

Fall Hiking Week : When Did It Begin?

Dear AMC member:

Fall Hiking Week means three different hikes in the White Mountains each day and canoe trips on lovely rivers, all while based at an attractive inn with good food and wine. It is one of the AMC's fine traditions. And now the question has arisen: When did Fall Hiking Week begin?

In 1970, the listing in the AMC Bulletin called the trip the 29th annual Fall Hiking Week. In subsequent years, the trips were called the 30th, 31st etc. through 1981, which was termed the 40th annual trip. Thus, according to the 1970 listing, it would seem the first Fall Hiking Week was in 1941.

The Fall Hiking Week Committee felt that if 1991 would be the 50th anniversary, then something should be done to mark the occasion. Since I work at the library at Joy Street on one day of almost every week, I was asked to check the records.

I looked at the AMC Journals, beginning in 1882, and immediately struck pay dirt. That year there was an "Autumn Excursion" to the Equinox House in Manchester, Vt. On Sept. 28, 1882, 95 Appies left Boston by train in two special cars. Three other members joined enroute. Some climbed Mt. Equinox. Later, they traveled to Lake George for a boat ride. The Equinox House is still in operation.

Similar trips following the Fall Hiking Week pattern were listed in the Journal and Bulletin for most of the years from 1882 through 1988.

What brought about the listing of 1970 as the 29th year? I tried to find out. The leader that year was Roger Goodwin of Wrentham, Mass. I called his home and asked for Roger Goodwin. A lady answered and said, "Roger Goodwin died in the summer of 1988." With that road closed, I called the co-leader, George Ensor of New London, N.H., and asked him if he knew what was the basis for listing 1970 as the 29th year. In a letter, he told me, "I very vaguely recall that the leader thought it should have a number but didn't know where to start counting. I'm afraid we'll have to label the number as 'arbitrary.' "

Webster's dictionary gives the first meaning of arbitrary as "based on one's notion, preference or whim."

So now we're seven years too late to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Fall Hiking Week. Anyone for a bicentennial?

In dealing with the question of the first Fall Hiking Week, I read of nearly 100 excursions, many of them fascinating.

Here is one interesting journey. On Sept. 21, 1905, 70 AMCers boarded a special train bound for the Wildmere House near New Paltz, N. Y. At Albany, the cars of the special train were put on a steamer and taken to Poughkeepsie. There the travelers boarded a ferry for Highland, where they took "electrics" -- automobiles -- to New Paltz. From there, they rode in carriages to their destination. It is recorded that they climbed Millbrook Mountain. The Journal of that day did not record the name of the trip leader but the planning of this expedition must have been a monumental job.

In 1907, on what was called a "Fall Trip," 110 AMC people went to Moosehead Lake in Maine on a special train. They took a boat to the Mt. Kineo House. They climbed Squaw Mountain and on a paddle up Spencer Stream, there were 12 canoes.

In 1923, Harrie H. Whitney was the leader of an ambitious undertaking with a trip cost of \$99. The group went by train to Montreal, then took another train to Cornwall, Ont., where they boarded their own steamer. They sailed up the St. Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers. They hiked to the top of Les Emboulements, which

is 2551 feet high. Since they probably started at sea level, they must have had a bit of a climb.

In most of the trips before the 1920s, travel was by train. Railroads were used into the 1930s. The notices did not always mention the method of travel.

From 1882 to the present, there were 32 Fall Hiking Weeks and 26 Autumn Excursions. Many other trips were held with other titles or with no titles. Almost all followed the Fall Hiking Week pattern of a stay at an inn with day hiking and some canoe trips.

The fall hikers went to many well-known inns, most of which no longer exist. Trips went to Waterville Valley eight times, the Crawford House in Crawford Notch 16 times, the Ravine House in Randolph six times, the Waumbek Inn in Jefferson eight times, the New England Inn in Intervale five times and the Eagle Mountain House in Jackson five times.

The Crawford House must have been a favored place in part because of the proximity of the railroad station, now an AMC visitor center.

As for leaders known to many club members, Al Robertson served as Fall Hiking Week leader five times and Mal Masters three times. Neil Whitman was a co-leader four times. Romney Robinson was the leader three times.

It must have been a great moment on a crisp fall day near the turn of the century when AMCs filling two railroad cars reached their destination and debarked, carrying knapsacks, hiking boots and all their other gear.

