

PATH WAYS

Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers

Summer 2005

Forty Years of PATH

By Paul Clayton

1965 - Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers was formed. Tom Campbell, an ATC Board Member and member of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club, assisted in formation of the club. The original officers were Charles Adams, Coleman Gentry, Patricia Glidewell and Harriet Austin.

1966 - PATH took on an additional 11 miles of trail, from Groseclose to VA 16. This section had been maintained by Reverend A.J. Shumate and the Boy Scouts of Grace Lutheran Church in Rural Retreat. Reverend Shumate was suffering health problems by the mid-1960s and was happy to find a home for the section that he had long tended.

1967 - An ATC Shelter Report submitted by PATH in December described Big Walker Lookout Shelter as in excellent condition with the standard accessories of axe, fire rake, broom, fireplace with grate and registry book.

1968 - In 1968 and 1969 the Appalachian Trail Conference undertook the detailed mapping of the Trail in order to place this map in the Federal Register. This was part of the process of legislation that established the Appalachian Trail as a National Scenic Trail, providing for the trail's permanent protection. The clubs put out white plastic panels at strategic points along the trail in order to make identification from aerial photographs easier. PATH did their work in the snow during December of 1968.

1969 - Stanley Murray, longtime Chairman of the ATC Board of Managers, was the keynote

speaker at the PATH Annual Meeting held at the YWCA on Chapman Street in Greensboro.

1974 - Dues were set at \$2.50 for an individual, \$3.00 for families and 50 cents for students.



An early design for the club logo

1975 - The summer schedule listed 13 events, including the 20th triennial meeting of the ATC held at Boone, Multiclub hosted by RATC, a day hike through Rock Castle Gorge and a trip to the brand new NC Zoo.

1977 - Hank Lautz, Executive Director of the Appalachian Trail Conference, was the featured speaker at PATH's 10th Anniversary Celebration and Annual Meeting March 6, 1977. As was common in the 70's, the meeting was held at Muir's Chapel Methodist Church in Greensboro.

1979 - On the November worktrip, the crew blazed and wheeled the newly completed Lynn Camp and Lick Creek sections of the trail.

1981 - The trail was relocated off Walker Mountain onto its new, current alignment.

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Path Turns Forty...

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1983 - This first year of Konnarock, PATH put in the privy at Knot Mole Shelter. In the early years, Konnarock crew time was strictly rationed. Path got two days, August 19th and 20th.

1984 - The club constructed Davis Path Shelter. As built, the shelter included a novel design feature, a "conversation pit." The front center of the floor plan was unplanked, leaving a large, deep well. The intent was to provide a functional equivalent of a bench, allowing users to sit around the edges of the pit. This feature drew much comment over the years, mostly unfavorable. The club discussed planking over it many times, and finally did so in 2000.

1986 - In this year the club renamed and dedicated Glade Mountain Shelter as Chatfield Shelter. Club founder and noted North Carolina conservationist Louise Chatfield, nearing the end of her life, was carried to the shelter on a stretcher by friends and relatives to be present at the ceremony. Over 100 people attended. PATH members instrumental in organizing the ceremony included Harriet Mattes, Ken Rose and Willie Taylor.

1987 - PATH formally incorporated in this year.

1988 - PATH acquired the Greensboro PO Box that it continues to use to this day.

1993 - The legendary "Blizzard of '93" buried the Appalachian Trail under as much as 63 inches of snow, causing the cancellation of the March worktrip.

1994 - The Stone Hut on Chestnut Knob was transmogrified into the Chestnut Knob Shelter by three intensive weeks of PATH and Konnarock crew effort. In other news, the old blue sickle bar mower finally gave up the ghost. It's demise merited the lead story in the July newsletter.

1995 - PATH celebrated 30 years with a potluck lunch at Parkway Presbyterian Church in Winston-Salem. The Keynote speaker was Dave Startzell, Executive Director of the ATC

1998 - Partnership Shelter was dedicated on June 6th at a ceremony attended by representatives of the Appalachian Trail Conference, the US Forest Service, PATH and the friends and family of Thomas Baldwin. Unexpected but welcome guests were several distance hikers who happened to be at the shelter that day. They were

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Karl Kunkel is the proud owner of Gordon's old blue bug. He keeps it spiffy with one of the new Appalachian Trail license plates.



Ever Wondered What That Flower Was?

By Tom Dillon

During the recent Summerfest, several people were curious about a bright red wildflower on Garden Mountain. Checking a wildflower guide that someone had brought found it to be firepink, a common flower of rocky areas and streams in the Appalachians.

