



# Expanding Horizons

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The newsletter for friends of Adventures for Women

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Adventurous Women,

Because of our many new members, because people have been asking questions, and because it's fun to look back, we will be devoting portions of this and the next several editions of Expanding Horizons to AFW's roots - how we started, where we've been, and what we've been doing. I took my first AFW vacation back in 1996. Ten of us, with Betsy and Judith as our guides, spent a long weekend at Mountain Meadow B & B in Keene Valley, NY. We hiked Giant Mountain and other smaller, less strenuous trails in the area. After hiking we'd get cleaned up, hang out for a bit on the back porch and then walk to town for dinner at the Noonmark Diner or the Ausable Inn. We played in the river behind the B & B and one rainy afternoon drove into Lake Placid where we shopped and had dinner overlooking Mirror Lake. As I remember, there were the three Philadelphia Girls, Bonnie from Point Pleasant, Judith, Betsy (who had another commitment and therefore only stayed one night) and three other women whose names escape me now. I remember it as a wonderful introduction to the High Peaks area of the Adirondack Mountains and a great way to meet a group of women who loved the outdoors as much as I did.

This year we will continue AFW's tradition of high peak adventure in Keene Valley. As has been our custom for the past few years, we will incorporate book discussions. Lynne will choose the books and lead the discussion while we sit on the back porch, munching snacks before dinner. Our hikes will include a high peak, if possible, and a number of less strenuous, but equally rewarding treks to wondrous views. If you haven't already gone on one of our 'Dacks: Hiking and Literature Weekends, I highly recommend you do.

*enjoy the journey ... Pissilla*



*Resting on the way up Anthony's Nose*

## Spring Weekday Quickies

This season we're going to try something new - short, weekday hikes with a reward ... no, not that kind of reward - a view!! These hikes will start promptly at 11AM, so please plan on arriving by 10:45 or before. We will hike for an hour or so, hang out a bit at a lunch spot and be back to the cars between 1:30PM and 2PM. These hikes will occur on Tuesday or Thursday on weeks when another AFW hike is not scheduled. They will be posted on the website home page and will be announced by email on Sunday for the following week. Register at [www.adventuresforwomen.org](http://www.adventuresforwomen.org) if you're interested in being on the email list.

## Catskills Weekend Rescheduled to Fall

We had to cancel the 2/26-2/28 weekend at Straus Center because of the heavy snowstorm. Be sure to join us on the rescheduled trip from 9/17-9/19. See website for details.

# We've Come a Long Way!

Picture a lively stream, a place of both tranquility and energy, winding through a rugged landscape. That's the Adventures for Women experience – solace, friendship and revitalization in the midst of our stressful lives. AFW is the singular idea of Betsy Thomason, our founder and an outdoor-woman, who believes that for women, learning to be comfortable and competent in the outdoors means learning about themselves, their needs, aspirations and what they can become. Like that lively stream, AFW has grown wider and deeper as our members add to its vibrancy ... in enthusiastic, growing numbers and with fresh ideas. Yet its mission has stayed constant. Now is a good time to pause and look back to our beginnings, how far we've come and our hopes for the future.

**In the Beginning ...** In the Spring of 1981, Betsy held a hiking workshop in her local library, aptly named "Giving Up Goldilocks – an Introduction to Hiking", followed by a hike up Popolopen Torne in Harriman State Park. The group of nine women who gathered that Spring became "Adventures for Women in Outdoor Living" – AWOL(!) -- because Betsy considered the possibility of including other outdoor activities, such as gardening. Shortly



Gertrude's Nose – Fall '95

## For Our Troops ... by Priscilla P.

The son of one of our members has recently been deployed to Iraq. Shamefully, a few of us admitted that until she started talking about him and his unit, we hadn't given much thought to our soldiers serving in dangerous situations. I went to Georgia with Sue to see him off and was astounded by how young some of these men looked. I suppose they have to be 18, (young by most standards) but many looked much younger. In their exchange of emails, Sue's son volunteered a list of names of the younger soldiers in his troop (ages 18 – 23) who have not been getting much mail. A few AFW members decided to let them know that we think about them and their service to our country by sending packages of 'goodies' every now and again. If you'd like to help in this effort, you can contact one of us or bring something fairly small to the potluck that can be included in the packages – candy, snacks, packaged cookies, amusements (cards, magazines, puzzle books), cosmetics. Just remember it's very hot there now and things will melt, so no chocolate and such. This is not an AFW event, just another way our members meet and grow outside our club.

after, recognizing the connotations "AWOL" might have, she shortened the name to what it is today. AFW became a member organization with a quarterly newsletter in 1985 and formed its first Board of Directors in 2000. After almost 20 years of creative and tireless leadership, Betsy chose to pursue a different passion, breath training, and passed AFW on to a group of longtime members headed by Betty P. Since November 2000, AFW has been a not-for-profit organization fueled by dedicated volunteers who continue in Betsy's footsteps. Today, it is led by a Board of Trustees and a host of volunteer hike, trip and workshop coordinators. Thanks, Betsy, for starting us off!

