



# BERKSHIRE APPALACHIAN TRAIL NEWSLETTER

Issue 7: February 2020

## ANNUAL AT GATHERING

On February 1st, 2020 we hosted another successful Volunteer Gathering at Taconic High School. We had 85 people in attendance for our 18th Annual Gathering! We saw a lot of familiar faces with a few new additions. After the initial reuniting of old friends, Deb Weisenstein, A.T. Vice Chairperson, gave us a recap of the past year. Some of the highlights this year included; privy councils, the installation of a Shays' Rebellion interpretive kiosk, and hosting six Americorps members for Corridor Monitoring. Additionally, this year, we accumulated 9,554 volunteer hours on the Appalachian Trail! An impressive amount for only about 240 volunteers!

Looking to the future, we will be updating all the maps at trailhead kiosks, relocating the trail from the Junction of Money Brook to the A.T., as well as improving tent sites at October Mountain and Race Brook. Additionally, DCR will be removing non-native Norway Spruce removal near Pittsfield Road next winter. Additionally, Greenagers and a local Boy Scout troop will be replacing broken bog bridges in Sheffield and South Egremont.

The break out sessions were filled with ideas and the transferring of information for natural resource and corridor monitors, Upper Goose Pond and Overnight site Caretakers, as well as trail communities. These sessions gave volunteers the opportunity to explore new options of staying involved and veteran volunteers to gain valuable information about their positions. Some highlights include; discussing the Massachusetts Walking Tour through A.T. Communities which will be happening in mid June, continuing pest management at Upper Goose Pond through phragmites cutting, and regulations to follow when corridor monitoring.

After lunch, as always, the gear swap and raffle table were a hit showing no mercy to those high profile items. Additionally, we were able to recognize many of our volunteers that have accumulated many hours over the year(s). Below is the list of awardees. Thank you to everyone who volunteers every year, even just an afternoon a year makes a huge difference in preserving the Appalachian Trail. We look forward to seeing everyone in the Spring!

# VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

## ATC AWARDS

### 100 HR (Patch)

Aguilar, Monica  
Beer, Roger  
Camin, Jeanne  
Ferrante, Grace  
Lewis, Scott  
Lieff, Megan  
Pastorizi, Celia  
Wilson, Sean

### 500 HR (Cap)

Breach, Alan  
Brick, Mike  
Schumaker, Greg

### 1000HR (Vest)

Smith, Dean

### 4000 HR- Presidential Award

Catalano, Cosmo  
Pelletier, Jim

### 25 YR

Novack, Mike  
Novack, Penny

### 25 YR (Last Year)

Mary Berryhill  
Nancy Eaton  
Debra Klaber  
Joanne Sheron

## AMC Stewardship Award

### Pychowaska Award >96 Hours

Cahill, Margaret  
Cramp, Bonnie  
Cramp, Rob  
King, Barbara  
Pelletier, Julie  
Smith, Steve  
Weisenstein, Deb



*All of our volunteer attendees. Photo Credit: Monica Aguilar.*

### Hart Award > 224 Hours

Brick, Mike  
Catalano, Cosmo  
Fairbanks, Don  
Klaber, Debra  
Pelletier, Jim  
Pirog, Dave  
Rentz, Pete

### America the Beautiful Pass

Smith Steve  
Pirog Dave  
Rentz Pete  
Fairbanks Don  
Brick Mike  
Catalano Cosmo  
Pelletier Jim

# CORRIDOR MONITORING COORDINATOR

The Berkshire Chapter's A.T. Management Committee is seeking a Corridor Monitoring Program Coordinator. The Corridor Monitoring Program Coordinator is responsible for oversight of the regular monitoring of Appalachian Trail lands by the assigned Corridor Monitors, reporting on the results of Corridor Monitoring, overseeing implementation of the Corridor Boundary Maintenance program and follow up on Encroachment Reports.

A member of the A.T. Committee, the position requires good communication skills with staff and volunteers through email and phone, an organized work style and attention to details. Primary duties involve managing a 20 person volunteer Corridor Monitor corps, planning work schedules, and connecting regularly with staff from ATC and NPS regarding Corridor Boundary issues and policies. Although this is primarily an "office" position, 4-5 field visits to projects near the A.T. are likely between April and November. Experience with land surveys, property deeds and maps is helpful but not required. An extensive and experienced mentoring system exists to assist new Coordinators.