But heres another way to find out more about the nature of Southwest Virginia: Attend the annual Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally, which is conducted each year on the Friday and Saturday before Mothers Day. The rally is run out of the Konnarock Community Center on Va. 600, about half-a-mile south of Va. 603. Its always a great place to find out about wildflowers, trees and wildlife, among many other subjects.

The main speaker this year was J. Wallace Coffey of Bristol, Tenn., one of the founders of the rally 31 years ago. On Friday night, he discussed "A Lifetime of Bird Study in the Southern Blue Ridge". Then Saturday morning, he led a field trip.

And that was only a little of what the rally had to offer. Here are some other workshops and field trips that were available on Saturday, the second day of the rally. This is a partial list:

Geology of the Virginia Creeper: In this one, Fred Newcomb of Marion Senior High School led an exploration of some of the cuts along the Creeper, the abandoned railroad that is now a bicycle trail.

American Chestnut: Dr. Fred Hebard of the American Chestnut Foundation took participants to some sites where American chestnut trees are still hanging on. He also talked about efforts to save them.

Tree ID: Joel Keebler of Virginia Highlands Community College led a field trip on tree appreciation and identification, even when the leaves aren't out. Can you tell the different trees

only by their bark?

Medicinal Herbs: Bob McKinney, an interpretive specialist with the Forest Service, showed participants some of the contents of Mother Natures old-time medicine cabinet. Theres a lot there.

Aquatic Insects: Tony Pane of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation helped young people and old turn over rocks in a Konnarock stream looking for insects. He says they can teach us about the need to keep water pollution free.

Other workshops or field trips covered small mammals, the Pine Mountain crest zone, invasive weeds, high-elevation wildflowers, salamanders and bird ecology. The list annually includes a popular hike to the top of Mount Rogers; it's nine miles round trip. There are other, shorter hikes.



The rallies began as a wildflower walk in 1975, expanding to cover birds and salamanders by 1977. That year, Wallace Coffey led a bird walk Saturday morning and a salamander search Saturday afternoon, both leaving from Grindstone.

"I had always wanted to see a big naturalist rally in Southwest Virginia and especially on the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area", he wrote in this springs Mountain Whispers, a publication of the Friends of Mount Rogers. And that's what this has become.

The Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally is still a newcomer compared to the Roan Mountain

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Ever Wondered...(continued from previous page)

Naturalist Rally, now in its 43rd year, or the annual Wildflower Pilgrimage at Great Smoky Mountains National Park. But it's a good time that will teach you something about the terrain through which our trail passes. The rally includes dinner Friday night and lunch Saturday, along with the workshops, and it's a bargain that you won't find many places. Registration fee this year was \$5, with an added \$8.50 per plate for the Friday night dinner. A big crowd attended.

The 2006 Mount Rogers Natural Rally will be May 12-13, 2006, and information is available from the Friends of Mount Rogers, 3714 Highway 16, Marion, Va. 24354. To join the Friends of Mount Rogers, dues are \$15 for individuals and \$20 for families.



Upcoming Events

July 14-18 - Worktrip. Poor Valley, Va. meeting site. A week with Konnarock in the wild. Water bar and trail rehab on the rim of that fabulous Chestnut Ridge. PATH will also be represented at a fair in Marion that weekend.

August 5 - Dawg Days - meeting site is Marcia's villa overlooking the I-77 tunnel. The current plan is to work on the High Water Trail, blue blaze, north of 615.

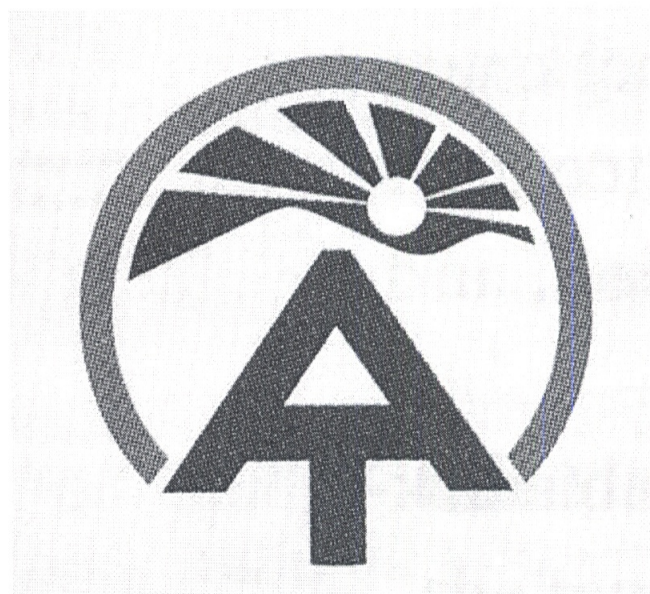
August 20 - Worktrip. Stony Fork meeting site.

