



Let's Go eNews

From The Editor

Tomorrow, Saturday, October 27, is the last trail maintenance day of the year for the quarterly crew. Many hands, mean less work. Go help. The crew leader is Les Love (lesrlove@charter.net). This crew goes out quarterly on Saturdays and mostly builds new trail on the MST. Contact Les if you have questions.

This issue features the last article about CMC members who are also Olympic athletes. Read about Keiko Meri. She was an Olympic skier for Japan. Thank you Bobbi Powers for writing the articles and for the CMC Olympians for sharing.

Another CMC amazing athlete Carroll Koepplinger, who is in his 80s, hiked this summer in France with his daughters. He shares his story this month. There is a bounty of travel stories in this issue- both for personal pleasure and for the greater good. Live vicariously and start planning your next adventure.

If anyone has any articles for the newsletter, send them to me at 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.

Sincerely,
Kathy Kyle
Carolina Mountain Club

Ideas And Opinions Sought On Possible MST Route Changes

By Marcia Bromberg, CMC President

At our recent CMC Council meeting members in attendance heard Darrell McBane, State Trails Manager, Kate Dixon, Executive Director of the Friends of the Mountain to Sea Trail and others, including CMC member Piet Bodenhorst, discussed the route and possible route changes to the MST in Western North Carolina.

This discussion was part of a larger review of trails in the seven westernmost NC counties being conducted by the Southwestern Commission. The MST is only one part of this review, but one that is very important to CMC members. We are close to completing the 140+ miles of the Trail for which the Club is responsible and the possibility that the route might change and miss a significant portion of the CMC-built trail has hit our trail builders and many CMC members very hard.

Hike
Save Trails
Make Friends



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It is important to know that no decisions have been reached about the route of the MST. Final decisions will be made by the State using information from the Southwestern Commission's trail review and you have a voice in this process. If you're interested in "weighing" in on the route of the MST, read Danny Bernstein's article in this eNews and the history section of Walt Weber's MST book for background, then send your ideas and opinions to: Regional Trails Plan c/o Southwestern Commission 125 Bonnie Lane Sylva, NC 28779. You are also welcome to send ideas and opinions to me at mwbromberg@yahoo.com. The initial data-gathering period for the trails review will end in early early November so please act soon.



MST routes were discussed at a recent CMC meeting.

What Will It Be?

MST Route In Western NC

By Danny Bernstein

It's hard to believe that the route of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (www.ncms.org) through the Western North Carolina Mountains still isn't settled after 35 years.

The MST starts at Clingmans Dome in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and goes to Mingus Mill-- and then what?

It's a long history of trying several routes that didn't work for various reasons.

It's hard to believe that the route of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (www.ncms.org) through the Western North Carolina Mountains still isn't settled after 35 years. The MST starts at Clingmans Dome in Great Smoky Mountains National Park and goes to Mingus Mill-- and then what? It's a long history of trying several routes that didn't work for various reasons.

The Past The original route was going to take hikers from the Smokies through the Qualla Boundary and the town of Cherokee. If one of the goals of the MST is to show off what is unique about North Carolina, the Cherokee nation is on the top of the list. But that was not to be. The Cherokee never responded to any overture from the state to discuss the MST. That door closed.

So hikers walked the Blue Ridge Parkway and went through five tunnels-- not the safest thing to do. Recently the Parkway declared that you shouldn't walk through the tunnels and Friends

of the MST had to come up with an alternate route. They did the best they could in a short amount of time but it's not pretty. You walk on US441 and after a few local roads, US74. This road walk is not a permanent solution.

New Routes To start the conversation on a permanent route, Kate Dixon, Executive Director of Friends of the MST, and Board member Don Walton held a series of meetings in Sylva. The photo above is of Jim Hallsey, retired Chief Ranger of NC State Parks who first suggested the idea of the MST across North Carolina, Don Walton, and Kate Dixon.

They wanted to engage hikers on how the MST should traverse through the far west of western North Carolina before it reaches the 140 miles that the Carolina Mountain Club section maintains.

After a couple of meetings, eight alternatives were discussed, driven, and mapped.

The first two routes stay in the Smokies until Heintooga Road. They're a variation of what my hiking partner, Sharon, and I hiked when we did the MST. Easy, peasy with all the comforts of the Smokies.

