

Golden Triangle

American Youth Hostels, Pittsburgh Council

Hostelling International, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping all people, especially the young, gain a greater understanding of the world and its people through hostelling.



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NOVEMBER 1999



The Golden Triangle

THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

Vol. 1 No. 1 Published by Pgh, Pa Council AYH

History of AYH

It is a long way from Westphalia, Germany to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and a long time from 1910 to 1950, but this is how far hostelling has traveled and how long the IDEA has endured. Indeed, that is precisely what hostelling is - the idea that, given the opportunity to travel inexpensively and adventurously, the youth of the world would find health, happiness, and international understanding. With the tramp of a heavy boot on a mountain trail or the rush of fresh air against the cyclists face, intolerance sinks to nothing, and impatience with one's fellow man disappears. Hostelling transcends the artificial boundaries of race, religion, and nationality, and establishes that while there are differences between various groups, it does not follow that one is inferior to another.

Somewhere in the deep conscience of the Westphalia school teacher, Richard Schirmann, these thoughts must have moved when he initiated the first youth hostels in country schools empty for the summer months. They surged irrepressibly through Western Europe so that hostelling was firmly rooted by 1933 when Isabel and Monroe Smith of Northfield, Massachusetts, voyaged abroad to find and feel the import of this spirit new to the United States but not necessarily alien. Upon their return, they founded the first American Youth Hostel in their home, then, with a burning ambition to make hostelling a household word they began their expansion. New England, ideally suited because of natural beauty, small towns, and numerous academic centers, became the first hostelized area. It remains today the bulwark of the movement. But in due time, other national areas accepted the IDEA — The Great Lakes, the Pacific Northwest, the Great Smokies, and others. By the time the United States entered the recent war, hostels numbered 250 and passholders nearly 20,000. It was not a

(Continued on page 8)

Hostelling - International Pittsburgh PA



Now Open

A 50 bed full service hostel in a commercial bank building. Free parking, travel store, handicapped accessible!



Be Sure To Visit:

- Andy Warhol Museum
- Station Square
- Nearby Southside
- The Downtown Cultural District
- Riverfront Bike Trails
- Nearby Universities
- The Carnegie Science Center
- The Zoo & National Aviary
- Phipps Conservatory
- Historic Point State Park
- Three Rivers Stadium

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....And MORE!!!

NEW 1999 MEMBER DISCOUNTS

HI members with valid membership cards are eligible for the following discounts. Full details can be found in the FREE 1999 North American Hostel Handbook.

Alamo Car Rental: Various Discounts. Contact your travel agent or Alamo and request Rate Code BY and I.D. Number 19998.

Andy Warhol Museum: \$1.00 off admission. (THIS DISCOUNT WAS NOT PUBLISHED IN THE 1999 HANDBOOK DUE TO A PRINTING ERROR, BUT IS AVAILABLE.)

Danny K's Diner: 10% discount off final bill. Two blocks from hostel. 412-431-1267

Gray Line Trolley Tours of Pittsburgh: \$2.00 off admission price on our daily scheduled Pittsburgh tours, April through October. 412-741-2720

La Prima Espresso Co.: \$0.50 off any espresso drink. Two locations. 412-471-4590

Mattress Factory (A museum of contemporary art): \$1.00 off admission; 10% off merchandise in museum shop. 412-231-3169

Nature's Design Holistic Health: 15% discount on therapeutic touch, Reiki, foot or body massages. By appointment. 10% discount on all health care products. 412-854-5409

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens: 10% off admission to conservatory and gardens all year. 412-622-6914

Rachel Carson Homestead: Buy one admission, get one free. 724-274-5459

Thoreau, NM - A Production Company: \$1.00 off



Pittsburgh Council, HI-AYH is a United Way Donor Option organization. Our Donor Option number is: **436**.

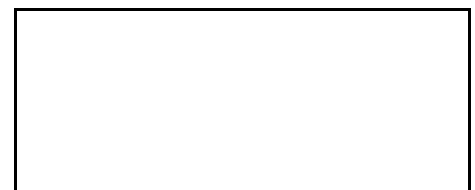
1999 North American Hostel Handbooks can be picked up at the Travel Center, the Pittsburgh International Hostel, and the Activities Headquarters. Copies are free when picked up in person.

HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL

PITTSBURGH COUNCIL-AYH
830 E. WARRINGTON AVE.
PITTSBURGH, PA 15210

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HOSTELLING



Pittsburgh Council, American Youth Hostels, Inc.

Serving Western Pennsylvania & West Virginia Panhandle
Since 1948, Incorporated 1955

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NOTICE

Please note the deadlines for future issues of the **GOLDEN TRIANGLE**

Holiday ISSUE
All copy, November 4
Binding/Mailing, November 18

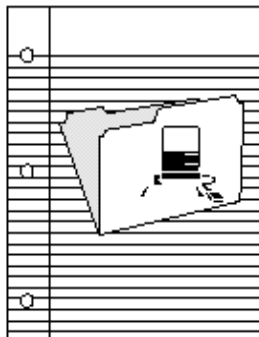
If your work is on computer,
Please contact Joel Platt at
joelplat@yahoo.com

Moving?

If you move, or have any subscription problems, please notify us right away. Returned mail costs 42 cents for each piece, so we can save money if you let us know about any changes in your address. You can also phone in changes to the office at (412) 431-1267.

About AYH

American Youth Hostels is a non-profit organization which promotes international understanding, educational and recreational travel, good citizenship and an appreciation of America. AYH does this by bringing travelers of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities together in hostels and by providing low-cost travel programs. AYH is the US affiliate of Hostelling International (HI), (formerly named International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF), which coordinates more than 5,400 hostels worldwide- the largest network of accommodations in the world.



**Submissions Policy:
Golden Triangle**

Classified Ads:

- Classified ads are free to Current members of HI-International
- All requests for classifieds must be made in writing via the Council Office. Request must include full name, address, phone number and membership number of member. Members are not permitted to place ads for non-members.
- Free ads may not be for commercial gain.
- Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

Trips

- All trips must be approved by authorized co-chair
- Trip leader must be a council approved leader
- Trips must be submitted through co-chair, for that activity. Trip leaders, are not to submit trips directly to editor or office, any trips improperly submitted will not be listed.
- Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

Articles

- Members are encouraged to write articles, about travel abroad and in the states, and about activities and outdoor sports in which the council has a program
- All Articles are to be, non-political and non-secular
- Above rules apply in addition to general rules for submission

General rules for submission

- No handwritten submissions
- Submissions Can be;
On computer disk (IBM / MAC), E-mail (Internet/compuserve), Direct Modem, Type written material double spaced, faxed. NO EXCEPTIONS. Call if you have questions.
- Submitted before the deadline of the issue that submission needs to be run in. (See Editors Golden Rule)
- All Submissions are on a first come first serve basis, The GT makes no promises to print material received and all material received becomes the property of the GT.
- Standing Deadline; Deadline for the GT, has always been, and will continue to be the First Thursday of the month, prior to the month of the issue.(See Editors Golden Rule)
- Please always check in advance with office, to confirm schedule.

Editors Golden Rule

- "Lack of planning on your part, does not constitute an emergency on my part"

Please note, the Golden Triangle frequency of publication for 1999.

Number 1 issue ->February / March: **Number 2** issue ->April: **Number 3** issue ->May: **Number 4** issue ->June: **Number 5** issue ->July: **Number 6** issue ->Aug. **Number 7** issue ->Sept: **Number 8** issue ->Oct: **Number 9** issue ->Nov: and **Number 10** issue ->December

Editor...

UPCOMING SLIDE SHOWS

- October 28:** We show the 16 mm film "Edinburgh". Crown jewels of Scotland, bagpipe players, statues of Bobby, Edinburgh medical school.
November 4: Kevin Swendson, "Thirty Eight Miles In The Grand Canyon In February". See the snow. See Ribbon Falls, the South Kaibab and Bright Angel trails.
November 11: Glenn Oster, "The Fells, The Becks And The Moors Of Northern England". Hiking the 190-mile Coast To Coast Walk.
November 18: Pizza and juice party.
November 25: Closed for Thanksgiving Day.
December 2: We show the 16 mm film "The Erie Canal". Open in 1825 by Governor De Witt-Clinton. Film footage of operation. Also "Fantastic Yellowstone". Discovery of natural wonders. First national park.
December 9: Henry Hanson, "Village Life In China". Tradition and change in Lijing, a village in Hunan. See also the booming city of Kunmin.
Slide shows start at 8:30 PM, at AYH Headquarters, Shady Avenue at Fifth Avenue. Doors open at 8:00 PM. If you want to give a show, call Luc Berger at 412-683-3131.

Pittsburgh Council Hostels

Ohiopyle AYH Hostel
Ohiopyle State Park
PO Box 99
Ohiopyle, PA 15470
(724) 329-4476

HI-Pittsburgh Hostel
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Pittsburgh, PA 15210
(412) 431-1267

Living Waters AYH Hostel
RD #1 (1 mile west on Rte 30)
Schellsburgh, PA 15559
(814) 733-4212



Oops...

If you find an error, please notify the editor. See the address for the *Golden Triangle* below.

Mail regarding the Newsletter should be addressed to:

American Youth Hostels
The Golden Triangle
830 Warrington Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15210

Office: (412) 431-4910
or

HI-Pgh on the information super Highway. Point your browser to :
<http://trfn.clpgh.org/ayh/>
or you can email us at
ayh@trfn.clpgh.org



HOSTEL HAPPENINGS

SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!!!

For: Travel workshops / seminars

Open house guides @ the hostel

City tours, walking

Booth @ travel fairs

Work parties

Shuttle to Fallingwater/ Ohiopyle

You can help make **HI** Pittsburgh a **HIP** place to visit for international visitors, US visitors and residents of 'da burg, alike. Call or stop by during our open hours!! We are in need of creative, **POSITIVE** feedback and suggestions; we look forward to hearing your input.

Like to travel, but not sure where to go? Looking for inexpensive accomodation?

