

BAY-Hiking 6/12

HEADLINE: Mount Rowe:  
Ignore the cell phone tower

848 words

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I chose Mount Rowe as my fourth hike based off the advice that Don Watson suggested it as a solo hike. Fortunately, I didn't have to go alone because my boyfriend Maxx agreed to tag along, and I was looking forward to spending time with him.

Mount Rowe, as locals may have guessed, can be easily reached by driving on 11A to Gunstock Mountain Resort and walking up the road that is located right behind the skate park. The day we went was fairly overcast but very breezy and pleasant, because the bugs stayed away from us for the most part. Even so we decided to throw on some bug spray anyway and started up the road.

It wasn't too long before we came to a trail for four-wheelers and bikes that went up the mountain. Unused to hiking without a guide, I spent a lot of time wondering if we were going in the right direction, because we so far had not seen any signs or hash marks to indicate a trail.

But just as I was deciding whether we should go back I saw two hash marks, one slightly above the other heading right. I remembered from what Don had told me on the first hike that the marks meant the trail bears to the right. So far it hadn't really been what I would term a hiking trail, because it was a road for access to the

cell phone tower at the top of the mountain as indicated by the telephone lines following us up the whole way. Still the hash marks gave me hope that people did hike up this way and we weren't completely heading in the wrong direction.

My feeling was further confirmed when we saw another hiker coming down the road and we stopped to converse with him for a couple minutes.

He confirmed that we were going the right way and that we were in fact about halfway to our goal. He then suggested taking the Tiger trail back down; it would spill us right back onto the parking lot at Gunstock, which was where our car was parked. We thanked him and continued on, and pretty soon we were able to see the tower through the trees and knew that we were getting closer.

Even though the trail itself is pretty short lengthwise to get to the top, I found it to be a fairly steep climb, at least for someone like me who is a novice to hiking and admittedly out of shape. I took frequent pauses to turn and look at the view or to check out some rocks we saw on the ground.

One of the best things about hiking with my boyfriend was that we really got to talk without a whole lot of distraction around. I found out that he knew more about trees and rocks than I had previously thought and that he had been to Gunstock before as a Boy Scout. He was picking up rocks and pointing out trees as well as telling me about some of his own hiking experiences as a kid. We reminisced about a hiking experience we'd both

had when we attended college together – all the freshmen had to make that hike, and the rocks practically required belay lines to scale.

From time to time we turned to admire the view that was becoming clearer as we ascended the mountain.

Finally we reached the top. We sat down next to the cell phone tower, from which we couldn't really see anything, and then continued along the trail until we saw some really great views along the ridge and stopped to take some pictures.

We then continued on down a white trail and eventually came to the ski trails that we followed all the way back down to our car. The trail along the ridge was great because you could enjoy the view as you walked along for a good bit of the time. When the trail finally meandered back into the woods it was easy to follow and had a wide range of trail scenery.

Overall, the trip was easy; the only real hard part was when we got to the ski trails, because they were a very steep grade. The Tiger trail is a black diamond trail, and we could easily imagine the thrills a skier might have zipping down from the top in winter.

Despite the unnatural cell phone tower, the trip was totally worth it, because we still saw some great views and I got to spend time with my boyfriend. I mean, you can't conquer a mountain all the time, and sometimes it's simply the attempt and the company you are with that makes all the difference.

In total I would guess we hiked three miles, and the trip took us about three hours.

*Danielle will continue to chronicle her 12-mountain goal throughout the spring and summer. To get your own check-off list, maps, and other info about the Belknap Mountain Range, visit [www.belknapsportsmensclub.com](http://www.belknapsportsmensclub.com) or email [dwatsonmusic@hotmail.com](mailto:dwatsonmusic@hotmail.com).*

CUTLINE (Hiking 1) THE BIG LAKE as seen from the ridge; it was such a panoramic view it was hard to decide exactly what to take pictures of. (Danielle DeLisle – Gilford Steamer)

CUTLINE (Hiking 2) THE LODGE AT GUNSTOCK as seen from the ridge. It was really cool that we could see the car all the way from the top. It looked like a tiny speck from way up there. (Danielle DeLisle – Gilford Steamer)