**Konnarock Crew Project**

**Wilder Mine Hollow Relocation**

*Joe DeLoach reporting*

Our 1999 Konnarock project was one of the most successful we’ve ever had. We had four consecutive weeks of Konnarock Crew time to work on the Wilder Mine Hollow Relocation, a project to take the Trail away from private land and to eliminate some steep and eroding sections. Four consecutive weeks is not ideal for us, as we tend to have a limited number of volunteers. But thanks to good Club turnout and good Konnarock Crews, we completed the project. It involved almost a mile of new Trail construction including steps, rock cribbing, and a particularly difficult route through a rock cliff in addition to the normal Trail digging. The relocation goes mostly through a rich cove hardwood forest reminiscent of the Smokies, with some very tall tulip trees and nice patches of showy orchids and other spring wildflowers. No more will hikers be walking past signs saying "No Trespassing" and our favorite, "Beware of Shotgun".
Club members who worked a total of 77 person-days or 747 hours on the project, and were bolstered by 10 thru-hikers recruited by Bob Peoples. So, altogether we had record totals of 32 volunteers, 87 person-days, and 824 hours with the Konnarock Crew! Nine Club members worked at least five days with the Konnarock Crew and earned a T-shirt; these included Ed Oliver, the leader with 10; Bill Stowell, Joe DeLoach, Bruce Cunningham, Frank Williams, Bob Peoples, Mary Cunningham, Derrick Stowell, and Darrol Nickels. Many thanks to all the volunteers, which in addition to the above included Carl Fritz, Kevin O'Donnell, Craig DeLoach, Steve Perri, Jim Eikenberry, Steve Banks, Rick Lott, Linda Williams, John Thompson, Steve Falling, Neil Dotson, Dave Nebeth, and Steven Banks plus thru-hikers Trosha, Time, Chuck, Molly Jacobs, Thomas Kornack, Edina, Thera, Caroline, Jeff, and Ben.

The 1999 Multi-Club Meet

Steve Perri reporting

The 1999 Multi-Club meet will be held from September 3-September 6, 1999. This year's event held on Labor Day weekend will be hosted by the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club at Unicoi State Park near Helen Georgia. This provides an opportunity for the southern A.T. maintaining clubs to get together for a weekend of hiking, renewing old friendships, meeting new friends and having fun with people who like to hike and maintain the Appalachian Trail. Opportunities for hiking and other excursions will be available. Saturday night will offer an optional barbecue dinner and entertainment. On Sunday night at 7:30 p.m. the general meeting will be held for a report from each of the clubs.

The cost associated with the meeting is as follows:
$10.00/adult for registration fee (children under 12 are free)
$12.00/person camping fee (children under 12 are free)
$10.00/person barbecue on Saturday (Optional)
Check-in will be on Fri. 3-10 p.m. and 8-1 p.m. on Saturday
Registration Deadline is August 10.
For a copy of the registration or more info, contact Steve Perri of TEHCC (423-349-5091) or Debra Beasley of GATC (404-648-8761) or Van Hill of GATC (770-339-7748).

32nd ATC Biennial Meeting: Radford ' 99

Carl Fritz - reporting

The 32nd Biennial meeting of the ATC was held at Radford University in Radford, Virginia from July 9-16. Helping with Staff functions were Steve Wilson, Steve Banks, Steve Perri, Garry Luttrell, Carl Fritz and Ted Malone. Banks and Luttrell also gave workshops that had standing room only. Almost 1000 members had pre-registered with less than fifty as no shows. Late registration started on Friday at noon and was steady until Sunday. The meeting started on Saturday morning with Robert G Stanton, Director of the National Park Service being the keynote speaker. He had nothing but praise for all the volunteers who work so hard for no pay and sometimes little recognition for keeping the Appalachian Trail open and safe. The meeting also included the formal signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Appalachian Trail in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This MOU describes the specific understanding and working relationships among the six government agencies, the ATC, and the nine volunteer A.T. clubs. This was quite an achievement since Virginia has over one fourth of the A.T. Sara Davis was named an Honorary Member on Monday's Business meeting and several resolutions were presented, voted on and passed. Our Club was responsible for the Workshops, which ran from Saturday until Monday. A special thanks to Ted Malone for spending the last two years planning and coordinating over 40 different workshops offered at the conference. Hikes and Excursions continued all week. The next biennial meeting will be in Pennsylvania in 2001.

Introductory Whitewater School

Mike Morrow reporting
The 28th annual TEHCC/APES Introductory Whitewater School (a.k.a. Canoe School) was held the weekend of May 15th. And even though this was the first school run by a kayaker, things seemed to go as smooth as usual. A total of 12 students finished the school. Six students were kayakers and six were canoers. This is the official count and the first school history that kayakers matched canoers. And the kayakers almost outnumbered the canoers, but one kayaker had to take out after Chestoa rapid on Sunday. Of course, I think this streak of open boater dominance may have been due to the name of the school for the first 26 years. Maybe we should call it Kayak School for 26 years and see how the numbers turn out.

