# A JOURNEYS

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY / SUMMER 2019

## TIME TRAVEL

The Wild East Historical and Cultural Experience

Significance of Scenic Views

Hot Springs, North Carolina

*View from the A.T. in Harriman/Bear Mountian state parks, New York – By Raymond Salani III*



**ON THE COVER**
Sunrise at Blackrock Summit — just steps from the Trail in Shenandoah National Park – Photo by Lori Mier

# JOURNEYS

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## MISSION

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy's mission is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail — ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come.



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For membership questions or to become a member, call: (304) 885-0460

membership@appalachiantrail.org

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> THE SHEER MAGNITUDE OF HISTORICAL EVENTS CONVERGING WITH THE A.T. CHALLENGED ME TO FIND THE COMMON THREAD OF THE MOUNTAINS AND GAPS AS BARRIER, PASSAGE, AND LIFE SOURCE
>
> *Marina Richie*

THE DRIVE FROM MARYLAND INTO WEST VIRGINIA — OVER THE Potomac and then Shenandoah rivers — is my singular favorite stretch of road. Not just because it is where I used to play, float lazily on innertubes, and attempt to kayak when the rapids were low in the summers of my college years, but for the sheer magnificence of the views and the deep reverence I feel for the history surrounding the area. History flows like a river along the length of the A.T. In some areas, like the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac in Harpers Ferry, it flows quite literally. U.S. history and culture are intertwined inextricably in so many places along the Trail that it is easy to liken the footpath to a portal for time travel. In this ancient but somehow ageless Appalachian mountain range, time loops from past to future and back again revealing old and new messages — of the significance of dazzling scenic views, the stories behind some of the oldest historical places in the U.S., and the importance of cultural diversity in the outdoor-loving recreational community.

*Wendy K. Probst / Editor in Chief*

**Jennifer Pharr Davis**

Jennifer Pharr Davis is a hiker, author, and speaker who has hiked more than 14,000 miles and traversed the Appalachian Trail three times. In 2011, she set the overall unofficial speed record on the A.T. (averaging 47 miles per day for 46 days). She has also logged over 600 miles pregnant and over 1,000 miles while nursing. She founded the Blue Ridge Hiking Company — a premier guiding service in the southeastern U.S., which recently launched a lightweight hiking and backpacking boutique in Asheville and a bunkhouse on the A.T. in Hot Springs, North Carolina. "It was a joy to write this piece because the scenic views along the Appalachian Trail are the first place where I felt fully beautiful, self-assured, and a part of the natural environment," she says. Jennifer is also the author several critically acclaimed books, including *Becoming Odyssa* and *The Pursuit of Endurance*.

**Audrey Peterman**

Audrey Peterman grew up in the proverbial "village" that it takes to raise a child. Free to roam the lush Jamaican countryside with a host of village children, she feasted on mangoes, guavas, and limitless fruits and sat on the riverbanks observing life in the water while doing her homework.

"When I migrated to the United States and discovered the National Park System, I was shocked to find the disparity in visitorship and employment along racial lines," she says. She and her husband Frank have been striving to remedy this situation through consulting, writing, speaking, and physically introducing people to the parks. She served five three-year terms on the Board of Trustees for the National Parks Conservation Association and is co-founder of the Diverse Environmental Leaders Speakers Bureau.

**Tim Bower**

Tim Bower is an illustrator living and working in eastern Pennsylvania. Over the last three decades, his editorial work has been commissioned by major U.S. newspapers, magazines, and book publishers, and has been recognized by the illustration/design industry. He has also produced artwork for advertising campaigns, annual reports, and character design for film for clients including: Sony, Nike, Volkswagen, Red Bull, ESPN, Major League Baseball and Blue Sky Studios. Tim has served on the faculty of several college illustration programs, most currently the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. "As an editorial illustrator I'm offered assignments on current events most frequently, so the occasional historical or fictional themes are always welcome and have become preferred," he says. "This article, with its substantial conceptual heft was a pleasure to dig into, not only for its interesting imagery but for its historical and cultural significance."

**Marina Richie**

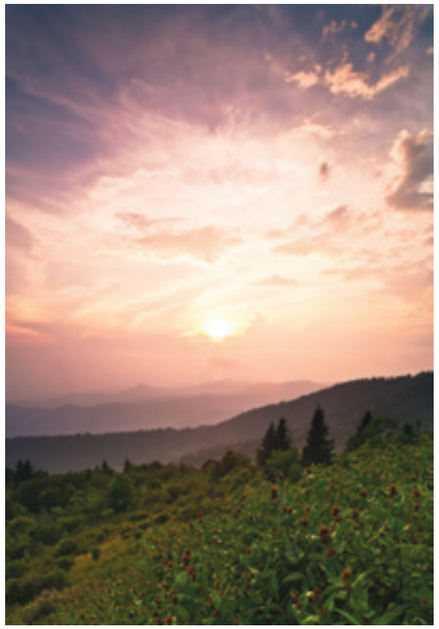
After a deep dive into history, Marina Richie has a piece of advice for fellow hikers: If you want to time travel, pause to touch a boulder and feel the passage of human history grounded in geology and shaped by the north-south mountain range.

Marina often writes about the confluence of nature and culture, and authored the winter 2019 feature, "Wild Skyway." "Researching this piece offered new and often emotional insights into the Cherokee Trail of Tears, and those who traversed the Underground Railroad, as well as stories from the Revolutionary and Civil wars, and the CCC-era," she says. "The sheer magnitude of historical events converging with the A.T. challenged me to find the common thread of the mountains and gaps as barrier, passage, and life source."

# RESILIENCE, DEDICATION AND ASPIRATION

AS THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL Conservancy's (ATC) president/CEO, it has been my privilege to share in the rich A.T. legacy. When I joined in 2017, I was immediately impressed by the passionate dedication to the Trail shared by our members, volunteers, partners, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and, of course, the ATC's board and staff. I've had an incredibly fast, exhilarating, and wonderful run, so I'm sure that this being my last column will catch many of you by surprise — more about that below. Initially, I want to address a number of important items:

First, the incredible efforts made by first responders, hikers, and the whole A.T. community to the horrific assault that led to the death of U.S. Army veteran Ronald Sanchez Jr., and which severely wounded another hiker, reminds us all how much we depend on one another. Our hearts go out to the victims and to their families and friends — clearly reflected by the outpouring of love and support that the A.T. hiking and volunteer community has directed their way. Not long after this tragedy, Appalachian Trail lovers from around the world gathered for the 33rd Annual Trail Days in Damascus, Virginia. The yearly festival of celebration, learning, and fellowship was made more profound by our shared shock at this senseless violence.



*Late summer sunset over the Nantahala National Forest/Blue Ridge Parkway – By Jerry Greer*

The mantle is ours to take up from Benton MacKaye in building and protecting the Trail. It's our job to protect the "scenic" in the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and to pass along to future generations the Trail community's legacy of resilience, dedication, and aspiration — the essence of "A.T. Strong."

MacKaye's goal was to provide residents in the eastern U.S. with a natural refuge and retreat from daily urban life. Knowing today that the A.T. is one of the last remaining contiguous open spaces in the East, ATC has sought to create a nationwide sense of urgency about Trail issues. We launched a public awareness campaign called "Wild East," which has served as the common banner uniting the most inspiring and important treasures along the A.T. This past year alone, with our landscape partners, we have protected more than 35,000 acres. ATC is making your voices heard on Capitol Hill, and with state and local governments; rolling up our sleeves with A.T. communities, documenting scenic views...and doing what we do best — supporting the ongoing stewardship of the Trail and welcoming millions of visitors.

Serving as the president/CEO has been the fulfillment of many of my professional dreams. My decision to leave ATC as of August 31 comes only after deep reflection on my professional and personal needs and my belief that ATC is on a solid foundation to move ahead to realize its visions. The wonderful impact that ATC has had on me is something that will guide my future career.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our board, members, and staff for giving me the opportunity to be the president/CEO of this remarkable organization, and for every experience shared, friendships made, and the good times we had together. Thank you all for all that you have done, for all you are doing, and for all that you will do. I leave ATC with wonderful memories, and with relationships with friends and colleagues that I hope will continue for the rest of my life. I wish you all the best.

In closing, we need to UNITE urban with wilderness, to UNITE the countless dedicated volunteers with hikers seeking to fulfill their personal aspirations, and to UNITE 14 States of varying terrain in one of America's most remarkable undertakings — the Appalachian Trail.

See y'all on the Trail!
*Suzanne Dixon*






THE ARTICLES FROM KIM O'Connell and Rebecca Harnish, "Step Out" and "Postcards from Paradise" (Spring 2019) are the reason I will keep my membership and enjoy *A.T. Journeys* as long as I live. Rebecca's short article may be why many don't want to long-distance hike, but to me and the ones who have hiked the Trail, we never want it to end. Her article gave me the sights, sounds, smells, and feelings that only a person that has experienced it can get. Keep these articles coming.

Richard "Truck" Dailey
Orange Park, Florida

WHILE I AM GENERALLY NOT a fan of the thru-hiker articles, I do appreciate the togetherness that comes from publishing the 2,000-Miler list of those who've done it ("2,000-Milers," Spring 2019) #jealous. The "Step Out" article about Trail Communities by Kim O'Connell is a keeper for when my life commitments allow me to hike, long weekends at best. Good tips in that article. Also, beautiful post card art by Rebecca Harnish.

Dan Rusin
Aberdeen, Maryland

I HAVE BEEN A LOYAL SUPPORTER of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy for more than 40 years now. Wonderful organization! I just had to tell you how awesome the new Wild East poster is. I normally do not go for any of the "gifts" that come with providing financial support, but this one blew us away. We framed it and it looks awesome. Thank you for caring so for our precious Trail. It passes through my new home town.

Jim Alden
Hinsdale, Massachusetts

I HAVE AN INCREDIBLE APPRECIATION for all those individuals in Trail crews who put so much time, energy, and soul into a "Trail" that has come to represent something much larger — for anyone who chooses to take the first step — into their exploration of self by the simple act of walking.

Willie Johnson
Georgetown, Indiana

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*A.T. Journeys* welcomes your comments. The editors are committed to providing balanced and objective perspectives. Not all letters received may be published. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

editor@appalachiantrail.org

Letters to the Editor
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Harpers Ferry, WV 25425-0807

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@hillier.c
People who clear and maintain trails deserve a special place in heaven. As a veteran (US Army '86-'92) and a long-distance hiker, I thank all of you for your hard work.

@marie.bauer34
Thank you for all your work. It does not go unnoticed by us in the AT hiking community.

@jenniferbuynitzky
I just took my basset hound, Eugene, on his first A.T. hike this past weekend. Thank you, everyone who helps to keep the trails clear, and the shelters repaired! We both had a fantastic weekend in MA! Although, Eugene did not get his trail name yet. Maybe next time!

@Lighthawk_East
I'm wild about Wild East! Let's make it happen!

I started by taking my daughter on short, manageable hikes that had something of interest for her ... the wild ponies at Grayson highlands ... the abandoned mine at Brooklyn Mine Trail in Fayetteville WV. I followed her cues so she didn't get frustrated ... now she's in college and introducing others to hiking.
~Karen Zitzelman Henkes

@subway_is_my_life
I had the pleasure of joining a team last weekend and moved hundreds of buckets of dirt in the Smokies to build the A.T. back up to normal levels in our section. Cleaned out water runs and rebuilt a bridge. Can't wait until next year!

# BOARD ELECTION AND ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

## ELECTION PROCESS AND IMPORTANT DATES

FOUR RETURNING DIRECTORS HAVE BEEN NOMINATED for open positions on the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) Board of Directors for the 2019–2022 term. Elections will be conducted electronically prior to the organization's annual meeting, which is scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to noon EDT on September 7, 2019.

Nominated for three-year terms are: Greg Winchester of Milton, Georgia; Beth Critton of West Hartford, Connecticut; Rubén Rosales of Cambridge, Massachusetts; and Norman Findley of Brookhaven, Georgia.

The annual meeting will be conducted on a virtual basis this year. Further information on the meeting, the elections process, and the nominees can be found at: **appalachiantrail.org**.

Additional nominations may be made via petitions signed by at least 100 members of the ATC in good standing and received 20 days prior to the annual meeting. They should be addressed to Sandra Marra, president and CEO, at ATC headquarters in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Additionally, any motions or resolutions relevant to the corporate affairs of the ATC for consideration at the annual meeting should be sent to resolutions@appalachiantrail.org by August 23 or by mail to ATC headquarters to be received before that date.

