

July 9, 1983 Saturday (1155.1 mtg)

I walked down the road for just a ways before intersecting with the AT along the banks of the Potomac River where it paralleled for a short while before beginning the climb out of the river valley to the crest of South Mountain in Maryland. Near the crest was a rocky outcrop known as Weverton Cliffs which provided a good view back along the Potomac to Harpers Ferry nestled between the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. The climb was not as bad as I thought it would be based on the profile shown on the edge of the map. That is the problem with the profiles, due to each map having slightly different scales, anyone not paying attention to this may be misled concerning the elevation change.



Looking back toward Harpers Ferry from Weverton Cliffs.

Five miles farther along the ridge, I encountered a huge stone gateway that marked the entrance to Gathland State Park. The park was a memorial to Civil War news correspondents. While at the park I met three other thru hikers. I had left Tom since he had been picked up by a friend for a few days of rest and relaxation. The three hikers at Gathland, Pete, Roger, and Vince were all headed to Maine as I was. I did not stick around the park for long. From there I boogied on seven miles to Dahlgren campground that featured a showerhouse situated right beside the trail. I did not take a shower, although I probably needed one, but figured what good would it do. As hot as it was getting in the afternoons I would be saturated in sweat within a few miles. I suppose I should have taken one; however, since just a few tenths of a mile down the trail I stopped in at the Old South Mountain Inn, a fancy establishment that had served past dignitaries and presidents from as far back as the revolution, many of which had their photos on the wall



Potomac River from Weverton Cliffs.

as a remembrance. The sign did say "Food and Drinks for All", or was that "Food and Drinks for Al?" I had a crab sandwich, fried potato slabs, and buttered crackers. I topped it all off with red raspberry cobbler al a mode! While there, I met a man who knew where Highland, Illinois was located. The reason he knew was that he played the organ. He played the large organs like the ones in churches that are built by Wicks Organ Company in Highland, Illinois. The meal and service was excellent. They treated me as if they did not notice the grizzly look and smell achieved by spending almost two



Washington Monument.

months on the trail. My bill came to \$8.50.

Two miles farther up the trail I passed through Washington Monument State Park. This was the first monument to George Washington. I spent only enough time there to snap a picture and check the place out before continuing on. Three miles farther on I crossed over Interstate 70 on a footbridge just for hikers. I watched as the cars went speeding along, wondering where they were all going. I thought if I got a ride from one of the drivers heading west, I might be able to ride all the way back home and be dropped off five miles from my home. I thought that would not be a good idea. Life here was good, what more could I ask for? My thoughts then turned to spitting off the bridge onto unsuspecting cars.... I waved and moved on.

My camp for the night was just beyond the interstate crossing. Actually only four tenths of a mile past. Pine Knob Shelter was a bit too close to the road. It was showing signs of abuse or heavy

use, whatever you want to call it. Several of the floorboards were missing. Enough to make room for one more person if it were there. I was surprised to find that Pete, Roger, and Vince were not there, but Greg Gilbert and about three others were. Two of the three others decided to move on, but John, a 33 year old Vietnam veteran, stayed behind waiting for his friend Zack, who had taken a run to the store nearby. John was a bizarre guy, in my opinion; however, he did have some interesting and useful points. He was the first one that I had met that grew his own sprouts while he hiked. He carried his own alfalfa seeds and grew them inside a small water bottle. Fresh greens are always tasty on the trail. I inquired about how I could become a seed grower, and he explained the process to me.



Entrance to Gathland State Park.

Eventually Zack returned from his hitch to town to get the "essentials" which consisted of cigarettes and liquor. He also brought some food items for John and himself. While transferring his macaroni into a ziplock storage bag, the seal at the bottom gave way and the dried pasta bounced all over the shelter! I did not eat dinner since I had such a good and filling meal at the Old South Mountain Inn earlier, and I also needed to conserve food during this stretch anyway. I probably could have rounded up all the stray pasta and had enough for supper. John and Zak went up the trail a short distance and partied with some other folks most of the night with the "essentials" that they had purchased.



White Rocks, Maryland area.





July 10, 1983 Sunday (1133.2 mtg)

What a day today! Interesting and entertaining! I said good-bye to Greg and John, and his sleeping friend Zak as I left Pine Knob Shelter on trail that proved to be nothing really spectacular, but sometimes quite rocky. Met several people heading south. That was good, as long as they were not going my way. About ten miles down the trail I reached an area known as Buzzard Knob. Although I never mentioned it in my journal, I scribbled a note in my data book next to the entry identifying it. Only one word was written: "Sucked!!!" That summed it up.

Anticipating a good view from High Rock, I continued on past one shelter that I thought was Devils Race Course Shelter, and then past the one that actually was Devils Race Course Shelter before I took lunch. I even passed up a huge black snake that would have fed several hikers. I stopped only for a picture of the reptile. Not until I had gone fifteen miles and reached High Rock did I stop for lunch. High Rock was populated by quite a group of people, some who were just waiting to jump from the cliff. This particular spot was known for hang gliding, and today was a great day to fly, or at least watch in my case. Off to the side were parked several hang gliders waiting their turn to launch. I watched as one guy jumped and glided safely to the patchwork ground far below. They seemed to judge the wind by watching the trees below for some action in the leaves caused by advancing wind. I ate some crackers and cheese as I watched the gliders. Danny, one of the pilots, gave me a cold orange juice. I must have spent about two hours up there watching and waiting for the next pilot to launch. I talked with several people while on High Rock, they were just as intrigued by long distance hikers as I was with hang gliding.

The trail dropped off the edge of the High Rock ridge following a rough and rocky trail over a recent relocation that took the trail off of the road down to Pen Mar Park; however, the trail still passed though Pen Mar park after about two and a half miles of descent. I was surprised to find the park packed with people and a big band in a nearby pavilion playing dance music. I wandered over to the concession stand and purchased a coke, an ice cream sandwich, and a sloppy joe sandwich. At a public payphone, I tried to call Dave Szabo, but got no answer. While I was enjoying my meal, an older guy that I had seen on High Rock tapped me on the shoulder and told me to come with him to their picnic table. They offered me lots of food and drink from their Sunday afternoon picnic outing. There was fresh fruit, fruit salad, fried chicken, carrots, cheeseburgers, cookies, Mountain Dew, lemonade, potato salad, etc. Their hospitality was astounding. They had seen me at High Rock eating my crackers and cheese and thought that was not enough. They raced down the road after they saw me begin my descent to the park and decided to invite me when I had reached the park. The food was great and I even did some polka and jitterbug dances. I must have turned peoples heads when they saw me with my hiking boots and shorts, and my scraggly beard as I danced with Linda. A good time was had by all that day. Before I left they loaded me down with extra goodies for the evening. I also walked out of the park with a gallon of water in my pack as I left Maryland and entered Pennsylvania. I walked another couple of miles carrying that gallon of water to Mackie Run Shelter. The word was out that the shelter had no water, and that the drought in Pennsylvania had dried up many of the springs along the trail.



Hanglider launching platform.



View from High Rocks to the patchwork valley below.



Hanggliders parked and ready to go.



Party at PenMar Park.



July 11, 1983 Monday (1113.1 mtg)

This morning I had only one bag of oatmeal and some sprouts I had gotten a few days ago from John. I ate the sprouts on bread with peanut butter. Soon after beginning the day I passed by Antietam Shelter and then lost track of the blazes. The shelter was located in an area called Old Forge Park. I noticed some guys nearby who were cutting down some trees so I decided to ask where the trail was. I knew it had been relocated along this section, but I was seeing greyed out blazes, and knew I was on the old route. They assured me that the trail was up the road, so I thanked them and followed the road a bit. Thinking I should have seen the trail by now, the road made a "y", I retraced my steps back to the men and asked again. They said that if I kept going on that road I would find a sign. I never really trust locals giving directions, but I went back and eventually found the sign. Once back on the trail I ran into some hikers and knew I was on the right track after that.



View from Chimney Rocks.

I took a short side trip to an area known as Chimney Rocks, but I was not impressed with the view. It was panoramic, but nothing really breathtaking. Stopped for a drink at Raccoon Run Shelters, and then continued on for another couple of miles to reach Calcedonia State Park where a grocery store was supposed to be located directly along the trail. This turned out to be not true; however, there was a concession stand and a public pool tempting me to cool off in the afternoon heat. The vendors were asking \$1.75 for a cheeseburger, and \$.75 for fries. The pool required \$1.00 for a swim. I decided to pass up this opportunity

and moved on to Birch Run Shelters. The miles in this area were either shorter than most, or the terrain was conducive to easy passage as I traveled the nine miles to the shelters in less than three hours! Over three miles per hour. Now that is what I call hiking! After twenty-five miles I arrived at the shelter and took the rest of the afternoon to relax and bring my journal up to date. I was about five days behind. I soaked my feet in the cool stream in front of the shelters, and whipped up a large supper of Lipton's sour cream 'n chives noodles and sauce with two bags of ramen noodles thrown in for extra bulk. I also added some cheese that I had received from Linda back at Pen Mar Park. I began seeing some new sights while in Pennsylvania today including



huge ant mounds with basal diameters of about three feet, and white rhododendron with green splashed in the center. Another interesting change was the use of twin log cabin type shelters that were painted black and white rather than just one shelter as usual. I gathered a little wood to help keep me occupied, expecting to have a fire later. Spent the night by myself.



Twin Zebra shelters at Birch Run..

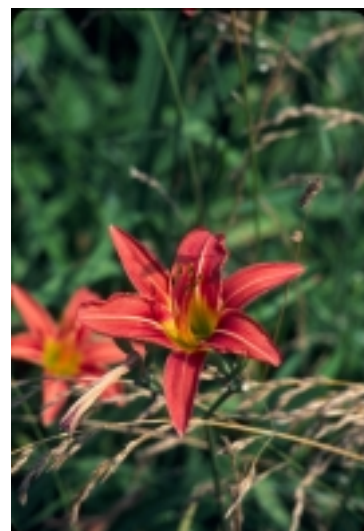


Giant ant mounds became a common sight.



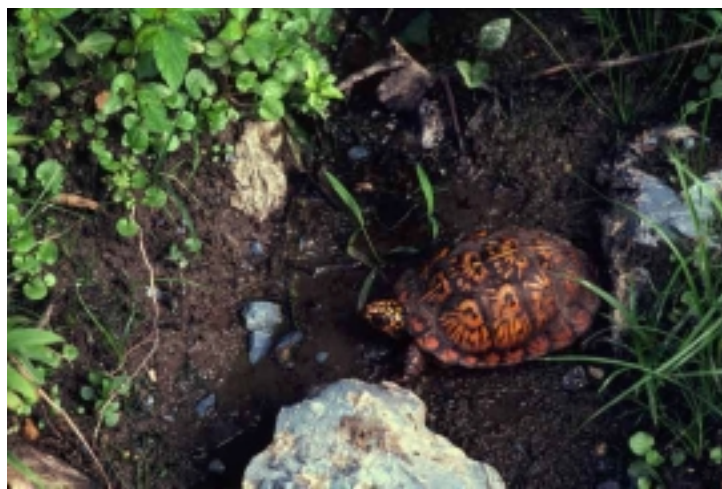
July 12, 1983 Tuesday (1088.8 mtg)

The temperature was cool this morning when I awoke, but after ascending just a bit I found out that all the cool air was just hanging in the depression near the shelter. I soon found out what the weather was really like - extremely warm. I hit a sudden rise in temperature as I went up. I cruised the nine miles to Pine Grove Furnace State Park in about 2 ½ to 3 hours and met several hikers going south along the way. At the park there is a store which is famous as being the home of the half-gallon club, a half gallon of ice cream that is. Prospective members can buy a half gallon of ice cream from the store and if successful at eating the whole carton in one setting, a piece of oak tag construction paper and a magic marker are rewarded to the new member so they can make a sign to hang in the store proclaiming that they were an official member. I looked through their selection and ended up with a half gallon of Black Raspberry ice cream for my attempt. I sat out on the front porch of the building as I began to eat in the heat. I must say that the heat has a lot to do with the successful completion of the snack; the heat melts the ice cream making it smooth and easy to scoop out and swallow. If I had to eat the whole thing while it was frozen solid, I would not have completed the challenge, but "on this day July 12, 1983 Gonzo! ate and became an official member of the Pine Grove Furnace State Park Half Gallon Club," as it stated on my sign. I talked with some other people after eating, one who bought me an A & W Rootbeer, which I also consumed. I called everyone at the butcher shop afterwards to tell everyone the good news: as far as I could figure it, I had just completed half of the Appalachian Trail, as well as becoming a member of the Half-Gallon Club. Maybe I would make it after all. It seemed possible to me now, although I knew deep down I could make it.



