



Carolina Mountain Club

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November 2015

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Ingles Parking Lot Across From Outlet Mall Closed - Meeting Place Now Toys-R-Us Lot

The Ingles parking lot on NC191 across from the Asheville Outlet Mall is closed for store demolition and reconstruction. Hikes scheduled to meet there will meet instead at the Toys-R-Us across from the Mall just south of the Ingles. Use parking places closest to the street.



Annual Dinner - Bernstein, Friday Crew, Photography Contest Winners and Outgoing Officers Recognized

Author Marci Spencer shared the history of the forest the club hikes and maintains during the annual CMC dinner on October 30. President of the club, Lenny Bernstein gave a summary of the club's accomplishments for the year, annual awards were given, changes in the bylaws, a slate of officers and the club budget were approved.

The Asheville Friday Crew received the Appreciation Award after completing the MST in WNC; at Waterrock Knob to Hornbuckle Gap. (Over 5,000 volunteer trail building hours for this 1.5 mile section).

Danny Bernstein was awarded the Distinguished Service Award. The Distinguished Service Award is made to a member who, during his/her membership, has made consistent and cumulatively extraordinary contributions to the operation of CMC, and to the achievement of its mission. Danny, a regular hike and trip leader, is also an author of several hiking books and is an active board member of various trail and national park boards. The list of her accomplishments for the club is long including being an officer, writer and editor for the club.

Lenny Bernstein highlighted the following successes for the past year: • 190 hikes scheduled • 31,000 hours of trail maintenance • Completion of MST around Waterrock Knob • Agreements with Green River Gamelands • Agreement with the Blue Ridge Parkway • Creation of Youth Challenge • Creation of A.T./MST Challenge • Special showing of A Walk in the Woods •

Honorary Life Memberships The following slate of officers were approved: Two-year terms- President--Barbara Morgan Vice President--Randy Fluharty Councilor for Education/Outreach (second term)--Kay Shurtleff Councilor for Hiking(second term)--Brenda Worley Councilor for Membership (second term)--Lee Silver Councilor for Technology (pending approval of By-Law changes)--Marcia Bromberg Councilor at Large--Steve Pierce One-year terms- Secretary--Paula Massey Treasurer--Ann Hendrickson Councilor at Large--Tom Weaver Past President--Lenny Bernstein Revised bi-laws were approved which included a new council position - Councilor of Technology.

Photography Contest

Winners of the first annual photo contest were also announced. The Grand Prize winner of the (recent) CMC Gerry McNabb photo contest was Janet Martin for her photo taken on the AT, NOBO of Sam's Gap. Winner of the People on the Trail category of the (recent) CMC Gerry McNabb photo contest was a selfie by Randy Fluharty on Jane Bald. Winner of the plants & Animals category of the (recent) CMC Gerry McNabb photo contest was Carolyn Baker for her photo taken on Graveyard fields.

Point, Click, Send



National Historic Site, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Overmountain Victory Trail, and Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

Be Part Of The Entertainment At The Spring Social

By Bobbi Powers

Be part of the entertainment at the Spring Social!

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the National Park System, our speaker's topic at the Spring Social will be the National Park sites in the Southeast - Blue Ridge Parkway, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Overmountain Victory Trail, and Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

To complement the speech, wouldn't it be cool to have a running slide show of photos we have taken at those 6 sites?! It's not a contest; it's a Show and Tell. Your name will be on your photo(s), and we will try to group the photos by site. Everyone who enters even one photo will have his/her name put in a hat to win a door prize. No judging, no worries about "Is it good enough?" All you have to do is Point. Click. Send. You will add to the entertainment! Start NOW. Help us have an extremely entertaining evening by being an entertainer yourself.

Here are the details:

Send up to six (6) photos, but please send each separately.

Send to Dennis Bass - dbass3607@gmail.com

Include your name as you want it on the photo and where you took the photo.

Use a phone or camera. This Show and Tell is for those of us who do not understand sizing, pixels, and such. (I used my phone to take the accompanying photo.)

Deadline is April 1, 2016.