Alan Saftel

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Fall Hiking Week: 1882 to 1988

(Information on trips from 1882 to 1916 came from the AMC Journal, which carried accounts of trips already held. After 1916, the Bulletin carried advance information. When trips are missing, it is because the publication for that year could not be found.)

1882 - Autumn Excursion, Manchester, Vt. On Sept. 28, 95 Appies left Boston by train in two special cars. Three other participants joined the group enroute to the Equinox House. Some climbed Mt. Equinox. Later, they traveled to Lake George for a trip on the lake.

1886 - Autumn Excursion. A party of 37 left Boston by train on Sept. 3 for the Adirondacks. At Westport, they took stage coaches to Winsor House in Elizabethtown. Ten ascended Hurricane Mountain. All went to Beede's for four days. All visited Ausable Ponds. Then 20 climbed Mt. Marcy.

1889 - Ashfield Excursion. Near Greenfield, Mass. Sept. 25 to Oct. 3. Thirty-three went on trip and enjoyed walks and drives.

1890 - Autumn Excursion to Squam Lake, N.H. Forty-three stayed at Asquam House in Holderness. The party left Boston Sept. 24, presumably by train. Trips were taken on Squam Lake, Squam Mountain, Mt. Prospect in Plymouth and Red Hill and Peaked Hill in Bristol. Mr. Ritchie conducted the trip. "Accommodations were excellent."

1891 - Autumn Excursion to Tamworth, N. H., where 59 stayed at the Wiggins Hotel. Climbs were made on Mt. Passaconaway and Mt. Chocorua.

1892 - Autumn Excursion. Forty went by rail to the Hotel Brandon in Brandon, Vt., on Oct. 14. Mt. Killington was climbed.

- 1893 - Autumn Excursion to Ashfield, Mass., on Oct. 4. Twenty-six took part.
- 1894 - Autumn Excursion from Sept. 28 to Oct. 6. Forty-six went by rail to West Burke, Vt., and stayed at Willoughby Lake.
- 1895 - Autumn Excursion from Oct. 3 to 12. Fifty-three went by train to Lake Minnewaska, N. Y.
- 1896 - Autumn Excursion to Waterville, N. H., from Oct. 8 to 17. Sixty-one took part.
- 1897 - Autumn Excursion to Norfolk, Conn., from Oct. 2 to 11. Fifty-nine stayed at the Stevens House and hiked in the Berkshire Hills.
- 1898 - Fall Excursion to Dixville Notch and the Rangeley Lakes. A record 86 participants took a train to the Crawford House on Sept. 23. They took a special train to Colebrook.
- 1899 - Fall Excursion from Sept. 30 to Oct 7. Fifty-six stayed at Breadloaf in Ripton, Vt. Participants climbed Mt. Lincoln where they found six inches of snow.
- 1900 - Walking Trip. Participants took the train to Bristol, N. H. After a boat ride on Newfound Lake, they walked to the Hillside Farm in Plymouth, the Pemigewasset House in Compton, the Hillside House in North Woodstock, the Deer Park Hotel in Lisbon and Breezy Hill House. The 14 hikers walked 120 miles in seven days, an average of 17 miles a day. They started on Sept. 6.
- 1901 - Autumn Excursion to Waterville, N. H. Eight-nine took part and Mt. Tecumseh was climbed. They started on Sept. 21.
- 1902 - Excursion to the Crawford House from Sept. 20 to 28. One hundred fifty-three rode to the hotel on a special train. Climbs were made on Mt. Washington and Mt. Webster.
- 1903 - Walking Party. Eleven started in Plymouth, N. H., and stayed at the Pemigewasset House. They went to Rumney, the Moosilauke Inn, the Summit House, Mt. Chocorua, the Chase Farm and South Moat.
- 1904 - Sixty-five went in a special train to Profile House via Plymouth and North Woodstock, N. H., on Sept. 17. Participants climbed Cannon Mountain and Mt. Lafayette.
- 1905 - Autumn Excursion to Lake Minnewaska, N. Y. Seventy took a special train to Albany on Sept. 21. Railway cars were put on a steamer to Poughkeepsie and on a ferry to Highland. "Electrics" (autos) were ridden to New Paltz and carriages were taken to the Wildmere House. Among the trips was one to Millbrook Mountain.
- 1906 - October Excursion to the Wachusett House in Princeton, Mass. Fifty-one participated. Trip began on Oct. 6.
- 1907 - Fall trip to Moosehead Lake, Maine. One hundred and ten participants took a special train to Kineo Station and a boat to the Mt. Kineo House. There were 12 canoes on a paddle up Spencer Stream. Squaw Mountain was climbed.
- 1908 - Crawford House in Crawford Notch, N. H.
- 1909 - Bridgton, Maine.
- 1910 - One hundred and ten visited the Ausable Club in the Adirondacks from Sept. 22 to Oct. 2.
- 1911 - Seal Harbor on Mt. Desert Island in Maine. Participants numbered 43.
- 1912 - Northern White Mountains.
- 1913 - Green Mountains of Vermont. Seventy-nine took part. Leader was W. S. Edmands.
- 1914 - Sixty-one went to Williamstown, Mass., from Oct. 3 to 12.
- 1915 - Labor Day Excursion from Sept. 2 to 7 at the Iron Mountain House in Jackson, N. H. Fifty-three took part. Visits were made to Carter, Madison and Lakes of the Clouds huts.