**Day Hikes ...** In the early days of AFW, Betsy was the only hike leader and there were just two Saturday outings a month called "Joy Hikes," on trails that we are all familiar with today ... in Harriman State Park, in western New Jersey, and on both sides of the Hudson River. Betsy led the first Appalachian Trail hike series in NJ in 1986-1987 and her first very popular "In Search of Blueberries" hike in 1997.

Today, AFW is fortunate to have several volunteer hike leaders and can schedule many hikes each month, including weekends and weekdays.

**Dawn, Evening and Night Hikes ...** Neither dawn nor dusk has deterred AFW women from their hiking. Years ago, there were dawn hikes to High Tor via the Long Path, summer evening weekly walks in Bergen and Morris Counties and night hikes up Bear Mountain to Perkins Tower every New Year's day. The night sky and view is thrillingly different from a day hike!

Today, we continue some of these traditions with our annual Equinox and Solstice Sunset Hikes in Ramapo Mountain State Forest, led by Priscilla.

**Where We're Heading ...** AFW continues to be an energetic and fun group because of its members. To carry on at this level, we count on our members to not only join our scheduled activities but also to share their ideas for new adventures and perhaps even co-lead some events. We would love to hear from you.



Cross Country Skiing Trip – March '95

# Fun Facts on Harriman-Bear Mountain Park ... by Georgette F.\*

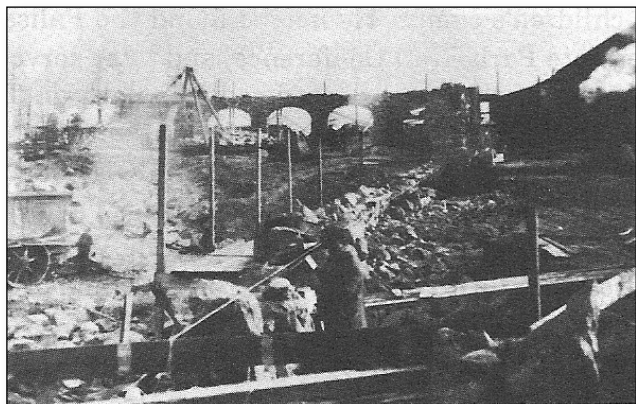
Many of us hike in Harriman-Bear Mountain State Park and love its many varied trails, rock scrambles, mountain top views and glistening lakes, but there's more to the Park than meets the eye. Here are some random facts to start you off, with more to come in future newsletters.

## Before It Was a Park

Today, the Park has over 300 miles of trails, both marked and unmarked. As you hike some of these trails, you'll notice the many mine holes and piles of tailings along the way. These are the remnants of the more than 20 prospector holes and iron mines from the 1800s, like Bradley Mine, Doodletown Mine, and Boston Mine, to name a few.

Hard to believe, but in the early 1900s, Bear Mountain was the site of a prison, holding hundreds of prisoners. Thanks to Mary Averell Harriman and other conservationists, the prison was demolished in 1910 with the creation of the Bear Mountain State Park. Work began on building a dock for steamboat excursions from Manhattan (cost, 85 cents for adults and 45 cents for children!). Bear Mountain Inn was completed in 1915.

Ice was once cut from Hessian Lake, at the foot of Bear Mountain, and sold in New York City by the Knickerbocker Ice Company. That was discontinued when the Bear Mountain State Park became a reality in 1911.

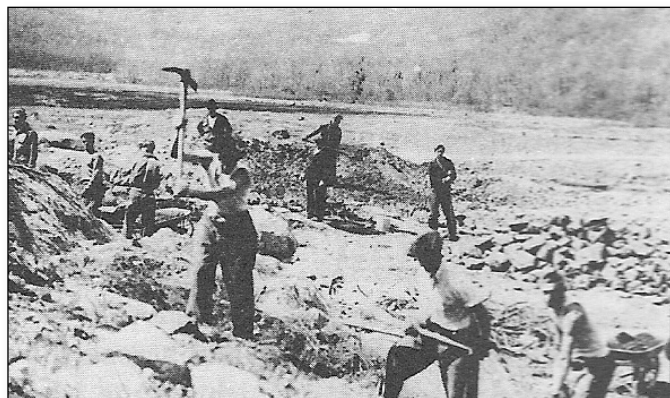


Construction of Bear Mountain Inn - 1914

## Old Woods Roads

Many of the hiking trails today are old woods roads. For example:

- The White Bar Trail as you leave the Johnstown Road parking area was once a paved road. It used to be a main road through Harriman, but closed in 1962 when Seven Lakes Drive was completed from Bear Mountain to Sloatsburg.
- The 1777 and 1779 Trails were the actual routes believed to have been used by troops during the Revolutionary War.
- The Hasenclever Road Trail was built in 1760, and is one of the oldest roads in the Park.