We will be adding more information including the agenda, biographies of board candidates, and other updates — so check back frequently as we get closer to the meeting.

Your membership must be current to vote. To check on your membership status, contact us at (304) 535-6331 or e-mail: membership@appalachiantrail.org. Elections will occur online. Online voting will open at noon on August 24 and continue until 8 a.m. EDT on September 7. All members in good standing will receive an e-mail with voting instructions in August.

**HOW TO PARTICIPATE:**

View the meeting live: **appalachiantrail.org or www.youtube.com/live**

View the meeting and submit questions during the event: **membership@appalachiantrail.org**

Renew your membership: **AppalachianTrail.org/renew**

Learn more: **appalachiantrail.org/MembershipMeeting2019**



*A.T. Shenandoah National Park – By Lori Mier*

# Scenic Views

## Wide open vistas beyond the foot path offer respite and are essential to the Wild East

{ BY JENNIFER PHARR DAVIS }

I HAD BEEN ON THE TRAIL FOR A LITTLE OVER FOUR WEEKS and despite the demanding climb to the summit of Roan Mountain my legs still felt energized. The Trail stretched before me like a moving sidewalk that pulled me forward without effort. It was late April and the breeze brought the stirring scent of spring to the 6,000-foot ridgeline. The eastern horizon was stacked with layers of mountains that turned violet and indigo as the sun grew heavy in the sky. To the west, the deep green of Christmas tree farms and spring flora filling the valley floor. As I ascended Hump Mountain, the sun descended on a distant peak. And, like a lit match to a

firework, the sinking orb ignited the sky with rose color hues and golden linings on every cloud.

When I reached the top, I was overtaken with the moment. Without thinking, I shouted, "Praise God," at the top of my lungs. Suddenly, I felt self-conscious. I looked around again to make sure I was alone. I was... I was by myself, standing on top of a 400-million-year-old mountain, with uninterrupted views in every direction, and the moment was too full to be contained.

For someone else, the expression might have been "Thank you," or "I'm Free." Or perhaps the sentiment could be best expressed in a guttural cry, a wolf-like howl or silent tears. But regardless of the expression, the translation is universal. There was something in that place and in that moment, there was something about the undeveloped landscape stretching like fingers in all directions that was transcendent.

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is sometimes described as a green tunnel. And, while the details of the bio-diversity and the sanctuary of the forest are identifying characteristics of the footpath, it is the scenic viewpoints that offer respite and release from long stretches within the canopy.

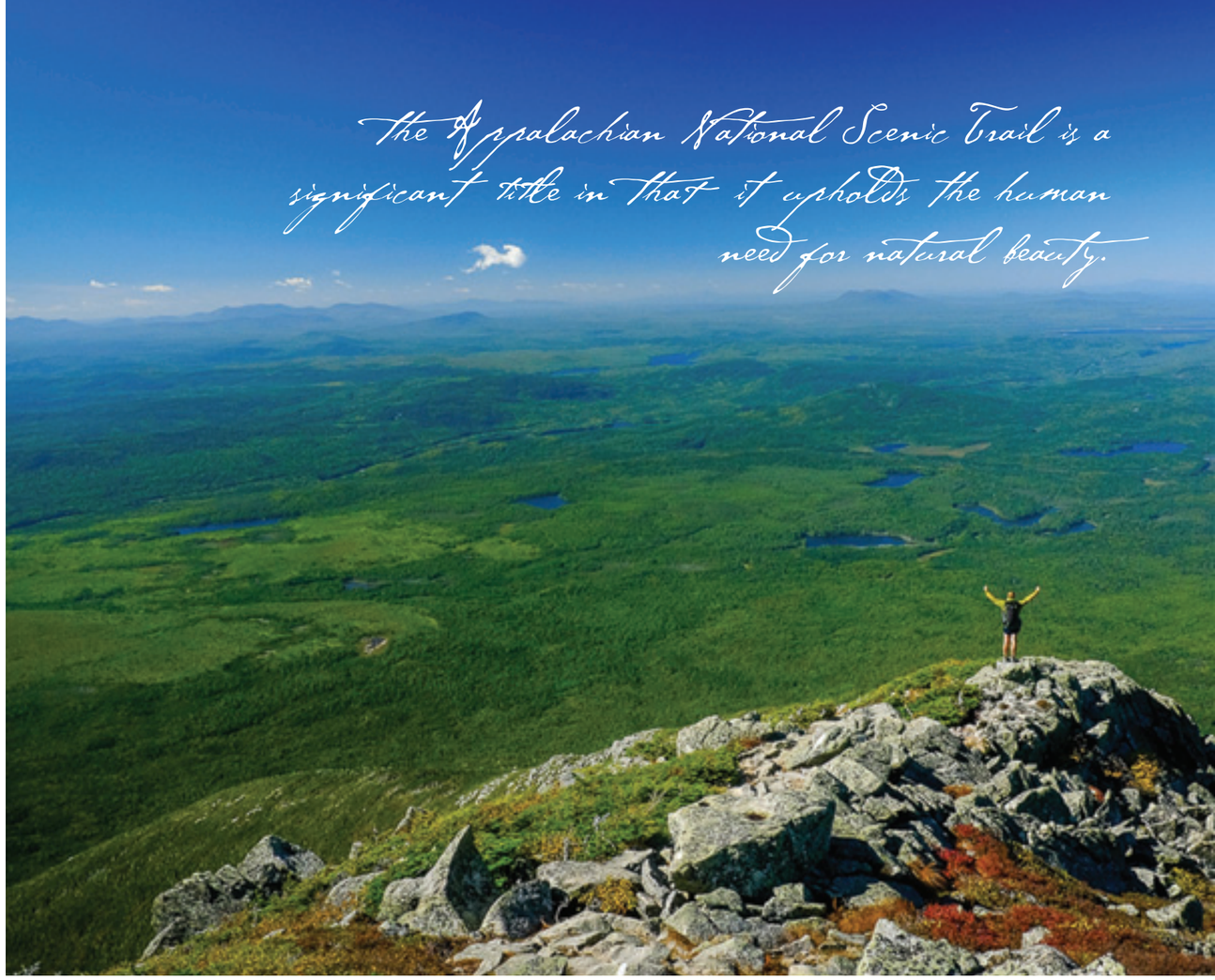
Myron Avery, early pioneer and leader of the Appalachian Trail, once said of the footpath, "It beckons not merely north and south, but upward to the body, mind and soul of man." And when you hike to scenic vistas such as Hump Mountain, McAfee Knob, Franconia Ridge, and Katahdin you feel exactly what he meant.

*Previous page: A.T. sunset from Three Sisters Ridge — Shenandoah National Park, Virginia – By Raymond Salani III; Above: George Masa with his camera in the Shining Rock Wilderness, North Carolina; A Masa photo of the view from Big Bald including Mount Pisgah, Little Pisgah, and Little Bald Mountain (Masa's hand-writing notes the elevation of each peak) – Photos courtesy Pack Memorial Library, North Carolina; Right: View from Katahdin – By Aaron Ibey*

In 1968, when the United States Congress recognized the Appalachian Trail as deserving of limited support and protection from the federal government it did not highlight the path's length, history, or recreation opportunities in the designation. Instead, it acknowledged its aesthetics. The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is a significant title in that it upholds the human need for natural beauty.

Beauty begets beauty — and conservation. The majesty of the Appalachian Mountains has inspired art in many forms, from folk ballads to watercolor paintings, from handmade quilts hung on walls to renowned poetry and reflections recited the world over. Some art, such as the stunning early photographs by George Masa, have also helped to protect and preserve the Appalachian Trail and its surrounding landscape or viewshed.






Masa, a Japanese immigrant who stood no more than five feet tall, used a bike wheel as an odometer to mark and measure the Appalachian Trail along the North Carolina and Tennessee border; and he brought his camera along to capture the stunning vistas of the southern Appalachians. His photographs, along with the writings of Horace Kephart, were a driving factor in the federal designation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and in raising the ten million dollars stipulated by Congress to fund the park.

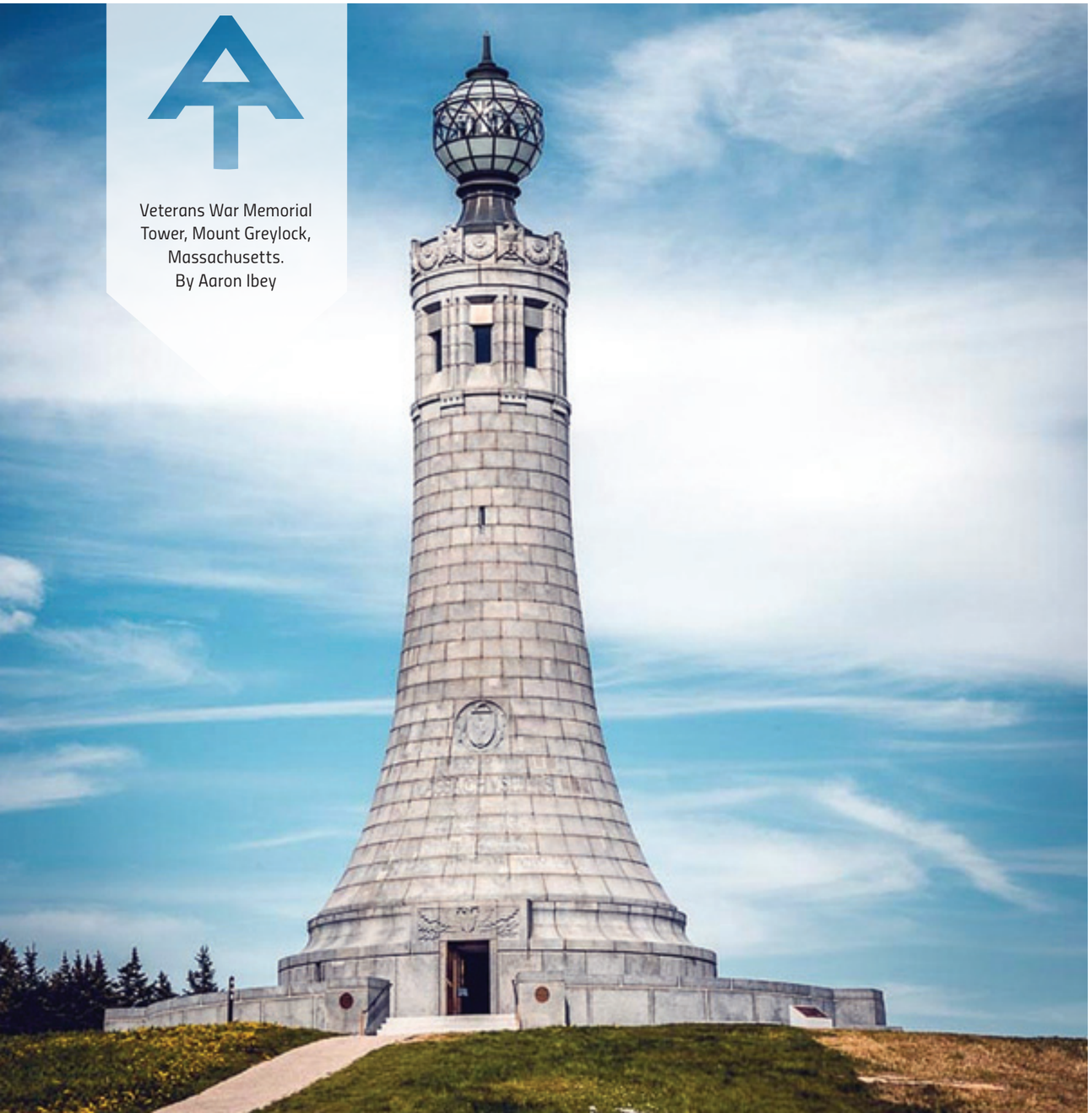
Whereas artists, recreationalists, and government legislation recognize the inspiration of the scenic views of the Appalachian Trail, the land parcels, which stitch together the awe of that place are still susceptible to the pressure of increased development and infrastructure. There is a daily and constant tension to allow for the expansion of a growing population while protecting the scenic vistas that improve quality of life, encourage conservation, and preserve history.

Recently, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail has been listed as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the path's scenic views and overlooks are a primary consideration in the designation. For as much as a historic house might teach us about life in the nineteenth century, think how much more an undisturbed landscape can teach about the history of this place and the men and women who inhabited these mountains over the past 10,000 years. Looking out at the Wild East that remains, and knowing it needs our support, will teach us who we are right now.

