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Vermont Roundup

Workers Rescue Montreal Woman On Camel's Hump

The Associated Press

DUXBURY — It took eight hours, but rescue workers safely brought an injured Montreal woman to the bottom of Vermont's second highest mountain Monday.

Bonnie Merson broke her leg late Sunday near the top of 4,083-foot Camel's Hump.

Rescue workers from the Green Mountain Club and the Waterbury Rescue Squad brought Ms. Merson down the mountain. Steve Rice, executive director of the club, said the rescue party, led by ranger Ben Mason, started the descent around 8 p.m. and reached bottom around 2 a.m. Monday.

The crew carried a litter down the Long Trail and over Wind Gap, one of the steepest parts of the trail, to the Deane Trail.

Ms. Merson was taken to the Medical Center of Vermont in Burlington, where she was listed in stable condition.

Injured Hiker Is Rescued

DUXBURY, Vt. (AP) — Bonnie Merson is safe after injuring herself near the top of one of Vermont's highest mountains.

It took eight hours but rescue workers early yesterday brought the injured Montreal woman to the bottom of Camel's Hump.

Ms. Merson broke her leg late Sunday near the top of the central Vermont mountain, one of the Vermont peaks higher than 4,000 feet.

Rescue workers from the Green Mountain Club and the Waterbury Rescue Squad worked together to bring Ms. Merson down the steep climb.

Injured hiker rescued

DUXBURY, Vt. (AP) — Bonnie Merson is safe after injuring herself near the top of one of Vermont's highest mountains.

It took eight hours but rescue workers early Monday brought the injured Montreal woman to the bottom of Camel's Hump.

Ms. Merson broke her leg late Sunday near the top of the central Vermont mountain, one of the Vermont peaks higher than 4,000 feet.

Rescue workers from the Green Mountain Club and the Waterbury Rescue Squad worked together to bring Ms. Merson down the steep climb.

Steve Rice, the executive director of the club, said the rescue party, led by G.M.C. Ranger Ben Mason, started the descent around 8:00 p.m. and reached bottom around 2:00 Monday morning.

The crew carried the litter down the Long Trail, over Wind Gap, one of the steepest parts of the trail, to the Deane Trail and to the bottom.

Montrealer rescued

DUXBURY, Vt. — It took eight hours, but rescue workers safely brought an injured Montreal woman to the bottom of one of Vermont's highest mountains early yesterday.

Bonnie Merson broke her leg Sunday near the top of the 1,200-metre Camel's Hump mountain.

Rescue workers from the Green Mountain Club and the Waterbury Rescue Squad worked together to bring Ms. Merson down the mountain in a litter.

Ms. Merson was then taken to

CITY— News in brief

the Medical Centre of Vermont in Burlington for treatment.

The Canadian Press

Woman rescued from mountain in Vermont

DUXBURY, Vt. (AP) —
Rescue workers took eight hours to bring an injured Montreal woman to the foot of a Vermont mountain yesterday.

Bonnie Merson broke her leg near the top of the 1,200-metre Camel's Hump.

Members of the Green Mountain Club and the Waterbury Rescue Squad worked together to bring her down in a litter.

8-hour ordeal for hurt climber

DUXBURY, Vt. (AP) — It took eight hours, but rescue workers safely brought an injured Montreal woman to the bottom of one of Vermont's highest mountains early yesterday.

Bonnie Merson broke her leg near the

top of the 3,937-foot (1,200-metre) Camel's Hump and was brought down the mountain in a litter.

She was then taken to the Medical Centre of Vermont in Burlington for treatment.

Tragedy turns strangers into a heroic team

Aug. 19 is our anniversary. Not our wedding anniversary, but the 17th anniversary of our most memorable hike in Vermont's mountains. Aug. 19, 1979 — the day a great hike became a disaster, and one of us needed to be carried off the mountain.

The experience began about a week earlier, when my husband, Robert, and I hiked up Camels Hump and thoroughly enjoyed it. We were unable to complete that hike, but vowed to do so the next week. We went to visit our family in Montreal and talked about our experience so enthusiastically that our brother-in-law decided he wanted to join us — along with our 7-year-old nephew and my sister.

Aug. 19 was damp and rainy, but we headed off toward Vermont and the beginning of the trail.

The hike up was a lot of fun and relatively easy. It took us about three hours to reach the summit of Camels Hump. But, once at the top of the mountain, it began to pour. Several of us were scared, especially since we were above the tree line and exposed to a possible lightning storm. However, we made it back below the tree line without incident.

It stopped raining. We were drenched but relieved that we had made it off the top. We were on the Long Trail on our descent and feeling good about having completed what we thought was the most difficult part of the hike.

But amidst our laughter, my sister slipped and cried out, "I broke my leg!" We ran up to her, and my brother-in-law took a tiny Swiss army knife and tried to cut off a branch to make a splint. We knew not to move my sister, but did try to keep her warm, as she slipped into shock.

Luckily, two hikers with a sterno stove and dry clothes came by. We sent my husband down to the ranger at the bottom of the mountain to get help. We sent one of the helpful hikers up to the ranger at the summit for assistance. I hiked down with my nephew to the nearest cabin to get him fed and settled in for some rest. Gradually, other hikers came through the shelter for the night's stay, and I directed them up the Long Trail to help. Fifteen people carried my sister off the moun-



Shelia Stober

Gradually, other hikers came through the shelter for the night's stay, and I directed them up the Long Trail to help. Fifteen people carried my sister off the mountain.

tain. The clouds had cleared by that time, and the view was apparently magnificent. However, coming down through Wind Gap, they had to pull a woolen hat over my sister's eyes so that she could not see the cliffs over which she was passed from hiker to hiker. Night time was falling, and it was getting dark. The rangers provided coal miner lanterns for some of the hikers.

I had fed my nephew, dressed him in dry clothes and put him to bed. Needless to say, I was unable to sleep, but was listening vigilantly to sounds of approaching footsteps to fetch us. I did not anticipate it taking seven hours. We woke up my nephew, gathered our belongings and headed off to meet the rest of the group. We hiked the rest of the way in the dark and silence.

Approaching the end of the trail by 1 a.m., we were stunned by the brightness of all the lights from numerous vehicles, including Waterbury Rescue.

We were told this was the first rescue off Camels Hump since the 1940s. My sister spent the next three weeks in the hospital in Burlington — she had smashed her ankle.

We have done a lot of hiking in Vermont, but our experience on Camels Hump 17 years ago has taught us to always be prepared for the worst. We learned that nature is very fickle, and a pleasant afternoon's hike can turn into a life-threatening situation. To this day, we are grateful to the hikers who rescued us on the trail, although we do not know who they are.

Shelia Stober lives in Underhill.