Stop by the hostel or the travel center for a free 1999 Traveller's Resource Guide, which includes the topics: Hostelling in North America (the opportunities here @ home are absolutely endless); Making hostel reservations (in North America and overseas); Getting ready to **GO**; Planning your itinerary; Getting there; About your money and Packing!

Also available: 1999 **HOSTELLING**; passport to North America guidebooks, **USA** hostel map, and lots of other helpful information for free when you pick them up in person at the Pittsburgh International Hostel during open hours. We also have available for sale: Volume 1; European Hostel Guide and Volume 2; America's, Africa, Asia and the Pacific Hostel Guide for \$10.95, each, plus tax. Members receive a 10% discount when you present your valid membership card @ the time of purchase.

Don't go anywhere without your HI-AYH membership card!! The cost is \$25 for an adult, one-year membership, \$15 for a senior, one-year membership, \$250 for a lifetime membership and **FREE** youth membership. Stop by the hostel to get your card *today!*

—You may also request a membership application sent to you via snail mail, by calling the travel center @ (412) 431-4910 or the hostel @ (412) 431-1267; when it is returned, we will get your membership kit to you ASAP.

FALL SCHEDULE:

November 6th @ 2:00 p.m. *WORLD TRAVEL: 101 (basics)* - On this day, our organization tries to get as many of its different venues (nationally) as possible to present a workshop, offering the opportunity to experience budget travel anywhere, firsthand. Everyone needs to be assured that you don't need an expense account in order to travel, in fact, with one you will often find *in the end* that you haven't *really* travelled.

December 11th @ 2:00 p.m. *DOWN UNDER; on a budget, mate!* - Find out how you, too, can experience kangaroos, penguins, dingos and the outback.....**on a budget!!** Bring a friend; you'll need one to get out of Woop Woop. If this intrigues you, then don't miss it!

Feel absolutely free to call the hostel @ (412) 431-1267 with your suggestions for workshops/seminars that would be of interest to you; they will be considered, then watch future newsletters and flyers in hostelling digs for upcoming events.

AYH Sheet Sleeping Sack DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT ONE!

Required in all youth hostels, the sleeping sack serves as your top & bottom sheets, with a built-in pillowcase. Regular sleeping bags are not allowed at hostels due to public health regulations. Our nylon sleep sack is especially light, compact, and dries extremely quickly (handy on trips). The cotton/polyester sleep sack is a little heavier and bulkier, but feels just like your bedsheets. Order one today! See the order form on the back page for prices.

Rambles For Autumn - 1999

October

October 27 Harrison Hills Park pond area. Bag lunch. Luc Berger. 683-3131

November

November 3 Cemetery Lane ramble. Hills and spectacular views. Dick Fischer. 421-9215

November 10 Mystery Ramble. Margaret Laske. 421-5219

November 17 Riverview Park. Bag lunch (weather permitting). Earl McCabe. 761-1844

November 24 No ramble. HAPPY THANKSGIVING.

December

December 1 Heidelberg. Bill Phoennik. 279-5411

December 8 Edgewood. Marilyn Ham. 687-4520

December 15 Downtown Pittsburgh. Enjoy the holiday decorations. Helen Brownhill. 279-3672

December 22 Allentown ramble. Bag lunch plus holiday goodies at the Hostel. John Hartman. 241-5031

December 29 No ramble. HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Fall rambles begin at 10:00 AM. Meet in Mellon Park, upper parking lot at Fifth and Shady Avenues. Carpooling is encouraged. For trips over 10 miles, please pay driver \$2.00.

Call trip leader for more information, especially if you plan to meet us at the trail head.

REMINDER TO TRIP LEADERS

All trips and equipment usage must be approved by the appropriate activity chair or co-chair. Trip reports and fees should be turned in by the end of each month at either the AYH Activities Building or AYH Office or mailed to Pittsburgh Council, 830 Warrington Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15210



SKIING

Mark your calendars and watch for the next newsletter! The Wilderness Lodge Ski Weekends are scheduled for the following weekends: Jan. 27-29 and Feb. 10-12. We have the full lodge for both weekends.

AYH ACTIVITIES WITH BEN

The 1999 Sabre ride has turned out to be an outstanding success. A well established ride, Jack Rearick and myself took on the task one Thursday meeting when the discussion came up while folding our newsletter. Neither one of us knew anything about organizing rides. A good thing too, I found out that it was a lot of work. I mean a real lot of work. Fortunately for me Jack is younger and more energetic. Meanwhile the lovely Sheryl is in England for two months with friends so we were able to abuse Jack's good nature by having him take on the really hard stuff. And most fortunately, there was the good advice from Larry, Marianne, Chuck and Lynn; old organizing hands.

Well, thanks to many volunteers, including five most welcome helpers from the Montour trail group, everything went well. About 450 riders went on the 15,35 or 65 mile loops. Food was good and plentiful, hot cider was served, the weather turned out good, people were happy and we made a substantial amount of money to help fund the hostel.

On a more personal note, my life included a lot of exposure to E-mail. Yes it is really fast. But since I have hooked up with my provider co, strange things have happened which I am at a loss to explain. For example, the 10\$/month fee keeps on appearing on my credit card as \$20.95. Which brings my small E usage to about six times the cost per mailing compared to the 33 cents per usage of the postal service. And then some E's disappear into E space, an Ethereal realm without any trace of former existence. Not even an E footprint. Scary. Having developed E anxiety about the aforementioned disappearances, I check by phone or at the Thursday meeting to see if my E has been E received.

I can only figure one of two possibilities; either the E business is done by a small group of secretive E wizards, who think that everyone lives in the E universe, or that I'm just plain too old to figure it out. And I know that I'm just as spry as any of the grey haired guys, so I know the system is at fault. There is really only one solution to address this crisis; go camping and leave the computer home. That'll fix it!



CANOEING

Activity Co-chairs: Paul Henry (724) 347-3282
Brian McBane (724) 443-8972

Oct. 29-31 Fri.-Sun. Joyce Appel (724) 526-5407
Join Joyce for her annual Halloween Canoe Cruise, in costume, on the Allegheny. Day trips from a base camp, Saturday dinner out, followed by a haunted house or hayride. Prizes given for costumes and games. If you don't have a costume, call Joyce, she has plenty!!!

The canoeing program offered something for everyone this year, even though Mother Nature was unwilling to provide the water that barely kept us from scraping bottom!

After a February planning meeting, and canoe inspection in March, the program was off to a good start. Quite a few pick-up trips were held on nice weekends in April: the Cowanashannock, Little Beaver and Buffalo were run. Tuesday evenings in May featured the popular beginner nights on the Allegheny, under the direction of George Schnakenberg. These were followed by monthly moving water schools led by Brian McBane, Kate Fissell, Jim Porcelli, Jim Roberts and the Nilson's. To put newly acquired skills to use, easy Class I trips were scheduled in the following weeks. An Eckert to Harris run on the Slip provided excitement for some advanced paddlers. Many thanks to all the instructors for their time, and to the students for their participation.

Everyone should be ready to paddle when the water comes up next spring!!!

Some new and different activities were planned. Don Hoecker's annual trip on the Red Bank was canceled due to low water, but was replaced by a very enjoyable day on the Clarion. A paddle on Mahoning Creek was made possible with a negotiated dam release by the Corps of Engineers. Dinner and a full moon paddle on the Allegheny, complete with festive decorations supplied by Rich Gemeinhart, was fun---although the planned lock through didn't happen (a fleet of barges had priority). Jon Maiman's rescue clinic on Slippery Rock Creek was educational and exciting!

Canoe camping trips were plentiful, beginning with Joyce Appel's Pine Creek trip, for which the weather was beautiful. Snow, rain and sleet had put a damper on last year's. Memorial Day weekend was spent on the Greenbrier and featured dancing cows, swimming dogs and a plummeting water level. July Fourth was hot, but frequent swim breaks in the New kept paddlers cool. The bigger water and drops also proved challenging. As I write, some of us are anticipating the Maiman's annual fall foliage paddle, and hoping for more water. Joyce is busy planning costumes, games and prizes for her yearly Hallowe'en Cruise on the Allegheny.

We encourage feed back from trip leaders, instructors and participants. If you have ideas or suggestions for the year 2000, please contact the canoeing chairs, or try to make the late winter planning meeting, to be announced in a future issue. Until then, best wishes and many thanks to all who make the canoeing program possible. To Ben: the canoeists also are fond of dining out after paddling trips. We have even joked about a supplement to the Shaw/Weil guidebook, featuring favorite restaurants!!!!

--
Shelley C. Nilson shelleycn@yahoo.com

OUTDOOR COOKBOOK FOR SALE BY LOCAL SCOUTS

Cadette/Senior Girl Scout Troop 83 have put together 400 recipes -- ideal for picnics, cookouts, camp and cabin meals. As avid outdoor enthusiasts who camp together three times a year, rappel, hike, and have completed outdoor survival training and high adventure programs, they've compiled favorite recipes from other scouts and campers across the US to create "A Taste of the Outdoors". This cookbook includes menu ideas from breakfast entrees to midnight snacks...and everything in between; and offers a variety of cooking methods -- foil, Dutch oven, campstove, box oven, campfire, grill, solar, etc. Most recipes can be adapted for cabin (indoor - with minimal equipment) cooking. Cost of the cookbook is \$12.50 and includes shipping and handling (in the US). You can visit their website at

<http://members.aol.com/janed5/recipe/cookbook.htm>

or send payment along with your name, address and phone number to: Troop 83, c/o Barb Koehler, 30 Center Ave., Pgh., PA 15202. Cookbook sales will be used to fund a 2001 trip to the Girl Scout World Center - Our Chalet in Switzerland.



SEA-KAYAKING

Activity Co-Chairs: Vickie Gotaski 412-344-4929
Fran Fleming 412.363.1221

Paddler's Dinners are held at various local restaurants on the second Tuesday of every month. Everyone is welcome.

Don't have a kayak? That's okay we have extras. Call your trip leader for details.

