


# Appalachian Footnotes

Delaware Valley Chapter • Appalachian Mountain Club  
Summer 2021 • Volume 59 • Number 3



**New Jersey Pinelands**  
**I love to walk**  
**Grandma Gatewood's Walk**  
**Ridgerunner returns**  
**CCC needed again?**  
**Adirondacks in COVID year**



# Appalachian Footnotes

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published using recycled electrons.

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**Our cover:** Len Marowski, a past volunteer of the month, know as Turtle77 when on the AT, pumps water at a campsite in upstate New York near Pawling.

Photo by Raymond Salani III

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Mullica River. Rich Pace photo.

By Eric Pavlak

A wonderful place to paddle and hike, the New Jersey Pine Barrens are a vast track of largely natural land and water right in our back yard. While largely pine, they are definitely not barren. They are a rich habitat for a large variety of plants and animals.

Although often presenting the appearance of wilderness, there are few places in the pines untouched by human hands. They are easily accessible, and are the largest expanse of open space on the eastern seaboard between Boston and Richmond.

The Pinelands National Reserve was created by Congress under the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 as the first National Reserve in the nation. In 1988 it was recognized by **UNESCO as an International Biosphere Reserve**.

At 1,195 persons per square mile, New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation. But the 1.1 million acres of the Pine Barrens, a quarter of the state, has a population density of just 15 people per square mile. The aquifer underlying the pines contains an estimated 17 trillion gallons of some of the purest water in the country.

### **Geology and Topography**

The pinelands are situated on the Atlantic coastal plain, and are made up largely of porous, highly acid sandy deposits. The sand was created by millions of years of alluvial erosion of the once mighty Appalachian Mountain chain.

About 10,000 years ago, at the end of the most recent ice age, the land looked a lot like arctic tundra. The glaciers never reached this far south, so it was never ice covered. By 5,000 years ago, the pinelands looked pretty much as the wild parts do today.

The area is low, with most of it under 100 feet above sea level. There are a few ridges and hills, mostly well below

300 feet. There are three major drainage basins that flow east directly into the Atlantic Ocean, while one, the Rancocas, flows west into the Delaware River estuary. All streams in the Pine Barrens originate there from the underground Cohansey aquifer. There are no streams flowing into the pinelands.

The dominant soil is quartz sand, which makes up more than 80 percent of the soil. There are more than a dozen local soil types, but all are highly acid (pH 3.5 to 5.5), contain only small amounts of humus and other organic matter, and drain quickly with little moisture retention. Thus, the entire area is prone to drought and wildfire. Given this, the region is covered with flora suited to these conditions.

### **Botany**

The pitch pine, *Pinus rigida*, is the dominant tree. The New Jersey Pine Barrens are the largest forest in North America where this tree is number one. Short leaf pines and many species of oaks make up the rest of the forest. The understory is made up of scrub oak and heath family members including blueberry, huckleberry and mountain laurel. Ground cover consists of various mosses, lichens, ferns and low heaths such as bearberry and teaberry.

The poor soil, frequent drought and periodic fires (mostly of natural origin) result in a dwarfing of trees within the forest and the natural selection of drought and fire resistant species.

The many cedar and sphagnum bogs and swamps of the region lie along the courses of the creeks and rivers. There are few natural ponds or lakes within the region. Those that exist are due to human, and sometimes beaver, activity.

The Atlantic white cedar is the largest tree of the region, and commonly lines the banks of streams and rises from the bogs. Highbush blueberry, swamp azalea and other shrubs

form the understory, and thick mats of mosses cover the ground. Blue-green lichens grow on the roots and trunks of cedars, while wild cranberries often line the banks of creeks.

In the few open areas with enough sunlight, such as the verges of bogs, carnivorous plants such as sundews and pitcher plants grow, along with orchids and ferns.

The tea-colored water of the pines, often called “cedar water,” is that way due to more than just cedar trees. The color is caused by tannin from a variety of vegetation, and from iron, the same iron that gives the quartz sand its golden hue.

The name “pine barrens” was given to the region by early European settlers because their traditional crops would not grow in the poor, acid soil. And the barrens of New Jersey are not the only ones, there are also smaller pine barrens on Long Island and Cape Cod.

