



Celebrating a Century

Path charter member Hollyce Highfill Kirkland, right, chats with current board member Karen Worthington during a 100th birthday party for Hollyce on Nov. 2 in Greensboro, N.C. A good number of old and new club members showed up for the occasion. Story and more pictures on Page 3. Photo by Karl Kunkel.

PATH A WAYS

Of the Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers

PATH Year 55, No. 4

Holidays, 2019

Editorial: Reschedule the Annual Meetings?

Should we keep on having PATH annual meetings at the end of the year in November? Or should we combine them with a particular work trip during the trail maintenance season – probably in conjunction with June’s Summerfest, which seems to draw the biggest crowds?

That was probably the biggest question asked in advance of this year’s annual meeting, which took place as usual in November in Winston-Salem, N.C. (See meeting notes elsewhere in this issue.) And there are good reasons to consider the issue.

Foremost is PATH’s geographical representation. While we may once all have been from Piedmont North Carolina – the reason we’re called Piedmont AT Hikers in the first place – that’s no longer true. We’re spread from Florida to Ohio, with a few members even beyond that. Travel for these folks takes many hours: eight hours round-trip to Hunt McKinnon’s home in Greenville, N.C., for instance, and many more than that to President Jim Houck’s home in Florida.

Beyond that, more and more of the club’s business can be conducted by email and other newer forms of communication. We’re still waiting for some kinks to be ironed out with our proposed new Web site, but it should hopefully help communication along once it’s in place.

Meetings require meeting stuff, of course: paper, pens to write with, tables to write on, various electronic gizmos and other things that might not be immediately available at a campground like Stony Fork, most recent site of Summerfest. But that’s a problem that could be overcome, isn’t it?

At any rate, all this is a ready topic for discussion. Give it some thought, if you're a regular at PATH annual meetings. Should we change the date?

Our PATH accomplishments for 2019

By Jim Houck

It was a good if uneventful year for the Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers (PATH) in 2019. Here is a list of PATH accomplishments from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. This is what was reported to our trail partners in Virginia.

Mostly regular trail maintenance.
Lots of spring rain and mud to deal with through August.
Blowdowns were plentiful throughout.
All Boundary Maintenance/Monitoring on the PATH section has been completed.

Mount Rogers National Recreation Area(MRNRA).
31.9 miles of the Appalachian Trail, from VA-670 near Teas, VA. to VA-42 near Ceres, VA.

Built & placed benches for sitting at the Partnership Shelter fire ring. (Thanks, Herb MacDonald)
Konarock & PATH Crew rebuilt the log steps on the north side of VA-670(Teas Road).
Konarock & PATH Crew rebuilt some of the rock steps south of Chatfield shelter.
Continued with Mowing of open areas.



A PATH Crew descends the trail near Knot Maul Shelter. Photo by Jim Houck.

Eastern Divide Ranger District(EDRD).
33.5 miles of the Appalachian Trail, from VA-42 near Ceres, VA. to US-52 near Bland, VA.

Boundary Maintenance/Monitoring on Garden Mountain was completed.
This concludes all Boundary Maintenance/Monitoring on the PATH section.
Added some corrugated tin to the spring house roof at Chestnut Ridge pond.
Built & placed benches for sitting at two campsites north of VA-615.
Continued with Mowing of open areas.

This is a newsletter for the Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers, a trail work club that maintains approximately 70 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Southwest Virginia. This newsletter comes out four times a year, as long as we have enough material and contributions. It is sent by email to the PATH List and others, or by U.S. Mail to members who don't have email. Feel free to print and post in your local outdoor store. SPRING DEADLINE MARCH 1, 2020. Web site: www.path-at.org. Or for info: PiedmontATHikers@gmail.com.