I had never experienced beauty like I felt standing on top of Hump Mountain, shouting into the wind, and gazing off into the horizon. But it wasn't just the beauty of my surroundings that felt divine. It was the realization that I was a part of my surroundings; I was a part of all that beauty. The significance of the scenic views of the Wild East is that they serve not just as a viewpoint into the Appalachians; they serve as a viewpoint into our soul.

# TRAILHEAD

ATC DIRT / HIGHLIGHTS / EVENTS / UPDATES



Veterans War Memorial Tower, Mount Greylock, Massachusetts.
By Aaron Ibey

## VETERANS WAR MEMORIAL TOWER

Among so many easily accessible historic Trail-side treasures from Georgia to Maine is the Veterans War Memorial Tower in Massachusetts. The 93-foot-high tower, which is located at the summit of Mount Greylock and is part of the Mount Greylock State Reservation, was constructed in 1934 by the Civilian Conservation Corps in honor of WWI veterans. At 3,492 feet, Mount Greylock is the highest point in the state and from its peak on a clear day, visitors can see as far as 90 miles away. ¶ Mount Greylock became Massachusetts' first state reservation in 1898, with the donation of 400 acres of land. Today the reservation includes over 12,500 acres, including an 11.5-mile segment of the Appalachian Trail.

WILD EAST™
APPALACHIAN TRAIL

The Appalachian Trail is more than a footpath in the woods. It is the backbone of a great landscape. With its scenic views, native plants and wildlife, American history, and unique communities, the Wild East landscape is a worldwide destination for your own unforgettable adventure. ¶ Immerse yourself in the stories surrounding the Wild East — from the importance of forest health to the eastern U.S. to the significance of the A.T. and surrounding corridor as a migratory route and home to myriad species of birds. Explore, watch videos, and learn about the people and places that are part of the larger narrative that encompasses the Wild East.

Discover the Wild East at:
**wildeastappalachiantrail.org**

*Illustration by Katie Eberts*

# SAFETY ON THE TRAIL
## AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

The A.T. has an extraordinary culture of kindness and generosity and is sometimes viewed as a sanctuary from some of the ills of the modern world. However, the Trail is not insulated against the problems of larger society. ¶ In the wake of the widely reported incident on the Appalachian Trail in southwest Virginia in May 2019 that resulted in the death of Ronald Sanchez, Jr. and serious injuries to another hiker, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) emphasizes the importance of reporting suspicious behavior to law enforcement. ¶ Mr. Sanchez managed to send an SOS from a satellite-based device just before he was killed. The distress calls triggered a major emergency-management response throughout southwest Virginia—from nearby U.S. Forest Service law enforcement, sheriffs' deputies from Smyth, Wythe, and Bland counties, the state police, and a National Park Service ranger from the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Twenty-four miles of the Trail from the edge of Mount Rogers National Recreation Area to Va. 42 were closed for 26 hours while law enforcement and a private rescue group combed the area to ensure other hikers were safe. ¶ The ATC advises hikers to call 911 (or use an emergency distress signal in areas where cell service is not available) in any situation requiring a law enforcement response or medical emergency. A 24-hour National Park Service dispatch number: **1-866-677-6677** can also be called to report incidents along the A.T. The ATC has updated and streamlined its Incident Reporting web page to provide guidance on — and multiple ways to report — an incident or suspicious person, including a mobile-friendly online incident report form at: **appalachiantrail.org/incidents**

For in-depth safety tips visit: **appalachiantrail.org/safety**

## Get Engaged with A.T. Volunteers

### Stewardship Council Selections
### Deadline August 15

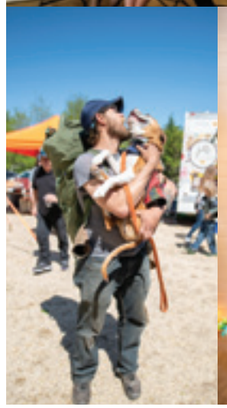
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is seeking candidates for the 2019-2021 Stewardship Council. This special committee of the ATC Board of Directors oversees policy development and programs related to stewardship of the A.T. and its surrounding lands and resources. The Council takes a lead role in volunteer engagement, outreach and education, and identifying and mitigating threats to the Trail. Members are expected to attend two, two-day meetings each year and participate actively on council committees. Committees typically meet once per month, usually by e-mail or conference call. The deadline for nominations is August 15.

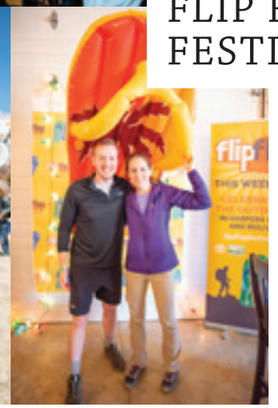
For more information visit:
**appalachiantrail.org/council2019**

*Springer Mountain – Photo by Niki DiGaetano*



*Live music, hiking workshops, food, beverages, and festivities were all part of the 2019 festival – Photos courtesy REI*






# FLIP FLOP FESTIVAL

This year's 5th annual Flip Flop Festival saw a record number of thru-hikers (55) starting mid-Trail during a four-day period in late April. More than 1,000 people joined in the festival's celebration of the great outdoors in Harpers Ferry and Bolivar, West Virginia by participating in workshops and outings ranging from hiking to birding and forest bathing, to star gazing. For the second year, REI supported the event with expert clinics and a storytelling panel, and added some extra zing by partnering with Blue Ridge Bucha at the festival, who donated proceeds to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy from their sales of a new Appalachian Trail brew. ¶ Flip flop thru-hikers can enjoy benefits like milder weather, a longer time frame to complete the Trail, and moderate terrain in which to start. Flip flop thru-hikes also help conserve the Trail by reducing overcrowding and sustaining communities along the Trail.

Learn more at : **appalachiantrail.org/flip-flop**

## Congressional Update

The Congressional Appalachian National Scenic Trails Caucus was formed to unite members of Congress who wish to work together for the sustained protection and conservation of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Over half of the American population lives within a day's travel to the Trail, and it unites countless communities over its 2,191 miles. The caucus co-chairs and founders, Representative Don Beyer (VA-08) and Representative Phil Roe (TN-01) are avid A.T. hikers and champions. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is honored by their leadership in the U.S. House on Trail issues. ¶ The caucus provides a venue for members and their staff to quickly gain important information regarding Trail events and the ATC's priorities, encourage rural economic development anchored by outdoor recreation while preserving a "wild" A.T. corridor, and is a convening space for ATC members who are interested/engaged in improving public lands (specifically Trail lands). Is your U.S. Representative a member of the caucus?

For more information visit:
**appalachiantrail.org/takeaction**

## A Soft Spot for Hardcore

*By Josh Kloehn*

Originated by the Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club (TEHCC) under the charismatic leadership of Bob Peoples, Hardcore is an opportunity for current thru-hikers and previous Hardcore participants to give back to the A.T., learn about trail work, and actually get dirty and perform Trail rehab that occurs after Trail Days in Damascus, Virginia. After 16 years of projects, TEHCC passed the Hardcore baton on to the next A.T. Maintaining Club north — the Mount Rogers A.T. Club (MRATC), and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Konnarock Trail Crew. This season, 2019 marked the fourth year that MRATC and Konnarock hosted and led the Damascus Hardcore crew. Taking advantage of the skilled and veteran Konnarock volunteers, they each took three to four Hardcore volunteers under their wing and tackled Trail rehabilitation projects up in the Grayson Highlands. ¶ "This year, my partner NAB ("Not A Botanist") and I ("Unicorn") are flip flop thru-hiking the A.T. and we decided to sprinkle a little Hardcore on the journey to really spice it up after Trail Days," says Phoebe Anderson. "NAB and I are both avid conservationists, and we wanted to do our part to help maintain this incredible trail. Hardcore was an awesome and humbling way to do so. I now understand the hours of work each set of rock stairs took to install, and the hundreds of thousands of hours that have been put in over the years to make this thing possible."

**Work completed as part of the 2019 Hardcore week:**

**87** Rock Steps

**3** Rock Waterbars

**34 Sq Ft** of Rock Crib

**578 Sq Ft** of Scree to close off braided social trails

**10** Stepping Stones

**13** Drainage Dips

**6** New Blaze Posts

Rehabbed over a **third of a mile** of a heavily-used section of the A.T.


*2019 Hardcore Trail Crew – By Willie Johnson*

# Wild East TIME TRAVEL

★★★★★

**THUNDER REVERBERATES.** Winds gust. Ahead lies a stone shelter built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. To your right, century-old tree roots tangle among rock walls of a long-forgotten farm. Underfoot, the soils may hide an arrowhead chiseled by a hunter 9,000 years ago, or a stray bullet from the Civil War. The boulder you touch to steady yourself could well be a billion years old. You quicken your step with the urgency of all who have come before you to find refuge in a storm.

Every footfall on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail connects to the flow of human history that is anchored in geology and influenced by the north-south mountains and gaps. It is here in the Wild East when outdoors, and within the largest natural corridor east of the Mississippi River, that time travel feels possible.

As I prepare for a backpack trek across several magnificent balds this summer, I'm studying up on more than the thrushes, warblers, and vireos I hope to hear and see. I'm willing to add the extra weight of relevant history pages from the *A.T. Guide to Tennessee-North Carolina*, along with the *A.T. Thru-Hikers' Companion*. The trick is to grasp the big picture beforehand and then study the clues and stories for each day. At the Clyde Smith Shelter, I'll look for two rows of maple trees that signal an old driveway to a vanished homestead. Near the junction with Highway 19E, I'll scan for black magnetic iron, leftovers from the long-closed Wilder Mine, where ten railroad cars hauled the last ore away in 1918.

When I hike over Jane Bald Summit, I'll think of the two North Carolina sisters, Jane and Harriet Cook, and their ill-fated 1870 trek home from visiting relatives in Tennessee. Harriet fell ill with milk sickness (from cows eating a kind of snakeroot and poisoning the milk) and was too weak to walk. They spent a freezing November night on this ridge. Jane hurried for help in the morning. Rescuers brought Harriet out by

BY MARINA RICHIE

ILLUSTRATION TIM BOWER

wagon, but she died the next day. She was 24. Stories are sprinkled throughout the Trail. They link hikers to poignant dramas and significant historical events.

## THE BIG PICTURE

Without the Appalachian Mountains, the history and culture of North America would be far different. The definitive ranges have long served as barrier, passage, and life source. Headwaters of rivers spring from cracks. Ancient rocks expose iron, coal, and quartzite. Every change in elevation hosts plant and animal life intimately tied to the mountains and in turn to the livelihoods of people. The rigor of mountain life fostered music in Appalachia, inspired poetry, myth, and fueled the indomitable human spirit seeking the solace of, and the sacred in, high places.

Some 480 million years ago, the buckling, folding, and faulting of colliding continental plates defined violent beginnings, perhaps a prelude to what would come much later in human conflicts. Once, the Appalachians jutted skyward as high as the Himalayas. Over the millennia, a series of mountain building events shaped the ranges of today. Erosion gentled and lowered the summits, yet there are no shortage of steep ascents, rocks, and roots interspersed with the bliss of ice-cold springs, waterfalls, sheltering forests, wildflower meadows, and the gaps between high points that played a vital role in human history.

*Each December, the Annual Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination in Maryland takes place to honor those soldiers who fell during the Battle of Antietam with 23,000 candles — one for each soldier killed, wounded, or missing at the Battle of Antietam – Photo courtesy the National Park Service*

From Georgia to Maine, the A.T. traverses history — not in straight lines, but more like skipping stones. In New York, cross the Bear Mountain Bridge on the Hudson River and feel the icy retreat of glaciers that carved the valley. Listen for the ghostly echoes of gunshots fired by Revolutionary soldiers from hillsides, the splash of oars a century earlier when Dutch settlers headed to the interior to farm the highlands, and the almost silent paddles of Native Americans slipping up and down the river as they had for thousands of years before European arrival.

## BARRIER

For the tribes that flourished before European arrival, the Appalachians were not a barrier, but

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From Georgia to Maine, the A.T. traverses history — not in straight lines, but more like skipping stones.

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part of the seasonal round that offered good hunting and gathering. However, they concentrated their villages and agriculture in the fertile valleys and at the confluences of rivers. Hikers on the A.T. can cross homelands of first nations that include the Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Abenaki of New England. The Seneca, Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga, Mohawk and Tuscarora all united as the Iroquois confederacy in New York. Pennsylvania is home to the Lenape and Susquehannock, and to the south, the Cherokee formed the largest of the Appalachian tribes.