For some reason, Friends of the MST thinks it's too difficult for the average hiker. But even these routes are not a sure thing. The Great Smoky Mountain National Park management made it clear that to approve the route, there would have to be dedicated volunteers to maintain the trails and campsites and eliminate illegal camping in the National Park on the MST path.

Most of the other routes leave the Smokies at Deep Creek entrance - just one night of backpacking for the average hiker. You'd walk through Bryson City, a cool town, and walk on back roads and on a future greenway to Dillsboro and Sylva. That would allow hikers to interact with townspeople and let them know about the MST. They could resupply, get a shower and a beer. And we know how important that is.

But then what? You might walk through Pinnacle Park, site of the old Sylva watershed, and now protected. Then you'd go up to Waterrock Knob, hooking up with the CMC section. Or you might stay low and not get to the Parkway until MST east of Balsam Gap. But, say what? That would invalidate all the trail building that CMC has done for years to get to Heintooga Road. CMC has committed to build trail on Parkway land until Heintooga Road.

CMC open meeting on the MST At a meeting open to all CMC members, CMC maintainers and other members met on October 4 with Kate, Don, and Darrell McBane of the State Trails Program to let them know that they've been working through very difficult terrain for over 15 years. Should they stop now and walk away?

Kate assured the group that the process was open and that decisions have not been made. Piet Bodenhorst estimated that the CMC crew has two to three years to complete the MST until Heintooga Road. Piet was adamant that hikers want vistas and mountains and Jack Fitzgerald agreed. If you walk the Mountains-to-Sea Trail across North Carolina, you'll reach the Piedmont, rolling hills and towns soon enough. "Besides," Piet pointed, "it is not safe to leave the trail unfinished."

Don talked about the need for trail towns. "For long term sustainability, you need community involvement."

"Yes," Piet said "Maggie Valley and Waynesville are very close to the MST in the Balsams but not involved at all."

Jim Hallsey who just completed the MST also attended the meeting. He commended CMC for all their hard work and great trail. He encouraged CMC to "finish what you're doing."

The future Volunteers are needed to walk the various routes. Jim Hallsey has already organized a group to walk the Smokies route. Interested in participating and walking other routes? Contact Don Walton at donwalton@bellsouth.net.



CMC Hikers To Present Slide Show Nov. 7 at Diamond Brand

Four Camino de Santiago hikers will talk about their recent experiences on Wednesday, November 7, hosted by Diamond Brand on Hendersonville Road in Arden. Don Walton, Tom Sanders, and Ryan Nelson spent nearly a month this past May and June walking the Camino in Spain, and Carroll Koeplinger, with his three daughters, did the Western half of the French Le Puy route in France and across the Pyrenees into Spain.

Don, Tom, and Carroll are veterans, having been Pilgrims on at least four previous occasions and are annual presenters at Diamond Brand. They will highlight how things have changed to produce what Don calls "the best ever experience yet" on the Camino. Ryan was on his first pilgrimage, and he is enthusiastic that it was a formative

experience in his life. We will discuss the 66% increase in US Pilgrims finishing the Camino this year. There will be plenty of pictures illustrating what they saw. The presentation will be from 6 to 8 pm. Everyone interested is invited. Put this event on your calendar for November 7!



Family Trip

Soul of CMC Hikes With Daughters In France

By Carroll Koeplinger

Back in 2010 after my return from our Switzerland hike one of my daughters commented that she would love to hike with me on one of my Camino hikes. Over the next several months the subject became more prevalent and my daughters became more & more interested as the discussions progressed.

I mentioned that 2011 was not enough time to prepare. I then decided that in 2012 I would hike in France & Spain to pick up a couple of sections that I had not done. One of those sections was in France from the city of Figeac to Cahors, a distance of 60 miles. I suggested that this would be a good beginning as we could do it in a week and the distance was not too great. The adrenalin then begin to flow! Preparations were made which included back packs & equipment & etc. needed for the hike. This would be the first such adventure for them.