Building Lake Monomine - 1934

## The Lakes

The Park has 36 beautiful lakes and ponds, 22 of which are entirely man-made. Only 14 are natural and even some of these were enlarged by the building of dams. Several were given names from the languages of the Native Americans who once lived in the region, some with poetic meanings. For example:

- Tiorati is "blue as the sky"
- Cohasset is "place of pines"
- Kanawauke is "place of much water"
- Stahahee is "stones in the water"
- Lake Nawahunta is "place of trout" and was actually intended to be a fish hatchery
- Lake Askoti, "this side" and Lake Skannatati, "the other side" are appropriately named as they are on opposite sides of Seven Lakes Drive.

Three other lakes were never finished.

## Campsites and Other Fun Places

Let us not forget all the camps and recreation areas in the park. Several were overnight motor camps. One of them still remains - the Beaver Pond Campground by Lake Welch. There were also dozens of camps, both day and overnight, built for children, a few of which are still functioning today. Several others are no longer around, including the Girl Scout Camp Quid Nunc (Latin for "What Now?"), demolished in 1976 and still fondly remembered by one AFW member, Lynne G., who attended that camp as a young girl.

The Anthony Wayne area was not just the huge hikers' parking lot it is today. When it opened in the 1950s, it was a beautiful picnic area complete with playfields and a swimming pool where I and several other AFW members swam as children.

The Park once had two skiing areas which have since been closed - at Bear Mountain and at the hill by Silvermine Lake. Walk up the old ski hill and you can still see the old ski lift equipment.

Now you know some of the stories of the Park. The next time you're out in Harriman, think of the old ruins, mines and

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prospectors, and your hike will be that much more enjoyable. Along with AFW, Harriman has come a long way from its beginnings. Meet at "Blue as the Sky" some day for an AFW hike!

*\*Georgette loves to explore every trail and woods road, marked and unmarked, in Harriman, study its Trail Maps and learn about its history (from Bill Myles' "Harriman Trails - A Guide and History", online research and conversations with other long-time hikers.) Amazingly, she files all this information in her brain and so is always ready with an answer to questions from her fellow hikers. Our favorite response when we don't have the answer? "Ask Georgette."*

*So any questions you have about Harriman or any of the other places we hike, just let us know and we'll see if we can find the answer, or "Stump Georgette", in our next issue.*

### Save Your Spot

Our weekend trips are popular and often have a waiting list. Sending in your deposit by the required date is the only way to guarantee your registration. Without payment, AFW will have to release your spot to the next person on the waiting list.

## AFW Connections

*Now and then, AFW opens a door to a new challenge or experience or passion in a member's life ... beyond what it offers in its program of hikes, outings and workshops. Take for example, last November's City Path outing to the Green-wood Cemetery in Brooklyn where we heard fascinating stories of the lives of Green-wood's "residents", dating back to 1838. Diane M., an AFW member, was there and has this to say...*

*"Having grown up in Brooklyn, the tour had a special meaning for me. So, I emailed Jeff later to ask if any volunteers were needed to maintain flower gardens or clean statues. He informed me of a Civil War Project that had been underway since the cemetery received a grant in 2002. Volunteers were about to begin a new phase of the project, the goal of which was to identify all Civil War veterans interred at Green-Wood, and welcomed me to the next meeting. We were treated to a "mini" lesson in archive work by a Library Science professor from Brooklyn College. By filing and identifying hundreds of cemetery documents according to plot, we would make them accessible for further research.*

*I personally handled documents dating back to 1846. Most were mundane cemetery forms and hand drawn maps of the grave plots, with names of those interred, but some were more interesting: letters authorizing moving of an individual or requesting that certain people be prevented from being buried in the family plot (due to some falling from grace). It was definitely a thrill knowing the document in my hands was written before the Civil War!*

*I have been back twice to work on the project. In 2011, the Cemetery is planning a Memorial Day event celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War. I plan on helping with that and encourage anyone interested in the Civil War to go!*

*Thank you, AFW, for such a wonderful connection!"*



Backpackers ready to go!

### Membership Privacy

AFW does not allow the use of its membership list for anything other than AFW business. For more information on how we protect our membership directory, please see our Privacy Statement on the "Join Us" page of AFW's website.

### Updates and Alerts

Be sure to check the Home Page of our website regularly for changes and additions to the Adventure Schedule.

### Sign-ups & Cancellations

To sign up for an event, go to the "Sign-up" page on our website. To cancel out of an event, please send an email to [contactus@adventuresforwomen.org](mailto:contactus@adventuresforwomen.org), call 973-644-3592, or contact the leader of the event.

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