*Members of Outdoor Afro on the A.T. during their 40-mile Underground Railroad hike – Photo courtesy Outdoor Afro*

For white settlers from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, the daunting march of Appalachian Mountains formed a physical obstacle, and then a mystical frontier between the Atlantic and the wonders of the West. The arrival of some 200,000 Scotch-Irish from 1710 to 1775 marked a push into the spine of the Appalachians. Initially, they sought cheap land and a new life in New Hampshire and Maine. Many moved on to Pennsylvania and others to the southern mountains, giving rise to the music and culture of Appalachia. Another barrier appeared in the clash of cultures as the Scotch-Irish intruded upon the tribal homelands, contributing to tragic episodes in mountain history. None are more infamous than the Cherokee Trail of Tears that followed the 1830s Indian Removal Act.

By the twentieth century, the high peaks and ridges would pose a literal barrier for pilots in bad weather. German balloonists crashed in high winds on Thunder Hill on Virginia's Blue Ridge during a 1928 race, and survived. In New Hampshire, a Northeast Airlines plane struck a ridge below Moose Mountain, killing 32 of 40 on board. Audie Murphy, World War II hero and actor, died when the small plane smashed into Brush Mountain near New Castle, Virginia in 1971, marked by a trailside monument. Since 1920, more than 55 planes have crashed in what is now the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, including an Air Force Phantom jet that slammed into Inadu Knob in 1984. Fragments are still visible from the Trail.

## PASSAGE

Every gap, notch, or valley between mountain ranges signals a passage for animals and people alike. Once plentiful until the mid-1700s era of plunder, eastern buffalo funneled through the Blue Ridge's Bearwallow Gap, also an ancient Native American route. Can you hear their ghostly snorts and pawing hooves in the winds? The major gaps funneled transportation routes, from trails to railroads to highways.

In times of war, the gaps proved strategic places to defend. During the Civil War, Confederates and Union forces sought to control access to the Shenandoah Valley — both for its resources and as a thoroughfare for supplies and regiments. Three gaps on the A.T. in the Shenandoah National Park section proved pivotal for the Confederates in 1862 — Browns, Rockfish, and Swift Run Gaps.

In that same era, beginning in 1851, slaves seeking freedom navigated a mountainous route near or on today's A.T. to cross the Mason-Dixon line into Pennsylvania. Most of the Underground Railroad routes likely followed the more forgiving mountain flanks.

## LIFE SOURCE

The Appalachians have long sustained life, from rivers and forests to wildlife, plants, soils, and arguably the human soul as well. The thirst-quenching springs are natural places for camps dating back thousands of years. A flat spot nearby to sleep, shelter from wind, and southern exposure would add even more attractive qualities. Later, moonshiners would build whiskey stills by certain springs, especially if not far from corn, rye, and wheat ingredients.

Trickling springs converge into streams and then mighty rivers. The New River, coursing 320 miles from the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina is one of the world's oldest. About 300 to 270 million years ago, continental collisions formed the supercontinent Pangea and, as they shoved masses of rock into mountains, the river system lifted with them.

The high elevations in turn offered a corridor for northern forests to expand far southward, and for the great migrations of birds catching updrafts and finding shelter. Those natural qualities persist in the Wild East, along with the relics of logging, clearing the woods for farms, fuel, and war. Awe-inspiring primeval forests remain in pockets and within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, saved from the saw by the rugged terrain and the foresight of early conservationists. There's a renewal story, too, in the returning forests and in our evolving relationship with trees, valuing them for storing carbon, anchoring watersheds, hosting wildlife, and nurturing the human spirit.

## NATIONAL HISTORIC TREASURE

Step back and consider the sheer quantity of history and culture resonating along the 2,191 miles of Appalachian Trail. The National Park Service-led surveys in 2002 and 2009 listed shelters, Civilian Conservation Corp camps, viewpoints, roads, bridges, buildings, monuments, fire towers, railroad grades, and moonshine stills to tally more than 1,200 features. The list goes on from prehistoric sites to quarries, kilns, and mines of early industry that gave way to richer prospects west.

Why does the A.T. harbor so many clues to our past, and so many opportunities for time travel? Volunteer Trail clubs deserve immense credit for maintaining Civilian Conservation Corps-era rock walls, steps, cabins, shelters, and fire towers. Hikers contribute by practicing Leave No Trace ethics to prevent vandalism, litter, and removal of historic artifacts. The more than 40 recognized Appalachian Trail Communities are leaders in geotourism that sustains our natural and cultural heritage. They support museums, exhibits, and culture that in turn enrich the hiking experience.

**OUTDOOR AFRO A.T. TRIP RETRACES THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD**

In 2016, seven African Americans re-traced the historical route of the Underground Railroad along a 40-mile stretch of the A.T., from the Mason-Dixon line south to Harpers Ferry. Equipped with high-tech backpack gear, the hikers still shivered in torrential downpours as they envisioned the hardships and life-threatening dangers of fugitives from slavery. Outdoor Afro, the oldest black-led conservation group, organized the trip. Find out more at: outdoorafro.com

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# 14 STATE HISTORY TOUR

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TO WHET YOUR HISTORY AND CULTURE APPETITE, HERE'S A SAMPLING FROM THE TRAIL — ONE FOR EACH OF THE 14 STATES.

### GEORGIA

**White Oak Stamp Mountain Culture**

Until the early 20th Century, mountain families lived an off-the-grid lifestyle in nearby hollows. The word "stamp" refers to a place to keep livestock. Flat areas like this were hard to find. The families burned the understory on ridges to clear the way for cattle, hogs, and sheep to munch on new green growth and acorns beneath sheltering oak, birch, buckeye, chestnut, and beech. White Oak Stamp, along with Buck Creek and Chunky Gal Mountain, harbors fine stands of old-growth, high altitude forests.

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Wayah Bald Observation Tower**

The three-story-high stone tower was built by the CCC in 1937. Visitors can gaze across ridge upon ridge of the Smoky Mountains — a view shared by a crew lifting heavy rocks 72 years ago. Wayah comes from the Cherokee word for wolf. Almost wiped out by predator control efforts of the early 1900s, a reintroduced population of the highly endangered red wolves face a tenuous future to the east in the Albemarle Peninsula.

### TENNESSEE/ NORTH CAROLINA BORDER

**Yellow Mountain Gap & the Revolutionary War**

A band of Tennessee patriots headed east to fight the Tories in the 1780 Battle of Kings Mountain in South Carolina. When drifting off to sleep at the Overmountain Shelter, imagine those men also seeking a camp for the night and their fears of what lay ahead. They'd drawn arms to fight back after British Major Patrick Ferguson threatened the "overmountain settlers" with hanging for taking the side of rebellion. The Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail intersects here on the A.T.

### VIRGINIA

**James River — Longest Foot Bridge on the A.T.**

Spanning 625 feet over the James River, the bridge is aptly dedicated to 1987 thru-hiker Bill Foot, whose efforts resulted in this unique footbridge. Looking down at the currents, drift back in time 15,000 years when nomadic peoples followed spawning runs of fish, then 3,000 years to an era of farming, villages and pottery making, 500 years to Spanish explorations, and 150-plus years to the Civil War. Confederates relied on the river for transport, and later as defensive barrier against Union forces that in turn would benefit from the river for attack.

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Without the Appalachian Mountains, the history and culture of North America would be far different.

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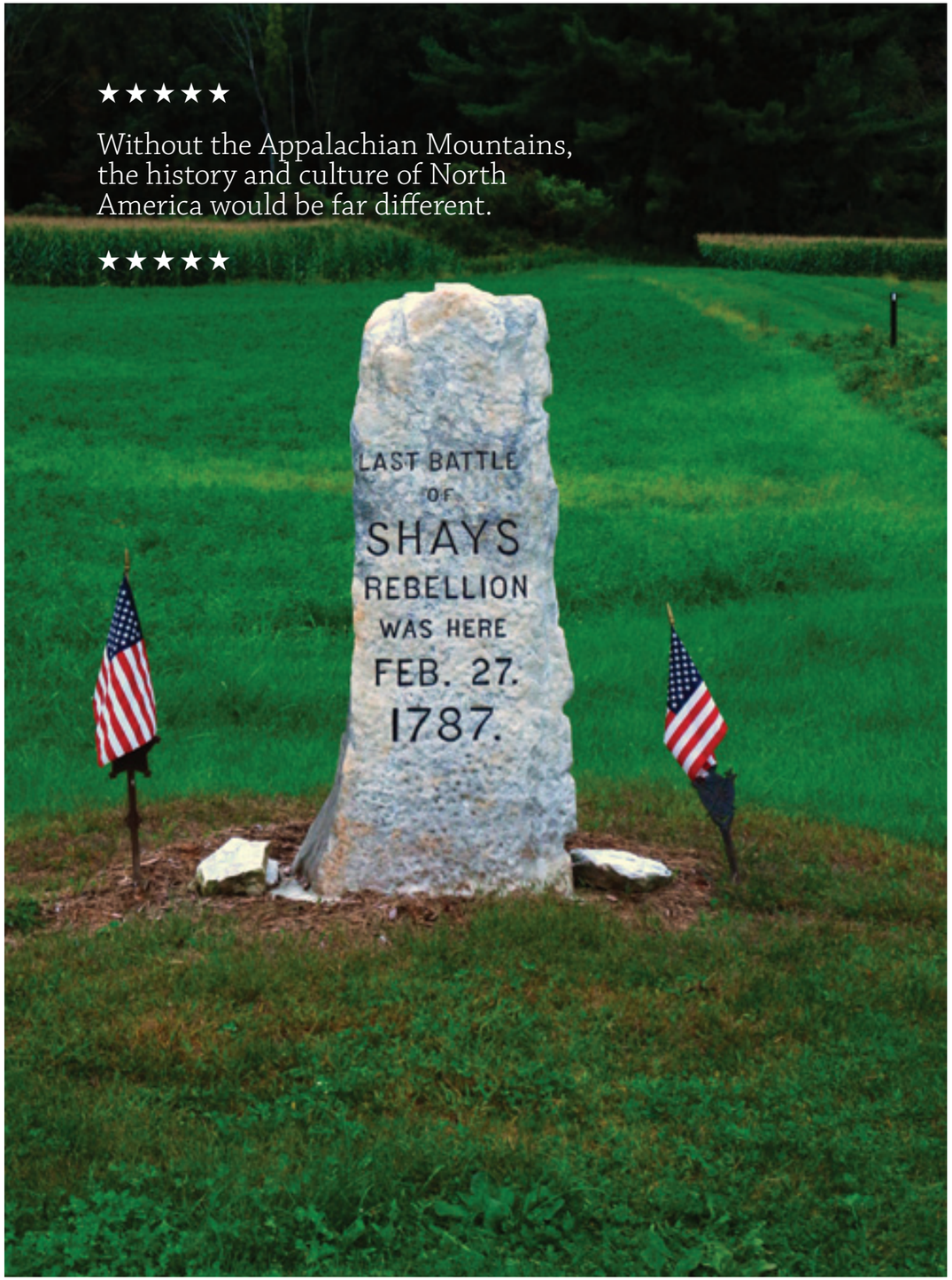


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## 14 STATE HISTORY TOUR

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### WEST VIRGINIA

**Harpers Ferry**
**John Brown's Raiders**

Abolitionist John Brown chose Harpers Ferry in 1859 in part because of the mountainous corridor to freedom, and the rough terrain for guerilla warfare. The aborted attack on the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry — on a site first championed by President George Washington in his second term — set the stage for the Civil War. Home to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy headquarters, Harpers Ferry lies at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. History is as thick as a humid summer's day here. Forests blanket the once cleared hills where cannons fired. Harpers Ferry changed hands eight times between 1861 and 1865.

### MARYLAND

**Battle of South Mountain**

Union and Confederate soldiers battled for the future of Maryland on September 14, 1862 on this ridge between the Potomac and the Pennsylvania border. Confederate General Robert E. Lee arrived first to defend the gaps. The Union's General George B. McClellan charged with 28,000 men to attack Fox and Turner's gaps, and later that day sent 9,000 men to Crampton Gap. The outnumbered 12,000 Confederates withdrew by nightfall. The Confederates lost 2,685 men to the Union's 2,345 casualties. Three days later at Antietam, 23,000 men would be killed or wounded in one day.

