

SPRING/SUMMER 1987 NEWSLETTER

MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM, Inc.



APOLLO PARK

MASON-DIXON TRAIL SYSTEM, Inc.



COVER STORY

The photograph reproduced on the cover of this newsletter was taken along Wilson run in Apollo County Park, see Section 12 of the MDT Guide.

It is printed with permission of the York Daily Record who printed a feature article on this park in their Feb. 1, 1986 "York Magazine".

This is the only park in the nation named in honor of the Apollo Space Mission, specifically the July 1969 Apollo-Saturn 11 flight. That flight made astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin the first men to walk on the moon.

On Jan. 9, 1987 York County Parks personnel were contacted to determine the status of a parking lot for this park. Their response was that none would be constructed until at least late summer 1987. This has both advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage of the lack of a parking lot is that it will limit visitors to the park and thus preserve its remoteness and relatively unspoiled charm.

This newsletter is published one month in advance of quarterly meetings as a service to its members by the MDT System, Inc. New members are welcome. Yearly dues are \$4.00 and new members are requested to add a one time application payment of \$3.00 to cover their first year application fee. For this \$7.00; however, new members receive a MDT Trail Guide and Maps, now selling for \$4.50. Send dues to:

Mason-Dixon Trail System
Membership Secretary
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

*
* A VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE *
* IS THERE A RED "*" ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL?? *
* HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES FOR 1987?? *
*
* A red "*" on the mailing label indicates that our records *
* show that your dues have not been paid for the current year. *
* These dues were payable on Jan. 1, 1987. Don't let your *
* membership lapse - this will result in your name being *
* dropped from the mailing list. *
*
* PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES TO MR. PAT BOYLE, MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY *
* AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS. *
*

DEADLINE

for material to be included in the Fall issue of the MDT Newsletter is October 1, 1987. Please send your material to the editor at [REDACTED]

TRAIL MAINTENANCE OPPORTUNITIES

1987 Trailcare Schedule

April 10-12

Terrace Mountain Trail at Raystown Lake. Camp at Seven Points Campground near Hesston.

May 8-10

Re-open Tuscarora Trail or blaze Link Trail on State Game Lands #81. Camp at Cowans Gap State Park.

June 5-7

Side hill trail construction on Mid State Trail at Blackwell. Camp at Pettecote Junction Campground at Cedar Run; sites 40-43. Free sitdown dinner at Cedar Run Inn for first 20 to apply.

July 10-12

Rebuild trail system at Chapman Run State Park in Allegheny National Forest. Camp at Chapman Run State Park.

August 7-9

Tuscarora Trail. Trip leader Sam Carlson. Camp at Cowans Gap State Park.

September 11-13

Cut relocation to re-open West Loop of Chuck Keiper Trail. Camp at site of former Coffin Rock Fire Tower. Bring your own water.

October 9-11

Thunder Swamp Trail. Camp at Dingmans Campground on U.S. Route 209.

November 6-8

Quehanna Trail. Camp at Parker Dam State Park.

All weekends begin Friday evening at the designated camping site. A full day's trail work on Saturday is followed by an evening of campfire sociability. After a morning of additional trail work, the weekend concludes about noon on Sunday. If you can't spare a whole weekend, you can arrange to join the group for whatever portion is convenient.

Volunteers are needed for all these trips, which are always fun, in addition to being beneficial to Pennsylvania's hiking trails. No experience or special skills are required. Bring work gloves; tools will be provided.

Please write or call Tom Thwaites if you plan to attend any of these events, or if you would like more information:

Trailcare Team Awards

All workers who attend two or more trips will receive a Certificate of Appreciation.

Those who contribute 20 or more hours of trail work on Trailcare trips will receive a special three-color "TRAILCARE TEAM" patch.

Earn your KTA Trailcare Team patch in 1987!