Three of my four daughters, Cindy(Cynthia), Suz(Suzanne) & Liz(Elizabeth) made the trip with me. My other daughter Pam(Pamela) was not physically able to go at this time. I met up with my daughters in Paris (they went there a couple of days earlier) on May 5th. Within hours we were on the train to the town of Brive where we spent the night. Leaving at 6AM and arriving in Figeac at 7:15AM. We begin our hike at 8:30 AM. Sunday, May 6th. I had made reservations for lodging prior to leaving so we would be assured of adequate facilities. We stayed at private homes except for one evening we stayed at an Abbey in the town of Vayats. I had never seen such enthusiasm as I saw in my daughters! They were primed! We had great weather with little or no rain. Had excellent accommodations with gracious hosts along with great food (and wine). We arrived in Cahors on Fri. May 11th and left there on Sun. May 13th, they back home and I on to more hiking. My daughters expressed so much delight in the trip and the great experiences encountered. The one thing that they all expressed was that there was absolutely so stress the entire week. As one said, all she had to think about was to put one foot in front of the other. Out

longest day of hiking was 14 mi. One of the expressions that one daughter made was that "how many daughters can say that they are hiking with their 82 yr. old father in France". My response was "how many 82 yr old fathers can say that they are hiking with their daughters"? One other comment along the trail was that "now we know why you love this so much"! They all agreed that this is but the first of more hiking in France. They made it clear that on future hikes there would be no time spent in Paris - we will head for the trail immediately. This was an experience of a life-time for us all.



Hoo Doos and Full Moon Night Hike

CMC Members Explore Bryce Canyon And Zion National Parks

By Stuart English

Upon flying into St. George, Utah, to meet my roommate for this trip, I noticed a curious thing. There was a big "D" on the side of a mountain. There was a Dixie State College. There was a Dixie National Forest. So after talking to a waitress and going to Wikipedia, I learned this:

Dixie is the nickname for southwestern Utah. It was first settled in the early 1860s, when farmers were sent south by Brigham Young to grow cotton, hoping to capitalize on the lack of availability of cotton due to the American Civil War. If the Mormons could grow cotton in this arid landscape, I suppose they could call it whatever they wanted.

In late September, Brenda Worley, Bruce Bente, Allyn Schneider, Kathleen and Dominic Abbate, Johann Artigas, Barbara Morgan, Lee Silver, Mary Beth Gwynn, Jacques and Beverly Perret, and I met for a number of hikes in Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks. Ten of us live in the real South where cotton once was king.

Bryce was our first stop and we spent three days there. The elevation here was between 7,000 and 9,000 feet and the hikes were cool and sunny. There was hardly a cloud in the sky. (This was true of the whole trip.) We hiked among a stunning landscape of sandstone formations called Hoo Doos, created by the perfect blend of altitude, freezing, thawing, and erosion. We took a moonlight walk guided by a park ranger (it was a full moon) and learned many things about the moon, the landscape, and the geology.

Then we moved on to Zion, dropping to about 4,000 feet on the canyon floor. Zion is a spectacular canyon carved by the Virgin River. Because of the difference in elevation, it was much warmer here. We made several hikes including a steep climb up Angel's Landing (where probably angels and certainly moi would fear to tread), a walk up a narrow part of the canyon in the river, and a long steady climb up to Observation Point. We learned that things are not always how we

expected. Bryce Canyon was really not a canyon because it had only one rim and no river running through it. But it was called one. Zion was a canyon. It had two rims and the necessary river. But it was not called one in the National Park designation. The Mormons did grow cotton in Southern Utah. But one thing could be taken at face value. We had a wonderful experience that we will never forget. And I ain't just whistling "Dixie."



Keiko Meri

Part 3 of 3

CMC Hiker Skied In Lake Placid Olympic Games For Japan

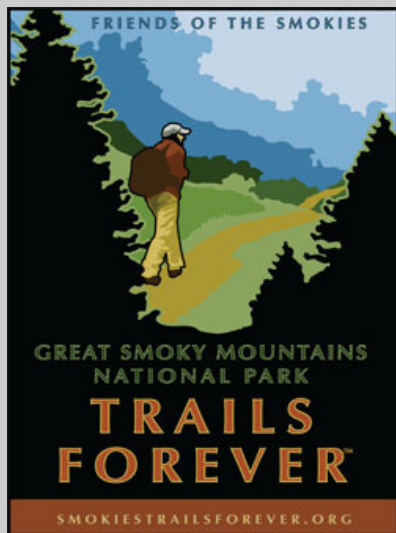
Part 3 of "Olympic Games Perspectives of Three CMC Women" By Bobbi Powers

In this final installment, the spotlight is on Keiko Merl. The August eNews highlighted the feats of Ann Hendrickson in gymnastics, cycling, and speed skating. Last month's eNews featured gymnast Lee Silver's memoir of the 1968 Summer Olympics.