**Recommended guide book: *A Field Guide to the Pine Barrens of New Jersey* by Howard P. Boyd.**

### Fauna

The pines are home to a vast variety of wildlife. Mammals range in size from white tailed deer to shrews. Beaver, muskrats and possum are common. So are red, grey and flying squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits, bats, groundhogs (woodchucks), and a variety of mice and voles. Predators include red and grey fox, plus weasels, minks and otters. Raccoons and skunks live here, too.

Reptiles include seven commonly found species of turtles and a dozen species of snakes, plus several less common species of each. Amphibians include a variety of newts, efts, salamanders, toads and frogs. Early spring in the Pine Barrens near a bog can be almost deafening with the sound of the tiny little frogs called spring peepers.

Fish include more than a dozen species, including types of sunfish, bullheads and darters. The chain pickerel is the only large game fish native to the area.

The pines are home to hundreds of species of insects and arachnids. The ones travelers are most likely to be distressed by are the mosquito and two species of ticks. Take



*Huge white cedars of this size once lined the banks of pine barrens streams, but were felled long ago to make shakes and clapboards. This one was discovered by AMC paddlers along a remote and tangled section of Mt. Misery Brook on a very cold President's Day in 2004. — Wayne Albrecht photo.*

appropriate precautions! Beautiful insects include a variety of colorful butterflies and moths, and the firefly.

With so many trees and streams, the pines are year-round or seasonal home to about a hundred species of birds. Varieties of ducks, geese and swans swim the waters while two species of herons wade and fish. Eagles, hawks and kestrels hunt by day, while several kinds of owls do so by night.

Songbirds include a large variety of warblers. Martins, swifts, sparrows, bluebirds, red-winged blackbirds, orioles, wrens, cardinals and too many more varieties to list are common.

Grouse drum and doves coo during daylight hours, while numerous species of woodpeckers hammer away. If you ever camped there, you were probably sung to sleep (or kept awake) by a whippoorwill. If you are lucky, a mockingbird will provide your night song.

### History

The land that was to become the New Jersey Pine Barrens was first inhabited about 10,000 years ago by the ancestors of the Lenni-Lenape people. They used the pinelands for hunting and trapping and occasional fishing. Archeologists have found more than a thousand early human sites in the pinelands.



*Water lily on the Mullica River. Rich Pace photo.*

## No streams flow into the Pinelands, they only flow out.



Europeans began exploring the New Jersey coast and inlets in 1524 (Verrazano), 1608 (Hudson, and a few years later by Block). They mostly stayed north of the South Jersey coast, and the region was claimed, at various times by the Dutch and the Swedes. It wasn't until 1674 that the first English settlers arrived.

Imported diseases such as smallpox, typhoid and many others, for which native populations had no immunity, had already arrived in North America from Europe and had spread to this area well in advance of the new settlers. Thus, it was likely that the native population was reduced to a tenth or less of its former size even before the first new immigrant stepped off the boat.

For the first hundred years or so the newcomers stuck to the coast, and fished, whaled and engaged in trading. Then came the extraction of lumber for construction and ship-building from the virgin forests. Hundreds of small, water powered sawmills were established throughout the region, and the forests fell. In 1749, Benjamin Franklin, appalled by the rapid deforestation, called for conservation and better resource management.

Pitch, tar rosin and turpentine were much in demand by the shipping and building industries of the day, and were extracted from both living trees and the stumps and waste of the lumber operations.

The discovery of bog iron in the 1760s sparked a new industry. This easily extracted ore was smelted using charcoal made from the abundant trees, and the high silica content of the ore resulted in an iron that was naturally rust resistant.

During the American Revolutionary War, New Jersey iron-works, such as the one at Batsto (now a museum and historical site), produced cannon balls and other weapons and tools for the Continental Army. Iron making continued for almost a century, although the tiny production of the region soon became a trivial part of the booming industrial economy of our nation.

The production of window glass, using the local sand as raw material and the forest wood as fuel, was also an important local industry at Batsto and other nearby locations. By the 1850s, both these industries declined and folded, giving way to vastly larger coal-fired mills. All this iron making and glass making required large amounts of charcoal, which meant clear cutting giant swaths of forests. Today, the only large scale commercial enterprises in the Pine Barrens (excluding real estate development outside the protected areas) is agriculture: growing cranberries and blueberries.