I went on the Nov. 15 Sunday hike to Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site. It encompasses 246 acres including the main house (Connemara), 5 miles of hiking trails to gorgeous views on top of Glassy Mountain, and a goat farm. It's a very family-friendly place. It is open year round and is free except for a small fee to tour the inside of the house which is exactly as the Sandburgs left it. There are 3 huge Chestnut trees and a giant Ginkgo tree (pictured) near the house. There are many photo ops. This is one of my offerings for the slide show; you know you can do better!

Point. Click. Send. Be part of the Spring Social entertainment! And you may be a winner! Thanks in advance for participating.

Friends Of The MST Needs Your Help

By Danny Bernstein

Friends of the MST has hired a hiker/writer to walk our section of the MST and to write directions. They broke our 140 miles into two sections: from Waterrock Knob to Pisgah Inn and from Pisgah Inn to Black Mountain campground. But what to call these two sections?

What is special about these two sections? Can you capture it in a phrase? If so, put your suggestions down and send them to Kate Dixon at kdixon@ncmst.org. You might win a prize.

All suggestions must be in by Tuesday, December 1.



Hiking Conference Scheduled For January

Southeast Foot Trails Coalition Release

The Southeast Foot Trails Coalition (SEFTC) bi-annual conference will be held this year in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, in January of 2016. We chose this venue and this timing due to the popularity of the WWW, an event held in winter in the past. That event will be moving to May, so we are hoping the winter hiking available in the area will appeal to many!

We will have hikes Thursday, Friday, and Sunday. Saturday will be reserved for our program, our speaker (Betty M. Jewett of the United States Forest Service), displays and information about SEFTC, and an evening social event/dinner. All this will take place in the Music Road Convention Center on Henderson Chapel Road, except the evening meal together at a nearby restaurant.

We will forgo small group workshops this year, per a Board decision. Hikes will be announced later, but you may reserve your rooms at the special rate for this event NOW, at the Music Road Inn, 303 Henderson Chapel Road, Pigeon Forge, TN 37863. 1-855-790-4646, 1-866-429-7744, Fax - 1-865-286-2236 or go online to: Southeast Foot Trails Coalition (Wilderness Wildlife group)

Room rates are as follows: Wed. 1/27/16 and Thurs. 1/28/16 - non-view \$59.00, mountain-view \$69.00 Friday 1/29/16, Sat. 1/30/16, and Sun. 1/31/16 - non-view \$79.00, mountain-view \$89.00 Sales tax of 9.75% and lodging tax of 2.5% is applicable to all guestrooms Check in: 4:00 p.m. Check out: 11:00 a.m. The deadline for rooms to be reserved for this event at this rate is December 28 of 2015.

Meals will be on your own. There will be a group Banquet Saturday, January 30, 2016, and each diner will pay for their own meals there. The registration fee will be \$20. You are free to send that by check to our Registrar at our Post Office Box with the form on the next page which you can print. If you wish to use PayPal to actually pay, please access the Benton MacKaye Trail's site they are loaning us: <http://bmta.org/SEFTC2016.html>. You will need to be registered to go on any of the hikes or Saturday events. There will be a "reward" for attending 3 events, as long as one of them is the Saturday event. Make plans now for the 2016 Southeastern Foot Trails Coalition meeting, January 29-31, 2016. Contact President@seftc.com for answers to any questions.



Meet Daisy Teng Karasek



By Danny Bernstein

Daisy is the only person I know who's driven the entire Blue Ridge Parkway in one shot. It took her seven days, going from Shenandoah National Park to the Smokies, stopping at Crabtree Falls, Moses Cone, and Linville Falls.

Daisy Teng Karasek has been active in CMC from the moment she landed in Asheville, less than three years ago.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Daisy went to a Catholic girl's school.

"I had one physical education class a week," she recalls. "Sometimes it was just folk dancing."

But she joined the Girl Guides, the British version of the Girl Scouts and hiked with them. She always liked to walk. Contrary to the popular picture of Hong Kong, there are mountains and hills around the city.