November 19, 1999 - Light Up Night Paddle - Everyone's Welcome
Deck the Point with bows of kayaks
Russ 412.331.2073

January 1, 2000 - Millenium Paddle - Everyone's Welcome
It's not too early to plan for our Y2Kayak
Russ 412.331.2073



ROCK CLIMBING

Rock Out with AYH!

Rock climbing trips from Pittsburgh Council of American Youth Hostels
The AYH Rock Climbing program is a great way to experience the thrill of rock climbing. Our Beginner trips are focused on teaching "never evers" the basics of rock climbing. AYH supplies the climbing gear plus a group of experienced climbers to set up the climbs and teach the course. All you need to bring is a bag lunch, water, and a sunny disposition. Wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothes (shorts and T-shirts in the summer) and tennis shoes. It's not a bad idea to pack raingear in the event of a late-afternoon thunderstorm.

1999 AYH ROCK CLIMBING TRIPS

No trips currently planned, as everyone is gearing up for cross-country skiing. Call Chuck Jones at (412) 242-6172 to see if anything comes up.



BICYCLING

Sabre Bicycle Tour Wrap-up

AYH Volunteers:

Special thanks to all of the AYH folks who helped us immensely at SABRE, and continue to donate their time and energy to making the AYH bike rides a success.

Ben Brugmans - SABRE Ride co-coordinator, setup, clean-up, a bit of everything.
Larry Laude and Marianne Kasica - Lunch captains, setup, clean-up, T-Shirt Sales, consulting, and all round BIG help!!
Ron Boone - SAG Wagon ,65 mile Route, clean-up, and road sign removal.
Mary Beth Hook - Lunch, setup, and clean-up.
Jack Peth - Road sign placement and removal, Cecil Rest Stop captain, Settlers set-up.
Joel Platt - Registration, lunch, and newsletter releases.
Joan Roofl - Registration, lunch, and clean-up.
Tom Bates - Lunch and clean-up
Mary Bates - Registration, T-Shirt sales, lunch, clean-up.

MTC Volunteers:

I would like to give extra special thanks to the Montour Trail Council volunteers who proved invaluable for running our rest stops this year. We received comments from riders on how friendly and helpful the rest stop staff and road marshalls were. Thank You!

Tom Murther - MTC Volunteer coordinator, Burgettstown Rest Stop captain.
Joan Dristas - Road Marshall at Stubenville Pike & McKee.
Hoyt Hall - Road Marshall at Rt 50 near Cecil.
Mike Jeram - Burgettstown Rest stop assistant.
Joe & Marci Nuggent - Cecil Rest Stop assistants.

Jack's Friends and Family:

People that I owe big favors to now. These folks are not even associated with the AYH or MTC, but love to ride or just wanted to help!

John Adamczak - Registration table captain.
Marcia Brissett - SAG Wagon for 35/15 mile route.
Bob Harkins - Road sign placement, registration, and clean-up.
Rich Katilius - Road sign placement, Parking lot marshall.
Karen Labay - Road Marshall at Stubenville & Ridge Road.

Nextell Communications:

Nextell for the cell phones they lent us.
A very special thanks to Allyson McDermott , Event Marketing Manager for Nextell Communications.

Please forgive me if I've missed anybody!! Jack Rearick

And most of all: Jack Rearick : T shirt design, pamphlet and poster design, organization, route and planning work without whose endless enthusiasm this ride would not have happened.

G.O.B.A. = "Great Ohio Bicycle Adventure" or "Good Old Bikin' Around"??

-by Mary Ruth Aull

I was one of 3,000 bikers who made up GOBA and it definitely was a 10. I didn't realize how draining the Clinton affair, Kosovar War, and the national health care restructuring had been on me until we arrived in Ashland, Ohio and pitched our tents. That evening we had a bicycle parade, costume party and ice cream treats. At 5:00 a.m. Sunday morning, we broke camp and rode out around 7:00 a.m., after coffee and chatter. It was cool and sunny with a gorgeous blue sky with huge puffy clouds. There were bikes as far ahead and behind as I could see. I was drawn into a real feeling of oneness with Mother Earth as I biked past corn and soybean fields and caught glimpses of the farm animals looking so peaceful and innocent on the beautiful Ohio landscape. I hadn't been that close to my growing food for so long and it made me sadly realize how far I am removed from the basic activity of the planet. It all looked so calm and simple compared to our computer, phone, fax, beeper, car-driven (excuse the pun) life.

We biked 50 miles that day but it was so easy with rest and food breaks every 10-15 miles and a wonderful lunch stop at Arboretum. That night you could hear a pin drop at 9:30 p.m. I was so impressed with the organization of GOBA and how well we were cared for. I was also impressed with respect to the environment as when we rode out in the mornings I would look back to where we were and there was not one piece of litter. I was amazed at the many different kinds of bikes and it brought tears to my eyes to see the wonderful positive side of the human spirit. There was a biker who had cerebral palsy; this was his seventh GOBA and he was the Icon of Gobaville. We all kind of looked after the young couple on the tandem with a 22 month old child in a carrier behind them. I wondered what kind of memories the baby would have when she grew older. A happy guy with a big smile had a piano keyboard on his handlbars and he played for us at breakfast and lunch.

There was also a blind man, traveling with his wife-he was from Pittsburgh as were so many others. I found this out wearing my Great Ride and Mon Valley T's.

It was a 350-mile loop and I surprised myself by only walking a couple of the miles. Oh, I almost forgot that 400 of us took the train for approximately 45 miles which was a neat experience.

We camped Tuesday and Wednesday nights at Coschocton having Wednesday off, although some actually did the 50-mile loop. Several nights there was dancing in the streets. One town's population was 3,000 so for one night we doubled it!!

The last night that the Taps played several shouted out "play it again", and I could feel the sadness that this was the end of our trip. One last playing of the revelries got us off to start on our last leg of our journey, arriving in Ashland around 12:30, 41 miles later. I couldn't have had a better vacation.

I look forward to sharing the video at a Thursday night Open House in the near future.



HIKING/BACKPACKING/TRAILS

November 7 Sunday Jim Ritchie 828-0210

Baker Trail Hike, Mahoning Section. This is another 10-mile hike on the Baker Trail, this time north of Dayton in the Mahoning Reservoir area. Start at Smicksburg Road and hike to the Mahoning Dam, going past the Jantz (Mahoning) Shelter for backpackers. Also, see the Milton Loop Campground, the village of Milton, and the Mahoning Dam. Dinner at Stockdale's in Dayton at your option. This is definitely a hike for those who love to walk; it is not a beginner's hike. Rated intermediate or higher. Call Jim for more information and reservations.

November 7 Sunday Joan Roof 351-2061

A city amble starting at our Hostel in Allentown. Joan will take us through some of Pittsburgh's interesting old neighborhoods, down Point State Park. On the way back we will stop for lunch at Station Square, then take the incline up to Mt. Washington. 5 miles, meet at 10:00 AM at the Mellon Park H.Q.

November 14 Sunday Veronique Schreurs 422 0358

A classic Duff Park hike of 5 miles in Murresville. Get out of the city and hike in the woods, yet be back home easily before dinner. Bring a lunch. Meet at Mellon Park H.Q. at 10:00 A.M.

November 21 Sunday Ben Brugmans 361-3623

A city hike from Washingtons Crossing, once known as Herrs Island, to the new Northside. We will hike on the trail along the Allegheny River, see new sculptures in the new North Shore Park, as well as historic old buildings. Lunch is at an old German restaurant, then hike back. Total about 5 miles. Meet at 10:00 AM at the Mellon Park H.Q.

December 5 Sunday Jim Ritchie 828-0210

Baker Trail Hike, Red Bank Creek Section. The fourth and final 1999 ten-mile hike on the Baker Trail, starting near Tar Kiln Run, going to Red Bank Creek, Heathville, and finally Summerville. Meet Amos Duck, visit the Summerville Shelter for backpackers and, at your option, eat dinner at the Kountry Kitchen in Summerville. This hike will be for experienced hikers who are accustomed to hiking 10 miles. It is not a beginner's hike. Rated intermediate or higher. Call Jim for more information and reservations. ♦

Year 2000 Sat/Sun Jim Ritchie 828-0210

Baker Trail Hiking Continues: Corsica/Mill Creek Section; Fisher-Sigel Section; Cook Forest Section; Allegheny National Forest Section. Be sure to watch the Golden Triangle beginning next March when we continue hiking the Baker Trail. Each hike will be approximately 10 miles and will include mostly off-road wooded terrain. As we go further and further north, we will have dinner options at the end of the day. Eat hearty country cooking in legendary venues such as the Vowinkle Inn, Cook Forest Inn, Bucktail Inn, and others.

Hiking Trips by A.J. Stones 412-241-6042

Hiking trips will leave from Jaden's Restaurant Rt. 22 East Monroeville at 8:30 AM

November 13-14. Saturday-Sunday Overnight Backpacking on Laurel Highland Trail 12 miles Seven Springs to Linn run.

Official Rachel Carson/Baker Trail Website

is now live; the URL is <http://members.xoom.com/rachelbaker>.

Also, I discovered the following website, by accident; you may (or may not) enjoy it. I thought it was quite interesting.

www.bakertrail.com -jim ritchie

Ron and mom Maxine (whom I spoke with frequently on the telephone), and Friends of the Trail like Dave Galbraith, Joe Wolfe, and Bill Wangler?? Well, one way is to sign the register when you pass their shelters at Corsica and North Freedom and tell them how much you appreciate the work they've done for the Baker Trail. Another is to write a letter to the "Golden Triangle", likewise expressing your thoughts.

Now we have 10 shelters up and running; all except the Schenley Shelter, which exists but is off limits for the time being at the property owner's request. Hopefully, we can renegotiate that closing soon and have all 11 shelters operative. The next big step for the Baker Trail, of course, will be to generate some new traffic on the Trail in the next year or two, hopefully, even some backpack traffic. Our goals will be to hold the maintenance on the Baker Trail steady but to increase the traffic to the extent each year's traffic will sustain the treadway for the following year. Can you help do that?? Absolutely. While making your hiking and backpacking plans for the Year 2000, try to plan at least one excursion, of either persuasion, on the Baker Trail. Become part of the traffic.