Tiger Lilies.

I moved on to my goal for the night, which was to cover the distance to Moyer's Campground for camp tonight. I set off on the twelve-mile hike from the store to the campground with a half gallon of ice cream and a can of rootbeer in my stomach, but did not feel too bloated to make me feel like I could not cover the distance to my planned stop. I took a short break at Tagg Run Shelters just over seven and a



Box Turtle.

half miles past Pine Grove Furnace. Luckily the terrain featured little elevation change, 500 feet at most over several miles. After the initial climb up Piney Ridge, the trail was downhill for several miles. I thought of playing Monopoly as I crossed over a set of railroad tracks owned by the Reading Railroad Company. The trail took me up and over Trent Hill before I located the side trail (road) to the campground. At this point I had to make a choice between the new shelter and the campground. There seemed to be some controversy over the new shelter that was being built near

Moyer's Campground. I believe that Mr. Moyer was not happy that the shelter was being built there since it would decrease his business by hikers. Either that, or it was being built on his land through eminent domain or something. Perhaps it was some other landowner who planned on charging hikers to stay. Whatever the problem, I decided to spend the night at the Campground since it had showers, a little store and also showed movies at night. The charge was \$1.50 for a tentsite, shower usage and admission to the movie. If you wanted to use the pool you would have to pay the \$7.50 regular site fee. I chose to do my swimming in the shower. I washed my shorts and shirt while I took a long shower, and later relaxed in the back of the store while watching a VHS video showing of "Hanger 18" about a UFO crash coverup by the US Government. It starred Darren McGavin, the actor from "the Night Stalker" and was a refreshing distraction from the usual trail life.



*Pine Grove Furnace General Store,
Home of the Half Gallon Club.*



*Getting the last bites of a half gallon of
Black Cherry Ice Cream..*



Pine Grove Furnace.



July 13, 1983 Wednesday (1067.9 mtg)

This morning I followed the blue-blazed trail back to the Appalachian Trail from Moyer's Campground. I had almost twenty-three miles to cover today, the last fifteen or so would be the infamous Cumberland Valley roadwalk. The heat of the summer was not in my favor, although I suppose it could have been worse. I guess I just needed a drink to prepare myself for this when I arrived at Whiskey Springs a short two miles down the trail. I "cameled" up at the spring and set off again. In a few short miles I reached Welcome Hill, and began the minor ascent before beginning the descent to Cumberland Valley. The bridge over Yellow Breeches Creek signalled the beginning of the long blacktop country road that would lead me across the populated farming valley. There are a few good things about the roadwalk such as the fact that there would be no hills to slow me down. I should be able to get across the valley in well under six hours. I would hopefully have to stop roughly half way through to visit "the Ice Cream Lady" if she was at home. I noticed some raspberries growing along the road as I began the first part of the walk and stopped to pick a few to eat. Not too far from there I came across one of the few shade trees along the roadway that was known as "Halfway Sycamore." It is one of the largest sycamore trees that I had ever seen, and the canopy provided much needed shade from the afternoon sun. It is known as "Halfway Sycamore" because at one time this tree was roughly the halfway point along the entire Appalachian

Trail. It is still close, but I put the halfway point back at Pine Grove Furnace State Park according to the data book for this year.



I continued along the pavement, now beginning to soften in the sun's rays. Eventually the heat waves glimmering off the black pavement gave way to the little house that I was looking for. I stepped off the road and ventured to the front door to see if anyone was home. A pleasant young lady opened the door and told me to go around to the back of the house and she would be out in a few minutes. I went back and settled down in a chair under the little shaded oasis provided by a patio umbrella under which I sat and received my ice cold lemonade followed by what she was famous for: any hiker stopping by and chatting for a while received a bowl of ice cream. That was just what I needed after the first part of this blazing hot road walk. She was interested in anything that I had to say, and probably could have told stories she had heard from other hikers for hours. She gave information to me about the upcoming trail in the valley such as the grocery store a few miles farther along was no longer in business. I could not stay long, the heat of the afternoon was not getting any cooler. It was probably the hottest

part of the afternoon, but I went on my way after thanking her and photographing the legendary "Ice Cream Lady."

My boots were sticking to the tar like I was walking on flypaper as I trudged along the remaining section of the road walk. I took the road walk around "Poison Ivy Creek" rather than attempting the suspended cable crossing over the water. The poison ivy was so thick there was no way to cross without touching it. I did not want to get Poison Ivy at this time, and register entries had noted that the two cables were covered at the ends with the poisonous plants. The road was an acceptable alternative, and was much safer in all respects; however, I would have liked to have tried the cable crossing just to see if I could shimmy across with my feet on one cable and holding on with my hands on the other just like in the army. Yeah right! At the end of the road walk, before the final ascent to Darlington Shelter on the side of Blue Mountain, I picked up a gallon of water to haul to the shelter, where there was no water. I spent the remainder of the afternoon lying around the shelter in the blistering heat of summer. I was entertained by a register entry left by a hiker whose trail name was "Fuzzy Jim." He apparently had bought some Generic Cheerios at the last grocery store and found them to be unpalatable. Fed up with inferior products, he had tossed the remainder of the "O's" onto the floor and indicated that he would never again buy imitation Cheerios. Fuzzy Jim was also the author and artist who penned the comic strip that showed up in virtually every trail shelter register along the trail that kept many of us in good spirits, and kept us going to find out what adventures "Anglehead" would get into next. I was gaining on him and possibly would catch him soon. Tomorrow would be a short day of only eleven and a half miles into the town of Duncannon, Pennsylvania.



Halfway Sycamore along the infamous Cumberland Valley Road Walk.

Bonnie Shipe, the Ice Cream Lady at the gate to her oasis in the back yard.





July 14, 1983 Thursday (1045.2 mtg)

Getting hotter. No need to hurry today with short mileage into Duncannon. As long as I get there in time for the Post Office. The only reason to hurry is to get out of the heat. There was only one climb today and it was 700 feet in about three quarters of a mile up the side of Cove Mountain before following the crest for about four miles and then dropping down into the Susquehanna River Valley.

I stopped for a break and to check out Thelma Marks Shelter along Cove Mountain. It was not a real nice shelter, but adequate. I met Rich at the shelter. He was waiting there for his mail to arrive in Duncannon. I suppose that he had run out of money and therefore could not afford to stay in town until he got his money in the mail. I had learned my lesson in '81 not to cut your money supply so close. Carry most of it with you in travelers checks and everything will be all right.

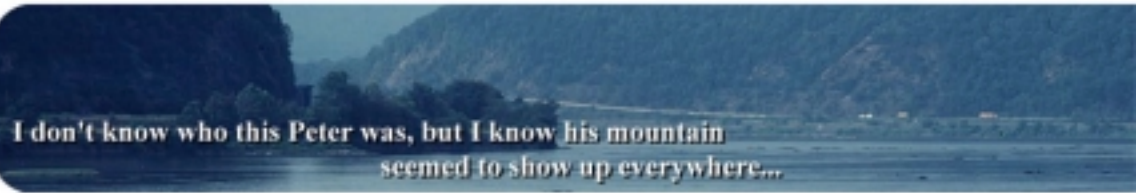
At a lookout point along Cove Mountain known as Hawk Rock, I stopped to drink in the view of the confluence of Sherman Creek and the Susquehanna River. From the lookout point the trail dropped about 700 feet down to Duncannon situated along the bank of the Susquehanna River. It was common knowledge to most hikers that the place to stay in the town was at the Doyle Hotel, an old hotel with an old time atmosphere. You can't beat the price of \$7.42 for a small room with a bed, desk and chair, and access to a community bathroom where a traveler can take a hot bath in the deep, old claw foot bathtub. The place was kind of run down, but interesting. There were weekly and monthly rates available and there were residents who had taken advantage of the deal. At certain times, or days, the bar downstairs offered .25 cent drafts. I stopped at the post office, but there were no packages for me as I had expected; however, there were a few letters. Nice to know someone was thinking of me. Ate at the local sub shop where I met the first hiker that had begun his Appalachian Trail adventure on a date later than May 15,

and had caught up to me. His name was Mark. He was an interestingly strange kind of guy. He must have been on a real mission to put the kind of miles on that he had been doing to catch me. Back at the hotel I spent the evening in the community entertainment room watching reruns of "Leave it to Beaver" and other shows.



From the crest of Cove Mountain, I could see Sherman Creek running toward the Sesquahanna River.





July 15, 1983 Friday (1033.7 mtg)

Today marked the two-month anniversary of the start of my hike. I am over half way to my goal, yet it still seems so far away. I was now in Pennsylvania, known for its' legendary "Rock Monster," the one that eats your boots and cripples many hikers. The whole section of trail in this state has such a reputation of being one of the nastiest parts of the Appalachian Trail. With this in the back of my mind, and the prospect of the heat wave that seemed to be settling in over us and drying up all the springs along the trail, I was not looking forward to continuing. Regardless, this morning I was up and ready to go - first stop, the post office to check one last time for mail. I was disappointed to find, once again, that there was no package for me. I gathered the letters and post cards that I had written, and boxed up some unneeded stuff to be sent home, and proceeded to send them off. Just as I was on my way out, the postmaster caught my attention and handed me a package that had just arrived and been sorted. It was a package from Dave Szabo! I quickly wrote him a card, mailed it, and stepped out into the morning heat. I attempted to refresh myself by buying a farewell to Duncannon A & W Rootbeer, but had to settle for a Frostie Rootbeer instead.

The trail first crossed the Juniata River on PA 849 and then the Susquehanna River on the Clarks Ferry Bridge, turned right and began the climb up Peters Mountain. I don't know who this Peter was, but I know his mountain seemed to show up everywhere just like Brushy Mountain in Virginia. The initial climb to the crest was the only really bad part. Once I reached the crest the trail followed it in a nearly straight line with little elevation change for many miles according to the profile map. It was a hot, tough climb out of the valley, and then seemed to become a jump from boulder to boulder for a while. So much for the level easy grade along the crest. I moved on to Earl Shaffer Shelter, which was only nine miles out of Duncannon, where I had intended to spend the night. I met many hikers there including Julie and Eric, and Claudia and Frank. I figured I would need some water, so I began the journey to the spring down a side trail near the shelter. The guide book says that water is difficult to obtain at this shelter. They

were not kidding, I went down, down, down, over very rocky trail to find the spring which surprisingly was a very good one. The climb up was just as bad and I probably drank the majority of the water I gathered to replace the water I lost in sweat.

I sat around in the heat until about three o'clock when it suddenly hit me - there are too many people at this shelter! I packed up my gear and took off hoping to make Rausch Gap Shelter this evening. What was I



The trail went over two bridges over the Juniata and Sesquahanna Rivers before climbing Peter's Mountain toward Earl Shaffer Shelter.

thinking?! It was another 17 miles to that shelter, and I was starting at 3 pm? That gave me roughly five hours to cover those miles before darkness began to set in. I boogied and boogied. I began by traversing the crest of Peters Mountain for the next six miles. A nasty drop-off from that mountain of almost 1000 feet brought me to the floor of Clark's Valley, where I crossed PA 325, and then began the ascent up part of Stoney Mountain and further on to follow the crest of Sharp Mountain for the remainder of the day. I just hiked and hiked, with little to no stopping. I even passed up a big rattlesnake on the trail near the Yellow Falls Village site, but it seemed to ignore me as it slithered southward on the trail and I continued north on my quest for Rausch Gap Shelter. I couldn't take the time to stop and chat, I just said "Hi" as I passed. I could sense the impending nightfall as the light level began to dim. I had just under five miles to go.

I arrived at the Shelter, also known as "the Halfway Hilton" at about 8:15 pm or so to find Fuzzy Jim, Pete Headon, Tim, Bruce, a female hiker named Terry, and Mike a schoolteacher from Allentown who was the only non-thru hiker of the bunch. Too tired to cook, I ate granola and drank lots and lots of water. The shelter was known as the Halfway Hilton since it was "roughly" halfway to Katahdin from Georgia, and it sported a nice rock patio with an aquaduct that brought the spring water right in front of the shelter. A nice touch. The company brought a sense of joviality to the place as there seemed to be continuous laughter while the evening drew to a close. The night air did not provide much relief from the afternoon heatwave, and despite wearing myself out on my mad dash to the shelter, I slept little, mostly because the raccoons on the rampage around the shelter looking for food kept me awake. Twenty-six and seven tenths of a mile total for the day, plus a tough trip to the spring at Shaffer shelter. Caught up with a fun group of hikers. Mike, the local, had so much fun, he told us that he would meet us at the Allentown Shelter in four days and bring party supplies.