"There's a beautifully rural world within a hiking boots throw of Hong Kong's downtown," a Hong Kong tourist website states. "Many of the trails are paved in Hong Kong," Daisy says. "They feel that reduces the erosion." After getting a degree in English from Hong Kong University, Daisy came to graduate school in Wisconsin. She met her second husband, Ed Karasek, in Indiana, where she worked in student services at a college. Eventually, they moved to the LA area. "Then I wanted to leave academia for the real world," Daisy says. Like many career switchers, she read *What Color is your Parachute?* And she listened to what the book told her. "I was told that systems analysis would be a good career," Daisy says. She enrolled in a certificate program, where she met her future boss. She spent a big part of her career working in the Health Care sector. By the way, here's a clear definition of systems analysis, Systems Analyst work with clients to determine their business needs. They then transform these needs into information technology system requirements. They analyze business processes and write system process specification. After she got divorced, she moved to northern California to live with her sister. "So much of who I am is because of my twenty-year marriage to Ed Karasek," she says. "So I'm not dropping his name." After she retired, she went on a seven-month road trip. Her focus was to attend the graduation of her two nephews in Halifax, but she also wanted to check out several other places that she might move to. Chattanooga was attractive. Portland, Maine was lovely but too cold. At the end of her Blue Ridge Parkway drive, she spent two nights in Asheville, staying at Airbnb lodging. "This was October 2012 and downtown AVL was hopping," Daisy says. She realized that the city was right for her. Daisy is a decisive person and it didn't take her long to find her perfect house in West Asheville. She wanted to travel so she bought a place that she could rent out while she was away. She found CMC on the web and somehow contacted Sawako Jaeger. She was on the trail with CMC two weeks after she arrived here, starting with Barth Brooker's group. "I didn't know if I could do all-day hikes," she says. In California, she had hiked with a local Sierra Club but here she was in new territory. Soon, Daisy started leading hikes. She considers herself a generalist when it comes to leading



1930s Pedometer

CMC History Archives

Modern Technology In 1930s Reflected In CMC Reports, Tools

By Rocko Smucker

CMC History Brief:

From Appalachian Trail Flint Mountain Shelter Log,

"Every time I'm about to run out of food, old people show up and feed me."

-Long John Silver, April 4, 2012

"Lunch time...Blisters from hell."

-Nyla and Ken, May 6, 2012

--Notable passers by: Chigger Bait, 3 Step, and Mutt Butts--

For CMC History Feature "1930's Trip Reports" click on: <http://rockocmchistory.blogspot.com/>

The Sacred Water Walk

By Don Gardner

I was traveling west in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan this summer when I encountered a caravan of about 15 cars. At intervals a car would pull over to the side of the road and a lady of Native American descent would get out. She would then face towards the water (in whatever direction it was located). Not knowing what this was about and because of my intense inquisitiveness and curiosity, I stopped along the road as one of the cars pulled over. I inquired of the lady what this activity was all