This 32-foot bridge over Saw Creek on the Thunder Swamp Trail (Pike County) was constructed by a KTA Trailcare Team in October 1986. The bridge design was provided by the Appalachian Trail Conference.

photo by Sam Rhody

TRAIL MAINTAINING WORKSHOP

10:00 A.M., Saturday, May 30, 1987

Here is a great opportunity to learn more about trail building and maintaining. There will be valuable information for both the novice and veteran maintainer. As we all know, those who hike the trails should help to care for them. It is also fun working at your own pace with old and new friends.

A badly eroded section of the Appalachian Trail on the east side of Lehigh Gap will be studied and discussed, after which a new relocation will be laid out and built -- by you.

Master trail builder Bob Proudman, who is well known to many of you, and the new Mid Atlantic Field Representative, Dennis Shaffer, will act as instructors.

The session will start at 10:00 A.M. sharp, May 30, 1987, rain or shine. If you get there at 9:30 and have preregistered, there will be coffee and donuts. At 5:00 P.M. we will adjourn to a local restaurant where you can have supper (at your own expense) followed by Bob's slides on various trail conditions from Maine to Georgia, and more discussion.

Bring work clothing, gloves, and trail lunch. If you have them, you can also bring a prybar and mattock. Meet at the intersection of the Appalachian Trail and Route 248 (at the bridge, about two miles south of Palmerton). For those who want to stay overnight, tent and shelter camping is available.

Please preregister by May 25 by sending a postcard with the names of those who will be participating, along with club affiliations, to:

Dick Tobias

This workshop should be a must for all trail maintainers. Come one, come all for a day of fun, learning, and pride. Host organizations for this activity will be the Philadelphia Trail Club, Keystone Trails Association, and the Appalachian Trail Conference. Hope to see you there.

--Dick Tobias



MARCH 7, 1987 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

There was a good turnout of 17 members for this meeting at the home of Clair Piersol, [REDACTED]

Highlights of the meeting are as follows:

- * Treasury balance as of Mar. 1, 1987 was \$1,176.73.
- * As of March 1, 1987, 77 members have paid their dues, 27 are delinquent.
- * MDT Newsletter is to be published one month prior to meetings.
- * Next meeting will be July 12, 1987 at Pinchot State Park. See details later in this newsletter.
- * Members present were not in favor of any increase in dues.
- * Trail reports were presented. These will be consolidated with other news of the Trail in a separate section later in the newsletter.
- * It was decided to investigate the cost of a "bar" for those who have hiked the Trail end to end. Proposed bar would be the same width as the patch and would contain "200 miler".
- * Last meeting of the year will be held Nov. 19, 1987 at the home of Dick Tobias. Details in the next newsletter.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE TIPS & OBSERVATIONS

You have probably had your fill of maintenance tips but here are a few more, along with some rambling comments on related matters, that may be worth your consideration.

- * When blazing, especially where the trail is on a road, carry a supply of yellow MDT Brochures for handouts. They will answer a lot of questions from naturally curious people who live adjacent to the trail and may possibly make some "Friends of the Trail" and result in some new memberships. If you need brochures, contact any club official or the newsletter editor.
- * Blaze on opposite sides of the same tree or pole or whatever when practical.
- * Select a taller person to blaze whenever possible. This is especially applicable to maintenance crews consisting mostly of Boy Scouts, some of whom can be quite young and not very tall. Higher blazes are less likely to be obscured by weeds/vegetation during the spring and summer months.
- * Picking up trash and litter along the trail would be a big plus and it is recommended that maintainers carry a plastic trash bag with them for this purpose. This bag might also be useful in case of a sudden unexpected rain shower.
- * As a comment on the above item, when Louise Sis and Ken Foster, two people who are concerned about improving our environment, hiked the trail from end to end, they picked up 300 pounds of aluminum cans. This certainly improved the appearance of the trail and, in addition, provided money for them to dine out for an evening or two. Louise also reported that they frequently stopped to talk with people along the trail. Such a laid back approach to hiking has much to commend it and creates a good atmosphere for future hikers on the trail.