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Old and new PATH members posed for a photo with Hollyce, center. Kneeling are, from left, Rodney Young, Roy Oakley, Harriet Mattes, Karen Worthington and Marvin Kirkland. Standing, from left, Paul Glidewell, Emily Oakley, Pat Young, Hollyce, Marcia Cope, Willie Taylor, Boyd Stanley and Grace Mauney. Back row, from left, Bill Chatfield, Kathy Chatfield, Don Chatfield and Tom Dillon. Photo contributed.

PATH Original Hollyce Kirkland Hits 100

By Tom Dillon

Hollyce Kirkland, one of PATH's original members, was honored – and extremely surprised – with a 100th birthday party Nov. 2 at Muirs Chapel United Methodist Church in Greensboro.

Some 70 people, including more than a dozen PATH members old and new, two of Hollyce's sisters, other family members and many friends, attended the barbecue lunch and took the opportunity to sing "Happy Birthday."

Hollyce and Marvin drove over from their home in Sevierville, Tenn., for the day, with Hollyce expecting only a few family members to be there. Instead, it was a gathering of friends from PATH and beyond that went back to and beyond PATH's founding.

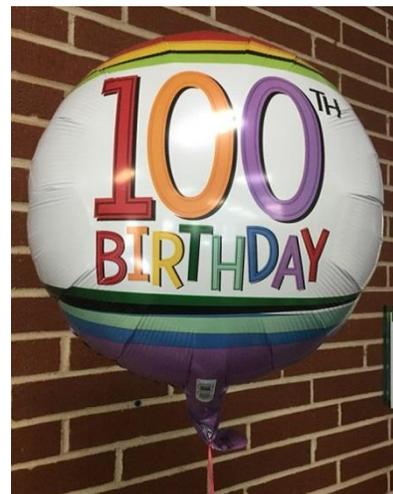


Photo by Karl Kunkel

Among founding and early PATH members, besides Hollyce, were Harriet Mattes from High Point, Don and Kathy Chatfield from Greensboro, Bill Chatfield from Raleigh, Boyd Stanley from Southport, Maxine Blackwood and Edith Brown (Hollyce's sisters) from Greensboro, Willie Taylor from Greensboro and others.

Hollyce is one of the original members of the club and a former president during the years 1969-71. She and Marvin still make an occasional work trip, and she is so active with Senior Games that Sevierville honored her with a special day on her actual birthday Oct 31. Hollyce is also now a member of the Tennessee Senior Olympics Hall of Fame, as well as a world record-holder in her age bracket in the 400 and 800 meter swimming races.

Review: Kephart's Camping and Woodcraft

By Ron Hudnell

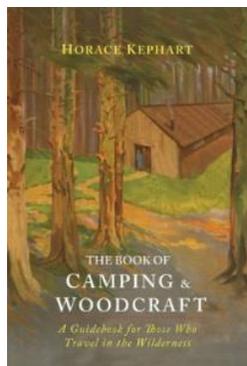
Last June, I met a former Wake Forest professor who had grown up in the Waynesville area of western North Carolina (and still has the family cabin there). Our conversation took many different turns, but we finally focused on the "Big Three" -- mountains, backpacking and trail maintenance. He asked me about hiking in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and if I remembered hiking the Appalachian Trail near Mount Kephart. I did not, which led us into a discussion about Horace Kephart, who my new acquaintance said was instrumental in getting that area designated as a national park.

He told me the story of Horace Kephart -- a librarian, more comfortable in the wilderness than in society, liked solitude more than his family, liked the bottle and had written the "go-to" book about camping and surviving in the back country. (Kephart also wrote other books about western North Carolina, notably "Our Southern Highlanders.") I then started searching eBay for his book and at the same time mentioned this search to some hiker friends who had recently purchased the book, Camping and Woodcraft. They loaned it to me, so life was good -- no out-of-pocket expense for another hiking book!