There was not much light left as I pulled into Rausch Gap Shelter after 27.7 miles.



July 16, 1983 Saturday (1006 mtg)

The trail dipped into the valley between Sharp Mountain and Second Mountain, crossing the later in a gap along the ridge, and then descended toward a small grocery store in a spread out, small town called Green Point. We had only traveled four miles this morning before arriving at the store, but since it was there.... We all stopped and bought something. I ate a pint of Tin Roof ice cream, a flavor I had never experienced before. I described the taste as "real good." While we were at the store I experienced why this group had been traveling together for a long time, they were nuts - but sure knew how to have a good time. Everyone broke out their cameras and began taking pictures of each other - It was "Camera Wars!" I drank an A&W rootbeer before continuing on toward Swatara Gap, where the Swatara Creek cuts through Blue Mountain.



Typical trail hikers at Ron's Grocery. Bruce, Terri, Pete, Tim Platz, Fuzzy Jim.

about 45 - 90 degrees with their edges ready to cut into the side of your boots. The trail seemed to be poorly maintained today. The rocks were one thing, but the vegetation posed another threat - the threat of having your exposed thighs and lower legs cut and scraped by the numerous briars that were growing over the footpath and had not been cleared. My legs experienced the sting of the initial contact and then again as the salt in my sweat ran down my legs during the heat of the afternoon. This seemed like the longest and hardest day yet. Hot and muggy. After twenty-one miles I arrived at an intensely cold, spring fed pond at Schubert's Gap, where I washed my sore legs and soaked my feet in the freezing water. There was a rope suspended over the water that people were swinging out over the water and jumping in. Upon entering the water, their immediate reaction was to exit as fast as they could. The water was just that cold. I set up camp a little below

After crossing under interstate 81, the trail crossed the creek on an old iron bridge before beginning the nearly 1000 foot ascent of Blue Mountain. The ascent lasts for about two miles and then levels off and follows the crest for the remainder of the day. The Pennsylvanian rocks encountered here I would describe as numerous, covering the trail almost everywhere, either as large rocky piles of boulders, or beds of loose, small flat slabs ready to slide from under your feet, or at times protruding from the ground at an angle of



Pete Heddon uses the same kind of camera as I.

the dam, and was comforted by a cool breeze that came off the pond and over the dam to the "hollow" where I was located. I believe today was the day that I met "The Three Doberman's," a pair of hiking female nurses that were accompanied by their Doberman Pincer. There was no way that these women could be approached along the trail without being detected by their dog. It did not discriminate. Anyone getting near would set off a volley of barking that would alert them of any potential threat.



Camera Wars at Ron's Grocery.



View from Round Head, PA.



July 17, 1983 Sunday (984.8 mtg)

This morning I started off early to get the majority of hiking in before it got too hot. I took a slight roadwalk which used to be the old AT in an attempt to avoid some rocks and brambles. Either the lack of rough terrain was too unusual, or the toll of the last few days had caught up with me as my knee began to hurt a bit while walking. I stopped at Neys Shelter for a short break after a little over ten miles and drank most of my water figuring I could pick some up at the spring in about two miles. I was totally wrong about that assumption. The spring was dry when I got there, and must have been dry for a while by the looks of it. I cruised on and began the steep descent off of Blue Mountain down to Port Clinton, Pennsylvania, a thousand foot elevation change. And what a downhill it was! My knee began to feel the pain along the descent. Immediately upon reaching the river, I took off my pack and dove in. Oh boy was it hot! Not the river of course, it felt real nice. After cooling off with a swim, I crossed the Little Schuylkill River and found a nice park owned by the United Church of Christ to relax in. There were some older folks camping in the area and I struck up a conversation with them ending up with an invitation to a meal of hot dogs, macaroni salad, and corn on the cob. What a treat! The Engles were their names, and I eventually just called them mom and dad - they treated us just like family. The rest of the hikers finally arrived and the Engle's loaded us all up and drove everyone to the IGA in Hamburg. Later in the afternoon a nice thundershower rolled through, but we remained dry in the open air pavilion even though the wind was whipping through the area and blowing the rain into the structure. My left knee, which started hurting a little this morning, really started to hurt on the downhill to Port Clinton, I guess I better let up a bit.



Open air pavillion that we used as a shelter for the night.

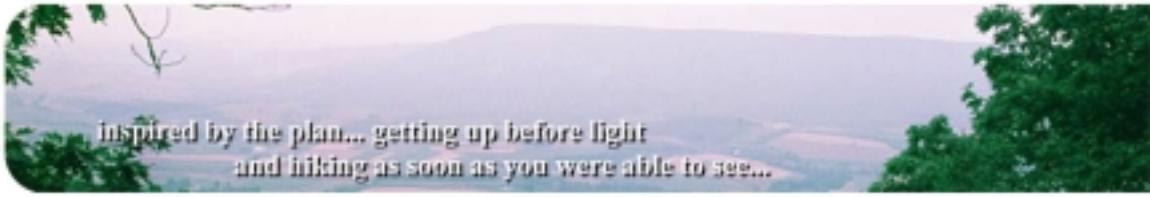


July 18, 1983 Monday (967 mtg)

Got up this morning with the intension of hiking nine and a half miles to the Pinnacle, which was mentioned in the guide as "a must see, as it is the most worthwhile and scenic viewpoint along the AT in Pennsylvania," where I intended to "dry camp" at the area posted as "No Camping." From the moment we woke up, we could tell that it would be a scorcher. We took our time getting going, but up the side of Blue Mountain I went. After a mere five miles the heat was getting intense and it seemed the lazy days of summer had arrived. I pulled into Windsor Furnace Shelter and waited for the rest of the bunch to arrive. Since we were set to meet Mike the schoolteacher at Allentown shelter just 16 miles away, I decided that this was as far as I needed to go today. Why not stay at the "furnace shelter" and experience the full heat of the summer. The rest of the hikers elected to do the same thing. The deciding factor for Fuzzy Jim was when he discovered on the map that he could walk down a nearby jeep road, hitch into town and bring back some beer. I put in my order for some rootbeer. Off he went. During the time that we had - all afternoon - Tim decided to excavate the fire pit that was full of ash that had become mud after the rain yesterday afternoon. He carefully removed most of the ash, uncovering some rocks beneath, and built a nice circular enclosed burning area with the help of a few of the other Pennsylvania rocks lying around - all ready for the next campers that might need a little fire for warmth. We certainly did not need any. Tim was also a great fan of cooking his meals on an open fire. Most thru hikers use some sort of stove, and I think he had one too, but liked building fires. I typically only used a fire if I felt that I needed to conserve gas. I carried a one liter aluminum fuel bottle and tried to avoid filling it up too often since most stores only sold gallon cans. Unless there were other hikers around needing fuel, the rest would go to waste, or be left for the next hikers that came by.

Fuzzy made it back from the store carrying sufficient beer to go around, but no rootbeer! He claimed that he went to three different places but no one had any. A & W can be difficult to find at times. No big deal. Just after he returned, Two other hikers arrived. Marcel, or "Rhode Island Red" as he was known, and Mark, the hiker who had caught up to me at Duncannon. They decided to stay also. The shelter was full, but the atmosphere was once again jovial. Fuzzy started a new register at the shelter after finding the old one had gotten full. Since he was the originator of the register, he decided to make the rules a little different for this one and listed the rules right up front: "this is a register unlike any other, it is a register for writing "slick, sick, shit." None of that regular stuff like how many miles you had done, where you were headed, no self pity, etc." I would like to have read it when it was finished.

I heard stories about Mark, and how fast he was hiking. I saw his three inch diameter bundle of stick matches that he carried to start his fires, and therefore don't doubt the story about how he was hiking along one day when smoke began emerging from his pack. He was streaking along the trail, bouncing so much it resulted in his matches rubbing together and self igniting. If it was not true, it is a good story. I do think that carrying matches like that was not a good idea. One bic lighter was sufficient for me.



July 19, 1983 Tuesday (961.6 mtg)

Inspired by last night's announcement by Mark and Marcel's plan of getting up before light and hiking as soon as you were able to see, we all decided to do the same in hopes of hiking the majority of the miles in the morning and then relaxing as the afternoon heat set in. We got up at 4:30 am and I set out with Mark and Marcel, but soon Marcel and I dropped back as Mark moved out. My knee was still giving me some problems, so I began popping aspirins in large amounts in hopes of relieving the pain. Marcel said his ankle was hurting as well. Was the rock monster responsible for this? Would it claim another two victims? Time would tell.

Three miles beyond the shelter, I stopped at Pulpit Rock, which provided a good view, but for some unknown reason, I passed on the view from the Pinnacle two miles later. The Pinnacle was only 80 meters off the trail, it wasn't that far. The heat must have gotten to me and impaired my judgment. The trail began a long five-mile descent toward the town of Ekville from that point. Just after the Ekville road crossing, I encountered a rattlesnake in front of a local ladies residence. I killed the snake, which she was grateful for, and cleaned the reptile using water from her garden hose. She gave me a bottle of rubbing alcohol to put the skin in to preserve it until I was able to send it home.

The trail then went back up to the crest of Blue Mountain, and followed it once again. I passed on the side trail to Hawk Mountain, a place I would like to see during the hawk migration, and continued on to Allentown Shelter. I bopped into the shelter early as expected, and walked the long, but fortunately not steep or too rocky path to the spring and stocked up. I filled the water sack that I carried so I would not have to return tomorrow morning before setting out. I fried up the snake and its large size allowed everyone to have a piece. That evening Mike showed up and brought a case of beer, and then decided that he would meet us again at the next shelter tomorrow, with a real picnic. A large group of youngsters came by and camped somewhere near the spring. Much later some southbounders stumbled in accompanied with the sound of clanking bottles of beer, and woke everyone up. They had been drinking at the Bavarian Inn that we would pass in the morning.



Preparing to skin the rattlesnake.



Unknown viewpoint in Pennsylvania.



“Rhode Island Red” takes a break among the numerous Pennsylvanian Rocks.



July 20, 1983 Wednesday (944.2 mtg)

Of course, with the early rising that we were doing now to beat the heat, the Gambrinus Restaurant (Bavarian Inn) was closed as we went by this morning five miles beyond Allentown Shelter. I found the huge beer bottle out front particularly interesting, and would have liked to have eaten breakfast there. Not far from the Gambrinus, lie a shelter that I remember as the worst shelter along the trail. I think it was partially due to its' proximity to the road and easy access. I don't even think I checked the register at this shelter after seeing the huge mound of trash piled up behind the shelter. The sight turned my stomach and the smell was awful. I went back to the trail and continued on. Today featured a lot of boulder hopping. In the area around Bake Oven Knob the rocks were especially numerous. One consolation was the abundance of blueberries that were growing along the trail free for the taking. Free food is always appreciated.



It is obvious what this place is known for.

Typical rocks in Pennsylvania.

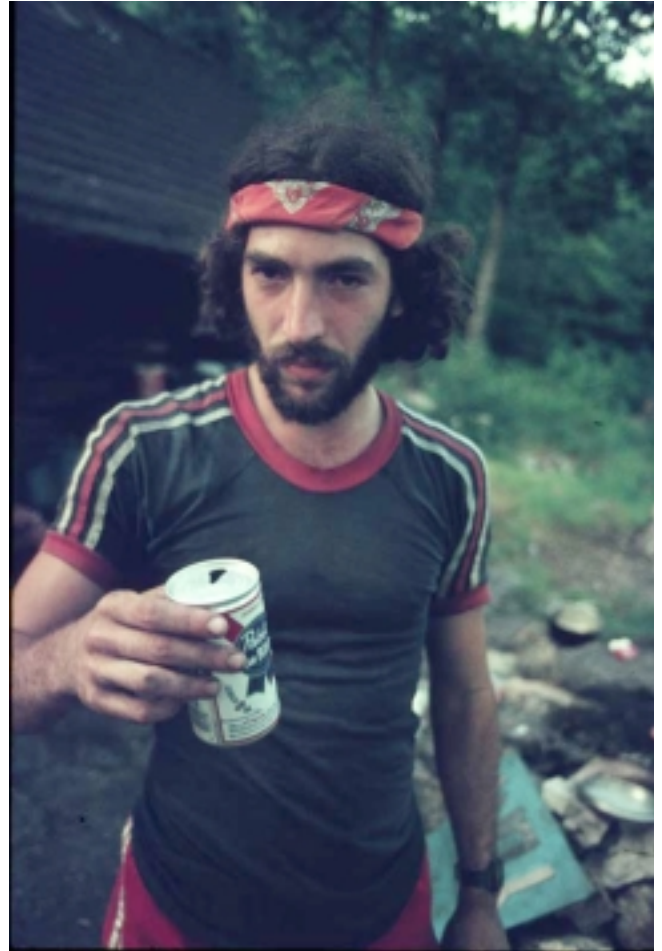


I ended my day at George W. Outerbridge Shelter after an 18.6 mile day. This stopping point not only allowed me to be at the selected spot for the big party tonight, but also logistically put the steep downhill and infamous climb out of Lehigh Gap as the first thing on the schedule tomorrow morning during the coolest part of the day. This evening Mike and his friend John packed up enough food to feed an army! Of course the heaviest part would have to be the case of beer, and the six pack of rootbeer (thank you!). They also packed in a dozen hamburgers, a dozen hot dogs, and all the buns etc., cheese, chocolate chip cookies, and two and a half gallons of vanilla fudge ice cream! What a party. If you were not full after that it was your own fault. We could use all the energy from this food for the big rocky climb tomorrow.