WORK ON RELOCATING THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL IN THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT 9:00 AM. JUNE 6, 1987, FOR DETAILS CALL CRAIG DUNN AT [REDACTED]

THE YORK HIKING CLUB WITH RON GRAY AS LEADER WILL BE CONSTRUCTING A SHELTER, AND PRIVY ALONG THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL ON PETER'S MOUNTAIN STARTING IN JUNE. ANY ASSISTANCE YOU CAN GIVE RON WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

*****TRAIL UPDATE*****

- * Turner Darden reports that the Eastern Section is in good shape generally but some trimming and blazing is needed.
- * Bob Bennett has replaced John Wriston as maintainer for the Landenberg to Elk Neck Section. It is planned to relocate a portion of the trail near Christiana so that a section of railroad track walking can be eliminated.
- * Blazing is needed from Route 272 to Perryville. "Rock hopping" is suggested as the means of crossing two streams on this stretch of trail at the present time.
- * Havre de Grace to Broad Creek Section benefitted from a Wilmington Trail Club work hike on March 21. Problems exist due to too much bulldozing by developers.
- * Turner Darden has relocated portions of the trail between Glen Cove and Broad Creek off road.
- * On March 8 a short section of the trail north of Broad Creek was relocated so as to pass through a portion of the Boy Scout's of America (BSA) Property. This relocation required some trail building which was accomplished by Ron Gray, John Seville, Carl Reachard, George Schneider, Dick Tobias. (all of York Hiking Club), and four energetic BSA Staff Members.
- * Commendations are in order for a job well done and in a timely manner to Bill Bryan and fellow Scouts from Port Deposit Maryland. They did a very nice job of rebuilding the switchbacks going up from Mill Creek. (Near Lock 12).
- * Extensive blowdowns and logging were reported upstream from Apollo Park. Troop #37 BSA did some work on this problem but quite a bit more work needs to be done.
- * The trail relocation of about 2 miles near Accomac which was mentioned in the winter newsletter was accomplished on Feb. 21, 1987 by Ron Gray, Ron Whitman, and Jim Hooper. Ron Whitman has also accepted the responsibility for maintaining the section from the Route 30 bridge north to Codorus Furnace.

*****ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST*****

PINCHOT STATE PARK

Hikers on the MDT in or through Pinchot Park (Section 17 of the Trail Guide) are encouraged to stop at the Visitors Center for a possible walk with the Environmental Interpretive Technician (E.I.T.), More commonly known as a naturalist.

This center is slightly off the trail - It's adjacent to the beach on the trail (York Side) of the lake - but past hikes led by the naturalist have been quite interesting and informative. It is open 2 weeks before Memorial Day until Labor Day on the following schedule:

Mon & Tue -- closed
Wed & Thur - 9 - 5
Fri & Sat -- 1 - 9
Sun -- 9 - 5

Hikes ususally take place between 1 - 5 on Wed., Thurs., Fri., and Sat.

It is fairly common to see deer in this park. Bobwhite, ruffed grouse, and pileated woodpeckers can be spotted at times.

Winter activities include cross country skiing and ice fishing.

Also, as an additional item of interest, local newspapers recently reported that beavers had built a dam across Beaver Creek (a natural!), resulting in the flooding of Thundergust Mill Road to a depth of about four feet. For hikers not familiar with this area, the flooding was on the MDI since it and the Thundergust Mill Road are one and the same for this stretch of the trail as it leaves the Pinchot Park area going West.

MDI PUBLICIZED

On Sunday March 1, 1987 the "York Daily Record" published a "Spring 1987 Outdoor Guide".

This guide gave quite a bit of emphasis to the MDI with a center page map showing the location of the Trail through York County.

Also contained in the guide was an article called "Gray's Personality Stamped on Mason-Dixon Trail".

A fairly accurate description of the trail was included but several erroneous statements were made such as the MDI "follows a mule towpah of the C & O Canal through Susquehannock State Park in Maryland, North past Conowingo Dam".

As most of you undoubtedly know, the canal involved was the "Susquehanna and Tidewater" and the trail goes through the Susquehanna State Park. The Susquehannock State Park is on the opposite side of the River in Lancaster County, Pa.

