



Carolina Mountain Club

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October 2021

Carolina Mountain Club annual meeting goes virtual again

Members: Due to the recent surge in Covid cases, the Carolina Mountain Club counsel has decided to again hold our annual meeting via Zoom, rather than in person. A significant number of our attendees are in the high risk category and the counsel felt it would be difficult to wear masks and maintain social distance for the duration of the meeting at the planned indoor venue.

Details will soon be available including log-in information, agenda, etc. For now, please hold **Friday evening, October 29th from 6:00-8:00 PM** for this meeting. We will be honoring challenge completers, electing new officers, and recognizing members who have earned our Service Awards.

AFTER THE FLOODING AT DINGLE CREEK

A Project Tackled by the CMC Asheville Thursday Trail Maintenance Crew
by Kit Ogburn

Weather often dictates where the Carolina Mountain Club Asheville Thursday Trail Maintenance Crew goes and what type of work it does. That was the case after tropical storm Fred in mid-August 2021 caused flooding at Dingle Creek, near the Blue Ridge Parkway. Next to a concrete bridge leading to the Dingle Creek MST Trail, trees and root balls were lodged up to seven feet above the normal water level, as high as the bridge itself. The flood water had risen well over the bridge.

This area was also impacted in early October 2015 when weather systems, including Hurricane Joaquin to the east, combined for record rainfall. Following that event, the Dingle Creek bridge had to be replaced, and the work was done by crews from the Carolina Mountain Club.

The recent heavy rainfall required work that called for special equipment, so before work started, Tom Weaver gave the crew a tutorial on the use of a grip hoist and its accessories.



Here are views of the job the crew faced.



Sawyers first cut what was accessible.



In the water, straps were connected to tree trunks and root balls that required more than a human effort to move.



After being properly secured, others on land operated the grip hoist to pull the debris in position for proper maneuvering.



After several hours of work, volunteers were able to clear the tangled mound of debris, leaving this portion of Dingle Creek much cleaner and the water flow much better.

The final photograph shows the size of one root ball removed from the Creek. Behind it to the left is the side that was cleared.



CMC Hiked on Private Land

by Danny Bernstein

Until the last twenty years or so, CMC used to schedule hikes on private land. It was never clear who owned these large tracks but as one old-timer says, "Everyone did it."

As I go through the *Let's Go* of years ago, I've come across several hikes that I recognize as being on private land. I was particularly drawn to one on Couch Mountain because it has now been developed for private homes in a gated community in Fletcher. The development is advertised heavily all over our area. The 1977 Q1 hike schedule said:

All Day ... January 19 1977

Couch Mountain – 9:00 A.M.

Hike 5, Drive 12

Malcolm MacLear 684-6174

Start at Locust Grove Church for an easy hike to the top of Couch Mountain for excellent valley views. Asheville Group meet at South Forest Shopping Center at 9:00 A.M. Hendersonville and Brevard meet at Ramada Inn, intersection of 1-26 and 64. All meet at Locust Grove Church 9:30 A.M.

A handwritten note on the CMC schedule for this hike says “posted” and “Bald Top” with a new meeting time and place. The handwriting is probably from Elizabeth Parker who graciously donated her copies of *Let’s Go* to the library via Peter Steurer, the CMC historian at the time. So this was the end of hiking on Couch Mountain.

Though I have not researched all the ups and downs of this land, the current 395-acre housing development was created in 2019. Now, all the lots have been sold on this mountain top.

Another common place to hike was Reynolds Mountain in North Asheville. This land took a different turn. Originally it was the estate of Senator Robert Rice Reynolds, (NC-D) passed down from ancestors who acquired the land before the Civil War.



Rock Tower on Reynolds Mountain

His daughter, Mamie Spears Reynolds Gregory, was known for throwing great parties. The house and land were sold out of the family and the house became the Reynolds Mansion B&B, which is still in business. But though the land is now developed completely, it never turned into a gated community. You can drive to the top and walk as well. The old rock tower building was supposedly the lookout playhouse for Mamie Reynolds. It is located close to the summit of Reynolds Mountain.

The Reynolds Mountain hike in the 1970s was described as:

Half Day ... January 28 1977

Reynolds MTN.

Hike 3 ½ mi., Drive 10

John Tompkins 645-7418

High above Beaver Lake there are wide views of north Asheville and west to Weaverville and North Buncombe area.

Peter Steurer, a CMC member since 1980, remembers leading hikes up Bearwallow Mountain in the Hickory Nut Gorge area. The property didn’t turn into a housing development. Neither was it sold to a public forest or park.

Rather, the land trust, Conserving Carolina, worked with the landowners to acquire and preserve 128 acres on the north slopes of Little Bearwallow Mountain. This is the land that most of the Wildcat Rock Trail crosses. An additional 38 acres of the property is under a conservation easement with Conserving Carolina. The first mile of the Wildcat Rock Trail crosses this land. So, you can hike up, but you’ll see plenty of “Private Property” signs warning hikers not to get off the trail. Much more land has been protected in this area.



Sign on Bearwallow trail

As Peter Steurer says, "All these hikes on private land had one thing in common in that they were all close to Asheville. Remember that the half-day Sunday hikes started at 2 P.M. It gets dark by 5 P.M in the winter so winter hikes had to be short drives."

Steurer continues, "Thinking even more, I remember when I first started hiking with CMC in 1980, I thought it was very odd that the trails we hiked never had trailheads and were never marked with the exception of those in Pisgah National Forest. Coming from the Adirondacks in New York State, all the trails were state maintained, had trailheads and were extensively marked. I am thinking now, there may have been more CMC hikes on private land than on government land back then. An interesting transition in hiking and CMC history."

Carolina Mountain Club eNews is published on the first Friday of each month. Send your news to eNews@carolinamountainclub.org. Articles are due on the last Friday of the previous month. Please limit articles to no more than 1,000 words. You may send up to two photos as jpg attachments.

To join Carolina Mountain Club go to : www.carolinamountainclub.org. Click on "Join CMC" on the right side. Follow the instructions. For all address and email changes, log in, select "Modify Profile", make changes and click on "Update Member" or email Dennis Bass at dbass3607@gmail.com. Your email changes will be automatically reflected in eNews delivery.

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