will be performing. I enjoyed the alpine skiing. It felt so good to be out in the glorious White Mountain's fresh air! Lunch was delicious and gave me the necessary energy I needed to ski! In the future, I would like to try cross-country skiing and the spa. Having been a guest at this hotel, I enjoyed many of the amenities and, of course, The Cave. Staying at the Mountain Washington Hotel is an experience all visitors to NH would enjoy." ~ Rita G

"I really enjoyed our tour and had been looking forward to it ever since it was announced. While there I snowboarded at Bretton Woods. It was a great opportunity, because I probably wouldn't have gotten up there to experience it otherwise. My favorite part of the resort's history was standing in the Gold Room, where the monetary council was signed in 1944. I am not a history buff, but I found it really neat that something that affects me so much today (the value of currency) was determined in that very room. I think a guest at the hotel would most enjoy all the mountain vistas from the comfort of that grand building. I would especially love eating breakfast in the dining room beside those huge windows. I wished our tour had been more extensive. We definitely didn't get to see the whole hotel, or even go up the stairs. It definitely felt incomplete. When I got home I was still pumped up from my great day and couldn't wait to tell everyone about it! Thank you GSAs!" ~ Eilyn G CNHCC Intern

"The beauty of the Mount Washington Hotel and its majestic setting can literally take your breath away. A magnificent grand hallway with cozy fireplaces leads you to spectacular views from the formal dining room and the classic wrap around verandas. It is difficult to find enough superlatives to describe the Mount Washington resort and Bretton Woods ski area. As my activity I chose to snowshoe instead of ski as I am a little hesitant about falling. We met after lunch at the Cross Country field office near the hotel which I believe doubles as the golf club during the warm months. From here you can choose to cross country ski, snowshoe or ride fat tire bikes (looks very interesting) on prepared trails through the golf course and into the woods. Inside the clubhouse is a lovely fireplace and small eating area. As a beginner at snowshoeing I was very appreciative of the assistance provided by the staff at the center. They made it easy and enjoyable. The day made me feel invigorated and happy. I felt that I was spending the day closer to nature in a relaxing and beautiful setting. I think my favorite part of the tour was the hotel itself with its spectacular verandas - both front and back - and the main hallway. I love the

design and the warmth of the roaring fireplace as you enter. I did not experience the skiing this time but have many times in the past and fondly remember the wide slopes with a view of Mount Washington that is unforgettable. I believe this may be one of the best views in the state. The fact that the international monetary conference was convened here in 1944, setting the price of gold and the US dollar as the international standard makes this place a historical gem. On a more personal note I loved the story about the original owner Joseph Stickney's widow, Carol Foster Stickney, who would summer there and watch as people entered the dining room and change if someone was better dressed than she! Also when you go, make sure you check out the carpets and pictures throughout the hotel. They reflect the flora, fauna and wildlife that is indigenous to the area. Craig, our tour guide, is full of incredible stories and tidbits about the hotel and its history. His tour helps to set the mood for your visit.

If you are visiting our wonderful state and plan to go to the White Mountains you must visit the Mount Washington Hotel even if it is only for a quick drink on their outstanding wrap around veranda. But given all the options that are offered it would be better to plan a stay for a few days so you can immerse yourself in its beauty and history. You too will return with a new zest for life. I personally would like to return to try the spa and zip lining." ~ Kathryn S

"The tour of Bretton Woods was awesome on so many levels; and of course we're always looking forward to more opportunities like that." ~ Howie W

"I want to express my appreciation for the familiarization tour of the hotel and ski area on Thursday, January 19th. Although I ski at Bretton Woods often, I was not very familiar with the hotel and all that it has to offer.

I must say that the ski area continues to live up to its amazing reputation for impeccable grooming and fantastic ski conditions. It is a cruiser's paradise with occasional challenges like Bode's Run and Deception Bowl.

The overall resort has so many recreational options. I was glad to learn that the zip line operates in winter. The nordic ski trail network and dog sledding are also wonderful attractions on the hotel side of Route 302. During the tour you acknowledged that the Mt. Washington is a luxury hotel but that more affordable accommodations for the budget conscious are available in other buildings on the property. That is good to know. Also good to know is that guests planning a stay at the Mt. Washington are well advised to book their excursions in advance if they wish to go dog sledding or whatever.

The history behind the property is fascinating. So I was glad to learn that guests can go on daily historical tours of the hotel. The fact that the underground cocktail lounge was once an actual "speak easy" serving "imported" Canadian spirits was especially interesting.

I frequently greet incoming guests at Manchester-Boston Regional Airport on their way to the Mt. Washington Hotel. I always tell them that they are in for a treat. Now I will have more to tell them about what to expect when they get there." Maurice D

"The day began with a drive north on Route 93, which was an absolutely beautiful winter wonderland on both sides of the highway. Trees covered with fresh snow, and better yet, the roads were clear and driving was easier than I had predicted. This reinforced one of the reasons I do love NH in the winter!. Upon arrival at the Omni Mount Washington, the elegance and majesty of the hotel and grounds was spectacular as well. I was very impressed with the in-depth tour provided by Craig. He was clearly "at home" at the hotel, and had a passion for the historical details of the structure, and the people who are part of it's history. The tour was detailed and included snippets of history, including what china and furniture was original to the hotel... amazing!