KING'S GAP NATURE HAPPENINGS

On May 17, 1987, the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club and the Appalachian Audubon Society will sponsor a "Nature Happening Day" at the King's Gap Environmental Education Center which is located near Carlisle, Pa.

A five mile hike will start at 10:00 AM. Other activities include a bird walk, nature film, childrens activities, basics of backpacking presentation, family nature walks, insect scavenger hunt, tree lore lecture, incredible edible plants discussion, bluebird slides, etc., etc. Snacks, soups and sandwiches will be for sale. For more information call [REDACTED]

*****JULY 12, 1987 MEETING DETAILS*****

Next Mason-Dixon Trail System meeting to be held July 12 in Pinchot State Park, after hiking section 19 of the trail. Meet at Etnoyers' RV World 4 miles South of Dillsburg on R.H. side of RT.15 at 10:00 AM.

Louise Sis, the hike leader, provides the following additional remarks:

- * Bring lunch and water.
- * Hike will all be on roads so bring appropriate footwear.
- * We will hike a recent relocation and look for possible alternate off-road routes.
- * A "MDT Western Terminus" sign made by Louise and Rick will be erected at the end of the hike at Whiskey Springs.
- * Return to Pinchot Park via a surprise route for meeting and maybe some canoeing.
- * Call Louise [REDACTED] evenings for more information.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It was originally planned to mail this newsletter about April 1; however, it was decided at the March 7 meeting that MDT newsletters will be sent out approximately one month prior to club meetings.

When the date of the next meeting was subsequently set for July 12, I pointed out that this policy would result in a time interval of almost six months from the time of mailing the last newsletter and this did not correspond to my concept of a quarterly publication as originally proposed.

As a compromise, I was told that, for this time only, I could mail this newsletter out two months in advance of the July 12 meeting.

Additional discussion regarding the newsletter made it quite clear to me that many members did not agree with my concept of when it should be sent out, what it should contain, the method of publishing minutes, the advisability of spending the needed amount of money to publish it, etc.

Finally, in an informal discussion after the meeting with one of the more influential club officials, he stated that he receives too many publications of this type and generally throws them into the waste basket without looking at them. He also stated that he isn't interested in them and doesn't have time to read them.

I have been somewhat discouraged by this negative reception to the first newsletter and to my concepts as to what a newsletter should contain and when it should be mailed.

It is therefore likely that my tenure as editor will be quite short.

CONOWINGO DAM FISH LIFT

In December, 1986, newspaper articles indicated that the Federal Energy Regulatory Agency had ruled that Philadelphia Electric Co. (PECO) must build a second fish lift at its Conowingo Dam as well as make changes to its original lift built in 1972.

This ruling was made after 4 years of concentrated efforts to relocate millions of young shad above the four dams operated by the various power companies along the lower Susquehanna.

During this period the State of Maryland banned the catching of Shad as an endangered species and their biologists found a significant increase in this species in the upper Chesapeake Bay.

On Feb. 6, 1986 PECO petitioned the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to reconsider its order claiming that it contained errors and was not supported by the six year record in the case.