### PENNSYLVANIA

**Caledonia Iron Works Underground Railroad**

Abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens employed freed or fugitive slaves at his Iron Works, constructed with a partner in 1837, and destined also to be a stop on the Underground Railroad. Freedom seekers heading north from Caledonia likely traced the A.T.'s route through Michaux State Forest to Pine Grove Furnace. In June of 1863, Confederate General Jubal A. Early ordered his men to burn the Iron works. Stevens rebuilt in 1865, and advocated for racial equality in Congress until his death in 1868.

### NEW JERSEY

**Wawayanda Mountain — Forging Iron from an Ancient Mountain**

Along this ridge, the Appalachians expose some of their oldest rocks — billion-year-old slabs of gneiss and crystalline, when early life bloomed in the form of algae. In the 18th and 19th Century, miners sought iron ore for forges in nearby Vernon Valley. The origin of the word Wawayanda comes from the Lenape people, translated as "winding water" or "water on the mountain."

### NEW YORK

**Dover Oak — Largest Oak on the A.T.**

The 21-foot-circumference and 114-foot-tall giant witnessed a parade of history for the past 150 to 300 years (its exact age unknown). Perhaps passenger pigeons once perched in the branches — birds that shook the air with millions of wings, and in 1914 blinked out forever after being hunted into extinction.


### WHERE THE CHEROKEE TRAIL OF TEARS INTERSECTS THE A.T.

Where A.T. hikers and paddlers converge at the Nantahala Outdoor Center, only 181 years ago Cherokee families hid in laurel thickets to evade captors. The U.S. military forced most of the 17,000 Cherokees and four other tribes to march to Oklahoma reservations in 1838-39. At least 4,000 died of hunger, cold, and disease. Today, the Trail of Tears is a national historic trail covering 5,000 miles of routes west.

In October of 2018, members of the Eastern Band of Cherokees gathered with partners from the Trail of Tears Association, and NPS staff from that national historic trail, and the ATC to dedicate North Carolina's first Trail of Tears historic marker at the Nantahala Outdoor Center's junction with the A.T. One arrow points five miles to Fort Lindsay, where soldiers rounded up the mountain Cherokees, and the other arrow points 895 miles to Woodhole's Depot in Oklahoma. The Museum of the Cherokee Indian, in nearby Cherokee, North Carolina, is dedicated to "preserve and perpetuate the history, culture, and stories of the Cherokee people."

*Left: A marble slab monument on the A.T. in Massachusetts marks the last battle of Shay's Rebellion – By Raymond Salani III; Above: A new sign marks the intersection of the Trail of Tears historic route with the A.T. at the Nantahala Outdoor Center – Photo by Kristina Moe*

Ultimately, we owe the plethora of historical treasures to Benton MacKaye and his 1921 vision for the creation of a footpath along the eastern U.S. We also owe those gifts to Arthur Perkins and Myron Avery whose early efforts led to the completion of a marked A.T. in the 1930s. Skip ahead to the National Trails System Act of 1968 that designated the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, creating a holistic park and jump-starting an ambitious project to acquire and preserve the Trail within a publicly-owned corridor. That effort is 99 percent complete. This is the "People's Trail," where volunteers make the difference, everyone shares credit, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy leads with the National Park Service as partner, along with other agencies like the U.S. Forest Service and local community members in the 14 states. The journey of protection is far from

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The rigor of mountain life fostered music in Appalachia, inspired poetry, myth, and fueled the indomitable human spirit.

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over, as new threats emerge along with a recognition of the need to expand conservation efforts for a wider and more buffered Wild East.

The next step? Historians hope to see the entire A.T. added to the National Register of Historic Places, offering more protection from development, funding for restoration, and greater public appreciation.

For my own small journey on the A.T. this summer, I'm feeling inspired to hike with greater attentiveness to layers of history and the stories floating on the breeze, conveyed in the bird songs, shining down from brilliant stars, and stirring among untended apple orchards merging with wild forests. I believe if you want to time travel, you need to remove yourself from the hustle, noise, and technology of our modern society. There's no better place than within the Wild East and the lifeline of the Appalachian Trail.

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## 14 STATE HISTORY TOUR

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### CONNECTICUT

**Housatonic River — Beyond the Mountain Place**

Housatonic comes from the Mohican "usi-a-di-en-uk" that translates "beyond the mountain place." Strolling the A.T. along the river, reflect on the significance of the A.T. as protector of headwaters and watersheds. The Housatonic River flows 149 miles from the Berkshires, nurtures a watershed the size of Delaware, and enters the Long Island Sound.

### MASSACHUSETTS

**Shays' Rebellion of 1787**

The A.T. skirts a weathered rock monument to Daniel Shays, a farmer upset by high state taxes and lack of compensation for serving in the Revolutionary War. In 1787, Shays and other leaders (including Luke Day who'd ridden with Benedict Arnold to Quebec in 1775) raided the federal arsenal in Springfield for weapons. The attack failed. The men scattered, and most were pardoned. The remaining rebels (but not Shays) were arrested in this field. The rebellion would inform the debate over state versus federal powers by the framers of the U.S. Constitution.

### VERMONT

**Little Rock Pond 9,000-Year-Old Quarry**

Ten thousand years ago, an avalanche of quartzite boulders tumbled down White Rocks Cliffs, close by Little Rock Pond in southern Vermont. Ancestors of the Abenaki and Mohican peoples once quarried the quartzite to shape arrowheads and tools. Archeologists unearthed a 9,000-year-old projectile point in 2010. During the Ice Age, glacier scouring exposed the metamorphic Cheshire quartzite, formerly sandstone before heated and compressed. The A.T. traverses a 30-mile stretch of the Robert T. Stafford White Rocks National Recreation Area.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

**Crawford Notch 1826 Landslide**

Thomas Moran captured the frailty of humans within Crawford Notch's grandeur in his 1839 painting depicting the aftermath of the first landslide of June, 1826, that rumbled down the White Mountain slopes after heavy rains. Innkeeper Samuel Willey, along with his wife and five children moved to safer ground, only to be struck two months later by a second mudslide that killed them all. There is now a Wiley House with exhibits and surrounding hiking trails in Crawford Notch State Park.

### MAINE

**Benedict Arnold's Heavy Portage of 1775**

Benedict Arnold led 1,150 Revolutionaries on a failed attack on the British in Quebec in 1775. The route coincides with the A.T. between Middle and West Carry Ponds. Arnold chose the Abenaki portage and paddle trail known as the 13 Mile Great Carrying Trail, the safest and shortest way to link the Kennebec and Dead Rivers. In contrast to the Abenaki people portaging birchbark canoes, the exhausted army men hefted 220 wooden boats (bateaux), each weighing 400 pounds. The Maine A.T. Club erected an interpretive sign by Arnold Point, where the army camped.



# THE LURE OF DISCOVERY

**VOLUNTEER HISTORY OF THE A.T.** / *By Leanna Joyner*

THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL WAS AN IDEA conceived in 1921 and was designed and built by ordinary citizens over the decades. Spurred by early champions and the essential route-finding led by others, at the center of the effort was a shared vision for a place that offered reprieve from our rapidly industrializing nation and purpose in applying one's skills toward a greater cause. Their efforts captured the "lure of discovery," as A.T. founder Benton MacKaye described it, mobilized through the hiking groups founded in New England, through the Mid-Atlantic and into the South. ¶ The most unique facet of the Trail, alongside scenic beauty, is the roughly 6,000 volunteers organized through 31 A.T. partner clubs that keep the Trail alive over its 2,191 miles from Maine to Georgia. The 1968 designation of the Trail as the Appalachian National Scenic Trail acknowledged the importance of public investment to the long-term management of the A.T. ¶ We call this public investment the Cooperative Management System. It respects volunteers as co-managers of this public resource that they helped design and build. It's an important legacy for all of us who love the Trail, and a model nationwide for reinvesting citizens in their public lands as stewards and protectors. ¶ Through the Cooperative Management System, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy serves as the convener and helps lead the management of the A.T. in 14 states, through eight National Forests, six National Park Service units, two National Wildlife Refuges, and 74 other state parks/forests and other lands.

*Myron Avery with measuring wheel on the Knife Edge in 1933 — on his way to set his first summit sign – Courtesy Maine State Library*

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THE MOST UNIQUE FACET OF THE TRAIL, ALONGSIDE SCENIC BEAUTY, IS THE ROUGHLY 6,000 VOLUNTEERS ORGANIZED THROUGH 31 A.T. PARTNER CLUBS THAT KEEP THE TRAIL ALIVE, OVER ITS 2,191 MILES FROM MAINE TO GEORGIA.

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{ BY LARRY LUXENBERG }

# The A.T. Story

## THE ONLY FULL-FLEDGED HIKING MUSEUM IN THE U.S. IS LOCATED NEAR THE MID-POINT OF THE A.T. IN PINE GROVE FURNACE STATE PARK, PENNSYLVANIA



*Clockwise from left: A.T. Museum building; A look into the entrance of the children's museum; Significant A.T. signs from Springer Mountain, Center Point Knob, and Katahdin; Descriptive panels on the present day hiking experience in Vermont, New York, and New Jersey – Photos by Nathaniel Shank*

THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL MUSEUM MARKED THE start of its tenth season with a big weekend in early May. On Saturday May 4, the museum inducted its ninth class into the A.T. Hall of Fame — which now totals 40 members. The following day, at its Hall of Fame Festival, the Museum unveiled five new exhibits, the largest number of new exhibits since its grand opening on June 5, 2010. At the festival, despite an all-day downpour, nearly 80 people listened to Hall of Fame inductees and people involved in the new exhibits. Among the attendees were the family of "Walkin'" Jim Stolz, who came from as far away as Alaska, and the three living founders of the American Hiking Society, who organized Hikanation: Jim Kern, Bill Kemsley, and Paul Pritchard.

Hall of Fame honorees this year were Jean Cashin, one of the most revered Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) employees; Paul Fink, who designed much of the original southern A.T.; Don King, the National Park Service head of land acquisition for the A.T. and other trails; and the late Bob Proudman of the ATC, noted for his work on the physical Trail. Mike Wingeart, former Appalachian Long-Distance Hikers Association coordinator, received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The five new exhibits opened were: "The A.T. and the National Scenic Trails; Hikanation," a cross country group hike in 1980-81 by the new American Hiking Society, which utilized 500 miles of the A.T.; "Blazing the Trail in Maine," featuring Myron Avery's folding kayak; "A Night on the Trail," a children's exhibit of a Trail shelter; and "Walkin' Jim Stolz," the famous A.T. hiker and musician, featuring his hiking guitar "Stella," which he credited with breaking a fall and saving his life. Also, the initial entry in a revolving hiker exhibit area, is the feather-light pack used by current Trail legend Heather "Anish" Anderson to set the unsupported A.T. hiking record.

The A.T. Museum is the only full-fledged hiking museum in the U.S. and includes a reference library with more than 2,000 A.T.-related books, magazines, and other documents set up by retired Florida State University reference librarian Linda Patton; a children's museum; and a large collection of artifacts from the builders and maintainers of the Trail as well as pioneering hikers. The museum hosts speakers and other programs and special events, and has also published two books, *Thru*, a novel by 1973 thru-hiker Richard Judy and the biography of Earl Shaffer, *A Grip on the Mane of Life*, by David Donaldson and Maurice J. Forrester.

As a reflection of the A.T. itself, the museum was created, built, and is run largely by volunteers. There is a part-time manager (and A.T. thru-hiker), Nate "Angry Bird" Shank, who coordinates volunteers and deals with myriad tasks necessary to run even a small museum properly. Local and long-term volunteers, as well as interns are welcome for every task that the museum performs.

The museum is located in Pine Grove Furnace State Park in Gardners, Pennsylvania, close to the geographic midpoint of the A.T. and adjacent to the Pine Grove General Store (location of the "Half Gallon" ice cream challenge) and Ironmasters Hostel. Shortly after the museum opened, the A.T. was relocated a short distance, taking it off a park road and bringing it past the store and the museum itself. The Trail continues north on a 19th Century roadbed, uncovered before the museum opened by volunteers clearing overgrowth on its surrounding grounds. The museum building is located in a historic grist mill that dates back to about 1765.

Each year, more than 10,000 people visit the museum. About half of the visitors come from the four-county area of Pennsylvania surrounding it. The remaining visitors come from all 50 states and dozens of foreign countries. It has attracted national and international print and television coverage and was featured in an episode of the Travel Channel's "Mystery of the Museum," focusing on a shoe of Grandma Gatewood, a pioneering thru-hiker.