The Big Baker Trail Story of 1999

-by jim ritchie

The Baker Trail runs from the Allegheny River near Freeport, PA all the way to a nondescript pipeline crossing on Vowinkle-Muzette Road within the jurisdictional boundary of the Allegheny National Forest, nearly 5 miles north of Cook Forest State Park. The Baker Trail was built as a backpacking trail in the late 1940's and was dedicated in the memory of Horace Forbes Baker, a Pittsburgh attorney who was not only the president of the post-war Pittsburgh Council of the American Youth Hostels, but an ardent supporter of the Baker Trail project. As a backpacker's trail, a series of overnight, Appalachian-style, open-face shelters were built throughout the 1950's and 1960's to support hikers using the trail. In all, eleven (11) shelters were eventually built along the 141 miles of the trail: Schenley, Crooked Creek, Cochran's Mill, Idaho, Atwood, Milo Weaver, Mahoning/Jantz, North Freedom, Summerville, Corsica, and Fisher.

Time has been unkind to many of the shelters: several were burnt to the ground by vandals; one has been declared "off limits" by an unsupportive landowner, and at least one simply rotted away. But during the 1990's, a resurgence of interest in the overnight shelters has occurred. Jon Speck and friends rebuilt the Cochran's Mill and Crooked Creek Shelters in 1995; Patti Brunner, Baker Trail Co-Manager, directed the rehabilitation of the Idaho Shelter by Scout Troop #91 in late 1998. Scout Troop #139, led by John Hackett of Verona, PA has adopted the Mahoning/Jantz shelter near Dayton, PA during 1998. Gerry Vaerywick, along with his family and friends, rebuilt the Milo Weaver Shelter in February, 1997.

Now Jimmy and Mikey Walter of Brookville, PA have contributed wonderfully, by building, from scratch, entire shelters, to replace the heretofore nonexistent shelters at North Freedom and Corsica. The two boys undertook the project to earn their Eagle badges for Scout Troop #67 of Brookville. Scoutmaster Joe Wolfe, and Dave Galbraith, former scout leader and perpetual "Friend of the Baker Trail" directed the boys to this project when he heard they were anxious to find a good project for their Eagle awards. Jim Ritchie dug through his boxes of old records to find the blueprints for the Baker Trail shelters and other constructions.

After sending the blueprints to Jimmy and Mikey, Jim talked with Ron Walter, the boys' dad, who asked if it really mattered if the blueprints had to be followed to the letter. Learning it was not necessary to do so, Ron said "I have the plans to a shelter in my head. I'll just build it that way." So, at home, Ron, Ron, Jr., and the two aspiring Eagle Scouts, constructed all the pieces necessary to build a shelter. They put the pieces together and it worked, so they disassembled the entire structure, put it on a flatbed and drove it to North Freedom. Relocating the shelter to a more advantageous spot than its former site, they reassembled it, got permission from the site's landowner for immediate placement and a promise for a permanent easement in the property title.

And did I mention that Jimmy and Mikey raised all the money necessary to purchase the materials by themselves?? Well, they did, selling hoagies, candy, from bakesales, and so forth. In Troop #67, part of the Eagle tradition is to raise your own money for your Eagle project.

Well, with North Freedom up and running, the Walter boys turned their attention to the Corsica Shelter. As it turns out, prefabricating the materials for Corsica was the easy part. As before, they cut out all the pieces, assembled it (to make sure it fit together), disassembled it, and loaded it on the flatbed. Alas!! The Corsica Shelter site was famous for its weekend teenage drinking parties. There was absolutely no security. So the Walters began calling all the landowners they knew in the area looking for that perfect spot. They soon resorted to simply driving up and down country roads near the trail looking for a spot to put the new Shelter.

Finally, "Friend of the Baker Trail" Bill Wangler, of Corsica, whose home is right on the Baker Trail, consented for the scouts to put the shelter in a spot about 100 yards down the trail from his house. Jim Ritchie and his maintenance crew of Rich Gemeinhart and "Indian" Carl Gundlach met Bill last October when they spent the day putting up new blazes on the 4 miles of roller coaster pipeline on the Baker Trail that starts at Mr. Wangler's house. It turns out Bill has been keeping an eye out for the Baker Trail for many years, giving out directions to lost scout groups and others.

So, the new Corsica shelter is located approximately 1.8 miles due north of Corsica; as you follow the Baker Trail along country roads going north out of Corsica, the new Shelter is located right at the point the trail leaves the road and hits the pipeline leading out to the Mill Creek State Gamelands.

How do you adequately thank young men like Jimmy and Mikey and their wonderfully supportive parents like

"Switchbacks are for Wimps!"

A First Person Account of the 1999 Rachel Carson Trail Challenge

-by Mike Schiller

Dateline: June 19, 1999.

Yeah, yeah, how hard can 34 miles be? When my friend, Bob the Banker, suggested we enter this Rachel Carson Challenge, I did not hesitate. After all, just this last February we had climbed Pico de Orizaba together in 16 hours, from 13,800 feet to 18,700 feet above sea level. Other than the headache that made me think my eyeballs were channeling a **STOMP!** performance, we had no real difficulty from the exertion. So, sure, 34 miles is a long way, but if we kept up a steady three mile an hour pace we would walk from North Park to Harrison Hills Park in less than twelve hours and even have time to eat lunch and look at a few wildflowers.

Plus, as someone who has logged many miles on trails all over the region, I felt ashamed to admit that I had never before hiked any portion of the Rachel Carson Trail. I had just read Carson's Silent Spring this past April and then promptly canceled my lawn service. It seemed that I owed it to Carson and myself to hike the trail named in her honor.

I discounted the fact that not many people had finished the challenge the first two times AYH sponsored it. I also ignored my other friends, K. and L., who had been on the trail in those years. It's a miserable trail, they said. All hills, straight ups and downs, lots of roads, lots of trail out in the open. They did not finish and this is from a fellow who walked over 1,000 miles on trails last year.

But jeez, I hike every weekend, I run, use the Stairmaster, pump some iron, climbed two volcanoes in February, climbed Ben Nevis in May. And my schoolmate and fellow 38-year-old, Dan Marino, just signed a contract for another 2 years with the Miami Dolphins. How bad is 34 miles compared to another season of running away from angry 300 pound men in cleats? Banker Bob and I sent in our \$20 entrance fees.

5:50 AM

The first challenge was getting to the trailhead on time. Living in the South Hills and rarely crossing the river to the North, I forgot how long it took to drive to North Park, even Saturday at 5:00 AM. I arrived at the trailhead at 5:50 AM (the official starting time) and found Banker Bob. Bob had convinced his girlfriend, Marianne, and four of her friends to join us. Marianne is a fitness and outdoor fanatic, and I had no doubt that she would finish. I wasn't sure about Ryan, Heather, Bill and Rachel, but they looked fit and they all had a good attitude. I would be the Old Guard, but I planned to have the last laugh when we got to Harrison Hills Park in Freeport 34 miles later.

6:00 AM

On the trail. Damn. Already ten minutes behind schedule.

6:02 AM

We miss a turn in the trail in the first 100 yards. We only walked an extra twenty feet, but this was not a day for unnecessary steps. The trail winds through North Park for about a mile or so, and we quickly manage to get lost again. The blazes on the trees are inconsistent here, and we must have missed one, because we find ourselves along a road that does not match any of the trail descriptions. Fortunately, our cumulative sense of direction and a little patient map reading get us back on track. Spotting some other participants on the trail at the bottom of the hill helps, too.

The next mile or so is quite pleasant, walking along an unknown creek, admiring the patches of Forget-me-nots, wild strawberries and sorrel. Little did I know I should have enjoyed it more while I could.

7:33 AM

The trail runs smack into Route 8. This would be no easy road to cross on foot with the large amount of mall-goers and soccer moms out on a Saturday morning, but fortunately the local police are on hand to manage traffic and permit us to cross safely.

Across the highway, we hike up a dirt road behind the Middle School, down a gas pipeline, through some woods, through someone's back yard (don't annoy the geese!), around a pond, and along a road for about one mile to achieve the first checkpoint at 7.5 miles.

8:57 AM

Volunteer marshals have cold water waiting for us, along with a tasty collection of Rice Crispy Treats, granola bars and mini boxes of raisins. We give our name to the marshal to record the time we arrive. We are behind our expected three mile per hour pace due to our navigational errors. Marianne suggests to Banker Bob that perhaps they should jog to get back on pace and finish sooner. Her companions are silent on the topic, and I helpfully suggest that if they want to they should feel free but I would continue to walk. Bob tactfully tells Marianne that there will be no jogging. We grab a breakfast bar from the box and keep on walking.

9:00 AM

For the next seven miles Marianne and her friends maintain a 100 to 200 yard lead on Banker Bob and I, stopping when they are not sure where the trail leads, letting us catch up and read the trail description for them. Occasionally, Bob keeps up with Marianne and then inevitably drops back and humors me as I point out the patch of Solomon's Seal, or the big clump of Butterfly weed. In between, I get details on how to get a loan.

10:52 AM

The front-runners miss where the trail turns onto the road and instead walk straight up and over some railroad tracks through the trackless brush. Bob and I follow the road through an underpass and arrive at the second checkpoint (14.2 miles) several minutes ahead of the others. Serves them right, I figure quite ungenerously, for not reading the trail description.

11:04 AM

We sit on the dusty roadside at Checkpoint number 2 in the 80-degree heat, replenish our Camelbacks with water and eat bagels and bananas, courtesy of AYH. We rest at the base of an imposing

hill that climbs steeply up a gas pipeline. Bob attacks the hill first, saying he is going to give himself time to "rest step" it up. I take the opportunity to put some moleskin on my heels, which are feeling the heat of the trail. I've never had a blister in the several hundred miles walked in these boots and I sure didn't want to break that streak with 20 miles to go. Marianne and crew head off shortly after Bob, leaving me to my moleskin and bagel.

