

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

1937 - 1943

" FINDING AID FOR BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS:"

<u>VOLUME & ISSUE NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC:</u>
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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

November, 1937

Number 1

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service of the Department of the Interior is interested in keeping the public fully informed about the Blue Ridge Parkway, especially those who live close by. We wish it were possible to have a "long talk over the fence" with each one of you in the manner of all good neighbors. With 500 miles to cover you can readily see that this is a real task and it may be some time before we can shake hands with all of you. We still have that in mind, but, meanwhile, we have hit upon the idea of this paper. It will be placed "from time to time" in the post offices, general stores, and other central points so that you may help yourself to your copy.

We shall answer here some of the questions we know you are asking about the Parkway and we shall discuss problems of concern to you and to us. At times we hope to write about matters that are not problems and we may even get to the point of "swapping yarns". Any inquiries will be welcomed and should be mailed to the Acting Superintendent, Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

ABOUT THE PARKWAY

Over 100 miles of the scenic road can now be driven in the two states of Virginia and North Carolina, although the work has by no means been completed. Black top road surfacing, such as is used on many of the important highways, will be placed probably next spring. Landscape development, including improvement of the woods,

planting and seeding, provision of food and protection for quail and other game may also begin in the spring. Also, yet to be built are the safety guard fences along the Parkway road. Everyone may now drive the Parkway, but at his own risk. It will not be officially opened and advertised until completion.

Many of you have worked on the road. Others have either given or sold land for the Parkway. In the latter case, you have talked with agents from the State Highway Department who are responsible for the land program. Title to those lands will soon pass to the United States. At that time, with a few exceptions, the lands will need be vacated by their former owners. A few acres of the Parkway lands may later be rented by the Government to nearby owners for farming purposes and in the near future we shall discuss that plan in the NEWS. The National Park Service will be represented in each state by a park ranger who will be in charge of the lands, to protect them from trespass, to watch for fires and otherwise be helpful to Parkway travelers, its neighbors, and all others. Many of you in North Carolina should know Rufus Wagoner, of Sparta, who has this job in your state. We understand that the Virginia ranger is to be on the job very soon.

PLEASE COOPERATE

Through the NEWS, we hope to win your cooperation and help, and those of you whose homes look over the Parkway land are very much in a position to help. We have laid out the park lands for the purpose of saving the scenery for the thousands, including yourselves,

who will enjoy it in the future. The trees, shrubs and flowers of the mountains are a part of that scenery. One of our biggest threats is fire; the other is unlawful cutting of timber on the park lands by tourists or by neighboring land owners, either by mistake or otherwise. You can help us to stop this destruction by being careful with fire and by stopping any trespasser whom you see using the park lands unlawfully.

We would also point out that the old rail fences on some parts of the park land were paid for by the state and are Government property. Together with the hedge-rows of trees and shrubs along them, these fences often are beautiful

and provide cover and food for birds and other game. Some of the fences will be left in place as part of the picture to be seen from the drive. Others will be re-set along property lines. Please do not remove them from your former property, unless you are sure they do not belong to the Parkway land. If you are in doubt, write us.

In concluding this first issue of the NEWS, this Service wishes to thank you for your many acts of friendliness. We know that many of you are glad to see the Parkway developed through your country and we feel that the work is gaining new friends daily.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

December 1937

Number 2

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service,
United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building,
Roanoke, Virginia.

MUCH COMMENT ON THE NEWS

As a result of the first issue, we have received numerous letters about the idea of this paper and about the parkway. The comments were of all kinds, shape and size and they proved to us that there is much to write about. Our test will be whether the favorable comments win over the others as issues go by and we hope you will continue to pass on your judgments. We have not yet answered all the inquiries but we mean to in time. Some of those which are of general interest, we may discuss in future issues of the News.

We circulated 500 copies of the first paper which was about half enough to meet the needs. This, we gathered from the number of people who wrote for the copy they did not get and this we hope to remedy in time also.