(Now reports from Journal end. The following reports come from Bulletin.)

- 1916 - Labor Day Excursion to Franconia, N. H., from Sept. 1 to 6. Participants went by train to Greenfield and by car to the Brunswick Hotel. Total cost was \$18.
- 1917 Fall Excursion, to Deer Park Hotel in North Woodstock, N.Y. Sept. 22 to 29. Cost \$33:50. L W. H. Ritter.
- 1918 - September Range Walk. Sept. 14 to 28. Carter Hut, Glen House, Lakes of the Clouds, Carter Hut, North Chatham. Cost: \$34:50. L Howard Jackson.
- 1919 - Autumn Excursion. Sept. 20 to 28. Hotel Greylock, Williams College, Mass. Hotel had "permanent orchestra." Hiking in Berkshires. Cost \$50. L T. S. Conant.
- 1920 - Autumn Excursion. Waterville Valley, N. H. Travel by train to Elliott's Hotel. Climbed Osceola. Cost \$50. L Harrie H. Whitney.
- 1921 - Autumn Excursion to Saranac Lake Inn in New York. Sept. 16 to 26. Cost \$95 including train. L Harrie H. Whitney.
- 1922 - Columbus Day Excursion. Oct. 11 to 15. Huntoon House in North Sutton, N. H. Cost \$30, including train. Climbed Kearsage South and Mt. Sunapee. L John Odiorne.
- 1923 - Autumn Excursion to the Saguenay River in Quebec. Train to Montreal and Cornwall, Ontario, where group took own steamer. Climbed Les Eboulements, 2551 feet. Cost \$99. L Harrie H. Whitney.
- 1924 - Autumn Excursion to Waterville Inn in Waterville Valley, N. H. Climbed Osceola, Whiteface and others. Cost of \$53 included transportation. L George F. Haskell.
- 1925 - Laurentian Mountains of Quebec on Sept. 11 to 22. Stayed at St. Donat Chalet. Cost \$76. L Harrie H. Whitney.
- 1927 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House in Crawford Notch, N. H. Sept. 22 to Oct. 2. L William E. Leonard.
- 1928 - Crawford House, N. H.
- 1929 - Autumn Excursion to Saguenay River and Gaspee Peninsula. Sept. 5 to 15. L Harrie H. Whitney.
- 1930 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House, N. H. Sept. 20 to 30. L William E. Leonard.
- 1931 - Autumn Excursion to the Hotel Alpine in North Woodstock, N. H. Hiked in Franconia Notch. Cost for single with bath: \$119.50. L William E. Leonard.
- 1932 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House, N. H. Climbed in Presidentials and Franconia. L William E. Leonard.
- 1933 - Autumn Excursion to Saguenay River and Gaspee Peninsula. Train to Montreal, then ship. Cost \$98. L Dr. John B May.
- 1934 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House, N. H. Sept. 20 to 30. Cost of hotel \$46 and up. L Edward K. Allen.
- 1935 - Excursion to Newfoundland and Labrador. Sept. 2 to 14. Traveled on train in special cars and then on ship. Cost \$148. L H. Holland Whitney.
- 1936 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House, N. H. Sept. 17 to 27. Hiked Presidentials and Franconia Notch. Cost \$45. L William F. Rogers.
- 1937 - Annual Crawford House Party. Sept. 16 to 26. Cost \$47:50 and up. L H. Whipple Abbott.
- 1938 - Lake Mansfield Trout Club in Lake Mansfield, Vt. Hiking on Mt. Mansfield and the Long Trail. Sept. 16 to 25. Travel by auto was suggested unless many wanted to go by train. L Eleanor A. Abbott.
- 1939 - No trip.
- 1940 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House, N. H. Sept. 12 to 22. L H. Whipple Abbott.
- 1941 - Waterville Inn. L Winthrop F. Potter of Lexington, Mass. Phone Lex 1776.
- 1942 - The Northfield. L Clifford Hicks.