11:17 AM

The bagel sucks the bridge off my three back teeth. Damn. I pull it out and try to get the bagel mush off the underside before replacing it, but it is surprising just how glue-like bagel mush can be when only half chewed.

11:26 AM

Bridge replaced, moleskin applied. I start up the brutal hillside with determination. My companions are just nearing the top of the pipeline. The sun and the dust make this a particularly tedious climb. As I start down the far side of the hill, I pass Ryan and Heather. Heather decides that the t-shirt she was wearing is superfluous and her sports bra will suit her just fine. My inquiry as to how they are doing is met with replies of "Good. Great." But I note that slim hint of uncertainty in their eyes, or is it the first reflection of fear? Either way, an energizing smugness perfuses my system. I quicken the pace and during the hot, non-scenic section of the trail along Yutes Run Road I pass several other hikers.

12:13 PM

When the trail finally leaves the road, it starts a section known as the "Roller Coaster". From about 16.5 miles to 19.0 miles I just walk up one side of a utility right-of-way and then down the other side. I walk up and then walk down. The sun is out and directly overhead now. I pass several more hikers and I feel like I'm on a mission. Walk up and then walk down. Apparently, the people who laid out this trail never heard of a switchback. At the crest of one hill, I spy Banker Bob climbing up the next hill. No sign of Marianne.

"Roberto, mi amigo!" I yell. "Ola!"

"Ola, Miguel!" Bob replies. I feel good.

12:19 PM

My eye catches something to the right of the trail. A black snake, about four feet long lies in the scrubby brown grass not more than 3 feet from me. I stop and look. The snake looks back. I reach for it, thinking it will make a pretty good present for the hikers behind me. The snake is too quick and scurries uphill. I walk uphill beside it. We keep an equal pace for 15 feet, then we both stop. Détente. Mutual Assured Tiredness. Okay, I think, I will leave you alone. Testing me, it wiggles over to the path where I am standing, does a quick curl around the tip of my walking stick, pulls its body up over the toe of one boot and then continues on to the other side of the trail. I am impressed into complete calm. I watch my friend move away and then I continue up the trail, not tired anymore.

12:25 PM

Bob waits for me at the top of the ridge. We walk the next quarter-mile together, reaching the "halfway" point at 18.0 miles. Marianne, Rachel and Bill are there already. No refreshments, but the marshal here directs people to the Rachel Carson Homestead. There, the AYH has refreshments, toilets and massages ready for all hikers. Massages, really? While we sit in the grass and eat lunch several hikers catch up to us, admit that they have had enough, and turn off to the Homestead. Seems like 10 of the 12 people who come by call it quits.

12:48 PM

Rachel spends most of the lunch break applying zebra and leopard print adhesive pads to various hot spots on her feet. The rest of us provide commentary and wonder out loud about Bill and Heather.

1:00 PM

Bill and Heather arrive. They are stopping here, they say. No one tries to talk them out of it. We shoulder our daypacks and walk.

1:15 PM

We stare at the trail as it heads into the woods on a laughably steep hill. Just looking at it takes the wind out of our recently rejuvenated sails. I imagine the trail designers laughing in their beers, "Switchbacks, hah! Switchbacks are for wimps!"

2:21 PM

Coming down the last steep utility path prior to the checkpoint, I slip on the beaten down grass that forms the trail here. So do several other folks. We all bounce back up and dust off our backsides with grace.

2:25 PM

21.7 miles done when we reach Checkpoint 3. I fill my camelback with water again. My legs are tired, but the cold, frosty taste of an ice cream bar from the nearby Sheetz convenience store makes everything seem better.

4:16 PM

This trail has more ups and downs than the price of an Internet stock. Infrequently, we get a nice view of Route 28, the Allegheny River and the towns on the far side. I am trying not to think evil of the folks who laid out the trail; surely they had good intentions. We pass several hikers calling for a rescue from friends, but we have far too much pride to quit now.

4:47 PM

We pick up a new companion along this section: a 35-year-old female flight attendant whose male accomplice has long since abandoned the effort. Jamie adds some new material to the conversation and she is easy on the eyes, though by the time we reach 26 miles I am not much of a conversationalist. I wonder how a flight attendant who admits only to some regular jogging seems to be breezing right through this whole day.

5:25 PM

The marshals at checkpoint 4 (28.4 miles) have thoughtfully

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

placed a few plastic lawn chairs next to their Explorer so that not everyone has to sit in the dirt. The last half-mile before this had been another unreasonably steep downhill slope along a gas pipeline. It took all my concentration to not give in to the leg cramps that threatened to send my thighs into convulsions. Thankfully, the checkpoint was close. Water, banana, feet up and everything seems better.

5:45 PM

Checkpoint 2 redux: the trail heads straight uphill along a gas pipeline. This is probably the steepest section of the entire trail and sets a new standard for unnecessary cruelty to hikers. Marianne and friends head up the hill at a pace that quickly has them out of sight. Banker Bob waits for me and my crampy legs. At the top of the ridge the trail returns to a nice woodland trail, and to celebrate, my thighs immediately seize. I collapse to the side of the trail, rubbing my thighs furiously trying to relieve the pressure.

"There's no one around," says Bob. "I can rub them for you if you want."

"Arrg, that's quite all right," I reply. "I can manage. Just give me a minute."

"Suit yourself. But don't say I didn't offer."

A few hikers whom we had passed earlier pass us. I drink as much water as I can and then we walk on.

6:16 PM

"When we get out to the next paved road, I'm hanging it up, dude," I say.

"It's up to you, guy," Bob says tactfully. "It sure does seem like a struggle right now, though."

"No question. I reckon you can pick me up on the way home?"

"Absolutely. No problem. You got a jacket to last until then?"

"Yeah. I'm set. Let's just get to the road."

I drink more water and we walk slowly down the gravel.

"You know," said Bob, "that flight attendant chick was asking if she was the oldest one of this group. She said she's 35."

"Yeah, she told me," I said.

"I said you were the old man of the bunch. She was impressed that you were going to do the whole trail at forty-one."

"Forty-one?" I gagged. "F*** you, pal. Try thirty-eight."

"Oops, sorry."

"Damn straight! Jeez, forty-one! You really know how to make a guy feel better."

"Yeah, well, I'm not sure why I thought that. I just thought..."

6:22 PM

One of the marshals has parked his car where the trail comes out to the road. 3 miles to go, more than two hours of daylight left. Suddenly, I did not really want to quit.

"How's the rest of the trail?" we ask the marshal.

"It's pretty nice up there," he answers. "Walked this section myself last weekend. It's nice up there, especially the horse pasture. Lots of flowers. It's a nice section of trail."

"How are the hills?" I ask. "Does it level off at all?"

The gentleman grins. "This is the Rachel Carson Trail. It's all hills. 'Course, it's not as bad as what's back there. These are definitely more gradual. How you fellows doing?"

"Pretty good," says Bob. "This guy's cramping up a bit, though. Has to decide if he's going to finish."

"Yeah, "I say, "should've eaten more bananas, I guess. Or brought some potassium pills."

"Maybe I have something that will help, " says the man. He hands me a bottle of Naproxen; I swallow a couple tablets and thank him. I tell Bob that I can continue. Maybe it's the placebo effect of the pills, or that crack about being forty-one, or just a second wind coming on as the evening cools off, but in any case, I am newly committed.

7:12 PM

Bob is talking. He is entertaining me with all the stories he can think of to keep me entertained. I learn more about Bob, his family and Marianne than I would over several pitchers of beer. Though right now I would prefer the beer. I try to keep up my end with a few stories and at some point, I actually start to feel good again.

7:38 PM

We reach Freeport Road and see the lot where Bob parked his Jeep for the return trip. Hallelujah! One mile to go!

"Hey, thanks for sticking with me. I wouldn't have made it without you."

"You would have done the same for me, man. You still might some other day."

"I know. And I will if I can."

8:10 PM

We emerge from the woods at the picnic shelter in Harrison Hills Park and the twenty or so hikers and organizers provide a small ovation. Fourteen hours and ten minutes after we started.

Marianne, Rachel and Bill had finished about 30 minutes earlier.

(Continued from page 1)

movement to be regarded lightly.

Hostelling swept Pennsylvania like a flood in the late 30's and mushrooming almost overnight was a chain of hostels along the Horseshoe trail from Harrisburg to Philadelphia and along the Appalachian Trail from the Susquehanna to Delaware Water Gap. A state council was established in Philadelphia, as well as a local council in the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre area. Pittsburgh, too felt the impact of AYH and, under the leadership of Horace F. Baker, eminent attorney, established a council in 1941, followed shortly there-after by a model hostel in South Park.

Unfortunately, great forces of evil were afoot in the world, and the thing hostelling opposed most -WAR- came to pass. Whole peoples relegated their pleasures and ideals to the back of their minds and united in an even greater effort. The United States was no exception. Amid the rubble of foreign communities lay ruined hostels. In this country, no physical destruction occurred but AYH membership and participation dropped markedly as did the number of hostels. Councils floundered and fell disorganized, and the newest groups, such as this one in Pittsburgh, were the first to go. In the aftermath, while foreign nations counted their broken buildings, American hostelling surveyed a terrible loss in everything but reputation, and while not returned to its beginnings of 1933, faced a reconstruction problem of prime magnitude.

Six long years after the demise of the original Pittsburgh Council a fledgling local group began anew on Washington's birthday, 1942, to hold hikes intended eventually to expand to a full-blown youth hostel movement. Simultaneously, Mr. Horace F. Baker invited a number of civic-minded citizens to a dinner at the Harvard-Princeton club in an effort at reorganization. This group, guided by the professional AYH workers from New York, Philadelphia, and Northfield, constituted itself a steering committee to formulate a new organization. It resolved to emphasize hostellers and hostelling rather than hostels in its initial phases, and this sound policy paid the dividends we are all happily reading today.