Results of having a shelter too close to the road.

Fuzzy Jim with his favorite pastime, other than hiking, of course.



Mike and his buddy brought up a feast of all feasts.



July 21, 1983 Thursday (925.6 mtg)

We woke again at 4:30 am and I hiked off with Marcel and Paul. The trail dropped 500 feet in just over a half of a mile on its way down to the Lehigh River running in the valley below. We followed the path as it made a huge hairpin turn to bring us into position for access to the bridge that crossed the River. Although the ascent was steep, I had expected worse, and the only really tough part came just as we began to join the crest. The trail became rough and nothing but rock. Apparently the zinc industry located below in the valley had produced so much toxic pollution that the vegetation of the area has been killed off, leaving just a pile of rocks. Not just rocks, but BIG ROCKS. The reward came as we were treated to a great view into the valley. As if the real trail was not tough enough, I decided to do a little bouldering along the side of the trail to make the final ascent a little more of a challenge.

The trail leveled out on the crest and followed along a jeep path for several miles over a burned out area. Except for the initial



In the Gap.

descent and ascent in

Lehigh Gap, I hiked along the crest of Blue Mountain for sixteen miles before reaching Leroy Smith Shelter where I took a siesta before moving on to Wind Gap. The trail along the ridge was mostly level (with rocks of course) except for the dip at Little Gap.

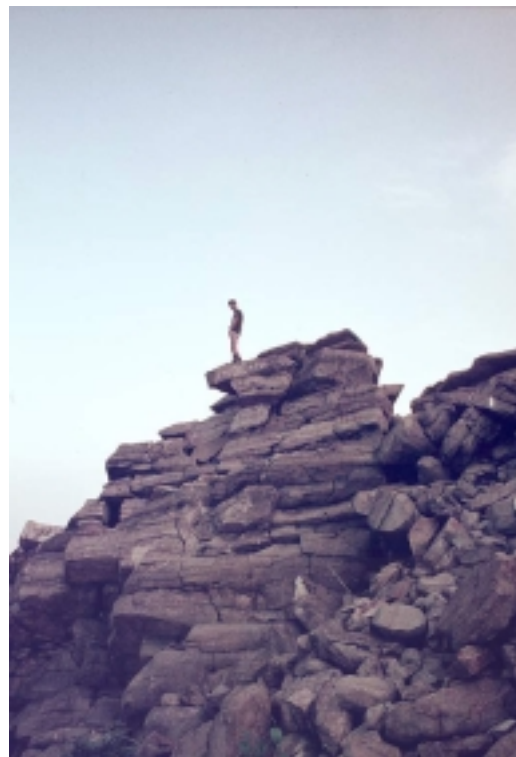
At Wind Gap, the trail crossed PA 33 near a Motel. While we were hanging around the Motel, we became aware of the darkening of the sky, so I, Marcel and Pete decided to take a room for \$22 total between us. Got a nice shower and were able to stay out of the rain that fell later. The next shelter was still almost nine miles farther and I had already traveled twenty-one miles. I think that is enough



I opted for a little tougher climb to the left of the trail.



I made it to the top!



Rhode Island Red decides to irrigate the barren surroundings.



Lehigh Gap to the West.



The bridge that we crossed over the Lehigh River.



Paul prepares to drop his pack as Tim takes a break.



Pete Headon tops out.



Fuzzy Jim listens to his radio with taped up earphones to help motivate him.



Terri gets to the top and immediately drops her pack too.



The motel in Wind Gap.



July 22, 1983 Friday (904.7 mtg)

From Wind Gap to my next supply point at Delaware Water Gap, the distance was almost fifteen miles, an easily reachable destination as my goal for today. Once again, the trail continued along the fairly level crest of Blue Mountain. For posterity, I had to stop and take a picture of the rocks along the trail near Wolf Rocks. Near the Kirkbridge Shelter I saw a nuclear power plant off in the distance with its cloud of moisture hovering over the typical nuclear shaped stack. Today provided more views than most of the rest of Pennsylvania. I seemed to be taking pictures often. I shot several photos from Mt. Minsi before descending toward the town of Delaware Water Gap. Along the descent I came across a spectacular view of the area known as the Delaware Water Gap, named because the Delaware river cuts through the mountains on its journey to the Atlantic ocean.

I found the church-run hostel located in the town, took the load off and then proceeded to the post office. I received a letter from my old hiking partner, Jim Triplett, my friend Dave Giger, and a post card from Amy Brown, a fellow Zoology major from SIU. I also had a package from my mother waiting for me to open. I took care of other business including buying a second Nalgene bottle with a wide mouth to allow me to more easily fill at springs that were low, and also allow me to carry a little extra amount without having to fill up the water bag. That evening Marcel, Terri and I took the bus to a "fancy" Italian restaurant, where I experienced for the first time a dish called manicotti parmesan.



Somewhere near Wolf Rocks.

Back at the hostel I wrote post cards, and afterwards called and talked with my brother and sister-in-law, and Janis Giger.



In the distance, a nuclear reactor can be seen.





Delaware River in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.



Mount Tammany with its uplifted rock.



July 23, 1983 Saturday (904.7 mtg)

This morning I still had chores to do. I gathered up all the items to be sent home such as the snakeskin, exposed film, a couple of small Pennsylvanian rocks, and a bottle opener that I had found while in town with a local advertisement on it. Terri and I rode the local bus to the town of Stroudsburg to buy groceries since the stores there had a better selection. While there, I also found a knee brace that I purchased to give me a little support for the knee that continued to give me trouble. We threw some clothes into the machines at a nearby laundromat and went to find something to eat. Terri, being quite health conscious, found a natural foods restaurant where I had stir fried veggies and a peanut butter fudge sundae. After eating, we felt a sense of urgency to return to the laundromat. We quickly removed our clothes from the dryer, rushed to the bus stop and caught the ride back to DWG just in time. The bus only ran about every hour or so. We had been lucky.

Having decided to take the day off and let my knee rest, I took part of the afternoon to explore the area around Delaware Water Gap. I walked along the river looking for a good place to swim, but decided not to swim. I found some bright red berries of the variety that I had seen on my 1981 journey while in Virginia. At that time I had never seen any like them before, and was not sure they were edible. They looked too good, somewhat artificial, and not at all like the red raspberries I was used to. I had since then found out that they were indeed edible, the locals called them wine berries since they were so juicy. I picked at least a pint of them to add to some vanilla ice cream later.

At the hostel there is a bulletin board where notes can be posted. This is also the place where Roger Brickner has a sign up sheet for "reservations" to stay at "Roger's Appalachia Cottage" in New York, a few days hike out of Delaware Water Gap. In order to keep from overcrowding, he has had to resort to a reservation system. I had not met Roger yet, but I had seen signs back in Georgia during my trip in 1981 that said "although you might be cold and hungry now, Roger's Appalachia Cottage is only 1230 miles away." He was known for giving free supper and lodging to any hiker who had traveled the entire distance along the trail to his home near Greenwood Lake, NY. I estimated when I would be at his doorstep and filled in a slot on that date. Other information on the board included a list of the shelters coming up and a description of how the water source at that location was. I recorded the list in my data book to help me plan where I "should" be able to pick up water.

For supper I prepared and ate fresh, fried egg sandwiches, and for dessert, the berries and ice cream.



July 24, 1983 Sunday (885 mtg)

It was unusual for me to have even considered taking a day off yesterday. Up to this point, I had only taken two days off, one in July when my parents came to visit me in the Shenandoah's, and the other when Jim and I got stuck in Pearisburg on a Sunday and had to wait for the mail on Monday. Staying too long in town makes me kind of nervous and I feel like getting out and hiking. I waited for everyone else for a while this morning, but no one seemed to be stirring so I took off by myself. The sixth state, Pennsylvania, was now officially completed as I walked through Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area and prepared for the ascent into New Jersey. A fog hung in the air as I started across the Delaware River. Passing up through a parking area I caught a guy and a girl doing "something" in the passenger seat of their car - this is Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area - I suppose you could consider that recreation. I continued on through the park. I stopped at the last water fountain and filled my water bottle before the ascent up the ravine of Dunnfield Creek on the side of Mt. Tammany that would take me toward a body of water known as Sunfish Pond, a remnant left from glaciers during the last ice age. The pond was described as being one of the nicest ponds on the trail. I enjoyed the clarity of the water, and I even took a swim to help cool me down, but I did not see anything out of the ordinary about it. Not having been in the east before, I had visions of New Jersey having toxic waste dumps and such, so I guess considering its location - in New Jersey - it was fairly impressive. Now I know that this stereotype is not accurate at all, and the reason why the state is known as the Garden State.

Past the pond, I noticed that the trail had become quite rocky. I guess I could not expect the rocks to just stop in Pennsylvania, but I suppose I had visions of some relief. Five miles beyond, I reached Camp Mohican Road, a dirt road that Pete had said he would use to bring up some party supplies this afternoon. I waited for his arrival. Paul arrived via the AT, then Rhode Island Red, and then Pete came up along the road. He was carrying A&W! Not only that, but ham and cheese and tuna salad for sandwiches, and chocolate cake! At that point the rain began to fall, so we quickly pushed on approximately two miles further to Mt. Mohican Shelter, two tenths of a mile off the trail on a blue-blazed trail. We got rained on most of the way, but somewhere along the ridge the sun came out and we were treated to a wonderful rainbow stretching across the valley and ending on the ridgecrest at the junction of the A.T. and the side trail to the shelter. Brushy trail conditions impeded our progress to Mohican Shelter, but we eventually arrived to find a shelter with canvas sides rather than the traditional wood or stone; however, the inside was dry. We could hear the yelling of children as they participated in some activities below at one of the summer camps located in the valley below. A short 11.6 mile day out of Delaware Water Gap.



In "The Gap" just before the climb into New Jersey.



Sparkling waters of Sunfish Pond, New Jersey.



A storm began to brew along Mohican Ridge.



A rainbow leading to Mohican shelter.



July 25, 1983 Monday (873.3 mtg)

Catfish Fire Tower practically loomed over the shelter, but I did not realize it until I arrived there this morning to watch the sunrise. If I had known that it was a mere half mile from the shelter I might have even went there to watch the sun set last night. If I had checked the guide, I might have even camped out in the tower. The morning was heralded by the sounds of reveille that could be heard coming from the valley below as the campers were awakened for the morning's activities. Today's hike was not extremely memorable, as I have no notes from the area between Catfish Fire Tower and Culver's Gap at US 206. At Culver's Gap there is a nice bakery that most

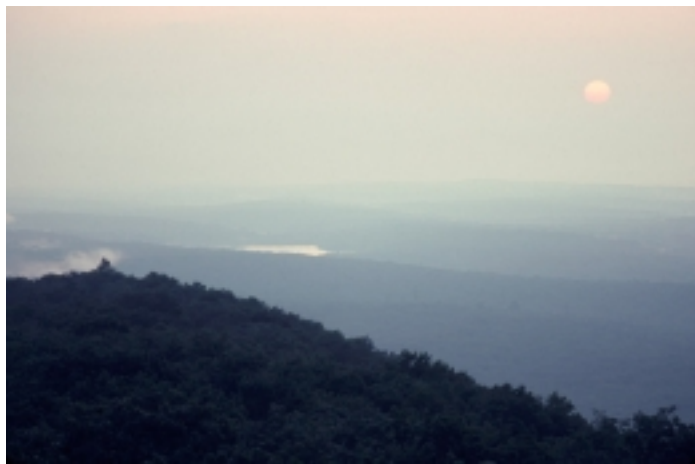
hikers stop for baked goods. Worthington's supplied me with a turkey sandwich and miscellaneous danish and donuts. After a short break at the bakery, I proceeded along the trail along the road that leads to the summit of Sunrise Mountain. A half mile past the bakery the trail turns off of the road and enters the woods to begin the climb up to Kittatinny Ridge, where the trail followed the crest for about six miles to the summit of Sunrise Mountain and the pavilion located there. Although the area is restricted to camping, I and a couple of other hikers sat around waiting for the sun to set before settling in for the night. The sunset from Sunrise Mountain was one of the best that I had ever seen. The clouds that were



View from Catfish Firetower.