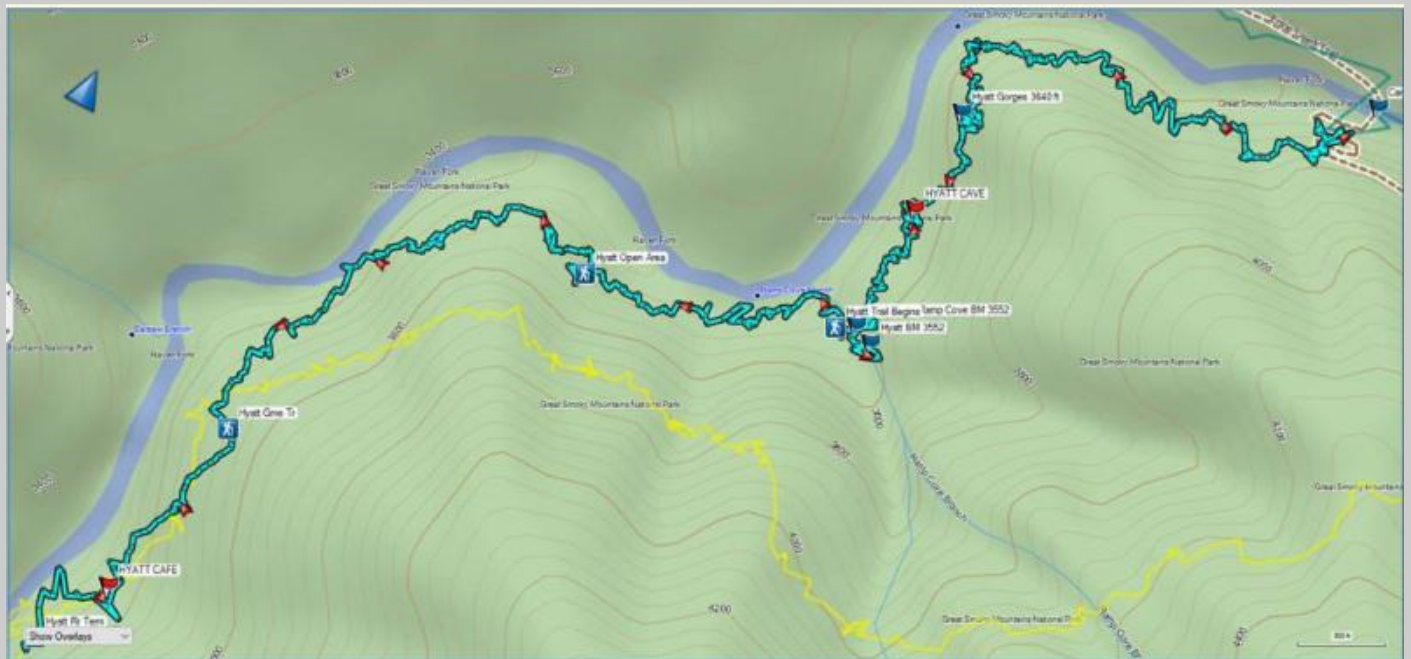


about. I learned a great deal that day and in two subsequent encounters during the rest of my trip.

These were a group of Ojibwe Water Walkers praying for the health of our Water. I learned (or better, I was reminded) that Water (Ni-bi') is the Lifeblood of Mother Earth. You see, in the Anishinaabe or Ojibwe tradition, men have certain responsibilities. One of them is to take care of the fire, and there are songs and prayers that go with that responsibility. Women have the responsibility of taking care of the water. They have always been the ones to make an offering for the water, to gather the water, to sing the water songs, and to recite petitions to make our water sacred. The 2015 Water Walk started in Matane, Quebec (on the St. Lawrence Seaway) on June 23, 2015 and ended at Madeline Island (located in the Apostle Islands) in Wisconsin on August 20, 2015. This walk was to raise awareness of the oil spills on the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River and the train derailments that have caused disasters to our waters, fish, animals and vegetation. We do not want pipelines across our country or our communities. While this may sound like a political statement or protest, the water walks have been taking place for quite some time by the Ojibwe people as they pay tribute to one of their sacred elements. And tribute to what I am sure we can all agree is one of the most important elements found on Earth. Knowing I had learned an interesting tradition of the Ojibwe Indians, I felt really good. Little did I know that I would later in my trip encounter the ceremonial finish to the Water Walk. As I traveled on my journey, I eventually arrived at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in the northwest corner of Wisconsin. I had been to the Apostles before and really enjoyed them. On this trip I decided to take the ferry over to Madeline Island. Madeline is one of the islands that makes up the Apostle Islands but is actually not part of the National Lakeshore (a unit of the National Park system). As I traveled the island, I noted that there was a very small section labeled Chief Buffalo Ceremonial Grounds (Gitchi-weshki Manidooke-aki) and the Ojibwe Cemetery (Anishinaabe jibqyaki). Being the curious fellow I am, I visited this small area (which sits in stark contrast to a golf club and marina). Lo and behold the final ceremony to the 2015 Water Walk was about to take place at this ceremonial location. As a backdrop to this encounter, I learned that the island is named after Madeleine Cadotte, daughter of Chief White Crane and wife of fur trader Michael Cadotte. The Ojibwe (Chippewa) and other native peoples made their home on Madeline Island for hundreds of years before European contact. It was once the capital of the Ojibwe Nation. The land was ceded to the US through several treaties in the 1800's. As the elder of the tribe said during his remarks at the ceremony, it was so nice of the government to give back 1.5 acres of land-when the entire island once belonged to and was entirely occupied by the Ojibwe nation. The ceremony was to honor and pay tribute to Ni-bi' and to thank again this year the Ojibwe women who had participated in the water walk. An elder of the tribe spoke at the ceremony and