All kidding aside, the school started with lecture and fun on Thursday at Eastman's Lodge. On Saturday, the instruction began at Warriors Path State Park. We then did a stretch of the North Fork of the Holston. Everyone did well and the rookies were even surfing by the last rapid. On Sunday, we ran the Lower Nolichucky putting in at Chestoa and taking out at Big Rock. We had an early take-out set at Sawmill. Most of the students took out Sawmill. The rest of us continued on to Big Rock. As usual, there were many student swims. I stopped counting at six. There was even at least one safety boater swim. At the end of the day all were smiling and talking about how they are looking forward to next year's school.

A big thanks goes to all of the instructors and boaters. Without their help, the school would not be possible. Thanks, Dale & Mary Mathis, Rich Ruhlon, Gary Kilpatrick, John Heffeman, Nathan Coggins, Cory Wells, Wayne Lemon, Jim McDarmot, and Randy Pasqua.

TEHCC Members Complete CPR/First Aid Training

Steve Perri reporting

Several members of the club are now certified in CPR and standard first aid thanks to a grant from ATC. During the month of June several of the club's members signed up for 2 evening sessions to complete the certification course offered by the American Red Cross in Kingsport. So now we are more updated on our training as we are certified for 1 year on the CPR and 2 years on the first aid. Those present for the training were: Steve Banks, Richard Colberg, Ed Montgomery, Joy Pierce, Kathy McDavid, Shannon Stanforth, Steve Perri, Bill and Derrick Stowell.

Scheduled Activities and Trip Reports

Laurel Falls Hike, Saturday, August 14

Leader: Steve Wilson, 239-0456, Rating: Easy to Moderate

The hiking trails leading to Laurel Falls have been substantially improved in the past few years. Some of the improvements are the rock steps down to the falls and the new wooden bridges on the blue blaze trail from Hampton. During this hike, we will explore these improvements while hiking from the Hampton trailhead to the Dennis Cove trailhead. Bring lunch, water, rain gear, and a camera. We will meet and depart from the parking lot between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 8:00 AM.

A.T. Hike: Fox Creek to Dickey Gap (Va. 603 to Va. 650), August 28

Leader: Neil Dotson, 423-245-6105, Rating: Medium

The hardest work for this 8.5-mile hike will be over quickly: an 840-foot ascent of Iron Mt. in the first couple of miles. After that, it's mostly downhill or level, apart from a little climb at the end after a respite at the small waterfall of Comers Creek. This section of the A.T. is south of Marion, Virginia, and just northeast of Mt. Rogers - so the drive is a little under 2 hours. We'll meet at the usual spot (between Burger King and McDonalds in Colonial Heights) for an 8:00 AM departure.
A.T. Hike: Indian Grave Gap to Iron Mountain Gap, September 11

Leader: Steve Banks, 288-2646, Rating: Moderate
This hike starts at Indian Grave Gap, near Erwin. We will travel north on the A.T., crossing Beauty Spot (with expansive views of the surrounding area) and Unaka Mountain, the highest mountain in the vicinity, as well as several smaller peaks before we arrive at Iron Mountain Gap. Bring appropriate clothing for the weather, lunch, and water. Meet between McDonalds and Burger King in Colonial Heights at 7:45 a.m. for an 8:00 a.m. departure. Call Steve at 288-2646 for more information.

Paddling Trip: Nolichucky Gorge
First Timers Trip, August 14

Leader: Dewey Fuller, 764-7340, Rating: III-IV
The Nolichucky Gorge is one of the premier whitewater runs in the southeast with spectacular scenery and class III-IV whitewater. Usually by August the flow is below 700cfs making the run less pushy and more suitable for those doing it for the first time. If you have been doing lots of class III water and feel like taking on something a little more challenging this might be the trip for you. Of course veteran gorge runners are also welcome. Contact Dewey at 764-7340 for details.

Hike Report: Old Timers Hiking Club
C. B. Willis reporting
This was a fun hike for the Old Timers Hiking Club from Hwy 321 south to Laurel Falls. One member of the club, Heuston Fortner, took along loppers and clipped greenbriar and laurel as he hiked. He also took a litterbag and carried the trash back. Heuston should have credit for six hours of trail maintenance work. The trail up the new switchbacks is clear of weeds. However, weeds, including stinging nettles, are very thick for the first 1/2 mile going north on the A.T. from the blue trail in Laurel Gorge. The weeds and laurel are encroaching on the trail. After the first 1/2 mile there isn’t much of a problem. We also observed about 3-4 large blowdowns during the hike. All can be stepped over or easily walked around.

A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Projects

May 16, Trail Maintenance North of McQueens Gap
Steve Banks reporting
Steve Banks cut weeds on the A.T. between McQueens Gap and Abingdon Gap Shelter, and posted two signs - a Foot Travel Only sign near McQueens Gap, and a description sign in the shelter. The shelter and A.T. are in excellent shape. Total: 7 hours.