Attendance at six bi-monthly A.T. Committee meetings in Lanesborough, MA per year is important. Occasional absences can be supplemented by written updates. Average estimated weekly time commitment is 2 hours, with short periods of 10 hours per week.

Contact Cosmo Catalano, [at@amcberkshire.org](mailto:at@amcberkshire.org) for more info.

## CHECK IN/ CHECK OUT POLICY

This is something that you *should* already be doing when you are out volunteering on your own *but* if you are not or need a reminder below is the check in/ check out policy that the National Parks Services is starting to mandate. This means you should always have a reliable point of contact that knows your whereabouts, when you will be arriving home, and what actions to take if you do not come home.

The next page has a document you can use to inform your person of contact if you plan on volunteering by yourself (or even in a small group) on the trail.

## **Mass AT Committee**

### **A. T. Volunteer Check In/Check Out Notification**

**Instructions to Volunteer:** Leave with (or send this document to) a trusted, competent person when you are working alone in the field or on a project. This may be the one thing that gets you home safely.

**Your Name:**

**Date of Work:**

**Work Location** (start and finish points, shelter site, boundary segment, etc):

**Vehicle Location:**

**Vehicle Make, Model, Licence Plate:**

**Your Cell Phone #:**

**Estimated Return Time:**

**If no contact by return time, make the following calls in the order listed below. Have the above information available.**

- 1. If you are calling from Berkshire County: Call 911**

**OR**

**If you are calling from outside of Berkshire County: Call the Berkshire County Sheriff's Department Dispatch Center: 413-499-7357**

**THEN Call:**

- 2. AT Committee Volunteer Coordinator: Cosmo Catalano, 413-822-0094**  
**Coordinator will notify APPA Safety Officer at 304-650-2677**



# HISTORY- SHEFFIELD LIME KILN

By Robert Bristow, AT Cultural Resources Volunteer

In the southern portion of Berkshire County, Sheffield became one of the first settlements in 1726. The town was named after Sir Edmund Sheffield, the second duke of Buckingham. Along with farming, a small industry of mineral extraction began. The manufacturing of iron was possible due to the rich iron ore deposits and plentiful timber for charcoal. A related demand for lime was likewise supported by the abundant deposits of Stockbridge Limestone named after the neighboring Stockbridge Valley in New York.

In addition to building construction use of the stone, limestone was burned in kilns yielding powdered lime that exhibits overwhelming versatility for construction, agriculture and other needs. Strategically, the kilns have been placed near the mines and quarries where limestone is found in order to minimize transport of the raw material to the place of processing.

On record, the main quarry that supplied the Sheffield Lime Kilns is the Goodale Quarry founded by Sheffield Businessman Chester Goodale in the early 19th century. Goodale bought the marble quarries in the 1830s and operated them for 40 years. The quarry remained in operation for approximately 120 years and provided the raw material for several local lime kiln businesses.

Deed research records that Albert Barnes and Marcus Barnes purchased the kiln property in 1903 and one year later the A&M Barnes Lime Company gained ownership. The Chester Goodale Quarry and the Berkshire Hills Company partnered in 1905 and neighboring kiln remained in operation until the 1929 with a transfer of ownership to the Berkshire Hills Lime Company, Inc. and one year later to the United States Gypsum Company when the business transferred the operation to a modern day rotary lime kiln located one half mile east at the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad tracks. The property transferred to private ownership in 1943 and continued to exchange ownership several times until 1991 when the US federal government acquired the property to secure open space lands for the Appalachian Trail.

Since little history of the property is known, historic maps help us to understand the kiln complex. For example, Sanborn Maps (1912), used for fire insurance, noted the configuration of The Berkshire Hills Co. Lime Kilns and Warehouse. One might expect that a continuously fed lime kiln, burning wood 24/7, might have been a fire risk, and the Sanborn Map noted that there was a “man on duty at all times, no fire apparatus.” The maps further identify the infrastructure of facility with four lime kilns, sheds for bricks, staves, hoops, wagon and a cooper shop were found. Several other outbuildings are labeled including an office. Located ½ mile (0.8 km) northeast of the kilns a warehouse was listed. It appears the fifth kiln was built sometime after 1912 but before 1923, where the Sanborn Maps record the area as “the former site” of the Berkshire Hills Company, although it is believed the kilns continued operating for the rest of the decade. Overall, the Sanborn Maps are the only surviving visual record of the industrial site.