was very articulate. Among a number of topics and admonitions to the tribe in attendance, he encouraged all to continue the efforts to bring attention to the situation on Mother Earth of how the human race has decimated water supplies. His statistic was that 43% of the Earth's water supply is contaminated. And he advised the Ojibwe's that their people would continue their efforts with every fiber of their being until the trend w

as reversed or every Ojibwe descendant is no longer living. As to the ceremony, I was able to be part of the audience and to participate (in my American flag doo rag and hiking shorts). A member of the tribe would carry around to those in attendance a bowl of smoldering sweetgrass. One would, with both hands, waft the smoke up "onto your being". This is 'We-skwu' ma-shko-seh' (sweetgrass), the first plant to grow on Mother Earth. Then we took a small pinch of tobacco (Ah-say-ma') in our left hand and hold it throughout the ceremony. We then proceeded to carry the Ah-say-ma' to the fire pit and drop it in. The smoke from the tobacco will carry your thoughts to the Spirit World. Its smoke will be your visible thoughts. You must use Ah-say-ma' when you want to speak with your Grandfather, the Creator. Needless to say, I was very moved and sincerely impressed with the Ojibwe people. I have done some studying of their history and traditions. And I am reading a short book and interesting read-The Mishomis Book-The Voice of the Ojibway. I came away from these two encounters with an even greater appreciation for the environment on Mother Earth. I had one final encounter with the Ojibwe's on my trip. That was the annual harvest of wild rice. But that is a story for another day. Respectfully to the Ojibwe people. I think we can learn a great deal from their heritage and their teachings.



Adventures With Mike Knies

Raving About Raven Fork Gorges

By Mike Knies

October 30, 2015

In 2009 I was planning to track the old Hyatt Ridge Trail from the gap (I call it Hyatt Gap) on the current trail down to and maybe beyond the current Park boundary. That gap lies above the iron bridge over the Raven Fork which is just above the confluence with Enloe Creek about 1.8 miles from the trailhead on Straight Fork Road. I am always intrigued by maps and the little dotted lines on them that indicate former roads, grades, trails, and paths. On the 49 map there was a railroad grade that ended about halfway to the bridge that was crossed by the old Hyatt Trail and then there was a dotted line. That area on Raven Fork is called "The Gorges" and is renowned for its continuous cascades of water around enormous boulders. None of my old park trail guide maps had the route on them as an official trail.

If you know anything about the history of the Three Forks area which lies about four miles above the bridge you would wonder why this route was not adopted and improved by the CCC. More about that later. That grade joined the logging railroad track that ran up Straight Fork to and past Round Bottom. Jenny, Seth, David and I eventually did that hike in March of 2009. The day we did the no longer maintained portion of the trail we had no time to scout up the river but at least we scouted the portion of the railroad that ran back to Straight Fork Road and that could provide the access for a future adventure.