This month downhill racer Keiko Merl reminisces about her road to the 1980 Lake Placid Olympic Games as a skier for Japan, her home country.

Keiko has always been a jock. She grew up in a sports-obsessed family. Both parents were competitive skiers and supported their daughter's goals. Keiko says, "I was tossed into the snow at age two and started skiing." By Japanese standards, she is a big girl, well-suited for skiing; however, her size XXL in Japan converts to a Petite in the States. Growing up, she loved the challenge of seeing how finely tuned she could make her body. However, schools in the 1970's were not especially attuned to female athletes. One goal Keiko never achieved was making her school's junior high soccer team - a boys' team in the 1970's - and even a protest by Keiko could not change the rule. At her Buddhist high school, she petitioned the principal to create a ski team, again unsuccessfully.

However, she skied for her college's ski team and started her road to the Olympics. Besides studying for a degree in Sports Medicine, Keiko trained for 2 - 3 hours per day, with an occasional Sunday off. The regimen included running 6 miles per day. To this day, she says, "I hate running!" The team spent about 120 days/year in snow, all the while continuing their studies. All the hard work paid off, and Keiko became an alternate in the 1980 Lake Placid Winter Olympics Games. She says, "Even though I am a big girl by Japanese standards, it was hard to compete with the larger Europeans and Americans." Everyone on the team practiced for all events, but Keiko's favorite has always been the giant slalom where she won many titles in Japan. However, she has mainly been a downhill racer where speeds can reach 70 - 75 mph over a 1.5 - 2-mile course. She said, "Every time I started a downhill race, I thought 'I don't want to die today' and my goal was always not to fall." Side note: she suffered two concussions during training but no broken bones. Keiko has several memories of Village life at Lake Placid. First and foremost was the extreme cold. This was her first time to eat lots of American food. Also, she told me, "I couldn't carry on a conversation in English. I could understand what was said, but before I could form a response, the conversation had moved forward." In 1983 Keiko started graduate studies in Athletic Training at California State University at Northridge. To help pay college costs, she tutored in math and also played piano in a French restaurant. Another aside: She has a baby grand piano in her new condo. After her college and competitive skiing careers ended, she went on to be a trainer for a variety of sports teams. Currently she is an EMT for Mission Hospitals. For fun this avid athlete enjoys playing tennis three times a week, and she often can be found hiking with the CMC on Wednesdays. Final side note: She became a U.S. citizen in 2008 because, as she put it, "I wanted to vote." If you need any training tips, Keiko is your go-to girl!



CMC Hikers Featured In Trails Brochure

By Jim Harb

The new Trails Forever brochure from Friends of the Smokies is now out. The brochure lists the achievement and establishment of the \$4M Trails Forever Endowment that has now been created to assist with Park trail maintenance.

Among other things, the brochure mentions Wednesday Hikers and the contribution that the group made to the endowment, and has a picture of Margaret Stevenson as well. While many Wednesday Hikers will receive this brochure in the postal mail due to their contributions to the Wednesday Hikers' fund at Friends of the Smokies, others who may be new to the group will not, and so the brochure is sent so that all may have a chance to see the new publication. To see the brochure click [here](#).



Smoky Mountain National Park Trail Updates

Dana Soehn

Management Assistant/Public Affairs

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Some shelters and campsites in the Smoky Mountain National Park are closed due to bear activity. Some areas are not closed, but hikers should be aware of bear activity. Campsites: 21 and 24 and the trails Laurel Falls and Cherokee Orchard Road are not closed, but have had bear activity.

The following trails are closed: Beard Cane, Chestnut Top, Hannah Mountain, Hatcher Mountain, Rabbit Creek, Scott Mountain from

campsite 6 to Schoolhouse Gap (site 6 is open), Chimney Tops (every Monday - Thursday for rehab work) The following campsites are closed: 3, 11,14,15 & 16.

