

BUSHWACK BULLETIN

VOL 2-no 1

APR-MAY 1955

SUSQUEHANNA APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

COMING EVENTS

1955

- Mar. 19 8:00 P.M. Appalachian Trail Movie and Demonstration of Trail Clearing Style Show - Civic Club, A. T. Conference Chairman and neighboring clubs guests.
- Mar. 20 8:30 A.M. Meet at Education Building for Relocation Dedication Hikes and Ceremony. (See Random Notes for details.)
- Mar. 27 1:30 P.M. Hepatica Hike - Glen Daecke to Ridge W. Fasnacht, Leader
- Apr. 3 2:00 P.M. Hawk Rock Annual Hike - Installation of Officers for 1955
Ralph Kinter, Leader
- Apr. 9 8:00 A.M. Trail Maintenance Trip - Bring tools and lunch.
- Apr. 10 2:00 P.M. Camp Fire Hike - Camp Arcola - Bring nose bag lunch - coffee furnished. Short hike in neighborhood J. Riggio, Leader
- Apr. 17 10:00 A.M. Indian Maiden Falls - Indian Steps Earl Shaffer, Leader
- Apr. 23 8:00 A.M. Trail Maintenance Trip - Bring Tools and lunch.
- Apr. 24 9:00 A.M. Up and Down Hike - All day hike - Bring lunch and canteen. Strenuous - only for the hardy hiker George Gruber, Leader
- May 1 1:30 P.M. Wild Cat Falls in York County - Picturesque setting
Betty Brown, Guest Leader
- May 6, 7, & 8 World's End Camping & Hiking Trip - Make reservation with \$5.00 deposit with Ruth Bolla, Phone 2-9459 by March 15
- May 15 1:30 P.M. Figure Eight Hike in Roberts Valley George Gruber, Leader
- May 21 8:00 A.M. Trail Maintenance Trip - Bring tools and lunch.
- May 22 1:30 P.M. Ellendale Forge - 6 mi. Some climbing Don Brady, Leader
- May 29 1:30 P.M. Darlington Trail East Dick Hugendubler, Leader
- June 5 1:30 P.M. Peters Mountain - Eastern Part Ruth Bolla, Leader
- June 12 1:30 P.M. Darlington Trail - West Elmer Bolla, Leader

MEET AT FISHER PLAZA ENTRANCE TO EDUCATION BUILDING FOR ALL HIKES

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BACKWARD GLANCES

Jan. 23: OUTING AT PINE GROVE GIRL SCOUT CAMP. Weather was just cool and snowy enough to keep us moving when we circled Fuller Lake. The food was prepared by Jennie and Anna, a la open fire. It was very tasty. Someone even ate baked beans his favorite food to leave alone. The evening was spent in group singing around the fireplace. Thanks, girls.

Jan. 30. CONODOGUINET CREEK: A skating party that turned into a hike. The weather was brisk and cold, real winter, and we hustled right along, following a sweeping curve of the creek and then short-cutting to the starting point at Camp Hill Park. The leader was Don Brady.

Feb. 4, 5, 6: WEEKEND IN THE POCONOS. Our first weekend was over subscribed. Those who attended pronounced it a great success and are demanding an annual event in February.

Feb. 12: ANNUAL MEETING: Officers were elected as follows:

President	Ralph H. Kinter
Vice-President	Donald Brady
Secretary	Thelma Marks
Treasurer	Anna Peffer

George Gruber's slides were admired by all. Refreshments were enjoyed afterward. Our thanks to the Committee and to Elmer Bolla for the use of his office for the meeting.

Feb. 13 MYSTERY HIKE. The mystery was solved when George Gruber led the group on a Blue Mountain Hike that wound up at Fletz Pass. The weather was doubtful, but nine hikers were curious enough to attend.

Feb. 20: PETERS MOUNTAIN. Postponed from Feb. 6. Bob Carnahan led a group of twenty-two from route 225 east on our section of the A.T. to the cross mountain road and down to route 325, about five miles total. Visibility was too hazy for proper views from the lookouts.

Feb. 27: CLARKS VALLEY, above Camp Shikellimy. The footing was somewhat soggy, the weather threatening, but no one needed to use rain clothes. This section has definite possibilities for hiking in dryer seasons. Bill Lief led a group of eight.