Among projects underway are a native plants garden and a reconstruction on the museum grounds of a stone trail shelter built by first thru-hiker, Earl Shaffer, around 1960. The museum is hoping to get Trail maintaining clubs involved in this project. Also underway is an exhibit on historic Trail saws and other tools.

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The A.T. Hall of Fame honors people who have made an exceptional and positive contribution to the A.T. and the A.T. community. Nominations are welcome. More information about nominations and donating artifacts is available at: **atmuseum.org**

# MOUNTAIN PLAYGROUND

## WOMEN OF THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS HIKING CLUB / BY LIZ SKENE

## IN 1937

30-year-old Harriett Fowlkes mourned, saying she had "given up hopes of ever getting to do very much more hiking in the Smokies." Once an active member of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, she had left her job as a home economics teacher in Knoxville, Tennessee to live and work in Jackson, Michigan. And although she didn't care for the term "veteran," she submitted her application to be designated as one of the club's "veteran hikers" anyway, an honor introduced just one year prior. Her application demonstrated that she had met the club's rigorous guidelines for that honor: for at least three consecutive years, she had joined no fewer than 25 percent of the club's scheduled hikes; she had hiked a minimum distance of 300 miles and three-fourths of the Appalachian Trail within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and had climbed eleven specific Smokies peaks. Thus, in 1938 Fowlkes became the club's first female veteran hiker.

Harriett was part of a group of hiking enthusiasts from Knoxville who believed no group of persons anywhere would profit more from creating the Great Smoky Mountains National Park than they. Additionally, they saw that their efforts in the locating and routing of new trails, including the A.T., would help to "lay the nucleus of a trail system in the Smokies equal to any other mountain playground." Their dedication to these two goals was unrelenting and underpinned the monthly group hikes, educational programs, social events, and other club activities. Even as they scrambled to find ways to pay for the 1934 handbook after losing their money in a bank failure, club members still carried out their A.T. clearing program, crediting the "bull-dog tenacity and unquenchable enthusiasm" of its loyal members.

From its beginnings in 1924, the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club brought together many southern Appalachian wilderness advocates. Among these were Harvey Broome, a co-founder of the Wilderness Society, Paul Fink, who served on the Board of Managers for the newly formed Appalachian Trail Conference and is a 2019 Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame inductee, Carlos Campbell, a founding member of the Great Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, and Jim Thompson, whose photographs were used extensively to advocate for a national park in the Smokies. Yet behind the scenes, female club members contributed to the club in innumerable and varied ways and their efforts sustained the club's high level of activity and advocacy.

While the club's women never achieved the levels of notoriety many of the male members did, evidence of their considerable contributions can be found throughout club records and correspondence. One such example is a letter from George Barber, chairman of the 1937 Appalachian Trail Conference Reservations Committee to Guy Frizzell, General Conference chairman. After the record-setting conference (16 states and the District of Columbia were represented), he wanted to "pay especial tribute to Miss Besse and Miss Sewell for the wonderful work they did."

*Clockwise from above: Club members at Hall's Cabin in 1932, including (from top left) Dorothy Trainer, Mable Joyner, and Harriett Fowlkes; A 1933 Labor Day hike to Three Forks including Carolos Campbell and Mabel Abercrombie (first two on left); Marking the A.T. in the Smokies*

Margaret Broome was one of the most active women in the club's early days. In 1930, Margaret was 22, single, and working as an assistant librarian in the Knoxville Public Library. As the younger sister to Harvey Broome, Margaret served in many club roles, including chairman of the handbook committee, handbook editor, hike leader, hike supervisor, and on the board of directors. She later married Robert Howes, first director of the Tennessee Valley Authority's Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, after they were introduced by Benton MacKaye.

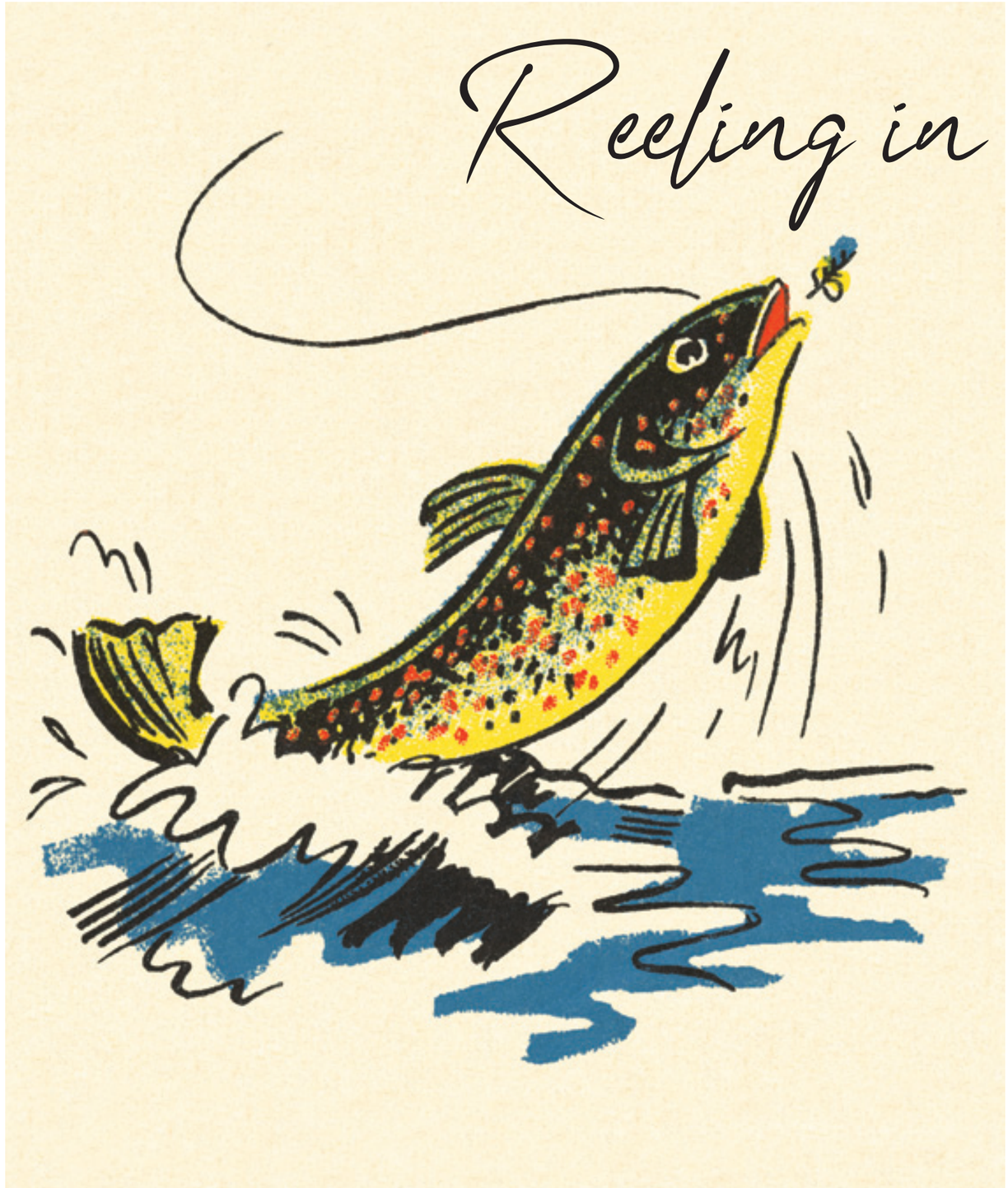
Mabel Abercrombie lived in Atlanta until moving to Knoxville for a job with the Tennessee Valley Authority's Forestry Division in 1934. Mabel took numerous photographs of the Smokies on club hikes, many of which are now part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park archives. She became friends with Benton MacKaye who said Mabel knew what "wilderness really means."

A confluence of factors enabled the young women who joined the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club. Women have always been active in conservation efforts — they were admitted to the Appalachian Mountain Club at its second regular meeting in 1876 and, by 1929, more women than men had become members of the National Parks Association. The cultural and economic necessities of the Great Depression, as well as the recent mobilization for suffrage and temperance, further encouraged women's participation in public life to blossom. Furthermore, Appalachian women have a long history of labor unrest. The club's women were part of a long Southern tradition of activism and civic engagement.

Highlighting contributions of women to the national park movement and development of the Appalachian Trail is imperative to understanding the importance and breadth of amateur conservation activism. Volunteers and hiking clubs are the heart and soul of the Appalachian Trail community. Today, the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club continues to offer monthly hikes, and maintains 102 miles of the A.T. This legacy was made possible by the tireless and often unrecognized and underappreciated work by women in the club's early day. Undoubtedly, we have them to thank for growing and sustaining the hiking community we hold so dear.

*Photos courtesy the Great Smoky Mountains National Park*

# Reeling in the Miles



BY ALEC CLEMENT

Ounces equal pounds and pounds equal pain, an adage that a past thru-hiker gave to me starting out on my 2,191-mile hike of the A.T. He was referencing the fishing pole that I tried to sneak past him on my pack shakedown. Up until that point, I was open to dropping weight off my pack. Now I was thinking of a different adage, "hike your own hike."

Due to the advice I was given, I sent my pole forward 30 miles ahead to Neels Gap. This would give me a chance to decide if the Trail would provide plenty of fishing opportunities to make the extra weight worth it. Within the first 100 steps of the approach trail I realized I made a mistake not having my pole on me. There was a beautiful waterfall (Amicalola Falls) cascading down into a pool of water (Reflection Pond). Although I can't confirm fishing was allowed at this spot, it gave me the foreshadow I needed.

It can be a challenge to carry any extra weight on your hike, regardless if it's for a day hike, a section, or a thru-hike. I once met another hiker that fished only using a spinner, 10 feet of biodegradable fishing line and a stick that he'd tie the line to. I believe he had the right idea. He never missed a fishing hole, but also never worried about additional weight added to his pack. You should know what compromises you are willing to make while fishing and hiking. For me, it was an ultra-light, collapsible pole that stowed away on the side of my pack. This made for quick access; which was important because it took miles to get to Katahdin, not the beautiful (and sometimes delicious) fish I caught. Do what works best for you.

Be aware and courteous. There are hidden fishing spots along the entire A.T. that remain beautiful because…they're hidden. There was a breathtaking riverbend that could have been my favorite fishing spot on the Trail. The problem was that it was littered with beer cans, old camping gear, and the like. Although it hardly made a dent, I tried to carry out what I could from that mess. The very best part of hiking and fishing is the connection you have with nature. That connection can be severed with ignorance and wastefulness. The good news is that connection can be restored.

## LUCKILY FOR THE DAY- OR SECTION-HIKER, THERE ARE NUMEROUS FISHING SPOTS ALONG THE A.T. THAT CAN BE ACCESSED BY A SHORT HIKE. HERE ARE JUST A FEW HIGHLIGHTS:

### NORTH CAROLINA

Starting in North Carolina, there was the Nantahala Outdoor Center. Although whitewater rafting and other water watersports run supreme here, the fishing here is also worth noting.

### TENNESSEE

In Erwin, Tennessee, I had the pleasure of staying at Cantarroso Farm and Apiary. My stay there turned into eight days – half of all the zero-days I took on my thru-hike. Owners, Mike and Peggy provided me with a fishing pole that wouldn't snap from the river monsters the Nolichucky River sheltered.

### VIRGINIA

A great spot for those unable to hike but who would like to experience a clean river, dirty hikers, and everything in-between are the Dismal Falls in Virginia. And in another part of Virginia, my favorite hiking trail to fish on came at a great cost. The price to pay was to break my "purist" streak (hiking every foot of the Trail) and it was well worth it. This trail reminds me of both the largest trout I've ever caught and the even larger trout I lost. The Creeper Trail, which stretches from Abingdon, Virginia through Damascus, Virginia follows the Whitetop Laurel River. This 34-mile trail hosts many activities for families and travelers such as horseback riding and biking. To get fishing supplies and insider info of the river check out the fly-shop "Hooked." You can also find more info of the trail and its rich history at: **vacreepertrail.org**

### NEW HAMPSHIRE AND MAINE

New Hampshire and Maine have so many remote ponds and rivers to fish from it's hard to choose from. Luckily, by following Route 16 you can get to many of these trailheads; which ones you choose is entirely up to your preferences.