### Abuse

A quick internet search for "off-road" and "pines barrens" will turn up plenty of examples of some of the worst abuses of nature of this kind. A page that has photos and examples of this kind of damage and discusses the problem is:

<https://pinelandsalliance.org/off-road-vehicle-damage/>



Top: AMC group stops during a trip on the Mullica River. Above: wild iris in bloom. — Rich Pace photos.

If you witness this kind of activity, or its aftermath, photograph it and report it to the appropriate authorities. Littering is also a problem, not only along the paved access roads, but within some parts of the barrens. Clean it up, if you can. Carry a trash bag in your pack or boat, and do a little public service.

### Paddling

There are 14 canoeable streams within the Pine Barrens and our chapter runs trips on some of them, including the Mullica, Batsto, Wading, Cedar, Oswego, Great Egg Harbor and Maurice.

Streams with canoe livery services are most likely to afford good paddling, since the outfitters clear the numerous deadfalls each year, and keep the waterways open. Anyone who has ever attempted to paddle an uncleared Pine Barrens stream can attest to the difficulty of numerous carryovers and portages, often through thick, tangled brush.

The best time to go, especially if you want to see wildlife, is on weekdays in the summer, and anytime the rest of the year. On summer weekends you will often share the waterways with hundreds of screaming, inept paddlers ramming their canoes and kayaks into the banks and tree stumps. In fall, winter or spring, and on weekdays, you will likely find yourself in peaceful solitude.

The best guide books are *Paddling the Jersey Pine Barrens* by Robert Parnes, and *Garden State Canoeing* by Edward Gertler.

### Hiking

The 50 mile long Batona Trail (BAck TO NAture) traverses the Pine Barrens, and connects the Brendan T. Byrne, Wharton, and Bass River State Forests. You can download a trail map and guide at

[state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/docs/batona14web.pdf](http://state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/docs/batona14web.pdf)

Another good trail for a long day's hike, about 10 miles, is to park at Batsto Village (be sure to check out his historic



Above: Carnivorous sundew plants glisten like nectar-rich flowers to lure unsuspecting insects to their sticky doom. Top of page: AMC paddlers on the Mullica River. — Rich Pace photos

site) and hike up the Mullica River and down the Wading, or vice versa. These parallel rivers are almost in sight of each other, before joining below Batsto. Trail maps are available online and at the park office.

A good information source for pines hiking trails is available at: [www.pinelandsalliance.org/exploration/todo/hiking/](http://www.pinelandsalliance.org/exploration/todo/hiking/)

Our chapter offers numerous hikes in the Pine Barrens, so check the web calendar or the online database.

When planning a trip, keep in mind that while the terrain is flat, the trails are often on sugary sand or loose gravel, which can make for slow and tiring hiking. And no matter where you hike, check with the park or state forest office for seasonal information and rules, and follow them.

Turtle on the Batsto River. Rich Pace photo.



# Grandma Gatewood's Walk

The Inspiring Story Of the Woman Who Saved The Appalachian Trail  
By Ben Montgomery, Chicago Review Press. 2016

Book Review by Kathy Kelly-Borowski

I first learned of Grandma Gatewood when I hiked a 300-mile section of the Appalachian Trail in 1984 with a family friend, when I was 24. Grandma (Emma) Gatewood was 67 years old in 1955 when she hiked the Appalachian Trail in sneakers, carrying her food and belongings in a denim bag. Just about anyone interested in the Appalachian Trail knows about this remarkable woman. But I did not know the details of her life and thru-hike until I read *Grandma Gatewood's Walk*.

In a doctor's office in August 1949, Emma read a National Geographic article on the AT. The seed was planted. Emma, a mother of eleven and grandmother of twenty-three, lived a hard life. The woods were always a place she would escape to be alone.

On May 3, 1955, Emma stood on the then southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail, Mount Oglethorpe, Georgia. She had told her family she was simply going on a walk. Only two people knew Emma was on the trail: the cabdriver who drove her to Mount Oglethorpe and her cousin, whom she spent a night with in Atlanta. She sucked on bouillon cubes and ate plants and berries she found along the trail. Emma found kindness in strangers who fed her, gave her something to drink and sometimes took her in for the night. She kept a journal of the rewards and challenges she encountered.