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ABOUT THE RELOCATION

The Relocation in Pennsylvania was undertaken primarily to bypass Indiantown Gap Military Reservation. To accomplish this it was necessary to turn northward as far as Stony Mountain. From this ridge farther west it would have been difficult to return to Blue Mountain, while a continuation via Peters Mountain to Clarks Ferry Bridge was logical. This meant that the Trail could cross the Susquehanna directly rather than by a long detour as was necessary at Harrisburg. In addition the disruption north of the city, caused by Television stations and other buildings would be avoided.

West of the Susquehanna the logical route was via Cove mountain, then southward to North Mountain and across Cumberland Valley on Ironstone Ridge to White Rock Ridge. Much scouting and comparison of ideas went into this choice of a route and it appears to be the best that can be found. The total mileage of the relocation, as finally evolved, is about sixty miles. The terrain it covers is surprisingly remote.

The new trailway turns north from Swatara Gap and crosses Second Mountain on abandoned roads, thereby entering an area known in the past as St. Anthony's Wilderness. It included Second Mountain, Sharp Mountain and Stony Mountain, with the intervening valleys. Geologically, this area is part of the Pocono rock strata, composed of gray sandstones, shales, and conglomerates, averaging sixteen hundred feet in thickness. Plant fossils may be found in these formations. At the same time there is some penetration from the east by Mauch Chunk series, consisting of red sandstones and shales.

The Trail route crosses the valley to Sharp Mountain at the point where stood Rausch Gap Station along the Reading Railroad. Both town and railroad are long-since abandoned. Rausch Creek is followed to the crest of Sharp Mountain. The stream has many waterfalls in a rhododendron setting. Old coal workings, some as small scale strip operations, others as tunnelling, are to be seen in the area.

Just north of the crest of Sharp Mountain, and extending its length, is an old stage road that once operated between Tower City and the Dauphin area. The Relocation follows this ancient road as far as Rattling Run, where it turns across the high valley that separates Sharp and Stony Mountains and passes the firetower on the latter ridge crest. The tower affords far reaching views of St. Anthony's Wilderness.

Along the stage road at one point are the mouldered foundations of many buildings where a town once stood. This is now in the heart of a wild region comprised of Pennsylvania Camelands. Deer and Grouse are plentiful. This area tends to be colder in climate, with earlier snows, than Blue Mountain to the south, probably because it fringes the Pocono Region, which is notoriously frigid.

Clarks Valley is crossed by descending the firetower road to route 325, then slanting westward up Peters Mountain. Along this crest the Trail route follows game trails, closely paralleled by jutting rock ledges. This is part of the Pocono strata and it provides many fine viewpoints all the way to the Susquehanna. This region abounds in deer and grouse, also there are many pileated woodpeckers, a shy bird that seeks the solitary haunts.

Clarks Ferry Bridge provides a convenient crossing of the river and with its utilization we have, for the first time, no detours on the Appalachian Trail. The water gap has many historical aspects and is known as a very scenic spot. Here, at the mouth of the "Beautiful Blue Juniata," was a favorite gathering place of the Indians. Duncannon Island was a burial ground and the bridge goes directly through an Indian Mound.

Cove Mountain, which really is a continuation of Peters Mountain and Second Mountain, with the river breaking through both ridges, is one of the few examples of two mountains perfectly joined, forming a V. This also is of Pocono strata, which explains the tracings of coal workings near the crest. The Trail enters the mountain at the mouth of Sherman Creek, slanting up on an abandoned mining path to Hawk Rock Lookout, one of the most spectacular viewpoints on the Trail in Pennsylvania. It overlooks the river crossing and the town of Duncannon, as well as Sherman Creek directly beneath and a wide expanse of Ferry County. This region is said to have been the hiding place of Simon Girty, the notorious renegade.

The relocation follows the north arm of Cove Mountain, over rough terrain, to the western curve, then descends to a dirt road and follows it southward to North Mountain. This ridge is crossed several miles west of Lamb's Gap on an abandoned road through Myers Gap. A small farm once stood in this gap, and a fine spring is situated there.