### RULES AND REGULATIONS

Each Trail state has different rules and seasons for fishing. For more information on catch and release designated areas or acquiring a state-specific fishing license visit: **fws.gov/fishing/FishingLicense.html**

## LEAVE NO TRACE FISHING TIPS

**STICK TO IMPACTED TRAILS AND ACCESS POINTS:** Trail braiding and streamside trampling are common problems at popular fishing spots, stick to already impacted trails and use designed access points as much as possible.

**TRASH YOUR MONOFILAMENT:** Carry out everything you bring in, and do mother nature a solid by packing out the trash of others as well. Monofilament takes 500 years to photodegrade, and even the smallest piece of tippet can be fatal to wildlife.

**LEAD-FREE – THE WAY TO BE:** Lead used in split shot and fly-tying materials is a common source of wildlife poisoning. Tungsten, stainless steel, tin, and bismuth are all suitable and non-toxic alternatives.

**RESPECT THE CATCH:** Fish are only a renewable resource when given the opportunity to thrive and reproduce; know how to properly handle, photograph and release a fish. Remember that rubber nets are gentler than cloth, and wet hands are better than dry.

Don't fish for likes: Consider the ramifications of telling the world about your favorite fishing spot. Use social media in an environmentally responsible way and think before you post.

## MAHOOSUC NOTCH / MAINE

PHOTOGRAPHER ***DECLAN FOX***

WE WERE STILL IN NEW HAMPSHIRE WHEN I started getting excited for Mahoosuc Notch. I wanted to take more photos of "Inc" and "Sponge," my hiking partners, but as we approached the end of our thru-hikes I was running out of time. The dramatic boulders of Mahoosuc would be one of my last opportunities to photograph my Trail family on an iconic section of the A.T. ¶ The morning was cool and damp when we entered the Notch. My plan was to get out in front of my friends so I could frame up and catch them in action. This immediately fell apart when they enthusiastically charged into the daunting slabs at full speed. As a testament to his impressive pace, Sponge was immortalized in my camera as a series of motion blurs. But, with a combination of frantic scurrying over slick rock and pleading for a few seconds head start, I managed to perch myself on a promising vantage point. When Inc emerged into the light, time stopped for an instant. I fired off a few frames, stowed the camera, and we continued on to Katahdin."

*~ Declan "Photon" Fox*

# ★ HOT SPRINGS / *North Carolina* ★

HOT SPRINGS, LOCATED IN THE MOUNTAINS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA AND CUDDLED ALONG THE BANKS OF SPRING CREEK AND THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER, IS A TOWN RICH IN HISTORY AND BEAMING WITH NATURAL CHARM.


*Clockwise from left: Garden fresh radishes at Mountain Magnolia Inn; Looking out from the A.T. on Lover's Leap; French Broad River; Bluff Mountain Music Festival – Photos courtesy Hot Springs Tourism Association*

WHETHER YOU ARE SEARCHING FOR AN OUTDOOR adventure, a relaxing soak in a natural mineral hot spring, or an evening out with friends and family enjoying live music, craft brews, and delicious food, you will find yourself refreshed and invigorated by the beauty of Hot Springs.

Be sure to take a few steps (or more) on the legendary Appalachian Trail, which passes directly through the town and draws thousands of adventure seekers from around the world every year.

## WHAT TO SEE AND DO IN AND AROUND HOT SPRINGS

### TOUR THE TOWN

Pick up some special souvenirs of original art, clothing, and jewelry by local artists while enjoying fresh coffee at the **Artisun Gallery and Café**.

Learn about everything from Christmas trees and mushrooms to vegetables, heirloom apples, blueberries, perennials, and ferns, by visiting **Elk Knob Farm**. The farm uses all organic methods, and specially tailored educational visits and overnight accommodations can be arranged.

Be mesmerized by **butterfly migrations**. The amazing monarch butterfly migrates 2,000-plus miles each fall from the northeast United States to Mexico, going through the high passes along Blue Ridge Parkway in September and early October.

Gear up at **Bluff Mountain Outfitters**. The A.T. goes right past the shop and it's a great spot for any type of hiker or adventurer.

## MOUNTAIN AIR HUNGER AND THIRST

Enjoy farm-to-table "casual fine dining" at the **Mountain Magnolia Inn**. A family-run country inn perfect for romantic getaways, weddings and celebrations, family vacations, or just a night out for a wonderful dinner.

Choose from an eclectic and tasty mix of lunch and dinner items at the **Spring Creek Tavern,** where you can relax and enjoy your meal on their shaded-porch dining area.

Stop by the **Smoky Mountain Diner** — a hikers' favorite — complete with all that tasty diner fair in hardy servings to satiate a hungry hiker's big appetite.

## STAY A WHILE

**Iron Horse Station** — newly renovated and directly along the Trail downtown — offers 15 cozy private guestrooms, a tavern with a wide menu and variety of beer and wine, and a coffee and tea bar.

Hikers of all kinds can try out the new **Trail-er Hostel**, surrounded on three sides by the A.T., this 1,600-plus square foot converted double-wide offers gear, meals, hiking itineraries, shuttle services, and makes hiking and backpacking accessible for groups and individuals who don't have time to plan or folks who might not want to invest in buying all the gear.

## ADVENTURE, REST, AND EXPERIENCE

Relax with a long, hot mineral bath after any number of outdoor adventures, an A.T. hike, or just for a soothing treat. Countless weary travelers and locals alike have been taking comfort from the naturally warm mineral waters at **Hot Springs Resort and Spa** for years. Quaint cabins (that are kid and pet-friendly) are also available for overnight guests.

Get adventurous — and possibly a little wet — during an invigorating whitewater rafting trip on the beautiful French Broad River with the **Nantahala Outdoor Center** or **French Broad Adventures**.

Visit the **Hot Springs/Madison County Library**, named "Best Small Library in America" by the *Library Journal*. Experience their top-notch customer service, read a book, and learn more about the local community, engagement, and educational events.

# TAKE A DAY HIKE NEAR HOT SPRINGS

## LOVER'S LEAP LOOP TRAIL

**2 Miles / Steep / Hike level: Moderate to Difficult**

The Lover's Leap Trail offers a dramatic view of the French Broad River and the town of Hot Springs. It ascends onto a rocky bluff overlooking the French Broad River directly across from town. It highlights not only the rugged beauty of the valley, but also the biological diversity that the area is well known for. The trail is a short walk from downtown, so the best parking can be found right in town. As you cross the Hot Springs Resort and Spa, then the river, and then ascend onto the rocky promontory, you will have excellent view of all the natural features the area is known for.

And enjoy an array music, art, and events throughout the year including the Hot Springs Annual Trailfest, Bluff Mountain Music Festival, Wild Goose Festival, and the French Broad River Festival.

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Find out more about upcoming events, get involved with the local Hot Springs Hiking Club, and plan your trip at: **WildEast.org/HotSprings** and: **hotspringsnc.org**

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Find out about all 48 A.T. Communities at: **appalachiantrail.org/ATcommunities**

# Strength and Beauty

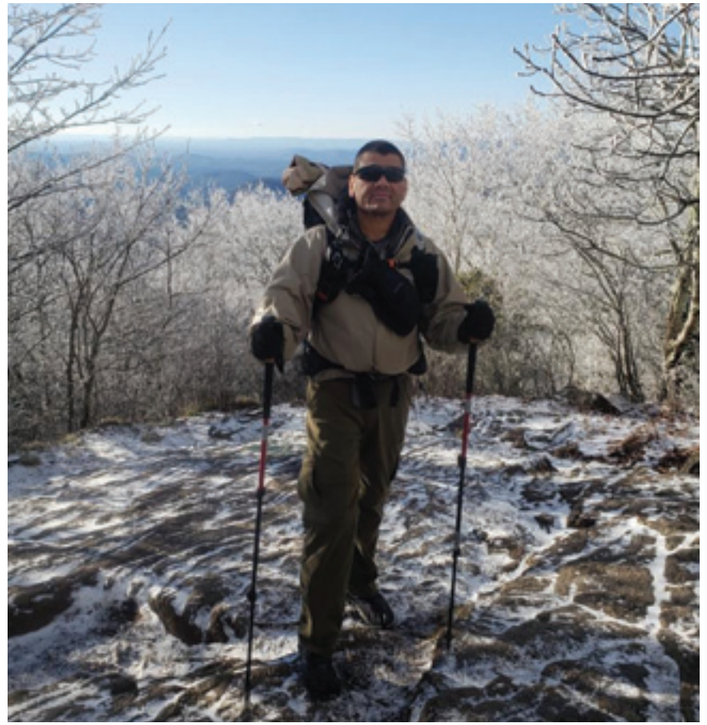
## A HIKER'S POSITIVE SPIRIT AND GRACE IS CARRIED FORWARD.

*By Brenda Kelley*

WHEN I FIRST MET RON, HE TOLD me he wanted to do something big, since he had recently improved his health and was learning to manage his chronic pain. He was used to walking a lot and was thinking of maybe doing a walk across America on the American Discovery Trail. We started backpacking together in Arkansas and we would talk a lot about the Appalachian Trail. He decided he wanted to try to thru-hike it. He saw it as just the beginning of what he wanted to do. He also wanted to try the Pacific Crest Trail and the Continental Divide Trail. He was considering applying for the Warrior Expeditions trip on the Continental Divide Trail after he was done with the A.T. I remember talking with him about Earl Shaffer and his famous quote that he went to the A.T. to "walk off the war." Ron wanted to be a positive example of the ability to manage and overcome mental and physical injuries. He wanted others to know it can be done and that help is out there for veterans, so that they could also get help like he did.

Ron talked about wanting to face whatever challenges the hike would bring. He knew his chronic injuries presented extra challenges and that was a main reason he started in January. He wanted to have plenty of time to be able to rest anything that acted up, and to not push his body too hard. A January start would also put him in front of the hiker "bubble," so that the Trail wouldn't feel too crowded. He looked forward to facing the harsh weather conditions that he might experience in January. Afterwards, he remembered those first few weeks fondly and with pride, telling me "it felt like survival out there." He made a few friends he bonded with and stayed in contact with long after they parted ways. However, he told me the harshest weather he encountered was on top of Roan Mountain in mid-March. It was very cold, extremely windy, and snowy. He had already decided that he was going to get off the Trail in Damascus (he later changed his mind and ended up just taking a break), and he told me that the snow storm on Roan Mountain was a form of Trail magic for him. It was as if the Trail was giving him a parting gift of experiencing the extreme winter conditions he had looked forward to facing.

Ron was also very much interested in seeing and learning about nature along the Trail. In the first part of his hike, he would watch the juncos at the shelters and said they would seem to follow him as he hiked. When he went back to his hike in the beginning of May after taking a break in April, he was happy to see so many more flowers blooming and hear different birds. He texted me pictures of flowers to identify, but he also told me that he had been hiking with a biologist or botanist who could identify and tell him about the plants and animals they were seeing; and he started learning to identify birds by their songs. He also sent me pictures of unusual looking bugs and other things he saw, like a giant hornet in a shelter, butterflies, and salamanders.



*Above: Ron near Springer Mountain; Left: Ron and Brenda in Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, Oklahoma – Photos by Brenda Kelley*

Ron's family has learned, as I already know, that the Trail community is a very special thing. I am so glad that Ron got to know and experience that for himself during his time on the Appalachian Trail.

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Brenda Kelley is girlfriend to the late Ron Sanchez, Jr. and a friend of his family. She attempted her own thru-hike in 2002. Ron was a combat engineer who served 16 years in the Army, including three tours in Iraq. Though he suffered from physical disabilities along with PTSD, he found healing and a new outlook through hiking. When he registered his thru-hike on ATCamp, of his motivation he wrote: "I've learned strategies to manage pain and feel I'm ready to celebrate my new-found second chance, if you will... I want to be a positive member of this year's hiking community and to share my life journey with hopes of making someone's day brighter." Ron was killed in a tragic and rare act of violence on the A.T. on May 11. To honor Ronald "Stronghold" Sanchez, Jr.'s life, the Trail community carry's his spirit and strength forward, focusing on all the magnificence and resilience that encompass the A.T. and those who hike it.

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Find out more about Warrior Expeditions at: **warriorexpeditions.org**

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For more information about Recreational Therapy from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: **prosthetics.va.gov/rectherapy**

# INDIGENOUS

HABITAT / ECOSYSTEM / CONSERVATION

**Shortleaf pine, *Pinus echinata*,** is a widely distributed and poorly understood southern yellow pine. Growing in 22 states from southern New York to eastern Texas, it occupies the largest range of any pine in the southeastern United States. Its extensive distribution reflects it adaptability to a great variety of soil, average annual temperatures, total precipitation, and elevations (up to 3,000 feet).