June 29, Work On Open Area About One Mile Trail North Of Iron Mountain Gap
Ed Oliver reporting
Darrol Nickels, John Thompson, Frank Williams, and Ed Oliver from TEHC, Ben Lawhon from ATC and fourteen scouts and scout leaders from Nashville, Tennessee helped improve the open area at the old orchard about 1.2 miles trail north of Iron Mountain Gap. The objective of this work is to return this area to an open area. The old apple trees will be left in the field but the other trees were cut and removed so that it will be easier to mow this field. Total: 73 hours.

July 3, Trail Maintenance Watauga Dam to Vanderventer Shelter
Bill Stowell reporting
Ed Oliver, Frank Williams, Derrick and Bill Stowell cut weeds from Watauga Dam Road to Vanderventer Shelter. As this is a wilderness area we had to use scythes. Derrick and I hiked to the shelter and started cutting back the weeds. The weeds were pretty bad, in some places they were shoulder high.
Total: 40 hours.

July 6, Campbell Hollow Road Relocation
Carl Fritz reporting
Ed Oliver and I flagged the temporary relocation from High Point through the recently purchased Forest Service tract to Campbell Hollow Rd. This will eliminate the road walk and hopefully will be close to the trail's permanent location. Total: 20 hours.

July 6, Cut Weeds South of McQueens Gap
Steve Banks reporting
Steve Banks cut weeds from McQueens Gap south to the top of McQueens Knob, on a very hot and humid day. Total: 7 hours.

July 7, Campbell Hollow Road Relocation
Ed Oliver reporting
John Thompson, Bob Peoples, Derrick Stowell, Darrol Nickels, Frank Williams, and Ed Oliver worked on the relocation at Campbell Hollow Road. This relocation will move the Appalachian Trail off of Campbell Hollow Road and onto land recently purchased by the Forest Service. We were able to complete about half of the relocation. We plan to complete the relo on Saturday and open it at that time. This relo will eliminate the last significant section of road walking on our section of the trail. Total: 54 hours.

July 9, Annual Maintenance Section 17
C. B. Willis reporting
Sandra Perry, Dick Lewis, Carl Kincheloe, Neil Ottenfeld, and C. B. Willis completed annual maintenance between Iron Mt Gap and Low Gap. The group performed all the necessary weeding, brush and laurel trimming, and renewed and obliterated unnecessary blazes. Carried out bag of litter from Cherry Gap Shelter and dug out spring to improve the flow and pool. We carried in electric drill with screws and installed 15 more screws in the picnic table at the shelter in order to assure it would hold up. Regret the broom we had left has apparently been removed but the long handled shovel is on its third year. No journal could be found and suppose we should wait until the spring if through hikers have already moved on.

We were very, very lucky in that the large, dead magnolia tree at the front of the shelter has fallen since our last trip. We had argued about cutting the tree down but decided it could stand and provide homes for wildlife for another 20 years. Also we doubted our ability to fell the tree and avoid the shelter and the table. Well, the wind did its job well between the table and the shelter, a hand span from the table and a foot or two from the shelter. After we trimmed the downed tree, it makes a fine bench sufficient to hold numerous hikers, right at the fire ring.

The erosion for 1/2 mile or so south of the shelter into Low Gap is getting worse and we will have to do something ASAP. We will discuss this problem and report later. If Ted happens to visit to check the shelter or anyone from TEHC is in the area, your advice would be appreciated.

Total: 35 hours.

July 10, Complete Campbell Hollow Relocation
Ed Oliver reporting
Bill & Derrick Stowell, Frank Williams, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, and thru-hiker "Preacher" completed the relocation at Campbell Hollow Road. This relocation moved the trail off of the road and eliminated the last significant road walking on our section of the Appalachian Trail. The relocation is about a mile in length and replaces about 1/2 mile of road walking and 1 1/2 mile of trail walking in the boggy section at Jones Branch. We need to go back and cut out a few logs that are across the new trail. We also need to install a post trail south of Campbell Hollow Road to make the trail route more obvious. The relocation is the approximate route that the trail will follow long term. There are a few short sections that will change after the Forest Service has a chance to do the necessary approvals. These modifications will reduce the grade in two places.
Total: 54 hours.

**July 13, 1999, Campbell Hollow Relo & Cut Blowdowns Trail South Of Watauga Dam Road**

*Ed Oliver reporting*

Frank Williams and Ed Oliver installed a post with a blaze on it trail south of Campbell Hollow Road. We then cut out the trees that were across the new relo at Campbell Hollow and improved the trail across the wet area about 2/3 through this relo. We then drove to Watauga Dam Road and cut out all the blowdowns between Watauga Dam Road and Watauga Dam. Total: 16 hours.

**To submit an article for the newsletter, contact:**

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