I eventually went back up that grade in 2011 to its terminus in a "large boulder field". You can interpret that description both ways no pun intended. The short story is that I could not find any continuation of a trail in the boulders. The going was so rough with rhodo, stinging nettles (I had gone in shorts) and steep slopes that I kept going higher and higher to try to find an open forest to escape. It took me three hours to go about a mile over the ridge to get back to the Enloe Creek Trail. It was so much "fun" that I didn't even write about it. At one point I could not even tell how to go back the way I had come much less the way forward. Time eventually allows the mind to heal its wounds and emphasize the positive. So somewhat undaunted I had noticed on a later normal trail hike the beginnings of a trail from the bridge end so I was determined to try the route from that side. It was now four years later and having completed for the most part my home site quests I had moved this route up onto the 15/16 schedule with increased priority. When my friend Cindy, who has been on many bushwhacking trips with Jenny and David W. said she loved that area of the Park and was excited to do it also I quickly got out all my maps out and planned the trip. I had my GPS route from the previous trip and both 31 and 49 maps to work with. The last two are done at a high level but I tried to plot some waypoints along the supposed contours to act as guides. The old routes don't show on the topo maps for that area. My previous route would be no help except that I had marked the end of the railroad grade and that would be the primary destination. Except for noticing for the first time that there is a former trail below the current Hyatt Ridge Trail and that there were a lot of large Fraser magnolia leaves on the trail in spots I will skip to almost the beginning of the bushwhack. The magnolia leaf is especially useful if you need a serious trail break and have no "insurance" papers with you as they are up to 18 inches long and very wide. I have to also note what a perfect day it was with the temperature in the 40's, a clear sky and the leaves in brilliant color and mid fall. Mid fall is a wonderful time to be off trail as visibility is enhanced over the monotonous sea of green in the summer but enough foliage is left to enjoy the profusion of color especially in sunlight. We felt obligated to go down to the bridge and enjoy the view up and down the stream of the massive boulders. At this point that Cindy said she had heard from a couple people that the reason there had not been a trail up Raven Fork was the desire of the Park to make the Three Forks area a kind of wilderness area. We started at 10:00 AM. The trace that I thought might be the trail origin runs up hill just above the bridge quickly and ran out as it really goes back into the current trail and the boulder field on this end seemed to have larger contents than I remembered at the other end. We saw a giant hemlock with blue and orange paint on it. I knew that signified it as being treated but it was dead. I don't remember seeing blue before. We spent some time working around the boulders which were covered with green moss and looking for a trace. I must admit that all along I didn't really expect to find much because it had just been too long for a path to have remained. We went up and down and the rhodo closed in once we passed most of the boulders. At this point I looked at Cindy and said that "We are moving from the objective mode to the survival mode!" In other words the primary focus going forward would not be finding the trail but in just getting through to the other side!

We tried to keep close to the 3600 contour since on the map the trace appears to track close to it to start with just in case we might find the trail. However mostly we were a bit higher as we went back and forth and up and down trying to find the best path through. I took the lead since I had planned the hike and was taller. I also had Boltar working furiously at times. The rhodo was very thick but it wasn't the worst that I had seen. We did get glimpses of "heaven" from time to time. "Heaven" is defined as being able to see 50 feet or more ahead! We made for my first waypoint about 1/5 mile from the bridge. It took about an hour and my GPS said we had actually traversed about three times that distance in our struggling. Cindy pointed out a cluster of four basswood trees. I kind of know the large heart-shaped leaves but would not have recognized the trunks. Some of the largest Basswoods in the Park are located on Jim Branch over the little ridge behind the Woody Place in Cataloochee. Many of the giant hemlocks had fallen and it was difficult to get over them since they were so slippery from the rain. They were so big around that I could barely straddle them and Cindy had an even harder time. You don't want to be sliding out of control down a steeply sloping hemlock trunk! Where available we had to be careful to test the dead limbs for foot holds. We also had to work around some boulder outcrops guessing whether it was better to go above or below. We had some great if infrequent views of the river below close to the entry point for Enloe Creek. I had set an initial waypoint at 3600 feet on the first big curve in the river. We finally reached it and the turning south 500 feet further we saw some huge boulders about 60 feet high. There was a nice open path around just below but there was a big gap between two of the rocks. I said before we took the path of least resistance we ought to go up and take a look and maybe there would be a view over the trees from the lower rock. What a surprise! There was a flat area about 20 x 20 feet under an overhang. I saw a fishing rod and lantern in a crevasse at the same time Cindy saw a fire pit and a pile of firewood at the far end. On closer inspection there was a set of old camp cooking pots below the lantern behind rocks! This place almost perfectly describe