Photographers and reporters sought out Emma when they learned what she was doing and begged to tell her story.

She told them, "Uphill walking is easier than going down," and "I have found a lot of lovely people who have taken me in for a night's lodging and food."

Reporters called her the first woman ever to hike the 2050-mile Appalachian Trail alone. When asked what surprised her most about her hike, she said, "All the publicity the newspapers give me."

She was not bothered by the attention; she just did not see what all the fuss was about. When asked, "Why are you doing this?"

she said, "Just for the heck of it."

**"I would never have started this trip if I had known how tough it was, but I couldn't and wouldn't quit."**

— *Emma Gatewood*

She told a reporter from Sports Illustrated, "I would have never started this trip if I had known how tough it was, but I couldn't and wouldn't quit."

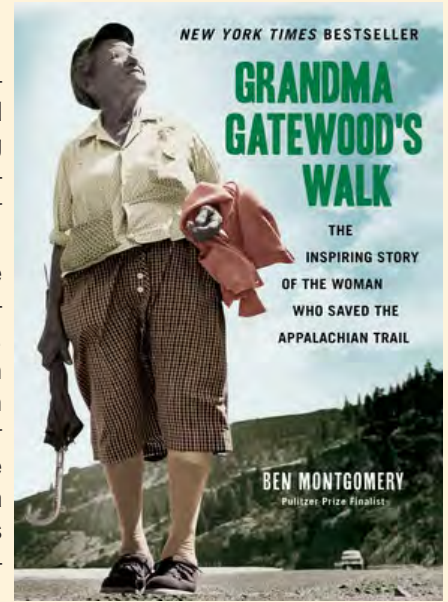
Grandma continued walking during Hurricane Connie and Tropical Storm Diane, storm categories 4 and 2, respectively. The rainfall and wind took out bridges and caused the streams to rise. She did her best to find shelter to dry her clothes and warm her body. If she was able to start a fire, she often heated stones and slept on them. At the time, Emma was unaware of the death and chaos the storms were causing.

In New Hampshire, Emma injured her knee. She lost a lens in her eyeglasses. Her injury, the rough climbs, and occasional misdirection and vision issues slowed her mileage considerably by the time she reached Maine. Grandma Gatewood reached Baxter Peak on September 25, 1955, twenty-six days before her sixty-eighth birthday. She sang the first verse of *America the Beautiful* on the top of Katahdin. On her 146-day journey, she went through seven pairs of sneakers and lost thirty pounds.

Emma's story has inspired countless hikers. She went on to thru-hike the trail again in 1957. At the age of seventy, she climbed six mountains in the Adirondack Range. 1959 saw her hiking the Old Oregon Trail from Independence, Missouri, to Portland, Oregon. In 1964, Grandma hiked the entire AT in sections, becoming the first person to walk the entire trail three times. She was a founder of the Buckeye Trail and spent many hours working on it.