September 17 - Worktrip. Stony Fork. Trail Neighbors Picnic with Volunteer Fire Dept. at Olystery Picnic shelter.

October 15 - Worktrip.. Sugar Grove. Meetings on Friday in Camp with ATC, MRNRA and New River Valley District

November 19 or 20 - Year-end meeting and family potluck in Greensboro, N.C. for the entire club and supporters.

First look at the new ATC logo...



PATH Turns Forty...

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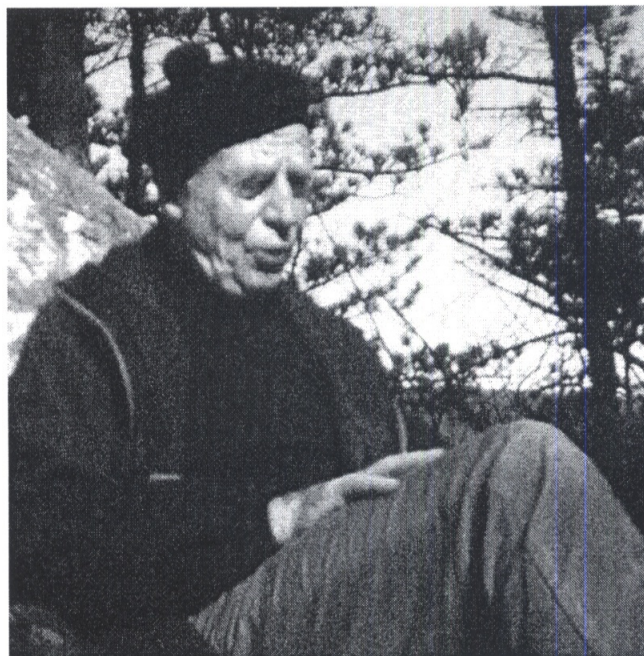
immediately incorporated into the festivities. A plaque was attached to the shelter stating that it was erected "in memory of Thomas Baldwin (1961-1995), a lover of the Virginia mountains. This shelter was built with the help and support of his friends and family".

2000 - Gordon Burgess and Bill Boudman were honored as part of the ATC's 75th Anniversary celebration.

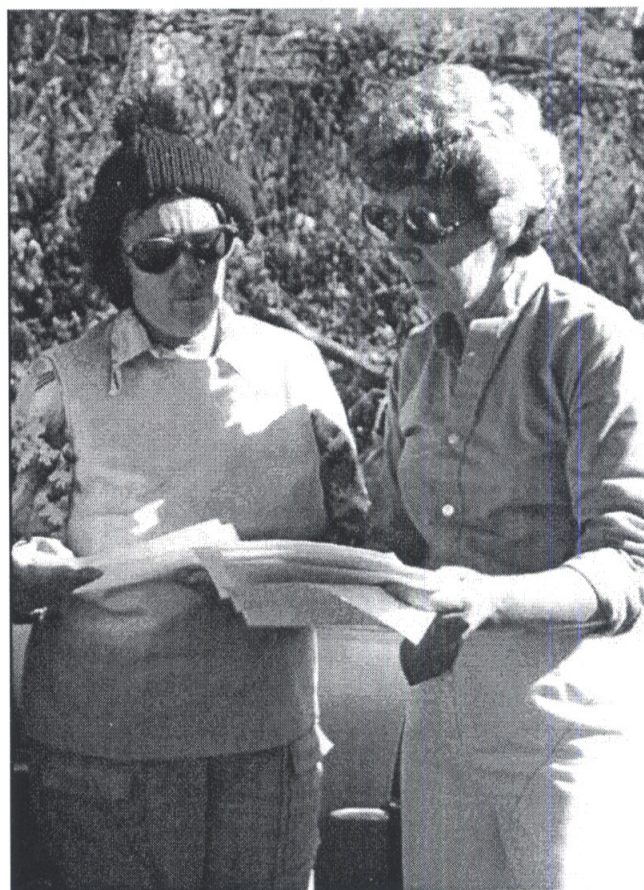
2001 - Parthena Martin was elected as an honorary life member of the ATC by the Board of Managers in recognition of "Distinguished Contributions to the Appalachian Trail". Also honored with Silver Service Awards for 25 years of active service were Henry and Doris Ford, Hollyce Kirkland and Ken Rose.

2004 - The Summerfest project for the year focused on rockwork, cribbing, water diversion and step-building on Garden Mountain and Chestnut Knob. Deno Contos, ATC rockwork specialist, lent his expertise and leadership to the PATH crews.

