



**Appalachian
Trail Museum**

1120 Pine Grove Road • Gardners, PA 17324 • 717-486-8126 • www.atmuseum.org

Progress Report - 2011

Another Spectacular Year

Continued Growth

The Appalachian Trail Museum continues to grow, exceeding everyone's modest hopes of only a couple of years ago. New exhibits are being made ready to occupy the planned new physical space as it becomes available. Publicity is spreading the word about the Museum, attracting an international audience. The challenge now is to maintain a growth rate in funding that meets the Museum's ambitious needs.

New Exhibits

AT Hall of Fame. An Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame was established, and at a banquet held June 17 in the Allenberry Resort, and attended by 150 people the first class of six was announced: Benton MacKaye, Earl Shaffer, Myron Avery, Arthur Perkins, Gene Espy, and Ed Garvey. A special award was given to Thurston Griggs, who died a few months later at age 95.

Traveling Exhibit. The Museum's new traveling exhibit was unveiled this March at the Mathers Museum of World Cultures in Bloomington, Indiana. It then traveled to Trail Days, the ATC Biennial Meeting, and the Museum Festival in June among other venues. It will continue traveling through the summer of 2012 to several youth-oriented nonprofits in Maine. The traveling exhibit was funded by a grant from the Quimby Foundation.

Sign Exhibit. In the spring the Museum opened a historical sign exhibit which included a sign that had braved the weather at Katahdin for ten years; a sign showing the distance from Wallace Gap to Mt. Oglethorpe (the original southern terminus of the AT); a replica of the original Springer Mountain sign; and the original Center Point Knob plaque.

Deans Gap Shelter. In late summer volunteers began the difficult task of disassembling the stone Deans Gap Shelter in Pennsylvania, which was built by Earl Shaffer. Work was discontinued before the start of the state's hunting season, and will resume in the spring. Eventually this historic shelter will be reassembled on the Museum's grounds.

Virginia CCC Shelter. Preliminary discussions are underway regarding the possibility of saving a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) shelter in Virginia.

Polaroid Project. With the launching last spring of the athikerpictures.org web site, the Polaroid Project was brought to a successful conclusion. This involved the digitizing of nearly 30 years worth of Polaroid pictures of through-hikers that had been taken at Harpers Ferry. A Quimby grant also funded this project.

Appalachian Trail Museum Year-End Report - 2011

Events

Hammock Hang. Among an extensive schedule of programs presented throughout the 2011 season perhaps the most unusual was a “hammock hang,” which was a display of many different styles of hammocks and their potential use by hikers.

Building and Grounds

Park of the Year. Pine Grove Furnace State Park was designated “Park of the Year,” thanks in no small measure to the success and popularity of the Appalachian Trail Museum.

New Construction. The Museum Society’s architect expects to have final plans completed and submitted to the state this winter, in time for construction of outside ramps to be started by late spring and completed by a year from now as required by terms of the South Mountain grant.

New Exhibit Areas. In addition to new exhibits planned for the 2012 season, our hope is to open the basement exhibit area by Memorial Day 2013 and the upper floor by a year later, at which time the upper level will provide the main entrance.

Lease Extension. The Museum’s lease was extended to 25 years, allowing us to proceed with our future building plans.

Information Kiosk. Volunteers from the Norfolk Southern Railway built a kiosk outside the Museum for the display of information relating to the Museum, the park, and the AT.

Public Services

Visitors. The year’s total of visitors came in at about 7,500 which included a contingent of hikers from Germany who had learned about the Museum from German television.

Open Every Day but Two. A remarkable achievement in the Museum’s two-year history is that its doors were open every scheduled day but two: one because of Hurricane Irene and the other the result of a premature October snowstorm. This record is owing in no small part to the dedication of 50 volunteer docents, including one who came from California to serve for a full month. These volunteers gave us a total of 1,589 hours during the 2011 season.

Funding

Two Major Grants. Major new funding was provided this year, including \$30,000 from the South Mountain Partnership, \$10,000 from the Hershey Corporation, and a \$50,000 challenge grant from an anonymous donor.

Future Needs. Although 2011 was the Museum’s most successful fund-raising year thus far, the awesome cost of our plans for the future is daunting—notwithstanding the tireless efforts of our dozens of volunteers. More than ever we will be depending on our members and friends for as much financial support as they can provide.

See the enclosed Membership/Donation form.

Thank you for your help,

Larry Luxenberg
President