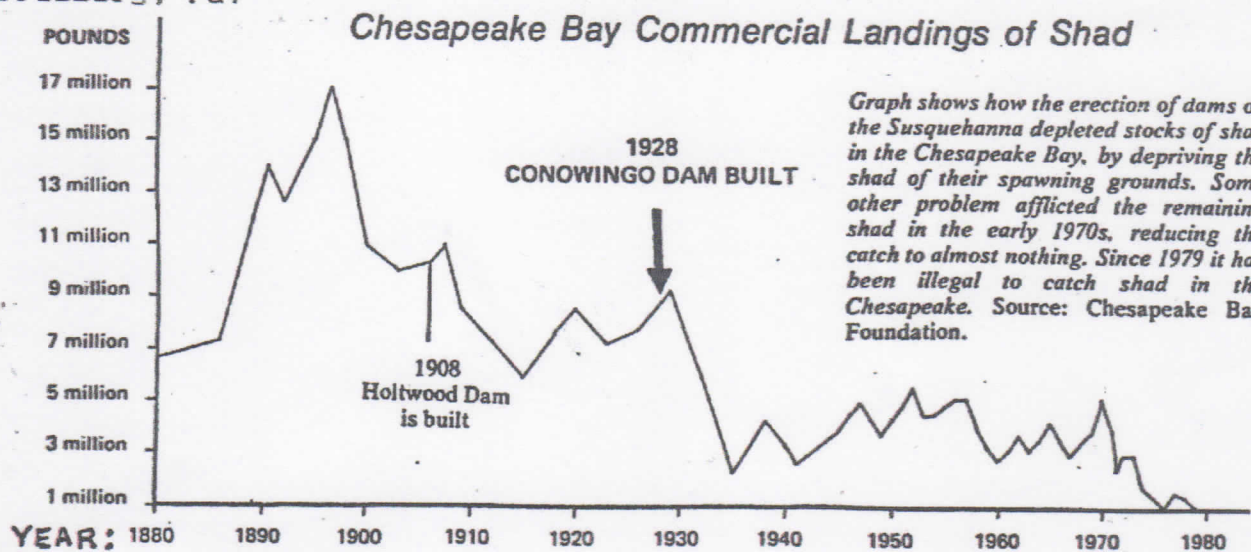
In addition to the fish passage issue, the utility appealed requirements that they adhere to an interim minimum flow at the facility and use a specific methodology to study the issue of permanent minimum flows, important for the protection of aquatic habitat downstream.

"Our position is that the existing fish lift is as effective as any in the United States" said Neil McDermott, PECO spokesman. "In our judgement there is no need to spend the money at this time on a new lift which may not only prove to be markedly inferior, but detract from the efficiency of the present lift".

However, Herbert H Ward III, Vice President of the upper Chesapeake Watershed Association of Cecil County, Md. stated that the appeal is "just a continuation of the same foot-dragging that's been going on for the last five years or so."

Environmentalists also maintain that the existing fish lift is on the wrong side of the dam to capture the most Shad. the fish, which swim upstream, are lured by the churning water to a trap at the base of the dam said William J. Goldsborough, a staff scientist for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. However, he and other environmentalists contend that the lure of churning water on the east side of the dam is masked by the discharge from the plant's turbines, and many fish cannot find the lift.

Currently, fish that reach the lift are carried to the top of the 95 foot high dam by a bucket-type elevator system, placed on a conveyor belt and deposited in a stainless steel tank. They are then dipped out of the tank with nets, two or three at a time, and deposited in a tank truck which hauls them upstream to spawn at a point south of Harrisburg, Pa.



PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS

The MDT passes through many historic areas and it is planned to describe some of these, together with any of their remaining structures, in future newsletters when suitable.

Some of the history associated with these areas is from a relatively recent period such as the Apollo-Saturn 11 Space Shot mentioned in the cover story, but most of it is associated with the history of a much earlier period.

Candidates for such articles include the canals along the Susquehanna and its tributaries, the old furnaces used for casting cannon and cannon balls in colonial times, the old ferries and the bridges - most of which were short lived as a result of ice, flooding, fire, demolition, etc.

Although the above mentioned items pertain primarily to the Western end of the trail, the Eastern end certainly has much history to offer, particularly along the Brandywine River. Members familiar with the history of this valley are invited to submit articles on this subject to the editor for publication.

Although the photograph reproduced below is not historically earthshaking, it seems to be a good example of the kind of photograph that should be submitted, if available, with any historical articles.

Here's a view of a photographer overlooking the Susquehanna during the Safe harbor Dam construction.

This shot was taken from the York County side, quite likely from a spot near the present MDT.

Reproduction of this photograph is with permission of the Safe Harbor Water Power Company and is from their 50th Anniversary Year booklet printed in 1981, which was made available by John Seville, York Hiking Club.