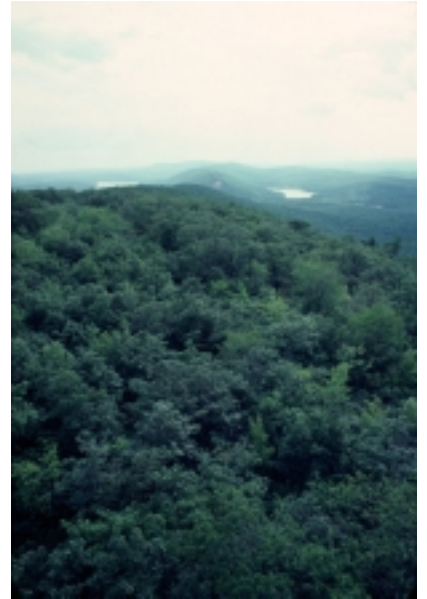


A section of New Jersey trail.



Sunrise from Catfish Firetower.

to the west were just right to provide interesting forms, and add a sense of life to the scene. I saw Apollo as he raced across the sky in his chariot. As the sky darkened, we waited for all the other public who had driven up to the pavilion to leave, and then we got out our sleeping gear. The night air was cool and there was only a slight problem with mosquitoes in the early evening. I had to carry all of my water up the mountain for the evening meal, breakfast the next morning, and the beginning of the next section, but the view at sunset was well worth the effort. We drifted off to sleep sheltered under the pavilion.



High Point Monument in the distance.



Pavilion on Sunrise Mountain.



Clouds reminded me of Apollo riding across the sky.



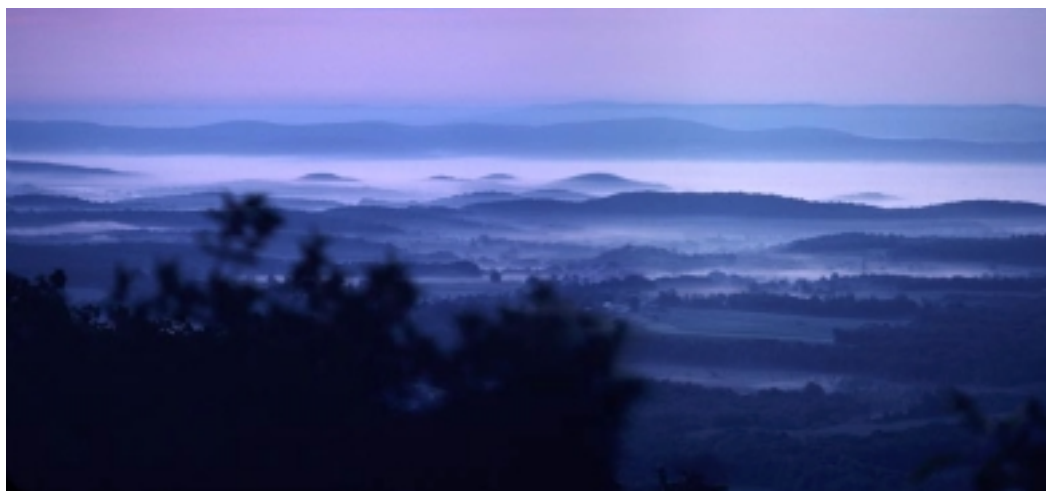
I could not tell whether anyone was actually looking in my direction,
but just in case, I turned around, bent over, and dropped my shorts...

July 26, 1983 Tuesday (851.7 mtg)

There was no "sunrise" from Sunrise Mountain this morning, the atmosphere was somewhat hazy, and the fog was rising from the valley below. But at this time of the year the sun came up behind a group of trees that blocked direct view anyway. The scene was impressive none-the-less and had a calming effect on the spirit. We packed up our gear before anyone could say we had spent the night at the pavilion, and headed north on the trail. About six miles farther, I took the quarter mile long side trail to Rutherford Shelter to obtain water from the spring that had not gone dry there yet. We had entered the boundaries of High Point State Park, and occasionally we were treated to a view of the monument that is located on High Point Summit. I climbed up a wooden viewing platform near the monument, and could see the people at the base of the monument as they walked around, and noticed there were some of those binocular telescopes mounted there for the viewing public. I could not tell whether anyone was actually looking in my direction, but just in case, I turned around, bent over, and dropped my shorts to allow them to see the moon rising over my waistband. Within the hour I found myself at the monument as I took a little side trip to check out the facilities. I did not use the telescopes to see if the moon was rising. High Point is, of course, the highest point in New Jersey at just over 1600 feet. I ate lunch while at the monument at a small concession stand located just below the monument.

The expected terrain after the monument did not seem to match the profile shown on the back of my map for the area after High Point Monument, perhaps the trail had been relocated since the printing of the maps, or the scale was so wacked out that it threw me off.

I secured a quart of ice cream while passing by the town of Unionville and then continued along the long roadwalk past the sod farms to Liberty Corners. Just before leaving the roadwalk, I got some water from local residents before the hike up Pochuck Mountain. They told us there was a lake near the summit that would make a nice camping spot, so off we went in search of the lake. We never found the lake, but the search had taken us a couple of miles beyond where we had expected to be for the night. I camped in a small clearing next to county road 565 as I recall, and had the company of at least one other hiker that I can remember. Those extra miles put us farther along toward Rogers' cottage, where I was scheduled for tomorrow night.





The valley to the East of Sunrise mountain later in the morning.



Highpoint Monument from the observation platform where the moon was rising.



Cornfields with rocks .



generally clear trail today until nearing Greenwood Lake
where a little rock climbing became necessary here and there...

July 27, 1983 Wednesday (827.6 mtg)

A three-mile road walk greeted us this morning before a super uphill followed by a trek through a swampy area and up and down slight rises. I found a fruit stand a quarter mile down a road that I had learned about through the grapevine recently. They had a formidable selection of fruits and vegetables as well as other supplies. Saw another rattlesnake today. Generally clear trail today until nearing Greenwood Lake, where a little rock climbing became necessary here and there. I arrived at the side trail to Roger's Cottage around three o'clock, turned right, and followed the steep descent down to the cottage.



Greenwood Lake

Roger was there ready to greet us as we arrived and identified ourselves. He and other hikers had painted a "to scale" profile of the entire length of the Appalachian Trail that had little hiker silhouettes marking the last known location of any hiker that had sent a post card to him as they progressed toward New York. Now that I had arrived, My little man was moved to the spot marking Roger's cottage. A feeling of accomplishment came over me as I could literally see how far I had traveled over the past seventy-four days. Liquid refreshments filled the thirst void created from the afternoon hike, and the hunger was taken care of at dinnertime with a meal consisting of spaghetti and steak. More than the maximum

number of people allowed to sign up back in Delaware Water Gap showed up this evening, and Roger did not turn them away. Eight instead of six people showed up. As a result, the steak dinner was split into more portions than expected and I felt like Charlie Brown as the platter finally arrived at my place and all that was left was a bone with a few scraps of meat on it. Luckily there was spaghetti, and coffee cake for dessert. We talked about our hiking experiences and watched slides from Roger's trips on the AT. He was hiking the Trail in sections and would continue this year somewhere in Maine.



*Rodger Brickner and
his cottage on Green-
wood Lake.*





I had no idea how far off the trail we were going, but we all had a craving for pizza so we piled in and off we went...

July 28, 1983 Thursday (812.4 mtg)

Last night we all decided that a breakfast time commencing at 7:30 am would work for everyone, giving us all enough time to get where we were headed that day. I strategically changed seats for breakfast, which included cheese scrambled eggs, sausage, and tea. I had planned on only traveling 13 miles to Little Dam Lake, where I intended to set up camp along the shore somewhere. Breakfast took much longer than expected so we got a late start, but with the little mileage that I needed to do, we just lazed along the rest of the morning and stopped for numerous breaks. The trail seemed to have a lot of little ups and downs over exposed rock projections. The Eastern Pinnacles, and Cat Rocks, both of which were 15 - 20 foot climbs (part of the up and down area) provided good views over the Greenwood Lake Valley. Everyone was in need of water by the time we reached Little Dam Lake, and since I don't drink out of anything other than a spring that I feel comfortable with, we all moved on to the Old Orange Turnpike where there was good piped spring just down the road a half mile - but it was worth it.



Cat Rocks area.

While at the spring, a guy offered to take me, Tim, Marcel, Paul, and John to Monroe, NY where there was a Pizza Hut located. I had no idea how far off the trail we were going, but we all had a craving for pizza so we piled in and off we went. It seemed like we went over ten miles or more just to get to the town, and I began to wonder how we would ever get back. But our first order of business was eating. I had the salad bar and ordered a medium pan pizza for myself. The others did pretty much the same. I ate two large helpings of salad, and all but two slices of the pizza. After everyone was

finished I suggested that we go over to the nearby gas station and see what kind of ride we could find. I figured we could talk someone into a ride easier than flagging a moving vehicle down. We begged a ride from a lady and her daughter in a pickup truck with a camper shell, and she agreed to give us a ride. She got directions from the attendant at the station; however, they were not entirely correct. We started off in the right direction, but soon missed the turnoff. We were soon on our way somewhere else. Tim tried to tell her where to go, but she did not take our advice until we knocked on the window from inside the camper and indicated to turn around. We turned around and headed back. Evening began to arrive and the sky became darker. All of a sudden we noticed a police car behind us and the lights began to flash. We all thought that we were violating some law by being in the back of the truck, but after stopping, found out that her license plate was unable to be seen. The plate had previously fallen off and been placed in the back window of the shell, but had fallen half way down obscuring the majority of the letters. What a relief! No ticket or anything. We continued toward the trail. I was really surprised at how well the lady took the additional stress that we had imposed upon her.

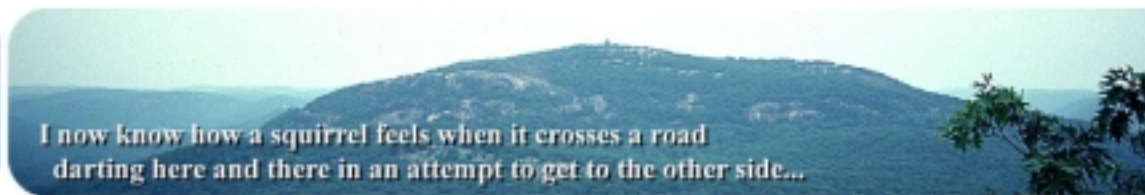
Back at the spring where she dropped us off, she even offered us a cup of goat's milk yogurt that she had made. I was willing to try something new although the others did not seem too interested. We thanked her for the ride and the yogurt and began the ascent of Arden Mountain as dusk snuffed out the light of day. Marcel and Paul chose to stay somewhere by the spring, but the real men went for the night ascent. The last section to the summit was possible only with flashlights, and as soon as we hit a high point near the summit, we picked out the flattest ground around to lay our sleeping bags down. There were rocks projecting everywhere, and the only spots we found were just big enough to lay on and nothing else. I found a depression on a flat rock that looked inviting only with the help of my two inch thick pad. Good thing we did not have to set up our tents, there was just not enough flat area. Luckily there was no rain this evening. I had enough water, I had carried over one gallon of water from the spring where we had been dropped off. A good adventure today, but scary thinking that we might have to hike all the way back to the trail from Pizza Hut.



Cat Rocks area.



A pond in an area of little water.