- 1943 - Autumn Excursion to Crawford House, N.H. \$52 and up. L Winthrop F. Potter of Lexington. Phone : Lex-1776.
- 1944 - No trip.
- 1945 - Crawford House. L Rhodes Garrison.
- 1946 - Ravine House in Randolph, N. H. Hiked Northern Peaks. Sept. 21 to 29. \$52 and up. Travel by rail or car. L Archie C. Grant.
- 1947 - Ravine House in Randolph, N. H. \$6:50 a day and up. L Jessie L. Mechling.
- 1948 - Ravine House in Randolph, N. H. Sept. 25 to Oct. 3. L Roy E. Davis.
- 1949 - Waterville Inn in Waterville Valley, N. H. Sept. 17 to 25 L Gerald E. Fosbroke.
- 1950 - Waterville Inn, N. H. Sept. 16 to 24. \$7 a day and up. L Gerald E. Fosbroke.
- 1951 - Waterville Inn, N. H. Sept. 22 to 30. L Gerald E. Fosbroke.
- 1952 - Same as 1951.
- 1952 - Annual Fall Hiking Trip. Ravine House in Randolph, N. H. \$8:50 a day and up. L Malcolm C. Choate.
- 1953 - Same as 1952.
- 1954 - Same as 1952.
- 1955 - Crawford House.
- 1956 - Annual Fall Hiking Trip. Crawford House, N. H. Sept. 21 to 30. \$76:50 and up for 10 days. L Albert S. Robertson.
- 1957 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Alpine Hotel in North Woodstock, N. H. Sept. 20 to 29. \$7.75 a day and up. CL Albert S. Robertson.
- 1958 - Same as 1957.
- 1959 - Fall Hiking Week. Crawford House, N. H. Sept. 25 to Oct. 4. 100th anniversary of Crawford House. L Albert S. Robertson. CL Tessie Connelly.
- 1960 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Crawford House, N. H. Leaders same as 1959.
- 1961 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Hotel Alpine, North Woodstock, N. H. Sept. 22 to Oct. 1. Hike Pemigewasset Wilderness, Mt. Moosilauke and Waterville Valley. L Kay Justley, CL Neil Whitman.
- 1962 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Waumbek Hotel in Jefferson, N. H. Climbed Moriah, Madison and Adams in one day. L Edith Almgren, CL Neil Whitman.
- 1963 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Waumbek Inn, Jefferson, N. H. Sept. 13 to 22. \$11 a day and up. L Albert S. Robertson, CL Doris E. McGuirk.
- 1964 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Waumbek Inn, Jefferson, N. H. Sept. 18 to 27. A, B and C hikes offered. (First mention of this.) L Albert S. Robertson, CL Stanley L. Sisson, Weekend Leader, Stanley Matthews.
- 1965 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. The Waumbek, Jefferson, N. H. \$12 a day and up. If interested in flatwater canoeing, notify Malcolm H. Masters, leader, 3 Ginn Road, Winchester, Mass. CL Stanley L. Sisson.
- 1966 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Eastern Slopes Inn, North Conway, N. H. Sept. 9 to 18. \$12 a day and up. L Malcolm H. Masters, CL Stanley L. Sisson.
- 1967 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. The Waumbek Inn, Jefferson, N. H. Sept. 8 to 17. Three hikes daily and several canoe trips. \$13 a day and up. L Roger L. Goodwin, CL Stanley L. Sisson.
- 1968 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. Waumbek Inn, Jefferson, N. H. Sept. 13 to 22. No section of the mountains too distant for a day's outing. Mal Masters will lead several canoe trips. \$14 a day and up. L Roger L. Goodwin, CL Stanley L. Sisson.
- 1969 - Annual Fall Hiking Week. The Waumbek, Jefferson, N. H. Three hikes daily. \$17 a day and up. L Roger L. Goodwin, CL Norman Griest.
- 1970 - 29th Annual Fall Hiking Week. Waumbek Inn, Jefferson, N. H. Sept. 18 to 27. Three trips daily for serious hikers plus Bootleg Board. Mal Masters will host several canoe trips. \$18 a day and up. L Roger L. Goodwin, CL John