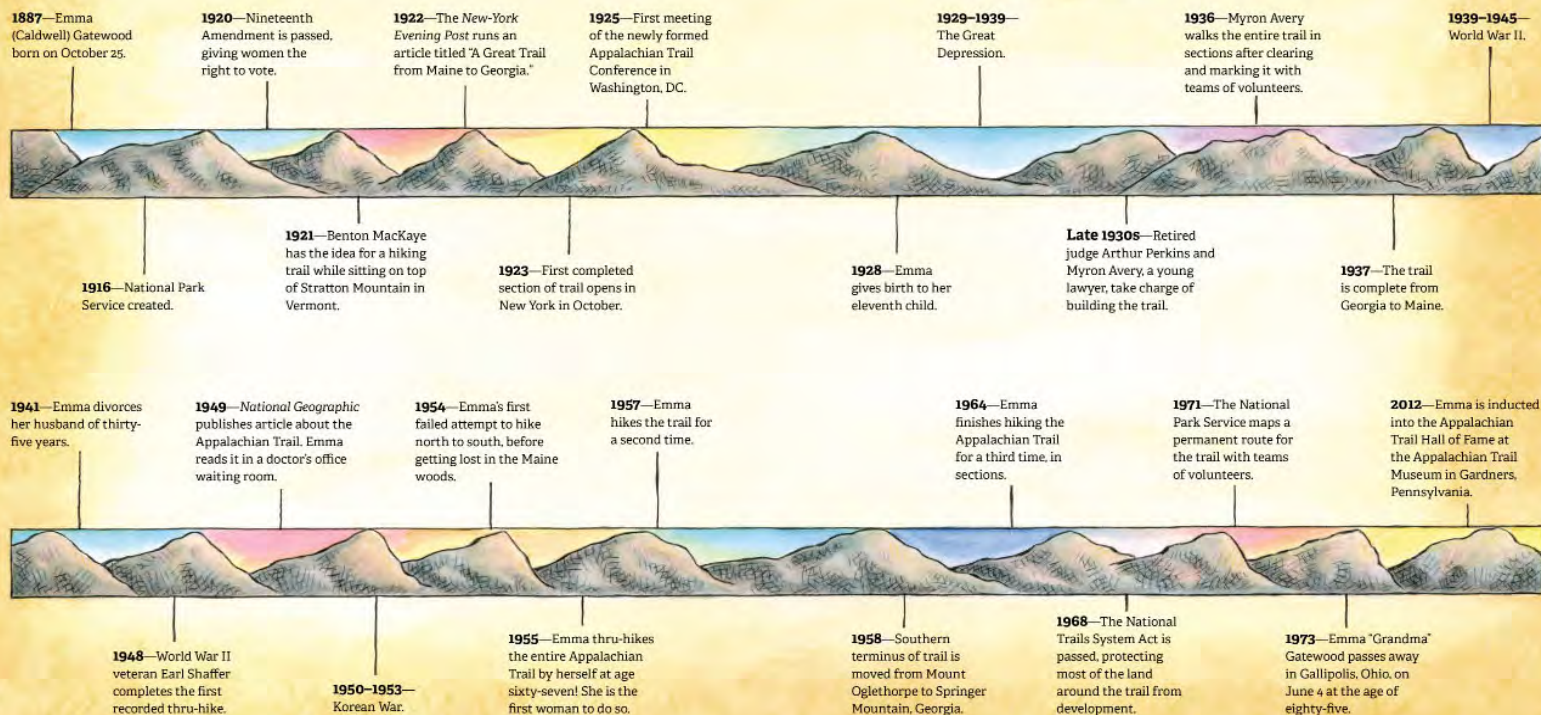
Emma Gatewood walked more than fourteen thousand miles in her lifetime. I've walked over five thousand miles and have many more to go, I hope.

Left: Emma Gatewood in 1955    More on the next page.



# TIME LINE

## Emma Gatewood's hiking career



## S. Matt Read, our 2019 ridgerunner, returns for 2021

Returning as AT ridgerunner for the 2021 season is Steven Matthew Read, who was our 2019 ridgerunner. He began the season this Memorial Day weekend and will be on the trail through Labor Day.

Matt is from Texas and thru-hiked the trail in 2003. He brings experience, maturity and enthusiasm to the job, and we look forward to working with Matt throughout the season.

The ridge runner program on the Appalachian Trail is now in its 28th year. It was not filled last year due to COVID.

The ridge runner is an AMC employee who works on the AT five days a week, including weekends and holidays, between Memorial and Labor Days. His or her job is to meet and greet trail users, educate on Leave No Trace, and help preserve the trail experience for future generations.

Our chapter and the larger AMC have been directly involved in supporting this program in Pennsylvania for all of those years. The program has been coordinated by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and the National Park Service, with a continuing grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The section of trail covered stretches 42 miles from Delaware Water Gap to Lehigh Furnace Gap and includes Wind Gap, Little Gap and Lehigh Gap in northeastern Pennsylvania (including the 16 miles of the trail maintained by the DV Chapter). There are two other ridge runner programs on the AT in Pennsylvania, one in the Cumberland Valley, and the other in southern Pennsylvania near Michaux State Forest.

If you'd like to keep updated on the Ridge Runner program and Matt's experiences on the trail, check out the program on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/NEPARidgerunner/>



# I love to walk. It is what I do.

By Lois Rothenberger

I love to walk. It is what I do. It is who I am: a walker, a hiker. According to my parents, I was older than the average child when I finally stood and put one chubby leg in front of the other while maintaining my balance. I suppose I have been trying to make up for that late start ever since.