Elsewhere in this annual report will be found detailed summaries of progress in 1949, a banner year for AYH in Pittsburgh. It was made possible through the selfless, unflinching devotion of many fine people to an IDEA. It has borne fruit because of active participation of all of you in activities which we firmly believe constitute a firm foundation, not only for your priceless companionship at a local level, but for elimination of animosity in a far greater sphere. With your continued support and enthusiasm, hostelling in Pittsburgh will inevitably reach the high stature it proudly enjoys in the great cities of the East. The community will come to look on hostelling as an integral and valued part of the culture of mankind.

Editors note: This was lifted (unedited) from the March 1950 Golden Triangle newsletter. Author unknown. Officers elected for that year were:

- Chairman: Tony Pranses
- Treasurer: Betty Bierer
- Secretary: M.L. O'Callaghan
- Hostels: Bruce Merritt
- Trips and Trails: Jack Stein
- Speakers Bureau: June Redman
- Program: Betty Saffer
- Membership: George Cohen
- Public Relations: Wes Bunnelle

Copies of the entire year (1950) will be at the membership desk at headquarters for your viewing.

They were gracious finishers and we all congratulated each other on a successful Challenge. While we sat there several other finishers walked in. One was a sixty-nine year old woman whom we had passed around mile 19. She just smiled and hugged her husband who had finished some time before we did.

10:30 PM

I am at home, a large pizza was just delivered and I am enjoying the feeling of being utterly physically exhausted. I am not thinking about tomorrow's 12-mile hike I am leading for nine other people. Oh well, at least I won't be getting smashed by angry 300-pound men wearing cleats.

Will I do it again? Right now, I doubt it. Of course, I have said similar things in the past about climbing mountains and have inevitably returned to climb another one. Talk to me next May and I may have a different answer.

Hostelling Memoirs

Elsie Jensen's account of her hostelling adventure to San Francisco with Burnetta Hahn, May 21-June 6, 1997

This was a touring vacation, so different from driving to a resort! Friend Burnetta and I rode on Amtrak from Yuma, AZ, to San Francisco, departing at midnight and arriving 21 hours later. The train followed the route of the old Spanish mission road, El Camino Real, through the San Fernando Valley, through tunnels in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Through Santa Barbara, a city of beautiful gardens and homes of Spanish architecture. We saw fields of vegetables and sugar beets in Salinas Valley, and we learned that Castroville is the "artichoke capital of the world," and Gilroy the "garlic capital." At Oakland, we know our journey was almost over. They bused us over the eight-mile San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge to the ferry building on Market Street, where we boarded a taxi for our hostel on Mason Street.

The hostel on mason street (HI- San Francisco- Downtown) was our home for 14 days. We were centrally located near Union Square and the St. Francis Hotel. Two blocks away runs the Powell Street Cable Car that took us up the hill, past California Street, past Lombard, and down the hill to Fisherman's Wharf, where all the people congregate on the street, in restaurants, or where the Alcatraz and Angel Island ferries come in.

One morning, while preparing our breakfast at the hostel, a lady from London struck up a conversation with us. She was traveling across the country on Greyhound. Another day we met a couple from Australia. The kitchen there is a large, sunny room with windows almost from the ceiling to the floor. There was an instant hot water tap, two microwaves, silverware and dishes, with a large kitchen sink and towels. We kept our groceries in a plastic box labeled with our name, and kept the box in a cubbyhole shelf on the wall. We shared a large refrigerator with our labeled brown bags. The honor system worked fine! We also stayed two nights at the Fort Mason hostel (HI- San Francisco- Fisherman's Wharf), near the Presidio and the marina. The hostel is a renovated military barrack with a common living room and an enormous kitchen with giant stoves that were used formerly by the military cooks. There were four bunk beds in our room. Fort Mason is a large estate with green lawns and bicycle paths through the eucalyptus forest of trees down to the bay. There was a supermarket at the bottom of the hill to buy fresh fruit and dinners after our walks along the marina.

One day, we walked quite a while along the marina to get to the Palace of Fine Arts. The weather was so perfect, with a breeze to move us along. The MUNI transit passes we purchased upon arrival had expired, so we walked. What a change from living in Arizona, where we use our car to do the slightest errand! Most of San Francisco's citizens live in apartments and use mass transportation. The townhouses facing the marina have flowerpots of blooms on each step leading to the front door. There were begonias, daisies and lots of status, tall stems with lavender flowers.

Our two weeks in San Francisco came to an end, leaving us with fond memories of the people we met and the places we visited.

was nice not to have to deal with the compartment rituals. My rituals included putting on clean socks(you can board the train in your sport sandals) and sleeping in my "sheet sleeping sack", so no one could reach into my clothes in search of my wallet or moneybelt. My inflatable pillow and other clothes served as a pillow.

DAY TRAINS: It's nice to arrive at your destination in the morning with hostel reservations, so you can check in before noon and spend the day sight-seeing, instead of waiting in line for a bed. H.I.'s "Book of Euro Hostels" or the "Lonely Planet" serve as guides you can use to telephone ahead for reservations. Without them, you will have to check at the information office when you arrive and take what you can get.

Info offices often have free or cheap maps and may call the hostels for you. Most Euro-Hostels have lockers. You can lock up your stuff, shower, and hit the road. Most train stations have pay lockers, if you don't want to stay a whole day or take all your stuff to the hostel. Since the day you marked on your pass is good until midnight, you can hop on a local train or two and visit interesting towns nearby (which may not be worth more than a few hours). After a night at your hostel, you can spend a whole day seeing the city where you stay, and take a night train out or stay another night there.

Eurail: All About Night Trains & Stuff a.k.a.:Eurupdate- 1999

By: David A. Shimek (road goliath)

Buying your Eurailpass is the tip of an iceberg of possibilities. Now that you have it-how do you use it? You can't afford to waste your transportation investment. The age 26 and under crowd have it easy. They can grab a 2nd class, 2-month pass and just go any time, any where for the duration. But even they have to adapt their schedule to get the maximum use and maximum enjoyment out of the limited time they have in Europe.

You can lose a whole vacation zoned out on the beaches of the Riviera (Cote D'Azur) with only a tan to show for it! With proper planning, you can avoid this fate worse than...well, let's just say there's a lot to see! Assuming you are over 26, you have a veritable cornucopia of passes to choose from. Don't assume that you always have to use your pass. Many of the trips between cities in Europe are quite short and do not require you to use up one of your valuable Eurail Flexipass or Europass days.

If you spend a month in Europe, about the MOST you need are ten days of rail travel. You will probably want to take a few days to get to know each city and/or region. Even if you want to spend only one night in each location, another interesting place may only be a short, inexpensive hop away. On the Riviera, you can go from Marseille all the way down to Rome on the coastal trains, hitting several dozen towns with hostels, camping, and hotels. That alone could take weeks(if not months). You can also call Nice home-base (cheap hostels & weekly hotels) and take buses round-trip for the one-way price.

NIGHT TRAINS: I learned last year how un-fun it is to spend more than one night in a row on the night trains (even if you have a whole compartment for yourself). There are some tricks of the traveler that can make it more comfortable for you. Once you have validated your pass at a station ticket window, you can hop on any train that doesn't require an extra fee or a reservation. In large cities, there is usually a separate information area where you can get a printed itinerary for your destination and timetable. They can explain (in English, normally) if you have to transfer to another train, or to a ferry, or a bus.

The high speed trains require a fee; although, night trains are normally quite slow, with few stops. Europass & Eurail-flexipass travelers can get more than 24 hours of use out of each day on their pass. Once you know your night itinerary, you can hop on just about anywhere, as long as your train is either an all-nighter or a connecting train to an all-nighter. Hop on after 19:00 hours (7p.m.)and write in the next day's date(the full 24 hour day) before or when the conductor gets there. Make sure to point out to them where you have filled it in, because they sometimes fill in the next box, assuming you didn't! The date is written backwards (Euro-style?), day first, then month second. Don't do it wrong, or you lose a day. I almost wrote the wrong date several times, so it helps to write on a practice paper first!

Avoid the night trains between Rome and Nice at all cost. They made me get off in the middle of the night to switch cars around, for no reason it seemed, because they eventually put about the same number of cars back on!

SUPPLIES: Pack as if you were going into the desert for the night-train, or even long day trains. I like to carry several plastic soda bottles (20 oz.) With me. I transfer my water, wine, juice, milk, etc. into them. You need at least 2 liters of liquids per person for a night trip. Unlike on Amtrak, the water on board is non-potable. I almost died of thirst several forgetful times.

Bread & cheese is the staple diet of train travel. Condiments come in tubes (mayonnaise, mustard, ketchup, etc.) at regular supermarkets. I find it least messy to squirt a bit on my sandwich for each bite. I prefer Gouda cheese, freshly sliced in the deli section, because it's mild & buttery. Whole wheat bread keeps you healthy. Crackers are a bit crumbly for the train. You can eat over a newspaper to keep from making a huge mess, or you can eat dinner before you leave, so you can get right to bed after the conductor is done. Cookies make a good dessert. For breakfast, fruit and chocolate bars cannot be beat.

To buy your supplies, large city train stations often have supermarkets, deli's, or drugstores that are open late. I prefer health food stores, which you have to search for. Bon Appetit a la train!

During the day, food carts come down the car, but the prices are huge and only affordable as a treat or emergency.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Most night trains have sleeping cars-too many in fact-so it's almost always possible to change your mind and get a dorm-style sleeper. Some north-European night trains have weird new compartments, which don't have the usual six seats, and are practically impossible to turn into beds.

Most trains still use old stock with the six seats, the temperature knob, the window curtain, and the door that doesn't lock. I like to put my backpack/luggage on the floor and then fold out the seats, so it can't be stolen while I sleep. If there are only two of you, it's possible more people will come into the compartment with you. It's ideal to have three people, because then you cover all three seat-beds, and it's unlikely anyone else will come into the compartment, unless the train is super-crowded (like leaving Munchen during Oktoberfest).