The paperback that I received was overwhelming; I just do not read books that long! This book is really two books, the first written in 1916 about Camping -- 381 pages, and the second written in 1917 about Woodcraft -- 425 pages. (The first edition of the book had been 321 pages published by The Outing Publishing Company in 1906, then reprinted in 1910.) This book has been around for a few years!

And to add to the length of the book I received, there was a 75-page introduction written by George Allison, a writer/naturalist from the Bryson City area, and Janet McCue, associate university librarian at Cornell University (Kephart had attended Cornell as a graduate student and had also worked at the Cornell Library).

This book is not easy reading. It is an encyclopedia of facts, figures, charts, diagrams, illustrations, opinions and experiences. I started reading it as the last thing before going to sleep at night and found it was a great prescription for insomnia! I could only do 3 or 4 pages before wanting to bookmark it for the evening. But my reading and sleeping habits should not diminish the information in the book.



Some of the interesting topics in the **Camping volume 1** – **Camp Tents** (Fixed Camps, Shifting Camps, Light Tents) – 62 pages; **Campfires** - 14 pages; **Camp Foods** (Meats, Game, Fish and Shellfish, Cured Meats & Eggs, Breadstuffs & Cereals, Vegetables & Soups, Beverages & Desserts, Dressing & Preserving Game, Provisions) – 106 pages. You will be amazed at the many different designs and ways to pitch a tent, the many ways to start a fire, and the energy fuel values per pound of food of every food you can imagine! Who knew that Cisco, Primus portable gas stoves, and flexible collodio ‘new skin’ had been around for 100-plus years? How did he do this research before the Internet?

Some of the topics in the **Woodcraft volume 2** – **Finding Your Way** (Blazes, Route Sketching, Pacing) – 114 pages; **Emergency Foods** – 20 pages; **Marksmanship & Axemanship** – 40 pages; **Shelters & Cabins** – 20 pages; **Knots** – 26 pages; **Skins, Pelts, Game Trophies** -36 pages; **Edible Plants** – 48 pages; **Wilderness First Aid** – 39 pages. Does moss always grow on the north side of the tree?

It seems the U.S. Army has done a credible job of designing emergency food packets for our soldiers since WWI! Kephart is a fan of the jackknife, small axe, and compass. I am not sure that I will ever skin a snake, but now I know how! I also know how Grandma Gatewood hiked the AT by eating from the forest! I know more about snake bites now, and other Kephartian tidbits:



Horace Kephart

Page 384 - If you are saving a drowning person who has you in a grip and will not let go, then “take a good breath and sink with him. You can stand it longer than he can...”

Page 386 - If a person has been struck by lightning, and the heart has stopped, “the case is fatal.” (Modern CPR practitioners might beg to disagree.)

Page 387 – For treatment of Hysteria: “Do nothing. Appear quite indifferent. A show of sympathy will only make matters worse.”

Page 397 – “Our most dangerous insect is the common housefly: it does not wipe its feet.”

Page 405 – For the dislocated jaw: “As soon as the jaw starts into place, slip your thumbs off the teeth into the cheeks, to avoid being severely bitten.”

Page 405 – For dislocated hips: “To reduce this dislocation is a job for nobody but a good surgeon.” [AGREED]

Page 406 – For fractures, “steadily pull the broken parts in opposite direction, without the slightest twisting. Begin gently, and gradually increase the strain. When the two pieces are end to end, an assistant must gently work them till they fit. This will be announced by a slight thud.”

As you can see, I enjoyed the “Woodcraft” portion of the book more so than the Camping.

I should add that Horace Kephart is not only credited with being an early advocate of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, but he and his photographer friend George Masa did much early routing of the Appalachian Trail through the Smokies. Kephart died in an auto accident in western North Carolina on April 2, 1931, and is buried at the Bryson City Cemetery.

There are several ways of getting this book : ebay has listings from \$10.96 to \$400.00; or you can buy through the Great Smoky Mountains Association at www.smokiesinformation.org (proceeds benefit the park); or you can likely find it at your local public library. You can also see materials on Horace Kephart at the Mountain Heritage Center and Special Collections at Hunter Library, Western Carolina University, in Cullowhee, N.C.