When I was frustrated at work, I slipped out of the office to take a walk and sort out my thoughts. Raising teenage daughters as a single mom often sent me to the streets of Mt. Airy to calm me down. And week-end hikes along the trails in the Wissahickon chatting with close friends were an important way I was able to bring balance to my life.

In 1992, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and required surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy over the course of a year. I had always wanted to hike in the UK, and my sister motivated me to rebuild my strength so that we could plan a long-distance walk in 1994. The next year was full of hikes and chats with my sister and then we boarded a flight to London for our adventure. We tackled the Coast to Coast Trail across northern England from the North Sea to the Irish Sea.

I was hooked on hiking adventures and have rarely had a vacation since that wasn't on trails. The next year I returned to the UK with a co-worker, and we met a British couple with whom we became fast friends. We heard about their Ramblers Association of local walkers and searched out groups in the States.

I found the Appalachian Mountain Club and proceeded to make more friends than you can imagine. Such an equalizer! No one asked what you did for a living, where you reside, what car you drive or any other status questions. Those things were often learned after a while, but the initial conversations were all about the beauty you were experiencing, your gear, what you had packed for lunch, books you had read, places you had hiked.

When one of our classmates posted that her father had died, I realized that he had been a friend of mine in the AMC with whom I had hiked many times. He always enjoyed stopping at a diner for coffee and pie after a hike. Emily and I were able to celebrate his life with a hike together in Valley Forge Park.

I met another one of our classmates through work and we discovered that both of us are breast cancer survivors. Naturally, Margit and I teamed together to walk 60 miles in 3 days in a fund raising event. And yet another of our sisters became a regular participant in our Wednesday group hikes along the Delaware River. Such a joy to get reacquainted with Shirley and become friends with her husband, too.

On a day hike along the Appalachian Trail one March day in 1999 I met a lovely man. He admired my jacket, and I loved his boots. We were off and running! Or walking. My wonderful husband, Alan. We camped and hiked and fished. We bought a cabin on a river in the wooded mountains of northcentral Pennsylvania and led many hiking weekends for the AMC.

We explored walking paths in the UK, Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Canary Islands and more. We bagged the highest peaks in Scotland, England, and Wales. We circumnavigated Mont Blanc walking through three countries and clambering over many mountain passes. We loved traveling to the west and discovering the hidden treasures in the Rocky Mountains. Endless adventures, endless fun. And always with so many friends and many more added every year. Magical. And, it all came from a love of walking.

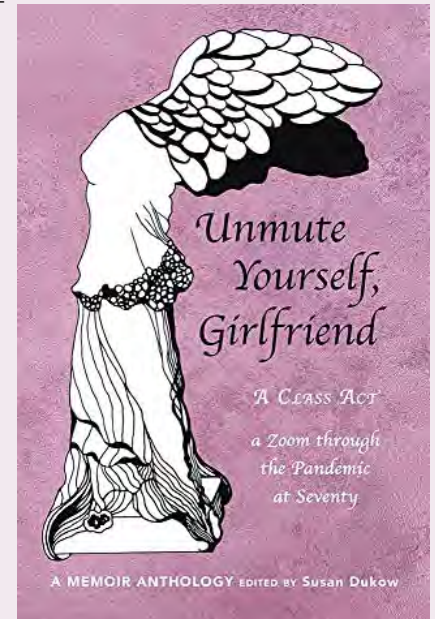
And then on Christmas Day of 2018, Alan wasn't feeling well and I took him to the ER. He died only three days later from a rare and aggressive form of leukemia. Just two weeks before he was as physically active as always and losing him was a shock. Of course, my family was wonderful and supportive, but I cannot overemphasize the AMC family and how those continued walks with friends buoyed me.

However, I found that no matter how I love walking and how many supportive friends there were, I was not able to move on. Grief totally filled me, and I was no longer a walker, but a widow, a griever, a woman in pain. But, I did manage to put one foot in front of the other and move forward with that pain and grief. And, as I have moved forward, my life has grown even though the grief has not diminished. Instead, continuing to be on the trail has made my life bigger so that the grief now has a cushion around it and it is not the only thing I have.

See you on the trail!