July 29, 1983 Friday (797.6 mtg)

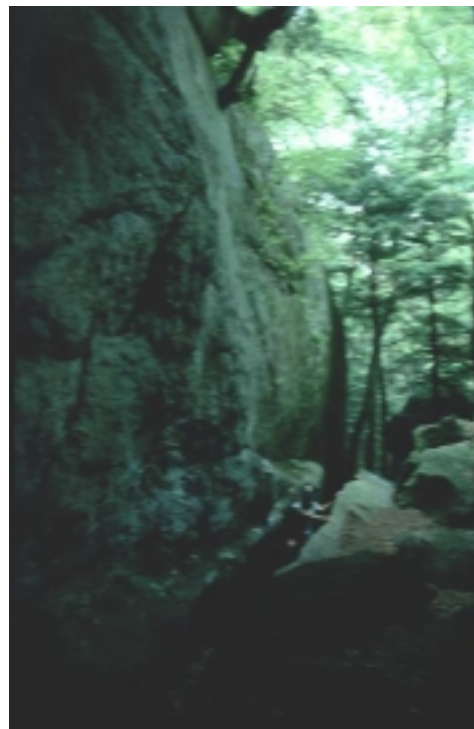
I was up at 5 am this morning, and wondered if Marcel and Paul had gotten up earlier and hiked past us while we slept. I doubted that they had. The trail dropped off Arden Mountain and then crossed NY 17 and immediately afterwards we encountered the toughest road crossing on the trail - the NY Thruway Crossing. Three lanes going in one direction and three lanes going in the opposite direction. No crossing guards, no crosswalks, just cars and trucks whizzing past in a blur one after the other. I now know how a squirrel feels when it crosses a busy road darting here and there in an attempt to reach the other side. There was no choice but to make a mad dash across the highway, pause in between and sprint across the next set of lanes.



Entrance to the "Lemon Squeezer".

Harriman State Park begins soon after the successful crossing of the Thruway. There had been some recent relocations in the park and we all agreed that the trail was wandering here and there for no reason. Tim commented that the trail crew must have given a paint brush to a "retard" and given instructions to go make a trail. I described it as "mindless meandering." The Lemon Squeezer was fun. It reminded me of "Fat Man's Squeeze" at Giant City State Park in Illinois, although there is no way that anyone

could go through Fat Man's Squeeze with a backpack. The park featured many deer that were rather tame. There was no water at any of the shelters. That included West Mountain Shelter. It had a great view of the Hudson River Valley, but the pond nearby was dry. While at the shelter I discovered two cans of corn and some marshmallows. I gave one can to Tim and ate the other. I laid at the side trail entrance until almost 6 pm before deciding the heat had diminished enough, and moved on toward Bear Mountain in hopes of getting water for the morning. The ascent of Bear Mountain involved some steep climbs, but the worst section was not very long. We found the observatory at the summit closed, but we spotted a water fountain nearby and were grateful we had chosen to move on. A slow drizzle of precipitation began so I set up my tarp off of the main summit where I hopefully would not be discovered, but provided a good view to the river below. I laid out on the rock outcropping until about 1 am when the drizzle returned and I ventured back under the tarp for the remainder of the night. For supper I had prepared a dish of Spanish rice that Terri had given me, boosted with a package of ramen noodles. I



Through the Lemon Squeezer.

topped it all off with chocolate pudding for dessert. I managed to get stung by a bee today as well.



Bear Mountain.



Hudson River from near West Mountain Shelter.



Bear Mountain observation tower.



July 30, 1983 Saturday (778.4 mtg)

Got up early this morning and headed away from the summit to avoid being caught stealth camping. At the base of the mountain lie Bear Mountain Lodge, a fancy building that I did not feel comfortable visiting in my hiker garb. The lodge was an impressive structure, and I marveled at the architecture as I passed by. The trail soon crossed the highway and entered a small zoo. I had arrived too early and it was not open yet. I walked the road around the zoo, and found a sign nearby that reminded me of my hometown: Highland, IL. I had five miles to hike today to reach Greymore Monastery, my goal for the day. With that in mind, and the morning just beginning, I decided to walk down the road to the town of Fort Montgomery to utilize the post office. I sent a few post cards to various people including Chuck Winchell, a hiker I had met in 1981, and one to Grandma and Grandpa Strackeljahn. Outside the post office there was a fund raiser bake sale. I bought some cookies for the road and ate some even before I hit the road back to the trail.



Bear Mountain lodge.

I crossed the Hudson River on the Bear Mountain Bridge, a toll bridge that used to cost hikers 10¢ to cross, but this year they had ceased collecting the fee. The crossing marked the lowest point along the Appalachian Trail, being 64 feet above sea level. Anthony's Nose rose abruptly on the opposite side of the river. I followed the trail up the side of the nose, but chose not to take the side trail to the tip for some reason. I am sure the view would have been magnificent. I was too excited about going to the monastery I suppose, but arrived at NY 9 and the entrance to the facility by noon. I had to wait until four o'clock before

being allowed to check into a room. I spent two hours in a nearby Bavarian Inn to take up the time, which seems ridiculous - I could have hiked on and covered many miles that day. But Greymore Monastery was an institution on the trail, a "don't miss" kind of place. It was the place where hikers were welcomed and allowed to spend the night in a private room, do laundry, shower, have dinner and breakfast, and not have to spend any money! How could I miss this?

Around two o'clock I walked up to the monastery and chatted with one of the friars for a while. Just before 4 pm, Tim, John, Marcel, and Paul arrived. We all selected our rooms and were able to get cleaned up before the 5:30 meal. Bruce, Terri, and Eric rolled in just as dinner was being served, and were unable to clean up for the meal. Every day of the week they have bountiful meals with various menus of home cooked items. One day of the week they feature cold cuts. Of course today was the day



for cold cuts! I made the best of it by eating large amounts of the various cold cuts and cheese. One particular friar seemed to be in charge of the hikers, Father Boscoe I think was his name. He continued urging us to go back and have some more food. He did not want us to go hungry. I certainly was not hungry after all the sandwiches and desserts that I consumed.

I spent the remainder of the evening making phone calls to my parents, Jim, Glen, and Dave Szabo. Back in my room, I moved my bed closer to the window, which I opened to allow the breeze to enter and blow over my body.



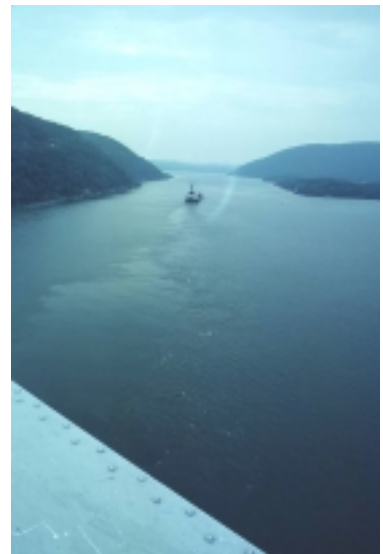
Bear Mountain Bridge.



Walkway and road to cross the Hudson River.



Hudson River Views.





July 31, 1983 Sunday (770.9 mtg)

You would have thought that after such a large dinner last night I would not be able to eat much this morning, but I managed to get down seven bowls of cereal, with at least four cups of milk, apricots, eggs and ham, many pieces of coffee cake, and two cups of orange juice! Left with Terri at about 8:30 am. I soon left her in the dust and reached Canopus Lake in Fahnestock State Park where there was a swimming area in the local lake beside the trail. Did not really swim, but just kind of sat down and reclined in the shallow water to cool me down. Although it was lunch time, I didn't really eat - I was finally full from breakfast.



Trailside register with the Kool-Aid Wino signature.

From there the trail was easy and I soon found myself at Ralph's Peak Hikers Cabin, a building more than a shelter, that I would spend the night at tonight. It was three o'clock and I had traveled 18.8 miles, a more respectable distance than yesterdays six miles. Upon arrival I was offered a beer! What a welcoming. I declined and took a soda instead. The members of Ralph's Peak Hikers were there this Sunday and were having a party for any hikers that happened to come by. Lucky for me. I had water-melon, fruit of various kinds, cookies, pretzels, pudding, etc. and later ice cream after they took me to the store just down the road. The place even featured real beds to sleep in. The other hikers

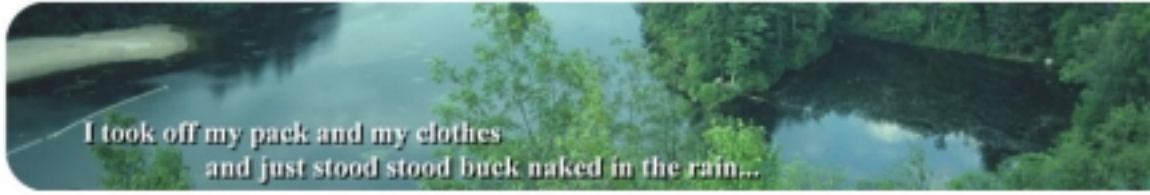
showed up later and were treated just the same. I love New York!



Ralph's Peak Hikers Cabin.

Party at Ralph's.



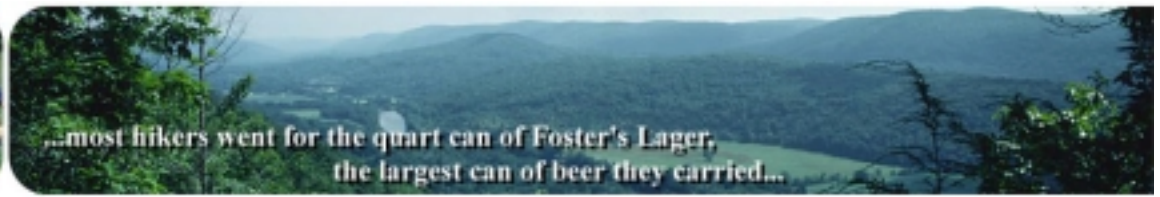


Aug 1 , 1983 Monday (752.1 mtg) From Gonzo's Appalachian Trail journal

Up at 4:45 and off as soon as I could see. Got stung by another bee this morning as I started the long New York road walk. I got confused when I reached NY 292, the road to Holmes, NY, but finally got straightened out and located the post office and store only 50 yards down the road from the A.T. Received a package, and a letter from Glen Stolar. Met and talked with several people while packaging and getting food ready. I talked with one lady named Cathy for quite some time, she seemed very interested in my stories.

After packing, I set off and soon reached Murrow Memorial Park near Pawling, NY. Many children were swimming in the lake, and I took off my pack, my socks and boots, and my t-shirt and lay on the sand for a while. Not knowing the rules, I got up and began to enter the water. Suddenly they were all yelling at me to get out of the water! Apparently it was time for only children associated with a particular camp to be in the water. I had to get out and wait for a while longer before my little dip. I did not have to wait long for 12:30 to arrive and the all clear for everyone to swim. I just kind of shrugged and said to myself, "I am already cooled down from hiking, maybe later." I did hop in for a short swim right before I resumed my hike.

Knowing the road walk was soon coming to an end, I stopped at a house situated along the road to ask the residents if I could get a little water before continuing into the woods toward Wiley Shelter. I knocked on the door, was allowed to fill my water bottles, and was offered a cold RC Cola to cool me down. We talked for a while and eventually got invited to breakfast the following morning. The shelter was not that far away, but I was not sure that I wanted to retrace my steps tomorrow. I said that I was not sure whether I would be back in the morning, and said goodbye as I continued on up to the shelter. I arrived at the shelter just as the rain began to pour out of the sky. I took off my pack and my clothes and just stood buck naked in the rain. Those scorching days of summer were here, and this was like free refreshment. I later discovered that one of the straps on my pack was giving out, so I decided I had to attend breakfast back down the trail in hopes of getting a needle and thread to repair the strap before it broke somewhere down the line. Twenty-five miles for the day.



Aug 2 , 1983 Tuesday (727.2 mtg)

This morning I walked back up the blue-blazed trail .4 miles to the junction with the AT, stashed my pack in the woods, and walked back to the Broidrich's for breakfast. I secured a needle and thread to fix my strap and sat down to a wonderful breakfast of four eggs, toast, melon, tea, and two bananas. I also carried some water back with me for the day. Very nice people.

Continuing on after repairing my strap brought me to the long steady ascent of Schaghticoke Mountain, where I caught up with a hiker on a training hike who had been stationed at Scott Air Force Base near my home town. Dropping down from the mountain I entered into the next state - Connecticut. Ten states down and four to go!

Soon after entering Connecticut, the trail bounced back into New York for one last fling and just as quickly dove back into Connecticut leaving New York for good. I picked up some young girls in that New York section who were determined to follow, or should I say "race" me down to the water pump at Four Corners in Macedonia State Park. The group of girls were members of a camp group led by a couple of nice English counselors. They had all kinds of questions about hiking and what I was attempting to accomplish.