Some night trains have only reclining seats, like Amtrak. The one I had from S. France to Paris was a lot more comfortable than I thought it would be. It

The Friend of the Fells

Glenn Oster, AYH member, hiked across England this summer and is sharing his experiences and observations with us. This is the first of three installments. In this issue, he discusses the Coast to Coast Trail, how it came to be and the general nature of the trail.

You've heard of Andrew Lloyd Webber's hit musical, "Cats;" now don't say "no" or you'll spoil my lead into this article. One of the cats that figures prominently in the musical is "Gus, the theatre cat." Gus, a shabby tabby has-been, was the quintessence of professional thespians in his prime, and he boasts that "his grandest creation, as history will tell, was Firefrowfiddle, the fiend of the fell." What's a fell? Well, this cat went to England and found out for himself.

Perhaps I had better explain what I found a "fell" to be. That may be the extent of your interest in this article, and you'll quit reading as soon as you know. I'll just have to take that chance. In Northern England, a fell is a high hill, a mountain in our parlance. Simple as that. It didn't take me long to encounter a fell. I climbed one on the first morning of a 190-mile hike I did across Northern England. The hike extended from the Irish Sea on the western coast at St. Bees Head to the North Sea on the eastern coast at Robin Hood's Bay. I made the trek over a thirteen-day period from July 8 through July 20, 1999. The trail is known as the "Coast to Coast Walk," but I'll refer to it as the "C to C." Those of you readers who know me will be appalled that I'm getting so soft when you learn that I stayed at hostels and bed and breakfasts instead of carrying my tent as I usually do. Not only that, but I hired a firm, called "Sherpas" to transport some of my gear from one hostel or B&B to my next night's accommodations. Got to admit, it worked out well.

This trail is not new to Pittsburgh HI/AYH. Members Bill Lindgren and Clare Bunker hiked it several years ago and gave a slide show at one of the Thursday open houses. That planted the seed. Later I learned that HI/AYHers, Alma Worthington and Sally Martin had also done it - Alma, twice. Bill and Alma gave me good information that helped me plan my trip; for instance, take lots of cash because the little ladies who run the B&Bs are not interested in your VISA card, and the villages through which the trail passes surely don't have money access machines. I can only imagine what they would say if I tried to write a check on an American bank. Those sweet souls want cold, hard cash. Bill and Alma are also to blame for my utilizing B&Bs and hiring the Sherpas. It was good advice - way to go.

In 1973, Mr. A. Wainwright connected a series of local trails and sheep paths to enable hikers to enjoy the English countryside in an orderly way and, as I mentioned above, called it the "Coast to Coast Walk," a name that has stuck through the past 26 years. Hikers travel from all over the world to make this trek. I came across hikers from Australia, New Zealand, France, Germany and the USA. Strangely, despite the trail's international appeal, England has not formally recognized it. C to C maintainers are not permitted to place trail signs in the national parks through which it winds its way. I may write to someone and point out this oversight. To whom?

The reality that makes this trail possible in England is that laws there protect the "right to roam," a right that precedes and supersedes the right of private property if the foot or bridle path has been in existence for a long period of history, that is, prior to the public land's becoming private property. The C to C parades across farm lands, through gates, over styles, between the buildings of a farm and sometimes past the farm house's kitchen. The farmers have no legal right to exclude the hikers. Most farmers, with whom I talked, take it philosophically, explaining that it's no real inconvenience and most hikers are well mannered and considerate. However, human nature being what it is, others chafe at this abuse of their unrecognized rights. I understand that there is land that is private property and, accordingly, off limits as in the USA, but an amazing amount of it is free to whomever comes by. They have signs saying "Public Footpath" or "Public Bridal Path" alongside many of the roads one follows - in the villages or out in the boonies.

The trail can be very difficult to find at times. Mostly, it crosses open pastures and moors, but there also were miles of foot path that was overgrown by shoulder-high weeds that often obscured the despised plant called "stinging nettle." It causes intense itching of legs exposed by hiking shorts. (We hate it in the USA, as well.) In England, they don't use the system of blazes that we do in the USA. Admittedly, blazes are not used in the western wildernesses in America, but the trails are very obvious with signs at trail intersections. That may or may not be the case in England. Some trail heads are signed and trail turns marked with yellow arrows. Nevertheless, you can't be sure which trail the yellow arrows are guiding you along. There could be several trails in the same vicinity. Also, sheep paths intertwine and obscure the main trail tread way. You can come into a meadow and find five well-defined foot paths - but not one sign. Presumably, you should then be able to refer to your map and the description in the trail guide. However, there may only be two footpaths described or shown on the map. To which of the five do the descriptions apply?

Mr. Wainwright may have been a genius at tying sheep tracks together to get hikers across large farmlands, but his skill at describing trail access, left much to be desired. For example, just east of Patterdale, one has to make the first ascent of a high fell to reach a meadow. This I did without incident. That brought me to a broad, treeless area that continued to rise, and rise even more, a "fur piece." At this juncture, there were three well-defined foot paths, but no signs. Going left was a steep climb. Study of the map ruled it out as one of the paths to consider. The trail guide's author said to take the lower trail. What did he mean? One climbed steeply to the right in short order. Was the one in the middle the lower one in Mr. Wainwright's mind? He "clarified" it by saying that we should make sure that we did not take the trail to Martindale. Martindale was off the strip map that accompanied his trail guide. Great. However, without signs, how does a hiker know which trail goes to Martindale and should be avoided? A local hiker came along and told me which was the trail to follow. Super. I climbed it for twenty-five minutes, whereupon I met a couple hiking toward me. Where had their hike originated? You might

know, Martindale! Back down the fell I retreated. Only one other trail remained; so, it had to be the correct one. It was, at last. This sort of scenario played out several times. Accordingly, I bought another guide book, but that author failed also, because he did not stay focused. He invariably told about other routes that could be taken, and his writing style made it difficult to determine at what point he had concluded explaining his alternate trail and was once again describing the main trail. So, while the trail is officially 190 miles long, I hiked more than 200 miles because of embarking on wrong trails and having to retrace my steps in order to return to the C to C. On many of my days on the trail, I hiked 18 to 22 miles. My average distance per day should have been 14.6 miles, but I managed to cover more than that on most days.

That it was hard to locate at times doesn't mean that I didn't enjoy the trail. I just had to air my complaints early on. The scenery at times was awesome. However, before I try to paint word pictures of the scenery, I want to mention the fields through which the trail passes. Most of them were surrounded by stone walls about seven feet high. Other fields were separated by hedge rows. The stone walls and hedge rows served various purposes, that is, they designated farm ownership, they separated fields of a given farmer, they served in some cases as sheepfolds and in some cases served to blow my mind. How do you locate the gate or style to go beyond the wall? Continue to search and take a large spoonful of patience. At times, I could see such a wall marching up a fell so high that I could no longer trace it with my naked eye. My monocular showed me that the walls continued up and over those mountains. Why? I later learned that centuries ago, when land was being parceled out from public property to individual ownership, a person could claim as much land as he could surround by a stone wall, presumably over a set period of time. Obviously, the wealthy could pay workers to put up walls, but the less affluent had to put up their own walls and couldn't claim as much land. That was a convenient way to allocate most of the land to those already wealthy. Irrespective of how they came to be, the ubiquitous walls looked very picturesque, especially when viewed from a distance. I went through such walls via gates and over them via styles so many times that I couldn't even begin to estimate the number. It's incredible how many different types of a gate latch the farmers use. Man's ingenuity at fashioning devices is limitless. It was impressive to note how well maintained the walls are. They must be attended to on a very regular schedule. I found them fascinating.

This is the second installment of an article in which Glenn Oster shares his experiences and observations during a hike he took this summer from coast to coast across England. In the first installment, he described the trail. In this issue, Glenn will discuss the animals that he saw, both domestic and wild, the other hikers whom he met on the trail (not to be confused with the animals that he saw), the hostels and bed and breakfasts where he lodged and the villages through which the trail passes.

While I'm dealing with farms, most are sheep grazing enterprises. I must have seen 30,000 sheep. It became an acquired skill to hike through the pastures without stepping on the droppings. In the farms with cattle, the spots to avoid were larger and easier to manage. Many of the sheep have paint smears on their rumps to designate an aspect of breeding. You can't imagine how many different baaa sounds I heard, some high pitched nervous and squeaky, some deep throated and testy and so many in between. The sheep all had heavy coats of wool. I had assumed that they would have been shorn and starting to grow a new coat to keep them warm next winter, but what do I know about sheep. The cattle farmers were breathing a bit easier, after the ban on British beef had been lifted in most of their markets. The sheep were timid, as you would expect, but, conversely, some of the cows were too inquisitive. One tried to take a bite out of my rain jacket, but I was able to pull it away from her teeth before she punctured it. I said a few unkind words in an explosive tone causing her to back off, but her curiosity brought her right back again. That time I was ready.

While domesticated animals seemed to be everywhere, wildlife was sparse, that is, except for rabbits. Northern England has more rabbits than I've ever seen, anywhere. Bears were hunted to extinction long ago, and I never saw a deer, deer hoof prints or their droppings. I saw one squirrel, but none of our usual critters, such as chipmunks, skunks, opossums, and raccoons. The only other wild creatures that I saw were birds, grouse in particular. Apparently, grouse hunting is a major sport. On the trail, I came upon strange looking semicircular stone structures about five feet high with grass planted on top. I later learned that they are not the relics of some ancient religious site, instead, "shooting butts." Shooters hide behind them and fire when grouse are stirred into flight.

Hikers on the trail quickly developed camaraderie such as I've seen previously on the Appalachian Trail in the USA. It would be like old home week when you encountered someone farther along the trail with whom you had earlier hiked or shared a pub meal. It could hardly be said that the trail was being heavily walked, but I came upon two commercial tours, each having about eight hikers. I hiked at times with two women from California, a couple from France and a young couple (both physicians) from England. I kept up, briefly with a 75-year-old man from England (who was a very fast hiker). I had dinner with a family of three, father, mother and 18-year-old daughter from Maryland and hiked for a couple days with the father (after the mother and daughter became fatigued and flew back to the USA). I also hiked with a couple from New Zealand and a man from England (who intended to do the whole trail in eight days - good luck). Near the end of my trek, I encountered a group of five English people following the trail westbound, one of whom was pulling his backpack on a golf cart. He was in for a rude awakening when he reached the overgrown sections, narrow trails on the side of fells, and places where there really was no trail - just a rocky direction to follow. Also, there were many on the trail who were hiking the Cleveland Way which shares the footpath of the C to C, in Yorkshire Dales and North Moors National Parks. There were others who may only have been doing day hikes. Notwithstanding, spread over 190 miles, there wasn't much of a concentration of hikers.