*Lois is a long-time AMC member who served as Chapter Treasurer and Chapter Chair, and currently is the Southern Regional Director and Treasurer of the entire AMC*

*She wrote this for a book of essays that the members of her Girls' High (in Philadelphia) graduating class is publishing. See: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58014917-unmute-yourself-girlfriend>*



# The vast legacy of the CCC still serves well today

By Richard Puglisi

The idea for this article came to me several months ago when my daughter Gen emailed me about a great [National Public Radio story](#) that she had just listened to.

It was about the State of Hawaii using their Federal COVID assistance money to establish a Civil Conservation Corps. I replied by telling her about how the CCC was a major part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal during the 1930s and how they did a lot of great work.

Her email got me thinking. While I knew of the CCC, what did I really know about it? And what about the things they accomplished, what were they and are there any remnants still around today?

The CCC operated from 1933 to 1942. Through the course of their existence, three million men aged 17-28 participated and they were provided with food, shelter, and clothing along with a wage of \$30 a month. Each participant lived in a camp setting with up to 200 other enrollees. The camps consisted of tents, lavatories and showers, a mess hall, medical dispensary and a recreation hall.

The CCC provided manual labor jobs related to the conservation and development of natural resources in rural lands owned by federal, state, and local governments. They built roads, bridges, picnic shelters and trails throughout the country. They participated in soil erosion control, planted acres of trees and established forest management practices.

CCC enrollees included actors Robert Mitchum, Raymond Burr and Walter Matthau, baseball players Stan Musial and Red Schoendienst, Light Heavyweight Boxing Champion Archie Moore and test pilot Chuck Yeager.

The program was reduced in scale as the Depression waned and employment opportunities improved but it was World War II that unofficially brought about its end.

What about that work they did? On a national level, the CCC constructed roads, trails, picnic shelters and campgrounds at the Grand Canyon National Park. At Shenandoah National Park in Virginia, they are credited with building much of the infrastructure. And at Acadia National Park in Maine, they built trails and campgrounds.

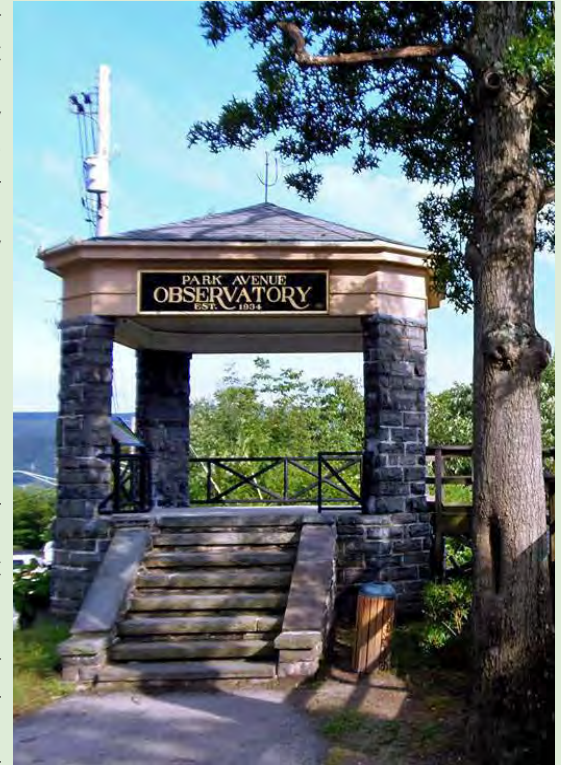
The CCC was very active in our area too. At Bass River State Forest in New Jersey, they built the 67-acre Lake Absegami by damming two streams. While at Voorhees State Park, they built roads, shelters, buildings, trails and planted numerous trees. And at Hacklebarney State Park, they established trails that are still in use today.

The Perkins Memorial Tower and Drive at Bear Mountain State Park in New York were CCC projects. At Harriman State Park they constructed roads, trails, and camps along with a number of lakes including Pine Meadow and Silver Mine.

Their labors at French Creek State Park in Pennsylvania included two dams, group camps, several tent camping areas, beaches, roads and picnic areas. And at Promised Land State Park, they constructed the rustic rental cabins at the Bear Wallow Cabin Colony.

So with all the work that the CCC did back then, what still exists today? Well the lakes they created are still around along with the Perkins Memorial Tower and those rustic cabins at the Bear Wallow Cabin Colony. Also, if you are ever driving on Park Avenue coming into or out of Port Jervis, New York, there is a stone observatory along the Delaware River that they built in 1934 which affords some beautiful views of the area.