Females at last, but too young.

Up the next mountain, Caleb's Peak, I met Alan Savage. I had read his entries in the shelter registers over a thousand miles ago - way back when. Apparently he had quit, but was starting up again with this being one of his first days out. I checked out the view of the river valley below from the peak, and then moved on to the next view just a short few tenths of a mile past. The view from St. John's Ledges was equally good. I picked my way down the steep rocky trail to

the Housatonic River Road below, and I soon outdistanced him in an attempt to catch up to "the Three Dobermans," the crew of two nurses and their Doberman that I had met in Pennsylvania. Somewhere along the four miles of trail paralleling the river, I caught up with them and hiked with them all the way to Cornwall Bridge. One of my favorite memories of this section was strolling through a pine plantation. Tall straight pines trees towering over a level, quite cushiony soft, needle covered A.T. footpath. A very peaceful place.

The trail passes directly through the town at the junction of US 4 and 7. The junction is sort of like a roundabout similar to those in Great Britain in that there is a piece of land



Possibly a view from Caleb's Peak..

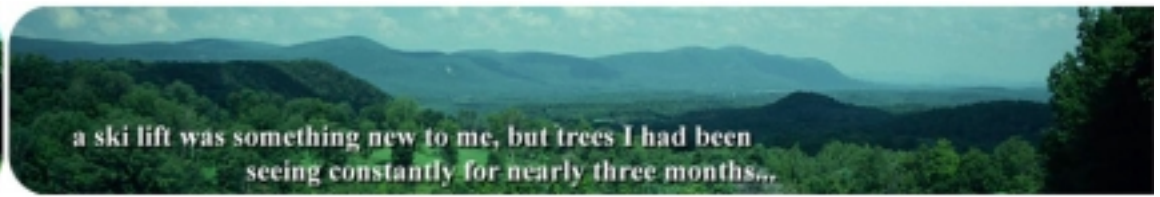
around which the lanes travel. This central piece of land was like a small park with trees and nice grassy areas. Outside the roundabout were located a few business establishments including the liquor store that carried all sorts of imported beers. It was common knowledge by this time in the trip that any hiker passing through that had hiked from Georgia to their store was offered a free beer of their choice. Most people went for the quart can of Foster's Lager, the largest beer they carried, but I had an orange juice instead. Called my parents on the local public telephone nearby, and tried to call Fred, a Shawnee Mountaineer climbing friend from college who was responsible for getting me about \$70.00 from the student activities counsel to help defray the cost of my trip, but got no answer. I camped in the grassy area next to a tree enclosed on three sides by the highway junction. The cars kept me awake for a while, but I got to bed around 10 pm and was soon asleep after another 25.7 mile day.



Housatonic River Valley probably from St. John's Ledges.



Pine Plantation.



Aug 3 , 1983 Wednesday (701.5 mtg)

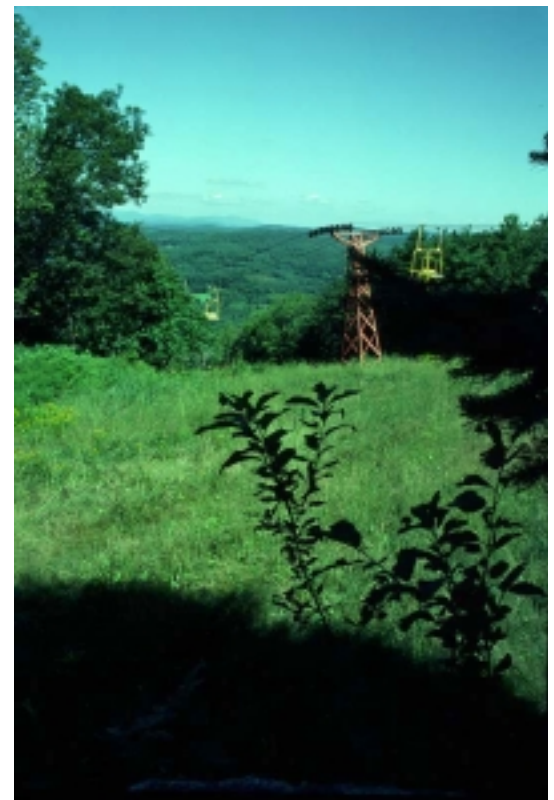
Had a nice evenings sleep even though I thought the traffic would keep me awake. Passing cars could not awaken me from my slumber once I had drifted off to sleep. Stopped at the post office to mail off the guide books that I no longer needed. Called Fred again and woke him from his slumber. Thought that maybe we could meet and do some hiking together, but we made no plans other than that I would call him again from Tyngham. I continued on up the trail.

Dark Ravine was nice, but too "dark" for any pictures. My recollections of the place 19 years later amounts to nothing, so with no recollection and no photos, the place is just a mention in my log of being nice. It is unfortunate, but many of the interesting places along the route have faded from memory. Memories that at the time seemed like they would last forever. I used to be able to remember the names of each shelter that I stayed in each night with no problem. Now, as I re-write this log after not even reading it since it was written in 1983, I struggle with maps and guides to piece together the last surviving recollections of the trip. Some parts may seem to be lacking in description. That is true, but I did not want to add anything that really did not happen, or exaggerate too much from the truth.

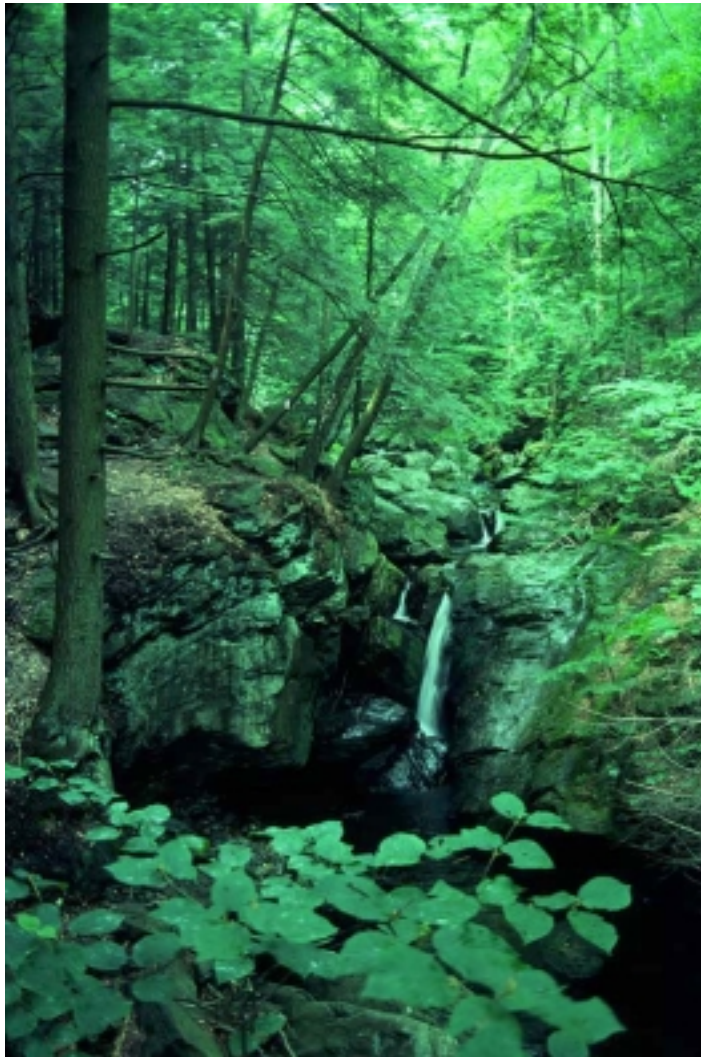
Cathedral Pines is another area that has not even a mention in my log. My memory of the ski resort just past that is stronger than the memory of passing through an ancient stand of pines. A ski lift was something new to me, but trees I had been seeing constantly for nearing three months now.

None of the shelters in this stretch seemed to have any water. No pumps, and the springs were dry. The summer drought was beginning to affect the water table more than I cared for. I did manage to find a Pepsi machine at the intersection of highway 43. I did not visit Pine Knob Lean-to, but checked out the spring - it was barely flowing. Sometimes at springs like this I spent up to five minutes collecting enough water to fill my pint bottle. The climb up Barrack Mountain proved tough and rocky, but at the road crossing of Conn. 7 after the descent I found a nice restaurant where I had heard that they always ask thirsty hikers the same question: "Are you real thirsty?" Of course the proper response they intended to get was "yes, I am very thirsty" With a smile, they would then put the small cup down that they had in their hand and grab a much larger cup to fill up. Very nice people. Their private register had just run out of space so I was the lucky one to christen the new register with the first entry. I don't remember what I wrote. Something really sappy I imagine.

Just before the Iron Bridge over the Housatonic River near Falls Village, I opted for the blue-blazed trail rather than the official AT road walk to the bridge. The blue-blazed trail followed near the edge of the river. In the river, I washed my socks and shirt, and then relaxed for a bit. I noticed a couple



of girls by the river and decided to chat with them. My main goal was to find a source of water. One of the girls, named Terri, said that there really was no public fountain or anything like that, but offered to get some from her house just across the bridge and up the road a bit. To that point I had traveled 24.7 miles so the additional mileage to her house put me right at twenty-five. It was time to find a place to stay too. At the house, I was welcomed by what seemed to be some sort of a party, at least they had company - besides me that is. I was quickly extended much hospitality, which included a meal of meatloaf, and potatoes. I visited with her folks and some others visiting from Kentucky or Tennessee somewhere long into the evening. I was offered the option to stay at their home, and accepted. I chose to sleep outside on a lounge in the backyard because I told them I would be leaving before they were up and did not want to wake them. After two days in Connecticut with twenty-five miles or more each day, I decided I would go for a record and attempt to put 100 miles down in four days, and finishing Connecticut in just four days time.



Sages Ravine.



Aug 4 , 1983 Thursday (676.8 mtg)

The morning started out with ominous thunder, and I knew it would not be long until the rain fell. And I was right, soon after departing, I made a b-line to a porch overhang just off the road not far from where I had departed. I waited for the rain to quit. At least it had waited until I was awake and packed up before the rain came. The rain did not last too long, and I was off again. Within a couple of miles I passed Limestone Springs where I found several tents still occupied, apparently waiting for the rain to let up. I wondered if any of them were thru-hikers that I had not yet met. I cruised on past because I was on a mission, a mission to put 100 miles behind me in four days time. The mountains presented me with a challenge in completing that goal. Travel over this section was very strenuous as I made my way up Lion's Head, past Bond Shelter, and then the steep climb up Bear Mountain. Although there would have been nice views at some of these places, the sky was too overcast and there were no views to be had. Upon the descent off of Bear Mountain I dropped into an area known as Sages Ravine that reminded me of some enchanted forest in medieval times as I traveled through the very lush and dark area following the trickling stream and gazing at the waterfall where I expected to see a maiden princess bathing in the pool below the falls - naked of course. I managed to snap a few pictures of the maiden, I mean the falls, as I stopped for a short break. Somewhere in Sages Ravine the trail passes into Massachusetts. One more state down, only four more to go!

From there it was a climb up Race Mountain and then Mount Everett. While going over Everett, I joked to myself about going over Everest, the really tall mountain in Nepal. The wind was blowing and the skies darkened as I passed thru this area. There was a storm brewing, but I had to keep moving. The descent off of Everett and then off of an area known as Jug End really supplied a beating to my knees. Not only was it steep, but it was the end of a long twenty-three mile day. I had just covered just under 100 miles in four days, covered Connecticut in only two and a half days, and I felt relieved when I finally arrived at Jug End Road. An additional two tenths of a mile brought me to a small picnic area with a piped spring that was flowing abundantly. The site was already occupied by a group of six young kids who were part of a solo expedition group out for thirteen days. They had no leader and were interested in my adventure, and we talked for a while. I set up my tarp on the edge of the picnic area on a level spot and drank up from the spring. Water had been scarce all day and now it was time to re-hydrate. It sprinkled a bit before nightfall, but my tarp did a sufficient job keeping me dry. I talked with a local who stopped by the spring and found out that while I was up on Everett with the wind howling and a storm brewing, there was actually a tornado warning in the area. What the heck, I didn't know. I went to bed early as the rain continued to fall around me.