Crossing the Cumberland Valley between North and South Mountains is a low but distinct elevation known as Ironstone Ridge north of the Conodoguinet and as Stony Ridge on the south side. By using this ridge the valley is traversed with a minimum use of roads. As far as the creek the route is on dirt roads flanked by trees. Then for a mile the Trail follows the bank of the creek to Bernheisel Bridge. This is a covered wooden structure of two spans, totalling one hundred ninety-five feet and built in 1869.

South of the Conodoguinet the new Trail utilizes segments of dirt road, about two miles of blacktop and one stretch of two miles off roads entirely. One small town is encountered along the way. The Pennsylvania Turnpike is crossed on a high bridge where the superhighway cuts through Stony Ridge.

Yellow Breeches Creek, called Catapasinkus by the Indians, is crossed on a road bridge at Leidigh Station. The Trail enters South Mountain at Wildwood Branch and joins the White Rock Trail at the gap east of the rocks, thereby retaining the best of White Rocks Ridge while eliminating the difficulties at Brandtsville.

We who scouted and worked on the Relocation feel that not only was the original objective of bypassing Indiantown Gap accomplished, but that the new route is superior to the old in many respects. The tedious Cumberland Valley crossing has been greatly improved, the detour at Harrisburg has been eliminated, both much needed changes. At the same time there are indications that the best section of the old trail, between Lamb's Gap and Manada Gap, will be preserved under its original name of the Darlington Trail.

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RANDOM NOTES

SUSQUEHANNA APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB began a year ago with a pro-tem organization and officers. Tentative membership was extended to all who appeared for one or more hikes. Bushwack Bulletin was set up as the informational outlet, both to members and to the public. A schedule of weekly hikes became the regular policy.

PERMANENT ORGANIZATION begins with adoption of the Constitution and the formal election of officers, who will be installed at the ANNUAL HIKE to Hawk Rock on April 3. CHARTER MEMBERSHIP will include those who pay dues on or before that day. Extension of the deadline for charter membership will be considered by the group.

Makeup and distribution of Bushwack Bulletin requires work and expense. Thus far a few have assumed the responsibility. Its future depends upon the support of the club as a whole. The club, in turn, depends on membership, both financially and for a working staff. Let's build up the membership and really go places this year.

DEDICATION OF THE RELOCATION has assumed the proportions of a Big Affair and it may expand our horizons immeasurably. A SATURDAY NIGHT Meeting has been scheduled (March 19), with a showing of the Appalachian Trail Conference movie on Trail Building Techniques, a demonstration of trail clearing and painting, a "fashion show" of hiking apparel, and a display of equipment and trail photographs. S.A.T.C. will be host and will provide the "actors!" The place is the Civic Club in Harrisburg.

THE DEDICATION CEREMONY will take place Sunday (the 20th) about 1:00 P.M. at Clark's Ferry Bridge. THE MORNING HIKE will get underway from Camp Shikelliny about 9:30 and will circle up to the Stony Lookout on Peters Mountain. The AFTERNOON HIKE will begin at Sherman Creek about 2:30 P.M. and will include the incomparable Hawk Rock Lookout. Hiking Groups and individuals for a radius of more than a hundred miles are being invited, so the sky's the limit.

TRAIL CONFERENCE: Business sessions, speeches, etc., May 30 and 31 at Ravine House, Mount Moosilauke, New Hampshire. Hikes will be conducted June 1, 2, and 3. This is timberline country, with a famous view. Anyone can attend. S.A.T.C. is entitled to two official representatives plus an additional one for each ten miles of Trail maintained, which means we have a total of three. Members wishing to attend should notify the Secretary CE 4-4308 by April 15.

APPALACHIAN TRAILWAY NEWS: A copy is now available on the magazine table in the Harrisburg Public Library, Front and Walnut Streets.

WEEKEND PLANNED: At Pocosin Shelter in the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia for July 29, 30, and 31. The moon will be full and the breezes are ever cool on the giant hills. More details at a later date.

MORN OF THE YEAR

Who can describe the tender April mood,
The mystery of growth, the scent of rain?
The poets try but word forms are too crude
And even music makers grope in vain.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL RELOCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

1955

59 MI TO CENTRE POINT KNOB