2005 - Forty years after it's formation, PATH remains a dynamic, hard-working and most of all fun club. Where will PATH be in 2045? If we can instill our values into our young people now, the club has every reason to look forward to the next 40 years.



Charles Adams - Photo by Barbara Council



Louise Chatfield and Hazel Monroe - Photo by Barbara Council



Vaughn Thomas Photo - Duffbusters at a PATH annual meeting in the early 1990s

ATC Meeting Unveils New Organization

by Karl Kunkel

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. -- A new name, logo and tag line were announced at Southern Highlands 2005, the biennial membership meeting held here by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. About 850 ATC members from Georgia to Maine and points beyond were on hand July 1 - 8 at the East Tennessee State University campus for a week of hikes, meetings, workshops and updates. The ATC's new tag line is "Join the Journey," and its logo will be the traditional AT lettering with a mountain ridge and a beaming sun in the background. The word "conference" in the ATC name is being put out to pasture.

These changes are part of a reorganization of the ATC and an effort to connect better with trail residents and the general population, educate youth about nature and the AT and to pump up the membership rolls. Several PATH members were in attendance. They included John Hartpence, Bill Boudman, Jim Houck, Linda Robinson, Dave and Martha Emrey, Doc Branham, Vaughn Thomas, Chris and Rhonda Bracknell, Marvin Kirkland, Ken Pugh, Leslie Killeen and Karl Kunkel. Vaughn's bright red V W sported the new AT-look North Carolina license plate. During one of the key meetings, members were each given a scarf with the new ATC look. One of the evening meals in the cafeteria featured birthday cakes for the US Forest Service (100 years) and the ATC (80 years), each topped with that organization's logo.

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ATC Meeting...

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Most of the PATH members stayed in dorms for this event, and some of the bolder souls converged on Bill "Attila" Boudman's open-back truck for breakfasts and get-togethers.

This meeting, the 35th annual affair, offered hikes along the AT, workshops, excursions to the Biltmore House in Asheville, NC and some good, professional evening entertainment, including John McCutcheon, the Virginia folksinger. During the opening meeting, Pam Underhill, a 30-year veteran of the National Park Service, was presented with an award for her service. Laurie Foot told the touching story of how she and her husband Bill, now deceased, worked together to create the 625-foot James River Foot Bridge.

(Ms.) Fran Mainella, director, National Park Service, was on hand to speak about the new ATC and to make some presentations to ATC staffers. One workshop dealt with the issue of giant windmills used for generating electricity. The ATC is weighing the pros and cons of these 400-foot-high structures that need to be built on the tops of mountains for best efficiency. The positives are that the windmills are clean generators of electricity and can cut down on air pollution. The negatives are that scenic vistas along the AT could be hampered and acres would have to be cleared to make room for these windmills, which are often built in groups.

The next biennial conference will be Ramapo 2007, July 13 - 20, at Ramapo College, in Mahwah, N.J., in the northern part of the state.



Letters...

Most years Ralph Meeks brings a fine group of scouts to at least one of our worktrips. Here is what they are up to this summer...

"Danny Barber and I, along with Ed Stanton, took a crew of 10 (7 boys and 3 adults) to Philmont Scout Ranch from June 24 to July 7 (that ended up July 9). We did a trek of about 65 miles which included resupply of food every 4 days and programs at staff camps along the trail such as a 3 hour service project, horseback riding, tour of the Anasazi Petroglyphs and homes, burro packing (a lot like dealing with boys), spar pole climbing, a chuck wagon dinner and breakfast, challenge course events (team building), shotgun shooting and reloading, burro racing, and black powder shooting which we missed because of the burro but I am going to have a day for that here at home. The crew also climbed old Baldy mountain 12,441 feet.

"We were able to tour the National Scouting Museum in Irvin Texas because of the flight delay in Dallas. We also rode the Sandia Peak Tramway (longest in the world) in Albuquerque NM on the trip out. All boys and adults did well and we had a great trip.

"As you probably know, Philmont (given to the boy scouts by Waite Phillips) is a 137,000 acre area in the Sangre de Cristo mountain range of the Rockies near Cimarron NM. It has elevations ranging from 6,500 to 12,441 feet. It serves about 20,000 scouts and scouters a year in its many scouting programs."

--Ralph Meeks

"Gordon has had a hip replacement operation which went well and has been moved to Brian Center, a rehabilitation center. He will probably remain there for three months. Gordon has suffered from confusion since his fall and evidently the anesthesia from the operation has confused him further. He will not need any cards until that clears. I am sure that calls and letters of support to Peggy would be welcome at this time."

--Betsy Truscott



**Piedmont
Appalachian
Trail**

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