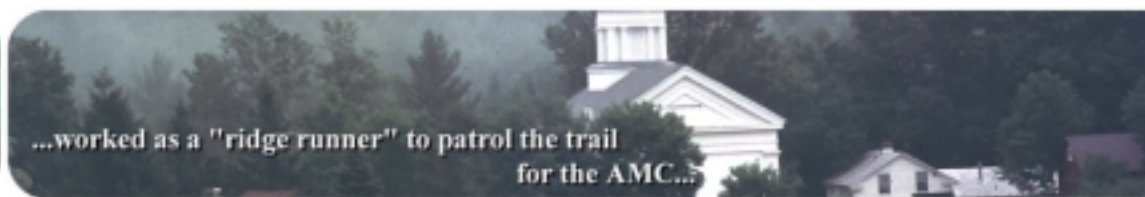


Aug 5 , 1983 Friday (653.9 mtg)

Woke early this morning and ate a supper for breakfast. I probably did this when I realized that there might not be much water at my camp tonight, or possibly I felt like I needed more energy after such a strenuous four days as I had just gone through. I followed Jug End road for a while until it intersected Highway 41, then continued on to intersect with Bow Wow Road (can't imagine how this road got that name) until turning right onto Lime Kiln Road which lead past an abandoned lime kiln. Soon after this the trail crossed US 7 and began the climb up June and East Mountains. I think this is the area where there had been a relocation that I found irritating. If memory serves me, the trail went up the mountain and then seemed to go right back down the same side. Just a vague memory, but I know something weird was going on there. While on this section I encountered a couple of foresters who were investigating timber trespassing in the area. They asked me some questions about seeing anything suspicious, but I had not. Upon reaching route 23, I stopped at an establishment called "The Turning Point" since there was a public phone beside the building, and took the opportunity to call my mother and arrange to have the boots that I had used in my pre-hike training trek across Illinois sent to me. The pair of boots that I had been using had developed a problem with the sole beneath my toes. They had lasted this long since the repairs in Damascus, Virginia. The additional thousand or so miles began to take their toll. The sole was releasing and flapping in the breeze with each step. I arranged to have her quickly send the boots to Cheshire, Massachusetts, a few days up the trail. Was this new development going to be the end of my long adventure? I was hoping that my feet had been sufficiently "hardened" by the many miles that I had already put in and that no problems would result from switching boots.

I stopped at Benedict Pond a little farther past route 23, where there was a picnic area and swimming in the pond. I paid the 25¢ to swim in the water and had myself a nice break. I met a nice couple from Connecticut who offered me two home-made blueberry muffins, a couple of cups of milk, and a candy bar. Of course I did not refuse. The generosity of the people I have met is inspiring, they give hope in a world full of bad things. Eventually thunder began to be heard in the distance and the sky looked as though rain was coming our way. This was my signal to make sure that I was in a shelter by evening, so off I went.

Mt. Wilcox has two shelters located on its slopes. One on each side of the mountain, about two miles apart. The first one reached as I continued up the trail was the South Wilcox Shelter, which had a nice spring. The other shelter was located on the opposite side of the mountain. I did not want to start my day tomorrow with an uphill climb, so I collected enough water and hauled it over to the North Wilcox Shelter where I decided to spend the night. Not long after arriving at the Northern shelter, the rain began to fall - once again I was lucky enough to have reached shelter in time! The shelter was huge! It could easily have accommodated 10 - 15 hikers. I had traveled a mere 18.5 miles today. Interesting how after many days of over twenty miles per day, 18 miles seems like a short day.



Aug 6 , 1983 Saturday (635.4 mtg)

From North Wilcox Shelter it was a mere four miles or so to Tyringham, Massachusetts. The first couple of miles took me through a nice area of pines before coming to a road that lead into the town. The evening rain developed into a morning of low lying fog that clung to the surrounding green pastureland. I thought I was back at Sages Ravine in medieval times when a white, castle-like church appeared out of the fog as I drew nearer to Tyringham. I arrived at the post office by 7:40 am, but the office did not open until 8:30. I took this opportunity to call some friends, but neither Fred nor Chuck were home. A big running race was scheduled for today up Cobble Mountain, and many people were in their running outfits preparing for the ascent. I imagined that if I had a pair of running shoes, I would have entered and probably blew them all away. Running up a mountain without a backpack, and wearing shoes that were probably at least two pounds lighter would make the run a breeze. I regretted the fact that I did not have any running shoes. I located a water faucet behind the white city office building near the post office where I was able to fill my bottles. I also found out that hikers could stay at Mrs. Canon's for \$8.00 bed and shower. Meals could also be arranged. I was not in need of any of these amenities, but noted them for future use. I also noted that I could pick up water at the Gaslight Motor Lodge Just beyond the Massachusetts Thruway that I would be crossing in about five or six miles.



Tyringham, Mass.

The trail followed the road out of town for about a half mile before turning right and following a dirt road up past a farm house. From there it passes by upper goose pond before intersecting with the Massachusetts thruway, and then US 20, where the Gaslight Motor Lodge sits. Another smaller road is soon crossed before the trail begins the climb up Becket Mountain. Becket Mountain provided the only challenging climb today and that was not much of a challenge. I began having thoughts of ending my day at October Mountain Lean-to, but while on the way up the mountain I ran into Cindy, who suggested that was not a good idea since the shelter was located very close to an access road and there would probably be a party there this evening since it was Saturday night. Cindy worked as a "ridge runner" to patrol the trail for the AMC (Appalachian Mountain Club). As a result, I decided to go

for the campsite listed in the data book about three miles past the Pittsfield Road, which was only about a mile past the shelter. I talked with a couple of short distance southbounders while I took a break at October Mountain Lean-to before moving on to my proposed camping spot. I found a spot next to a beautiful flowing brook in a gulley below, and set up my tarp just in case it happened to rain. For some reason I had developed a pea-sized blister on the back of my right heel today. A minor annoyance after a twenty-three mile day.



Cindy.



Aug 7 , 1983 Sunday (612.5 mtg)

Very short day today of only 6.6 miles. Not that the blister was causing problems or anything like that. I had arrived in Dalton, Massachusetts, where the community center was available to hikers as a place to sleep and clean up. I ran into a couple more southbounders along the road walk into Dalton and got the scoop on the place. Dalton is a good sized town compared to the majority of towns along the trail, and I was confused a bit on how to get to the community center once I had reached the city. I found the place with the help of a cyclist that was passing by who was kind enough to give me directions. Upon arriving at the center, I checked in, got a key, a towel and soap, and proceeded to take a shower. The center is always locked to keep out the "Riff-Raff", hence the need for a key. None of the small towns worried about this type of problem.

Once I had washed off all the dirt and most of the odor, I put on my "finest duds" and hitched into the nearby town of Coltsville to do some shopping. I carried a "town shirt" that was a button down short sleeved shirt with an A.T. patch sewn onto the left shoulder just to let everyone know I had come from the trail. I imagine that they probably had that figured out from the long scraggly beard, shorts, wool socks and hiking boots that I also wore. And of course there was the smell of a real man - one who had not used deodorant for months. The Coltsville Mall had a Bonanza restaurant where I immediately stopped for the AYCE (all you can eat) salad, soup and ice cream bars. I made sure that they had some sort of rootbeer on tap that I could make floats with - as if not having any would really have stopped me from eating there. The whole place had their eyes trained on me after they saw me start to shovel it in...

After eating my fill, I went to a nearby store where I bought a GE Walkman, I thought it might be nice to have a few tunes to listen to before I retired each night. I had not had the chance to do that since Jim left the trail back on June 23rd. Then next stop was at a grocery store to pick up a few items to eat tonight and tomorrow morning. After that, I picked out a spot along the side of the road, and stuck out my thumb to secure a hitch back to Dalton. I scored a ride from two guys who were waiting for another hiker known as "Sister Spott." The ride was not that far, so they took me to the community center and then returned to wait once again.

Laying around the rest of the afternoon got me nervous again, so when I heard that the "K-Team" was planning on hiking out tomorrow, I decided I would go too. I was expecting mail in Cheshire, but thought I would get there before it did, so I figured when I arrived at Cheshire I would leave a forwarding note for the postmaster indicating where any mail that had not reached my scheduled mail drop by the time I arrived should be sent. I called and talked with my friend David Giger for a while this afternoon and spent the remainder of the time just hanging out. Later on "Fish", and "The Awesome Robots" came to spend the night as did Dianne Spott and Pat Guthrie. Met a lot of people I had caught up to, but felt I already knew from reading the registers, and knew that tomorrow I would leave them while they rested and I trudged on toward my goal.



Aug 8 , 1983 Monday (605.9 mtg)

Awoke naturally this morning at about 6:15 am. Ate, packed and left - I had the routine down now. From Dalton the trail continued through non-descript areas for the next seven miles with the exception of "The Cobbles," a series of rocky outcrops that provided a view into the Housatonic River Valley on the left, and Cheshire below to the north. I strolled into Cheshire and headed straight for the post office. This was a business day, not a stopover for the day. My business was much more than I had expected. I received more packages than I had ever received in one town today. Seemed as though everyone decided to send something to me at this Massachusetts trail town. Jim had sent me his radio, but I had just bought one yesterday so I sent it back. Dave Szabo went to the outdoor store in Carbondale and bought me a new set of shoulder straps after I told him about my repairs back in Connecticut, and had enclosed them in a package along with a pair of new wool socks. I discovered \$5.00 tucked inside one of the socks - what a guy. Mom was able to get my boots there in time, I packaged up my old ones, along with some of the extra food that I had been sent, and forwarded it all to West Hartford, Vermont. I donned my new hiking boots and set out for Greylock. As I walked out of town the boots seemed to be working out just fine except for the spot on the back of my Achilles tendon where I had a swollen spot from what appeared to be some kind of bite, spider or insect. I happened to be right where the collar of the boot hit my leg and irritated it somewhat.



Hoosick Lake seen from near the Cobbles.

of 2500 feet from Cheshire to Greylock summit. At this elevation the smell of Christmas returned with the Balsam trees near the summit. There are so many side trails and mountain road crossings in this area that hikers wanting to stay on the A.T. have to keep an eye out for white blazes to stay on the correct trail. At the summit stands the Massachusetts War Memorial, a large stone tower that resembles a lighthouse. I believe the structure was intended to be used as a lighthouse, but then someone decided that the memorial should be located on the states tallest mountain, Greylock. Bascomb Lodge is also on the summit, where

I made Greylock before four o'clock after seven miles of substantial uphill climbing. Real mountain terrain was almost upon us once again. There was an elevation change



"The Cobbles" Massachusetts.

hikers can pay a fee and have supper and a spot in the bunkhouse for the night. I had only traveled nine miles to get to the summit, but when I learned that I could help out in the kitchen in return for food and lodging, I decided to stay. This is the first of a series of mountain huts that I would encounter between now and Maine, and I was off to a good start. Usually they have you picking up trash outside, and then helping with the dishes after the meal. Generally not too strenuous, and worth the effort involved to get a good hearty meal. I remember the rolled oats oatmeal breakfast with the brown sugar added. The best oatmeal on the trail. Sure beats that instant stuff.



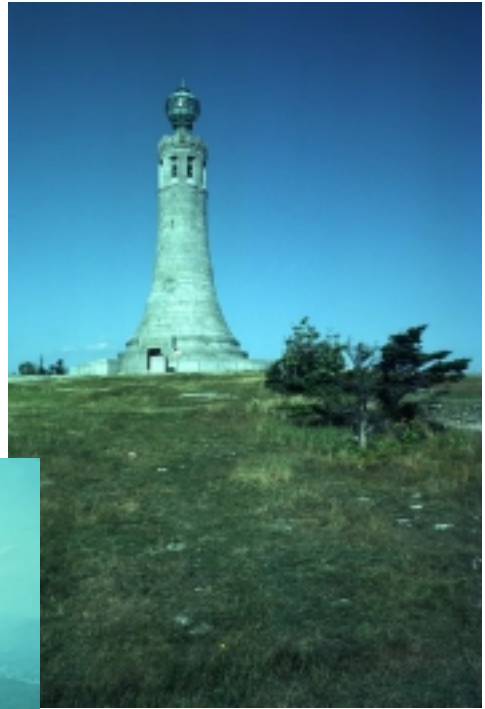
*The tallest mountain in Massachusetts,
Mt. Greylock.*



*View from somewhere on the way up
Greylock.*



Nearing the summit of Greylock.



*War Memorial on
Greylock.*



Pave paradise, put up a parking lot.



*Bascomb Lodge on the
summit of Greylock.*



*View of Adams, Mass. from inside the
Memorial.*