A complimentary lunch over at the Downhill Ski area was great, and gave us all a sense of the quality of the food and offerings to skiers. The staff was friendly, concerned that they got our order "right" and it was fun mingling with the skiers coming in for a break. Being a weekday, it was pleasantly crowded, but not packed. After lunch, I personally checked out some of the rental options, but then made my way to the activity I chose... the spa.

I must admit, I didn't realize that the spa was different from the indoor pool and jacuzzi. I learned it's operated separately from the hotel's facilities, and I felt that when I went down the elevator to the reception area, I entered another world. Soft music played, colors of walls and furnishing were soft and there were no clocks, TVs, or other distractions. I was led by an attendant on a brief tour of the facilities, which included a sauna, steam room emanating eucalyptus fragrance, showers and changing areas, locker room, "relaxation rooms" both private and a larger one leading out to the outdoor jacuzzi. Amenities included fresh ice water infused with fruit, healthy snacks like pecans cashews, and other nuts, and soft lights and curtains produced a very peaceful ambiance. I felt immediately relaxed as I donned my complimentary large plush white robe and headed for the outdoor jacuzzi, which was the perfect temperature. Bubbles gently massaged me as the snow flurries fluttered down, while I had a view of the mountain, obscured at the top by clouds. Gentle music played, but was best appreciated when the bubble machines stopped periodically... the water was crystal clear, and an attendant appeared periodically providing either complimentary flavored water or orders from the bar. I thought I would only stay there for a half hour or so... but two hours later (taking breaks to cool down occasionally) I hated to leave. The shower, steam room, and changing areas were thoughtfully stocked with whatever I might have wanted or needed.

A few other guests I spoke with told me this was not their first visit, and they considered this spa the best one they had ever been to. One couple deliberately came to the Omni Spa for Sunday - Thursday mostly because there were not so many people, but also because the prices were less. This trip they left their kids home, and didn't even ski, just enjoyed the Spa for several days! My only slight regret was that I underestimated how much I would enjoy the experience, and that I didn't allow enough time to leisurely enjoy more of the offerings. Would I consider returning... Absolutely! " ~ Jean S

GSA Tim A, wrote a wonderful article about our day. [Click here to read it. http://nhgsa.com/Blog/4589421](http://nhgsa.com/Blog/4589421)

Thank you for allowing me to take part in the tour of the Omni Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods on Friday (January 19).

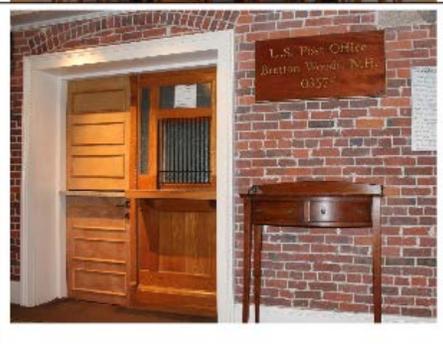
As you know I have a website ([www.images-of-new-hampshire-history.com](http://www.images-of-new-hampshire-history.com)) devoted to the rich history of New Hampshire. I have taken many photographs of the Mount Washington Hotel exterior and surrounding landscape, but had never been inside before. I was very excited to get this opportunity.

The morning started with a tour of the Hotel . It was interesting to learn many new facts about the hotel I did not know. The story of Joseph and Carolyn Stickney, the transformation of a 3 season hotel into a year round thriving resort. Having the last name of Marsh, I was particularly interested in the relationship of the Mt Washington Hotel and the Cog Railway (Designed by Sylvester Marsh). Sylvester was nicknamed "Crazy Marsh" for his "Railway to the Moon" and thereafter on the tour I was dubbed "Crazy Marsh"

The Tour was not only of historical value, but also gave me valuable information regarding what the Hotel has to offer for its guests. Besides the skiing both at the Nordic trails at the hotel and nearby Bretton Woods , guests can also enjoy a relaxing swim in the pool, several shops ranging from souvenirs to clothing and jewelry and a movie theatre. A self-sustaining facility, the hotel also has its own Post Office.

To experience first hand the many activities available at the resort, I elected to try Nordic skiing for the first time in 25 years. I would often go with my children on the Kancamagus highway. Although the equipment has changed for the better in 25 years, I still remembered how to glide and really enjoyed the peacefulness of the wooded trails and the beautiful view of the back side of the hotel.

As my opportunities to volunteer hopefully increase, each tour of the beautiful places New Hampshire has to offer will make me a more informed Granite State Ambassador and a helpful resource to the "Guests" visiting the Granite State.



Thank you again,  
 Richard S. Marsh  
 Granite State Ambassador  
 Indian Head Class of 2016

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