LANDS TO BE LEASED TO FARMERS

In some sections the parkway is built through farming country. In planning the road, we have tried as far as possible to have it pass around and not through the farming lands and buildings. In the 500 miles, we could not always avoid the farms, however, and the parkway boundaries do include a sizable acreage of good crop land and pasturage.

It should not be necessary to describe to you the scenery for which the Blue Ridge is famous or to say that the parkway is being built "to show it and to save it." The distant views from the mountain tops, the woodlands of pine, hemlock and hardwood, the rhododendron and mountain ivy make for a kind of scenery which is hard to find elsewhere.

Not all people realize, however, that the farm lands of the Blue Ridge add much to the scenery. In our opinion the long stretches of grain, the fruit orchards, and the green pastures with the cows and sheep are a part of the picture which we all want to preserve. These farmed areas open up the distant views which would be hidden if the side of the road were all forest. To keep this part of the picture, we have depended on two things. The first is the scenic easement idea by which the owner of the land agrees not to place billboards or anything unsightly within view from the road. The second idea is that it may sometimes be of advantage to the parkway and the nearby farmer as well to arrange for the leasing of farm lands inside the park property. A few agreements of this kind were made last year and we feel they worked well.

The Park Service, of course, must be the judge of how all parkway lands should be used. No former owner should take it for granted, therefore, that he has a right to lease land now or in the future. Furthermore, we must obtain approval in Washington before we can give a final answer. A study is now being made along the parkway for landscape development, including tree and shrub planting. The hay on some meadow lands will be cut by the parkway workmen for mulching the plants. Some of the open lands will be planted in this program and others allowed to grow back naturally. We do not expect to lease any of the woodlands along the parkway. Other lands which have been recently cultivated may be seeded with grass for possible lease as pasture in the future. Lands which are

in need of rest may be limed and sowed in cover crop for some time before available for lease.

Since leasing will depend on all these things and more, you can realize that each property is a separate problem. You can also realize why we cannot lease until all of the work on parkway lands is done which may mean a year or more in some cases.

Since so much of the leasing is in the future, it is suggested that you rely on us to come to you about it at the proper time. Meanwhile, if you are especially concerned, write to us and we will tell you what we can. While each property will mean a separate dealing between the parkway office and the farmer, many of the conditions will be the same in all cases. It is believed that the former owner of the land should have the first chance to lease it. If he is not interested, it will be discussed with other nearby farmers. For the present, actual rent will be on the basis of \$1.00 per acre per year. While, in fairness to everyone, final leases of orchards and other special lands may have to be at a higher rate per acre than average land, it is not the idea that the parkway should make a cash profit from the lease. In addition to the actual rent, the owner must agree to take proper care of the land and in some cases to make improvements to the land. It is this part of the agreement which we consider of most importance to the parkway.

For the present, leases will be made only for short terms not longer than one year. When planting work is completed and final land-use plans can be made, we should be able to offer some assurance of yearly renewals or longer term leases.

SHARE-CROPPING OF HAY

Another type of cooperative arrangement was started last year in the share cropping of hay on the parkway meadows. This method may be continued this year on sections where construction is just beginning, but most of the hay on completed sections will be mowed by our own forces for use in mulching during the planting and seeding work. After the landscape work is completed, we will also have more to say about share cropping of hay.

THE SEASON

The months have rolled around too fast for us. Here we are well into the hunting season and we haven't written our story on that subject. The parkway lands are to become a game preserve on which there is to be no hunting but we hope plenty of game. Bird and animal feeding grounds and possibly some actual breeding are part of the program you will all be interested in. Till get around to that story remember that game must have refuge to develop more of its kind.