Repairs may affect hiking too. Middle Prong Trail-the first bridge on the Middle Fork Trail has undergone temporary repairs. Stock users are advised to walk stock across the bridge.



Report Woodpecker Damaged Ash Trees To Park Biologist

By Glenn Taylor

Recently management staff found woodpecker damaged ash trees along Injun Creek in Greenbrier valley. Significant amounts of bark had been chipped off from numerous trees in search of insects, which in the case of ash at this time means emerald ash borer infestation.

If anyone finds similar woodpecker activity on ash trees I'd like to know the location. Contact - Glenn Taylor, biologist

Great Smoky Mountains National Park

107 Park Headquarters Road

Gatlinburg, TN 37738

865-430-4748

865-436-1728 fax



Kate and Jan and the art of moving boulders.

Trail To Every Classroom

Onan And Fisher Learn Trail Design And Construction During Workshop

By Jan Onan

How would you like to be able to move a 3600 lb. granite boulder 15 feet from its earthen bed? It can be done once you know how! CMC members Kate Fisher and Jan Onan worked along side the NY and NJ trail crew to learn how to do just that and more during a Trail to Every Classroom Alumni workshop on Bear Mountain - Harriman State Park in New York State.

The focus of the October 5-7 weekend was Trail Design and Construction and included actual work on the Appalachian Trail. Instructor Eddie Walsh from Tahawus Trails LLC taught us that trail design is about user experience and sustainability.

The AT has gotten a lot of use on Bear Mountain because of its proximity to NYC. Therefore a lot of erosion problems and trail widening has occurred. Eddie Walsh has been working with the ATC for the last 7 years to relocate or rebuild the AT. This provided a perfect hands-on learning experience for TTEC alumni and AT Club members. Using simple machines, participants were able to move and place 'gargoyle' rocks along steps that were placed in the spring by volunteer trail crews, lay a stretch of the AT by grading a simple tread way using side hill construction, and move boulders. They also saw a demonstration of how to move very heavy rocks using cables, pulleys and a winch. Kate and Jan also participated in the TTEC Spring Workshop at Grayson Highlands and learned about Questing while developing a Guardians of the Grayson Highlands Quest. They took what they learned to build 2 more local quests in Hot Springs and Carl Sandburg's National Historic Site. They joined Julie Judkins, our regional ATC Community Program Manager and another teacher from Hot Springs Elementary to build the Hot Springs Quest.

The Quests will be available soon on the Internet. CMC members and the public are encouraged to test the quests! CMC members are welcome to contact Jan or Kate if interested in TTEC activities.



First Phase Of Chimney Tops Trail Rehabilitation Completed

By Dana Soehn

Great Smoky Mountains News Release

Gatlinburg - Officials at Great Smoky Mountains National Park have announced that the first phase of the rehabilitation of the popular Chimney Tops Trail, from the trailhead to the junction with the Road Prong Trail, has been completed. On Friday, October 19th, the trail will be open all week until the second phase of the trail rehabilitation begins in late April of 2013.

The Chimney Tops Trailhead is located along Newfound Gap Road about 8 miles south of the Park's Gatlinburg, TN entrance. The combination of heavy use, abundant rainfall, and steep terrain turned the Chimney Tops Trail into a badly eroded obstacle course of slick, broken rock, exposed tree roots, and mud. Since April 2012, The Park's Trails Forever Crew has been rebuilding the trail using durable stone and rot-resistant black locust timbers that will stabilize the trail for decades to come, reducing annual maintenance and greatly improving the visitor experience. To read more click [here](#).



Memories, Artifacts

Casada Traces Human Cost, History Of National Park

By Andrew Kasper

As Don Casada veered off-trail and began bushwhacking his way over fallen logs and through overgrown shrubs along the shore of Lake Fontana, he barely glanced at the trusty GPS unit in his hand. He'd been this way before, many times, and knew just where he was going. Casada finally stopped at a clearing marked by a looming stone chimney, all that is left of a cabin that early Appalachian settlers had once called home.

The reliable chimney once spewed smoke and radiated heat for the family that lived inside, now long gone. Casada approached the chimney and touched one of its stones, as if to remind himself it was real. He recalled that it was several feet shorter than when he first stumbled upon it several years ago, with pieces of the chimney breaking off and falling to the ground around it as the clay and mortar deteriorate with time.