s the kind of place that the hero in Kephart's novel "Smoky Mountain Magic" finds in Nick's Nest off of Deep Creek!! We couldn't get far enough away from it to get a good picture of the whole outcrop. It looked like with the firewood and gear that had been left was something the person planned to come back for. It was hard to tell but I think it had been a number of years. I cut some rhodo and put it over the gear so if whoever did come back they would know we had been there. It was about 100 vertical feet above the river but there was a small pool providing water eliminating the necessity to climb down and back. We looked around and could find no apparent manway or cuts on limbs evidencing the way of access. That fact also supported my conclusion that it has been some time since it was used. The site was so significant that it should have or would have been on or close to any trail and used by former settlers or recreationist for many years. For that matter it would have been used as shelter for Native Americans for probably 1000's of years. I am no archeologist but digging in the dirt might turn up animal bone fragments, arrowheads or whatever. We didn't think of that at the time though.

Cindy did speculate that it was the type of place that Tsali, the Cherokee chief, might have hidden out in when he was on the run. As we left we looked above and below and still found no evidence of a path. We were back in the rhodo but since we had made the turn from a north facing to a west facing sunnier slope the rhodo thinned a bit. However I noticed my first greenbrier as I moved past two strands. Before I could say something about it Cindy mentioned them. I said I hoped it wouldn't be a harbinger of things to come and fortunately it wasn't as I hardly saw any the rest of the day. We did encounter some of the blackberry type of briars though. I had given Cindy a pair of leather work gloves in case we got into a bad mess but they were never thick enough to get them out though I felt them scratch my chin and forehead. We slid in the mud down a vertical bank beside another boulder. I got my pants (more) muddy and told Cindy that I had slid down many a steep slope of dry leaves in the late fall. You have to hope that your feet will catch anything that might be hard on your rump! We were making our way toward Ramp Cove Branch. Cindy pointed out the distinctive bark of a silverbell tree. According to the map there was a bench mark at 3552 apparently right on the creek and at the point the trail crossed it. We didn't expect to find the BM and GPS is only accurate more or less to about 40 feet especially in a narrow area with limited satellite access like the Georges but we knew we would be crossing the former trail at that point if there were any visible remains. We took a break as we approached the stream. As we resumed the forest opened up so I went higher so I could come down and make sure that I was above it and that we crossed the line and didn't miss it. I saw something hanging in the trees that looked like a sheet of tin. It turned out to be a wash tub right at the point we would have guess for the path's stream crossing. There was no other detritus around. Cindy rubbed moss off a number of likely boulders but we never saw the BM. I said I should have brought my metal detector to help find it. The stepping stones looked slippery and the fallen leaves, some floating, hid the true nature of the pool. Boltar cut a hiking stick for us to test the water and hold our balance. Across the branch Cindy found some gash marks on a tree that certainly were not natural and then what appeared to be a very faint path. Well it appeared to be slightly more than a simple game trail but barely. We kept looking at each other and then at the putative trail. Relatively speaking, we now motored along for about 1500 feet not believing our luck. It wasn't easy but it was better than rhodo occlusion! When we came to another rocky but open area I said well this is good news and bad news! I meant that the area was open and relatively easy to traverse but it would be very hard to find the continuation of the trace through or on the other side. I went up and Cindy went down but as I predicted we never found it again. We had only about a half mile as the crow flies to go now but including the next bend in the river and our forced zig zag course it would be twice that and take an hour and a half! We sat down and ate some lunch and then resumed our scramble continuing to unsuccessfully look for that elusive trace. The forest was now taking over more and more from the rhodo but the going was

still difficult. We were doing side hill traverses in and out and across shallow seep sloped draws. We were lucky that it had rained the previous weekend. The ground was soft and leaves matted down so we could stamp our boots into the slope. If the slopes had been hard and covered with dry leaves we would have been continually sliding downhill. The GPS now said we still had about a 1/5 mile to go. I looked up the slope and it seemed to be a little flatter up there. When we got up there Cindy and I looked at the ground and then each other and we thought we had found at least a game trail headed in the right direction. It was less than the first one but was at least something. It went up and down behind and around rocks and trees but it was something!! We then saw a large set of boulders in front of us as we entered another rock garden.