*Image of the most intact of the five kilns at Lime Kiln.*

*Photo Credit: Robert Bristow.*

## HISTORY- SHEFFIELD LIME KILN

Much of the day to day operation of the Sheffield lime kiln is known due the oral history conducted with a local resident Mr. Art Batacchi, by Mr. Michael King, of the Sheffield Historical Commission. During the early decades of the 1900's the kiln was a major employer in the community, supporting the local Pitcher School on Limekiln Road and a neighboring community of workers to operate the kiln year-round. As many as ten men were employed. Limestone from the Goodale Quarry and timber from the area fed five kilns. The only source of water at that time was from a well located at the Lime Kilns (currently off-site in a small storage shed). The kilns were a vertical shaft continuously-fired design. The lime kilns were individually top-loaded by limestone-filled quarry side dumping rail cars that travelled from neighboring quarries. Rail trestles abutted the kilns from the higher grounds northwest and utilized a narrow-gauge rail system. At the base of the kilns, draw tunnels permitted the quicklime to be extracted from the kiln and allowed to cool on a 190-foot (57 m) platform before being placed in wooden barrels for transport. Quicklime, the finished product was shipped off-site by another rail system. Barrels to transport the lime were also manufactured nearby in a still standing big red barn. This barn is likely the warehouse previously reported and based on the Sanborn maps.

Additional details on the kilns come from period research of the area. The kilns were vertical shaft continuous burning, using local timber for fuel. Kiln designs of the period included a firebrick lining, surfaced with regular brick and an iron sheath and/or band wrapped on the outside. The limestone was transported by a small gauge railway system from the quarry and dumped into the top of the shaft, known as the hopper. Wood fires were continuously fed on the raised foundation in a firebox so that at any time five kilns were in operation to meet the market demand. Present day foundations can be measured and give us the size of the structure. A raised stone foundation that the five kilns rest is 197 feet long and about 24 feet wide (the width varies since it is built into the hillside). A flat platform where the quicklime could cool is the same length and 45.5 feet wide.

Shortly after the closing of the Sheffield Lime Kiln, the Appalachian Trail was blazed through the valley. An early description of the trail and kiln is found in The Guide to the Appalachian Trail in New England, published by the Appalachian Trail Conference. The trail followed an unnamed dirt road by the "old deserted limekiln which is worth examining" (ATC 1939:113). Early hikers had the opportunity to observe the site shortly after operations ceased. Sometime in the mid-nineties, the AT was re-routed off the roads on the protected corridor, uphill from the kiln.

## AT NEWSLETTER SURVEY

This newsletter is a year old! We want to know what you think about it and how you think it could be improved. Any input is appreciated.

Do you want to become a contributor? Do you have a story to tell, wish to be a volunteer spotlight or have some information that you think would be helpful for the rest of the club?

Fill out the Google Form or email me directly if you have any input or want to contribute to the newsletter.

[Google Form](#)

or

email at [monica3151@gmail.com](mailto:monica3151@gmail.com)

## KAY WOOD DOCUMENTARY

Margaret Cahill, one of the Dalton A.T. Community members created an inspiring and informative video about Kay Woods' life. She was an instrumental member in helping to develop the Berkshire Appalachian Trail club as well as assisting in the architecture that we use on our shelters in Massachusetts.

Check out the video here:

[Kay Wood Documentary](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Our next Committee meeting will be Monday March 9th. We will be discussing the upcoming project plans at 5pm and the regular meeting will start at 7:30pm at Mount Greylock Visitor Center.

It is open to all! We encourage attendance, especially if you are interested in becoming a committee member. After that, we will be posting the project list and trail maintenance will be in full swing!

We look forward to seeing you all soon!

## HOURS REPORT

After volunteering please enter your own hours regularly. You can use this link to easily input them yourself:

<http://bit.ly/MassATHours>



## CONTACT US

Email us at:

[at@amcberkshire.org](mailto:at@amcberkshire.org)

Like us on Facebook at:  
Massachusetts Appalachian  
Trail Management  
Committee

Check us out at:

[https://amcberkshire.org/  
getting-involved](https://amcberkshire.org/getting-involved)