"History will fade; chimneys will fall; time will cover bottles; and metal will erode." Casada said of the looming historic relic and others like it

found inside the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Casada is an artifact and home site hunter, who scours forgotten trails of Smokies with a GPS system in search of artifacts and physical clues of the inhabitants who lived on the land before it became part of the park and they were forced to leave.

He works alongside fellow amateur historian and Swain County resident Wendy Meyers. Her task is to hunt down the stories and oral histories of the people who once accompanied the artifacts for which Casada endlessly searches. Together, their mission is to not only to record as much of the oft-forgotten human history of the park before the layers of time cover and degrade it even more but also give it credence. Between the 1920s and 1940s, to make way for one of the largest conservation projects in American history - the half-million-acre Great Smoky Mountains National Park - thousands of residents of Western North Carolina were forced to leave their farms, churches, schools, barns and homes. Some families had hardly departed from their land when park officials torched their former houses and possessions in an attempt to erase the traces of humankind from the new park. But it was impossible for the park to entirely erase their history. There still remain the memories, the stories, or as the case may be for so many early Appalachian settlers within the park's borders, an artifact: a chimney, a rosebush, a whiskey bottle or an old rock wall or carriage road - now overgrown with bushes and weeds. And for park visitors who are fortunate enough to stumble upon a human clue, for those who take care to look and don't entirely believe the myth of the Wild East - that the land taken for the park was as inhabited jungle - will notice, on a trail, in a thicket, when something seems slightly out of place, crafted by the hand of man, rather than nature.

However, what might not seem like a pressing task for Casada and Meyers - retracing routes of stagnant history - actually has a sense of urgency for the two historians. Especially for Meyers, who relies on personal accounts to collect information for their research, the urgency is a little more human. "If we don't act now, a lot of the sources will have dried up," Meyers said. "As time goes by people are dying." Already, the youngest profile of a person who can contribute first-hand information to the project is in their late 70s. People who may remember the earlier history of the park are already in their 90s. But Meyer's challenge isn't only a race against time, it's one against distance too. Settlers who lost their homes and land to make way for the newly-created national park were paid for their loss by the government, but they were forced to start over elsewhere and couldn't always afford a new farm with what they'd been paid. Many moved to other parts of the Southeast to work in the textile factories or to the northwest to log timber. Meyers uses census records, family trees, government surveys, deeds, personal contacts, obituaries, the phone book, the internet and many more tools to find an important source who can maybe tip Casada off to a unknown building, whose foundation is obscured and hard to find within the park boundaries, or identify the former inhabitants of a structure the two have already found. It's slow work. Meyers can spend a whole day making phone calls and doing research just to track down one photograph or someone who may have a link to the past. She has interviewed more than 50 people for the project, and sometimes she'll turn up an interviewee with a sharp memory who can help the team record where each person in a long-since disappeared community lived. Yet tracking

down someone who has a direct connection to the history of the pre-park settlers doesn't always guarantee a fruitful interview. "One man, who was 8 years old at the time of the first taking, said all he remembered was his dad raised hogs and it was the end of the world when they had to leave," Meyers said. Other interview subjects Meyers tracks down may have Alzheimer's disease or dementia. And sometimes, even when the pair comes away with what they think is a reliable account of where certain buildings were in the park and who lived in them, they later come to find that the memories were as faded as the forgotten building's foundations. Once Casada reviewed five different accounts of where a school and a church were once located on Indian Creek. Each person recalled them being in a different location. Only one of the interviewees was correct, and Casada was able to locate the school. "The old man was dead on," Casada said about the location of the school. However, he continues his hunt for the church. Casada uses a hand-held GPS unit to log all the home sites he's visited and notes whether he successfully found traces of a structure or not. Sometimes he has to return multiple times before he stumbles across the foundation of an old shed or cellar. When the park took the land, all the buildings were burned to the ground. To help with his field work, Casada uses a collection of old topographic maps dating back to before the park's creation that denote structures with a black box, but sometimes the markers are not accurate or remnants of the structure have become too shrouded in time. "There is a lot of wandering through the woods looking for evidence," Casada said. His work has brought him along all 800 miles of the park's trails, which is more like 2,000 actual miles walked if you account for all the backtracking of following a trail to its end and then turning around. And those figures don't include the countless miles of scrambling up ridgelines, trekking along old wagon roads or bushwhacking up streambeds. Many settlements were concentrated near a water source. One of the problems is Casada doesn't always know what he's looking for. Sometimes the signs are discreet as flowers or shrubs that would have been planted around someone's house decades ago - like periwinkles, daffodils, or a rose bush - which otherwise wouldn't be found growing deep in the woods. Another tell-tale sign: a grouping of walnut trees, popular back then for their nuts, natural dyes and other uses.