We were deciding which way the game trail went get around it. But there was a pointed boulder outcrop down below a bit. I told Cindy that I wanted to go down there first and have a look at the view of the river. It was a great view across to Batsaw Branch. Cindy came down and found a potato chip wrapper and then a coke can. I marked and named that spot the Hyatt Café! I knew at this point we were only about three

hundred feet from the railroad terminus and we were in a logical place for someone to take a break or eat lunch if they made a short foray into the boulders. Cindy said she thought she could make out the faintest trail heading down from our perch. I said "yeah and I think a tree fell on your head" but according to my gps we were about 40 feet of elevation above our final destination and still the 300 linear feet so I said "lead on". As we dropped down she found a tiny cut branch! We made our way over the difficult terrain ever fearful of slipping on the emerald green moss and breaking an ankle between two rocks. We arrived at my waypoint. We have taken four hours to go two and a half miles. The terminus I marked is actually about 400 feet further up river than the grade ending on the map. I think the difference was only partly developed from the number of stones on the roadway and then for whatever reasons they gave up. It would have been very difficult to go any further and the amount of timber in the boulder field was likely more limited than the normal forest. We made our way now along the mostly level and wide grade. There are many cuts and places where the rock cliffs and outcrops have been sheared off but we saw no signs of blast holes. With the grade there are many blowdowns lying across to negotiate over and under. We were soon out of the park and now the grade was clear and there were truck tire marks visible. They had to be recent since we had had the rain last weekend. Once the road led off up the slope and we could see a flat area but we weren't inclined to explore. We passed a private property keep out sign and were wary but the road at that point did not appear to have been used in a long time from the amount of vegetation. Eventually we passed an old rusted camper trailer. Since there was a concrete block against the front door we didn't think it likely any one was home. We passed three or four places where the railroad had had to bridge over ravines or defiles. We could see nothing remaining though. We saw a lot of squirrels. I rarely ever see any though I know there are plenty around. They would be wilder than the ones at home. Maybe the scarcity of mast this year has them a bit more venturesome. We continued around the edge of the Hyatt Ridge and past where the Hyatt Ridge Trail had formerly crossed. I had originally wanted to work it back to the current trail but that would have to wait for another day. It is a pretty hike and at one point there is a nice tiny waterfall falling off a rock bank. At McGhee Branch we could see the road down below so we slid down the slope. I showed Cindy where Major McGhee, the grandson of Jesse McGhee, who had a place on the misnamed McKee Branch in Cataloochee lived. A guy in a pickup gave us a ride back to our car and we were done! We never found the trail but we had a fantastic day in the woods. Cindy had been great company and it would have been a rewarding but lonesome slog without her. I kept her entertained with and almost non-stop commentary on the woods and why we were going this way or that. I had told Cindy after finding the cave that our day had been made as far as I was concerned but it kept getting better and better. Scenery, geography, weather, company and discoveries could not have been finer.



Picture this....

Seen on the Art Loeb trail at the end a CMC November 14 hike, father and daughter hustling up the trail for daughter's wedding in less than appropriate footwear! Photo by Marcia Bromberg



Send eNews articles to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org

The newsletter will go out the last Friday of every month. The deadline to submit news is the Friday before it goes out.

The next issue will come out on Friday, December 25, so send your news by Friday evening at 9 P.M. before the newsletter comes out, that is, by Friday evening, December 18, to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org. Include your email address at the end of your story. Thank you.

Westgate parking - Park in the northernmost part of the lot - past EarthFare, in the last row of parking spaces.

To join Carolina Mountain Club go to: www.carolinamountainclub.org. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side. Follow the instructions. Send all address and email changes to Gale O'Neal at gogalemail@gmail.com. Do not resubscribe yourself to the eNews. That will be done automatically. If you are a non-member subscriber, you need to go back to the eNews and make the change yourself.

Carolina Mountain Club | P.O. Box 68
Asheville, NC 28802



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