

Greensboro, NC
July 26, 2005

Paul,

It took a while, but I finished the article you laid down in PATH WAYS. Each entry after the '70's had a story with it.

Please permit me to add just a few items to some of your entries.

1966 - ... Gordon and I visited in Rev. Shumate's home in Rural Retreat before he passed. At that time he was very ill. Another item of interest on the early trail upkeep is that Ernie Mussler was member of that scout troop. We visited quite often with him at his apple house in Rural Retreat. His mother made good dried apples and great preserves of all kinds. He had a cedar board with a rattlesnake skin pinned down about six feet long and many other items of interest. Your item brought pleasant memories.

1979 - ... I was part of that work trip. Just north of the knoll where Bill Medlin passed, the trail descends along an old logging path and turns to the left about half way down the mountain. We missed the turn and kept right on blazing clear up to Wayne Bruce's barnyard. Needless to say the next day we were using brown paint to cover up those blazes. Barbara Council was also part of the crew.

1984- ... I thought the design of the Davis Path Shelter was great. One of the features I liked was, anyone could sit down and eat without others stepping over them and sprinkling dirt in their food. Dawson had a great idea.

I always like to try to follow the many routes of the trail from VA 615 to Davis Path Shelter. That trail was just like a turning plow, a furrow in each field and strip of woods. The only routes not taken are on the Mountain Empire Airport and the read bed of I 81. Years ago there were faded blazes on some utility poles along US 11 near the Mountain Empire Airport. It may have crossed there in the earlier years.

Another lasting memory with me is Hugo. Hugo was not like Poe's late visitor in The Raven "gently tapping" Hugo slammed into those mountains with force. Forest Service called and said; as soon as VDOT cleared the roads they wanted us to help them determine the damages to the trail. They gave us a two-way radio and furnished transportation. First we went to Walker Gap. It took us eight hours to walk from Walker Gap to 623, most of the time jumping from tree to tree that was across the trail. Henry and Doris Ford helped. They told us that an evergreen on the up hill side had blown down across that forest service road into Knot Maul Branch and taken the road with it, and as soon as it was clear we could ride in and look at Lynn Camp Mountain south side. The work crew was small, (Mr. Gore had not brought us email) but Mike Mabe, Gordon and I spent the better part of a week clearing blow downs. Lots of chain saw experience. Paul I don't remember the year, but the months was September and October. We need Gordon's notes for this one. Bill Foot and crew helped on Garden Mountain.

K. R. Rose