Shortleaf pine is a medium-sized, native, evergreen conifer with relatively short needles and thin, flaky, black bark that becomes reddish brown with age.

Shortleaf pine has medium-thick bark which protects the tree and the dormant buds within the bole and at the base. Pines up to about 30 years of age will sprout from dormant basal buds if the crown is top-killed. It regenerates well after fire since exposed mineral soil and lack of competition facilitate seedling establishment.

## SHORTLEAF PINE

*By Matt Drury*

THERE HAS BEEN A dramatic decline of shortleaf pine forests and associated habitats that once covered a vast area from eastern Texas to Florida and up the eastern seaboard to New Jersey; in pure stands or in mixed shortleaf pine/oak savanna ecosystems, they grew on more than 280 million acres. Over the last 30 years, more than 50 percent of these forested acres have been lost with the most significant declines taking place east of the Mississippi River. This rapid decline can be attributed to massive pine beetle outbreaks in poorly managed stands, changes in timber management practices, altered fire regimes, disease, and land use changes.

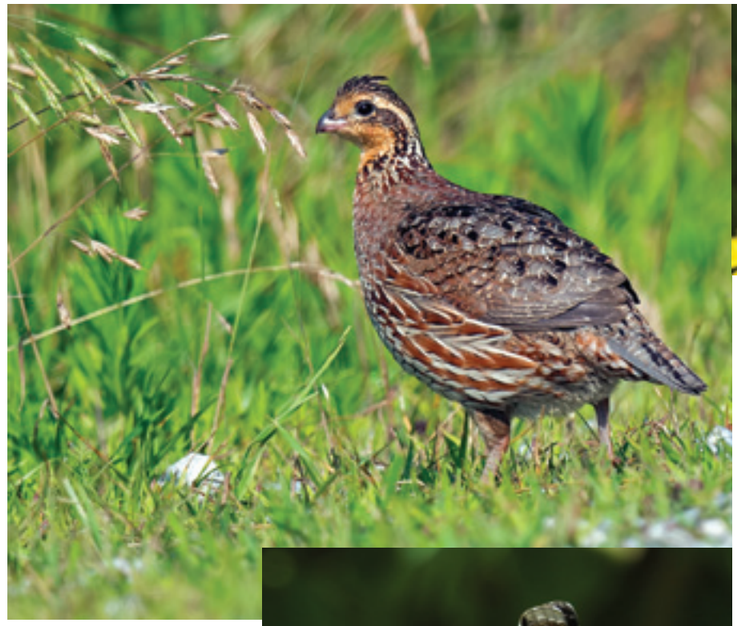
According to the Shortleaf Pine Initiative — which represents a broad range of public and private organizations, working in the shortleaf pine ecosystem: "At stake is an extraordinary diversity of cultural, ecological, and economic values centered on wildlife and recreation, water quality and a high value wood products industry. With millions of people depending on the benefits of this imperiled ecosystem, the need to develop a range-wide conservation strategy is more compelling than ever."

Shortleaf pine seeds are an important food source for birds and small mammals. Stands of seedlings and saplings provide cover for bobwhite quail and wild turkey. Old-growth shortleaf pine provides habitat for cavity dwellers like songbirds and woodpeckers. And shortleaf pine and shortleaf pine/oak savanna ecosystems support an amazing variety of wildflowers and native grasses, providing pollinator forage for various species of bees and butterflies.

### SHORTLEAF PINE IN THE SOUTHERN BLUE RIDGE

This ecological zone is only located at low elevation, typically below 2,300 feet. It occurs on exposed slopes, low hills, and ridges. Soils typically are acidic, with a pH of 4.1 to 4.3. Wind storms, tornadoes, insect infestations, and frequent wildfires are all important natural disturbance events influencing this zone — which occurs in the southern most extent of the southern Blue Ridge across South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, extending into the southern ridge and valley and Cumberland Plateau of Tennessee and Kentucky.

Along the Appalachian Trail in western North Carolina, this habitat is very restricted to low elevation areas in the Little Tennessee River and the French Broad River, including places like Lover's Leap Trail north of Hot Springs and near the Fontana Village Resort and Fontana Lake. The forest is dominated by shortleaf pine, with less amounts of southern red oak, pitch pine, chestnut oak, scarlet oak, blackjack oak, post oak, white oak, pignut hickory, red hickory, and red maple within the shortleaf pine subtype.



*Clockwise from above: These ecosystems provide a variety of native wildflowers, which attract pollinators like bumble bees and American painted lady butterflies – Photos by Bryan Tompkins - USFWS; Stands of shortleaf pine seedlings and saplings provide cover for northern bobwhite quail – Photo by Briann Kushner/Cornell Lab of Ornathology*

### A FIRE ADAPTED SPECIES

Many sites with these subtypes, particularly those with no recent fire occurrences, have a dense shrub layer, this is typically dominated by ericaceous species such as mountain laurel, low bush blueberry, or bear huckleberry. Where all three subtypes have been under a more frequent prescribed burn management, the shrub layer can be quite open, with only scattered shrub occurrences. One shrub that seems to like the more frequent fire is New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*). Within these more open areas the herbaceous layer tends to be diverse and includes such species as fragrant goldenrod, stiff aster, little bluestem, Maryland golden-aster, Appalachian sunflower, silver plume grass, and many others. Herbaceous diversity can be sparse under the densest shrub layer and can account for fewer plant species as opposed to a more open fire-maintained habitat, which can have much more numerous species.

Few rare plants have been documented within the shortleaf pine zone in the Nantahala and Pisgah National forests. Only two are currently known, *Liatris squarrulosa* and *Thermopsis mollis*. Both are herbs, are fire adapted, and flower and fruit under more open conditions.

Openings within shortleaf pine forests are generally driven by insect occurrences, in particular southern pine beetle, wind events, and fire. The last southern pine beetle infestation occurred across both forests in the late 1990s. Patch sizes can vary dramatically depending on insect outbreaks and if they are followed by fire events, which can lead to large openings. Fire is considered an important factor in maintaining this habitat with a fire return frequency as low as four years. The absence or infrequency of fire can result in more canopy oak dominance, an increase in fire intolerant trees such as red maple, and an increase in shrub density.

Find out more about the Shortleaf Pine Initiative at: **shortleafpine.net**

# HISTORIC SUMMER READS

TAKE A DEEPER DIVE IN TO THE nuanced stories of American history along the A.T. this summer. Our picks will send you back in time — and maybe inspire you to plan a future visit to a hallowed place of historical significance in the Wild East.


### Hiking through History: Civil War Sites on the Appalachian Trail

*By Leanna Joyner*

Our featured pick, *Hiking through History: Civil War Sites on the Appalachian Trail*, was written to "share the history of place with Appalachian Trail lovers, and to share the A.T. with history lovers," says author Leanna Joyner. "I knew from my own experience as a 2,000-miler who hiked the length of the Trail from Georgia to Maine in 2003, that history was easy to overlook in the midst of the physical and present-moment experience of long-distance hiking." Her book meets the typical hiker's tactile experience of the Trail with knowledge that deepens one's appreciation of what happened here. "Rather than presenting a lot of regiment details or the minutia of military operations, it captures the purpose, action, and outcomes in a way that brings to life the moments that shaped our American history that we get to explore on our Appalachian Trail," says Joyner who — while not initially a history buff — made it her goal to connect the past with the footpath. "I did that by presenting pieces of stories that have never been told before in A.T. guides, described ways that the landscape looked, then compared to how we see it now, and described the characters who knew the land before it was ever imagined as part of this long-distance trail," she says.

Sparked by her research, Joyner set out on hikes to retrace the steps of regiments, United States presidents, and freed slaves. Other hikes she included offer the perspective from the height of land to see the paths of advance or retreat where armies traveled. Together, there are 25 hikes in the book, giving readers the opportunity to explore both the history and the beauty of the A.T.

## More Historical Reads Available at the A.T. Store:

### Underfoot: A Geologic Guide to the Appalachian Trail

*By V. Collins Chew*

The only A.T. guidebook of its kind offering a step-by-step tour of the geologic features and background on how the Appalachian Mountains developed over billions of years.

### A Walker's Guide to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

*By David T. Gibert*

A comprehensive guidebook to walking tours of Lower Town Harpers Ferry, Virginius Island, Maryland Heights, and Loudoun Heights that provides visitors a glimpse into Harpers Ferry's past, from historic floods to the Civil War as well as details on historical structures.

### Walking with the Ghost Whisperers, Lore and Legends of the Appalachian Trail

*By J.R. "Model-T" Tat*

Scores of stories take you across the threshold of American history and make the A.T. come alive in your mind's eye, through lore, legends, and anecdotes that spark the imagination and help you truly realize what it means "to see what you see."

### Civil War Battlefields: Walking the Trails of History

*By David T. Gilbert*

Rarely seen archival photos, maps, and stunning contemporary photography. This information-packed book explores more than 30 Civil War battlefields — from Antietam to Chancellorsville, Gettysburg to Shiloh — including the first five national battlefield parks preserved by veterans in the 1890s.

### Images of America Along the Appalachian Trail

*By Leonard M. Adkins and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy*

A series of six books with many never-before-published vintage photographs, their back stories, and the history along the A.T. in their regions:

- Along Maine's Appalachian Trail*
- Along the Appalachian Trail in Georgia, North Carolina & Tennessee
- Along the Appalachian Trail in West Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania
- Along the Appalachian Trail: Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire
- Along the Appalachian Trail: New Jersey, New York & Connecticut
- Along Virginia's Appalachian Trail

*By David B. Field

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Purchase one of these great reads at:
**atctrailstore.org/exploring/historic-summer-reads**





*A.T. – "the Guillotine," Shenandoah National Park, Virginia – By Hannah Sourisseau*

## ANNUAL FUND LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

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*Wildflowers – A.T. Vermont – Photo by Aaron Ibey*

I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL back in the 90s, when a young woman of Asian descent sent me her story about thru-hiking the Trail for publication in our environmental travel newsletter, *Pickup & GO!*

My feelings grew deeper when I first set foot on the Trail at its beginning in Georgia near the turn of the century, on a hike with the Atlanta-based "Keeping It Wild" group my husband Frank spearheaded. It was the first time I actually saw a tree fall in the woods, and we heard the crack well before we saw the shudder in the forest where it landed.

A few years later, while preparing to speak at an Appalachian Trail Conservancy event, I learned about Benton MacKaye, and how in the 1920s he envisioned the Trail as a means of helping working class Americans in rapidly urbanizing areas make more efficient use of our spare time, instead of just our working time. What a visionary! I felt closer to the Trail than ever.

While getting ready to speak at the Florida Trail conference recently, I learned that James Kern, who founded that trail in the 1960s, came up with the idea while hiking the Appalachian Trail. But my growing passion for the people who created the A.T. and the wonders it has unleashed in the world went completely off the charts when I learned the story of a recent A.T. thru-hiker named Daniel White.

Daniel — whose Trail name is "Blackalachian" — reached out to me and our organization (the Diverse Environmental Leaders Speakers Bureau) during his 2017 hike. Upon hearing him tell his story, it was clear to us that he could be a pivot on which the entire urban conservation movement turns. I learned about his misspent youth, including a stint in prison, and the 180-degree turn that hiking the A.T. made in his life. Hiking and completing the Trail made him feel at home in the world in a way he never had before; and since then he has completed the 2,000-mile Underground Railroad Trail, and finished the Scottish Outdoors Challenge, hiking backcountry across the Scottish Highlands, over mountains and through bogs, coast to coast. Next, he's planning to hike the 500-mile Camino del Norte trail in Spain as pilgrims have done since the 9th Century.

As a lover of our great American outdoors and an advocate for engaging more Americans of color with the enjoyment and protection of these treasured places, I am over the moon thinking of all the young people that Daniel's story will inspire. In this era when people are conditioned to interact with the world mainly via their devices, how invigorating will it be to see that a person of very limited means, with almost no exposure to wild nature and the impediment of a prison background, can yet rise to be an adventurer, a world traveling explorer — and one who helps chart a path forward for a nation of nascent stewards.

I know it's possible to keep falling more and more in love — I'm still falling in love with my husband after 27 years of marriage — but I can't see how I can possibly fall any deeper in love with our precious Appalachian Trail. Still, I am open to being surprised.

*by Audrey Peterman*

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A.T. – BALDPATE MOUNTAIN, MAINE – BY JOE TRESADERN