2020 Calendar

Here is the first part of our calendar for 2020. PATH work weekends are generally the third weekend of each month from March through October. More events will be added as we know about them. Contact us if you have questions.

March 20-22 **March Volunteer Weekend** **Sugar Grove, Va.**
This is the first of our work weekends for the new year. As in the past, it will be based out of the U.S. Forest Service volunteer work camp at Sugar Grove.

March 27-28 **NC MST Annual Meeting** **Surf City, N.C.**
This is the annual meeting weekend for the North Carolina Mountains-to-Sea Trail. For information, visit www.mountaintoseatrail.org.

April 18-19 **Wilderness First Aid** **Sugar Grove, Va.**
Two-day wilderness first aid course will renew your first aid certificate for the next two years, including CPR. PATH will pay the \$50 cost for this course. Dates are tentative. Visit www.landmarklearning.org.

April 17-19 **April Volunteer Weekend** **Sugar Grove, Va.**
Base Camp probably at Sugar Grove with a pot-luck meal Saturday evening. Details and dates for this and other work weekends will be published in the March newsletter.

May 15-17 **May Volunteer Weekend** **Stony Fork, Va.**
Base Camp probably at Stony Fork Campground off U.S. 52 north of Wytheville, Va., with a pot-luck meal Saturday evening. More info in the March newsletter.

October 9-12 **39th ALDHA Gathing** **Abingdon, Va.**
This is the annual gathering of the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association. It will take place at the SW Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon. Email Blaze@aldha.org.

Bits and Pieces

■ We'll have more news about what's planned in 2020 in the spring newsletter in March, but in the meantime, please welcome **Betsy Truscott** as PATH's new vice-president and **Martha Emrey** as a new board member. Both nominations were approved at the annual meeting Nov. 16 in Winston-Salem. **Chris Bracknell's** term on the board was up, but he will remain as an advisor to the board. Betsy replaces **Steve Yonts** as vice-president, but the post is not new to her; she held the job earlier when **Paul Clayton** was PATH president.

■ Ever considered using a leaf blower on trail work? Board member **Ed Martin** told members at the annual meeting that he thinks a backpack leaf blower used on sidehill trails will reduce the amount of sidehill redigging that has to be done as trails age; he says it should lessen the tendency of hikers to walk off the edge of the sidehill trail. He is planning to purchase a leaf blower and use it on several PATH sections over the next few months. We'll try to keep you posted.

■ If you're in the Virginia woods the next couple of months, remember to wear your blaze orange; **hunting seasons** are still in effect. Virginia wild turkey season continues through January 25, 2020, followed by a spring wild turkey season April 11-May 16, 2020. General deer and bear seasons continue through Jan. 4, 2020, and a number of small game seasons continue through the winter. BE CAREFUL.

■ To send information to all members via the PATH List, send your email messages to path-list@path-at.org. To subscribe to the PATH List, see the directions on the Web page at Inside PATH, which will require an ID and password to enter. Subscribing to the list will increase the amount of email you receive, but it's a quick way to get informed and involved about PATH work. **It will pay you to sign up for the PATH List.**

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AND LASTLY, MERRY CHRISTMAS

Want to Join?



We will have lots of trail work scheduled on the Appalachian Trail in 2020, and now is the time to get enrolled. You may join PATH (or renew) at our Web site, www.path-at.org, with PayPal, or print and mail this form with check or money order. You can also attend work weekends/meetings and join or renew there. Please don't mail cash!

Name (s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Annual membership dues are \$20 for an individual _____, \$25 for a family _____ or \$15 for a student_____. Donations are also accepted. Donation total _____

Send payment to PATH Treasurer, P.O. Box 4423, Greensboro, North Carolina 27404. Total amount enclosed _____

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