In its short history, the Civil Conservation Corps accomplished much, maybe most importantly giving opportunities to young men during difficult economic times. So today just like during the hard times of the Great Depression when so many were unemployed, the idea of putting people back to work in the areas of conservation and service beneficial to the environment is still a great idea. And once again, just like in the 1930s, it should be done on a national level except this time it should be made permanent.

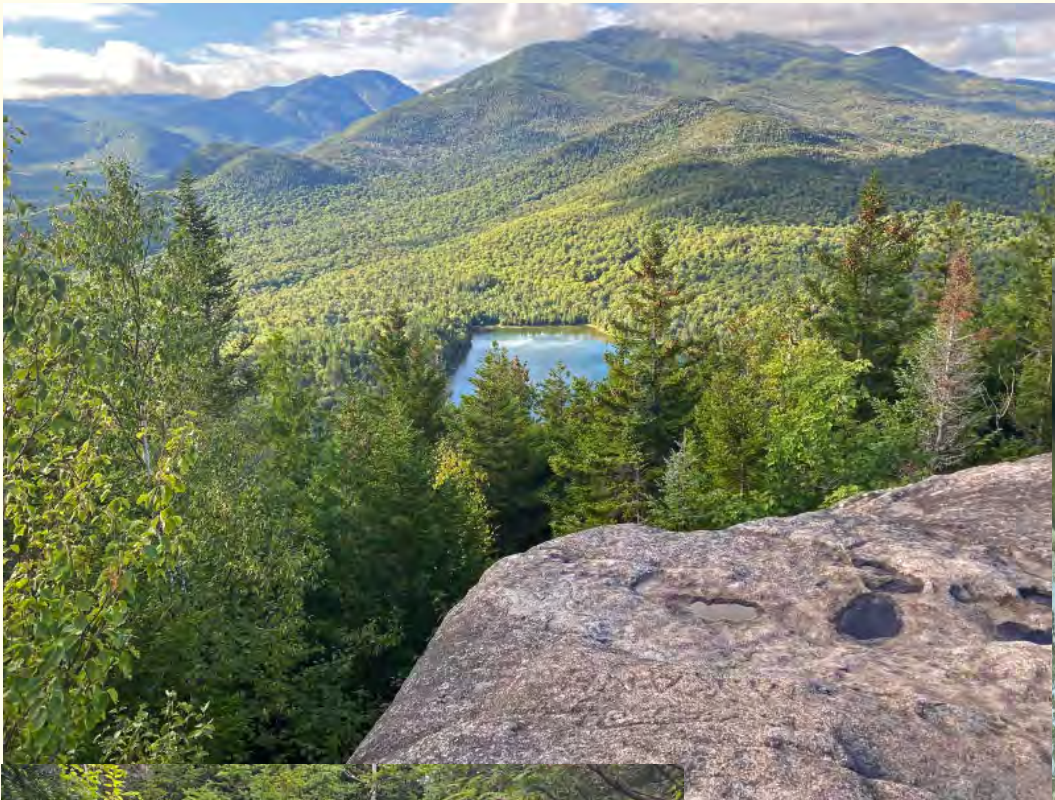


The idea for the CCC originated with Frances Perkins, FDR's Secretary of Labor and our nation's first woman cabinet officer.

The bill creating it was introduced in Congress just 11 days after Roosevelt took office. By Memorial Day it was functioning, and by Labor Day, it employed half a million young men. Half of their dollar-a-day salary was sent home to their families.

Originally limited to unmarried men, it later took in some who had spouses. In addition to putting the unemployed to work on useful projects, it provided jobs to those most likely to rebel, riot and engage in violence, which was not uncommon occurrence in that troubled time.

Much of the infrastructure in our national parks, including roads, bridges, trails and buildings was built by the CCC. The CCC planted an incredible three billion trees. Over its years of operation, it employed nearly three million young men. — EP



## Hiking in the COVID year: Adirondacks 2020

Many people stayed close to home, hiking with their spouses and family members. Others did not let their enforced isolation keep them from bolder adventures.



**Photos by Barbara  
& Jeff Fritzinger**