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The Friend of the Fells, continued

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The Hostelling International stays that I made worked out very well, except that the hostels at Grinton and Osmotherly turned out to be much farther off the trail than I expected, and each involved a major climb. The hostels all included breakfast in their advertised prices; some also provided dinner and a bag lunch at a reasonable price. All provided sheets and pillow-cases. My itinerary took me to four hostels and ten B&Bs.

The B&Bs were a great way to sample the lifestyle of the local folks as I trudged across the country. Some proprietresses were very polished and gracious, while others were just plain, friendly farmfolk, all of whom kept nice, clean places and cooked good food. The B&Bs always served the meals on their best china. Typically, upon arrival, regardless of your sweaty, grubby appearance, you would be welcomed and asked to sit down in their parlor and have tea and cookies. They called the goodies something else that I can't recall, but they looked and tasted like cookies to me. I have heard it said that the practice was a means for them to decide if you are a person they want to have in their house. I never sensed such if it was true. In any event, I must have passed the test each time. Don't know how they could turn you away if you had made a reservation there and had no other place to lay your head for the night. As to the sleeping accommodations, twice, I had small rooms, traveling alone as I was, but more often the rooms would be large, well ventilated and cheerful. Rooms often had only one light hanging in the center. Nowhere did I see screens on the windows, and nowhere did I see air conditioning. Beds were comfortable. Usually, you didn't get a top sheet, but they provided comforters that were nearly three inches thick. That really wasn't practical because it was too hot with the comforter over you and too chilly with it off, but such is life in Northern England. I think the B&B union dictated it. This imaginary union that I allude to also dictates breakfast time - no earlier than 8:00 a.m. Considering the long miles that I had to walk most days, I needed to get as early a start as possible. Speaking of breakfasts, the B&Bs provide a full English breakfast - at least four times as much as I eat at home - juice, cereal, eggs, potatoes, bacon (really Canadian bacon), two or three links of sausage, broiled tomato, huge mushroom caps, toast (never saw an English muffin the entire time I was in England) and coffee or tea.

Continuing with the typical B&B, the bathroom had to be shared, although it never inconvenienced me. Except for three B&Bs, I was their only guest for the night. I had been concerned that they wouldn't want a single who would tie up a room, in case they could have rented it to a couple, but that never happened. While I am discussing bathrooms, each had an electrical device that heated water scalding hot in seconds, most had the type of shower head that is attached to a removable hose and all looked very new. Toilets were something else. They flush from the left side, almost universally, whereas most of ours in the USA flush from right side handles. When you flush them, you think you've unleashed Niagara Falls, but, despite the voluminous rush of water, their bowl designs really are not all that efficient, and you usually have to flush a second time. (I'm sure you are reading this article to find out such erudite bits of information.) Coin operated laundries were not to be found in these villages.

That introduces another subject, the villages. A few were towns with, perhaps, twenty buildings, but very often they were much smaller. The exterior of the houses was customarily constructed of stone, brick and flint, unpainted cement or white painted stucco, with slate or tile roofs (farther south, thatch roofs). Pretty flower gardens - think the ladies tried to outdo each other. Some villages had only six buildings or so. I don't believe that Keld had that many. Often, there were only a few houses, a pub, sometimes a church and cemetery and not much more, no petrol (gasoline to us Yanks) station, no grocery store, no any kind of store for that matter. Bolton on Swale is such a small village. Its claim to fame lies in Saint Mary's Cemetery where there is a pyramidal monument about twelve feet high honoring the memory of Henry Jenkins, who died in 1670 A.D. He is believed to be the person who lived the longest in England, i.e., 169 years. They contend that this is accurate based on much corroborative evidence, and there does not seem to be disagreement that I could discern about its veracity. The village pubs were godsend in places where the hostel or B&B did not serve dinner. You simply go up to the bar, place an order for your food and your pint of lager (some of them pronounced the word, "pint," as "peent"- took time for me to decipher what it was they were saying) and someone would bring it to your table - no tip expected. I was delighted to find that draft beer is no longer served at room temperature. It was chilled, just as in bars in the States. The townspeople in general were very friendly and helpful, but I found the pubs' bar tenders to be reserved if not a bit surly.

This is the third and final installment of an article by Glenn Oster covering a coast to coast hike he took across England last summer. In earlier installments, he discussed the trail, itself, the lodging accommodations, the domestic and wildlife encountered and the villages through which the trail passes. In this issue, Glenn discusses the terrain that the trail traverses, the scenery he enjoyed, the roads of northern England and the people who made his hike so memorable.

Now comes the terrain. England's fells, are not high in altitude compared with mountains in the Appalachian chain, let alone the Rockies and other ranges in Western USA. However, elevation variations are significant in that they rise from a very low base, and trails often are very steep with poor walking surfaces. All that makes for challenging hikes. Their fells in the Lake District in particular are dramatic and worthy of spending some time to hike over a number of days. There are beautiful lakes, a few waterfalls and rock strewn streams; hiking there is a rewarding experience. Most of this type of scenery is in the western part of the north country where I started my hike. That doesn't mean that other locations weren't beautiful in their own ways. I deeply enjoyed views of the Swale River (Swaledale) far below with its fields outlined by stone walls, and these were in the eastern half of the hike. Moreover, there were sweeping distant views from many of the high moors in the eastern national parks. Don't recall which way Alma Worthington

hiked it, but Bill Lindgren did his hike from East to West so as to save the Lake District for last - the dessert of the trip. The weat her comes from the West, and I didn't want cold rain blowing into my face. As such, I sacrificed direction for comfort. Atop some of the high moors, I did get some fiercely strong winds combined with hard rain, and I was grateful for having it striking against my rain jacket hood instead of into my face.

The high moors are treeless expanses with heather growing about a foot or so high. It was not in bloom yet throughout most of the distance, but it had just begun its beautiful bright purplish bloom in a few places in the East. It must be a true sensory delight to see a moor in full blossom. Often, the moors were covered with high, sedge-like grass that hid the peat from which it grows. If the peat was wet, hikers were in jet black mud; they would sink in several inches with each step. Fortunately, for me, there had been very little rain for a time, and my footing was much better. Dried foot prints showed how deeply other hikers had sunk in. There are eroded sections in the peat areas that require your scrambling down into broad gullies and back up every so often. The lower elevations and valleys had wild flowers, many like ours, but, on the other hand, many were unfamiliar to me. I couldn't carry one more ounce and elected not to take a book along for flower identification.

History abounds along the trail. There are prehistoric stone ceremonial circles, the remains of a huge Norman castle in Richmond, abbeys and monasteries closed by King Henry VIII in 1534 a.d. and countless stone ruins of centuries old structures. The trail passes lead mines that have been closed for many years. One could only speculate as to how many fathers worked these mines and died prematurely from lead poisoning. I assumed that the mines closed when the health hazard became known, but they closed earlier than that when England discovered that it could import lead less expensively. The trail passes many other industrial sites, many of which are operating stone quarries. One is the source of red aggregate, an ingredient used in certain asphalt roads (they call them tarmacs); it is enormous. Some are well hidden so as not to be an eye sore. Their operators were safety conscious in regard to hikers and built bridges and steps to keep them isolated from the loaded trucks that regularly ply the access roads the trail crosses.

The usage of words in northern England, reflects the ancient history of the area, words introduced during invasions by the Romans, Vikings, Danes and Normans. They use the word "fell" that we've discussed. They call streams smaller than rivers, "becks" or "gills," and Northern England is the area from whence we got our word "dale." A waterfall is a "force." A "rigg," I believe, is a ridge and a "nick" is a small ravine. An "unmetalled" road is one of soil or gravel, that is, one that is not of concrete, brick or tarmac. A lake may be referred to as a "water" as in Ennerdale Water, Ullswater or Haweswater. "Tumulus" is a mound of earth, as an example, 60 feet long, 30 feet wide and ten feet high that was sometimes an ancient burial site and at other times - a mystery. Speaking of mysteries, the word "how" is used as part of a place name, such as "Bentley How," but no local person I talked with could tell me what a "How" is..

The area is one of warm, friendly people who are happy to be left exactly as they are. One B&B owner (who, as a sideline activity, builds and sells personal computers) said that the southern English people regard them as spear chukkers, but they are satisfied to be just as they are, thank you

At times, the trail follows roads for short distances. Roads in the back country are narrow - one lane, dirt, gravel or tarmac, with stone walls or high hedges lining both sides. Some motorists drive like the wind, expecting that oncoming motorists will hear their screechy horns as they approach blind curves. No thought is given to lowering their speed. Presumably, the low traffic volume keeps accidents to a tolerable level. Driving on the left side of the road is standard in the U.K. I never drove there, but I also never got accustomed to it as I rode with others. It is easy to understand why vehicles in the U.K. are small - narrow roads and expensive petrol.

This hike is one I've wanted to take for many years. I'm pleased to have had the opportunity to do it and consider it one of the major hiking events of my life. I recommend it - only take about three hiking guidebooks in addition to full Ordnance Survey topographic maps instead of strip maps; also, allow about five additional days to hike more of the Lake Country fells and seek out side trip attractions that I missed.

Hike the C to C. You'll be glad you did. Then, like this cat, you'll know first hand what a "fell" is in addition to learning a good many other words you never hear in the USA. But, best of all, you will have seen some impressive scenery, will have been exposed to history preceding anything we normally hear about and will have enjoyed meeting some very nice people ---- even if they don't know how to pronounce the English language.