Many of the home sites close to trails or the road have been picked over by park visitors who illegally pilfer found artifacts, but sometimes it's an old hinge or a rusting washtub that tips Casada off and is a sure sign of a human past. In other instances, Casada said, he has found himself inspecting a pile of rocks to determine if it's a collapsed chimney, or in fact just a pile of rocks. Only estimates exist when it comes to how many old homes are out there in the Great Smoky Mountains Park wilderness. In Swain County - the county with most land invested in the park and where the team focuses its work - Casada has few facts to go off. In Swain County, during the first acquisition of land for the park, 180 tracts of land from private individuals were purchased. Because of shoddy record keeping, however, Casada doesn't know exactly how many houses were on those properties. He estimates it could be around 250. And later, about 450 houses were on lands taken by the Tennessee Valley Authority in Swain County, about half of which were on properties handed over to the Park Service and half of which were flooded by the lake. Casada uses a rough multiplier of six people per household to calculate the displacement of people in Swain County during those several decades. Places like Cataloochee Valley in Haywood County

and many parts of Tennessee also had large populations of people who had to pick up and leave their homes. But, it wasn't just houses, it was cemeteries; memories, heritage and way of life the people left behind. Meyers and Casada hope that by documenting their histories, the old settlers will be allowed to live on inside the park, if only by forcing those who visit and cherish it to acknowledge what was sacrificed to make it possible. The team records all their interviews and keeps digital records of their research, with the hope to publish volumes about the conflicted past of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. "The fact that we have a park here is a fantastically wonderful thing," Casada said. "But people who lived here for generations have lost a lot in the making of this park."



Story Behind The Now Beautiful Shining Rock, Middle Prong Wilderness Areas

By Ashok Kudva

In the early 1900s Champion Fibre Company built a pulp and tannin extract plant at Canton and the Champion Lumber Company built two saw mills to produce lumber from trees in what is now the Wilderness Area of the Pisgah National Forest: One at Sunburst (Lake Logan area) and one at the site of Camp Daniel Boone.

They built railroads to move cut trees to the mills. Wildfires of 1925 and 1942 destroyed lots of trees in this area. In 1934 U.S. Forest Service bought the Middle Prong and Shining Rock land. Shining Rock and Middle Prong areas were designated as Wilderness Areas in 1964 and 1984, respectively.

After the demise of the saw mills and railroads, the railway tracks and railroad ties were removed. The railroad tracks became walking paths for recreation.

There are still several remnant historic artifacts from the logging era on the wilderness trails such as cables to haul trees, railroad ties and rails.

There are no signs or blazes in the wilderness area. Where paths or manways intersect, one has to identify special features such as " The Uprooted Tree", "Split Y Silver Birch Tree in front of a large fallen tree whose branches have grown into big trees, " a side trail between a tree with lost bark 10 ft from a rock ", etc. With the current GPS technology and digital photography we can document these critical junctions for fellow hikers and incorporate them in the CMC Hike Database.

The Small Print

The next issue will come out on Friday, November 30. Wednesday hike reports for the hike just before the eNews comes out will be published in the next eNews.

Hiker leaders, post your photos and hike reports on the website as directed, or send your eNews hike reports and photos to hikereports@carolinamountainclub.org

So send your news by Friday evening at 9 P.M. the week before the newsletter comes out, that is, by Friday evening November 23 to Kathy Kyle at eNews@carolinamountianclub.org. Include your email address at the end of your story. Thank you.

The CMC Calendar is meant to answer the perennial question "When is this happening again?" It is also meant to prevent conflicts between competing CMC events. Please check it often.

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

How to join the Carolina Mountain Club

1. Go to www.carolinamountainclub.org
2. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side and follow the instructions

For CMC members only - 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.