Also a matter of season--we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

January 1938

Number 3

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

WOODLANDS ALONG THE PARKWAY

As we write this bulletin we can look from our offices in Roanoke across the way to a thermometer which today reads at 16 degrees and we know it must be cold up along the mountains. Winter is here all right and we know that your work has turned from the plowing and the harvesting in the frozen fields to the repair of buildings and tools and to filling up the wood bin. As you all must realize, this Service is very interested in preserving the woodlands along the parkway. Every tree and bush inside the boundary is Government owned and will be protected as much as any other kind of Government property. Cutting of any kind without special written permission is unlawful. If any of you are not sure about the property line, write us or see the ranger on your section. We shall be glad to help you find it.

We want to impress upon property owners along the parkway route where construction has not yet begun that any timber on lands which are to become parkway lands is more valuable to us standing than it would be to you in cord wood or as lumber. The States of Virginia and North Carolina have made every effort to show that they are going to offer a fair price for the land. The timber value will naturally be part of the price that you will be offered by the State. Where such lands are concerned you can help us a great deal if you will ask us or the State people before you cut. The State agents will be around to see you in due time and in many cases it will not mean a long wait.

We realize, of course, that we have no control over timber beyond our boundaries. We would like to point out to

you, however, that fine tracts of woodlands will be admired just as much by the parkway visitors whether we own them or you own them. When you cut your timber, we suggest that you bear this in mind. Do a clean job; flatten down the laps at least and protect the young growth. This will give your next crop of timber a better chance and will prevent fire and everyone can take more pride in the lands which are seen from the parkway.

FIREWOOD FREE TO RELIEF FAMILIES

In cleaning up some of our parks, we have cut a small amount of dead chestnut and some dead oak which has been stacked in cord wood lengths. We have permission to give free a limited amount of this wood to families in need of relief. A letter from your county relief agency to Mr. Sam P. Weems at Galax, Va., or to the foreman in charge of the park is all that is necessary. We cannot haul the wood and any family wishing to get it must provide the truck or team. No wood will be given except for use in the home. The wood may be had at Rocky Knob Park near Floyd, Cumberland Knob Park near Galax and at Bluff Park near Sparta.

GRAZING ON PARKWAY LANDS

During the past year, we noted that a few farmers have allowed cattle and sheep grazing on nearby private lands to wander across the parkway. We realize that in many cases this happens because the owner has not had time during the busy crop season to rebuild property fences. The State, when buying the land, has usually made it clear to you that fencing will be necessary and the State has in many cases increased the amount of the land purchase price to

(over)

repay you for this work. Every farmer knows that "good fences make good neighbors" and this will equally be true between park lands and your own. We would like to urge you to use the winter months for this work. Next year we will have to see that cattle do not feed on the parkway lands.

VIRGINIA RANGER APPOINTED

Mr. Frank A. Farrell, foreman in charge of the work at Rocky Knob Park, has been designated as deputy ranger for the Virginia section of the parkway. Mr. Farrell now resides in Floyd.

CONTRACTS COMPLETED

Grading work on the parkway between Tuggles Gap at Virginia Route No. 8 and the Meadows of Dan at Route No. 58 has been finished since the last Parkway News. The North Carolina sections from Route No. 21 to Deep Gap near Boone are rapidly nearing completion. Some of them have already been completed. Almost 120 miles of the drive have now been graded and should be ready for surfacing and other work soon.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

February, 1938

Number 4

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

WHAT IS A PARKWAY?

We are often asked: "Just what IS a PARKWAY." As an answer, we wish that we could drive you over other parkways built elsewhere in the United States, for the difference is more easily "seen" than "explained". Perhaps it is best explained by comparing the parkway to the usual highway and then by quickly saying that they are very different.

The ordinary state or county road is built to take people and freight from one place to another--from the farm to the town and from that town to the next. They are all-purpose, all-use roads along which the life of the community moves. They are built first to be useful and the pleasure of the traveler is secondary.

A parkway, on the other hand, is a special kind of road built FIRST for the pleasure and recreation of the people who use it, rather than for the business of life. The parkway seeks to marry Beauty and Usefulness. It does not necessarily follow the shortest route, but it is located along the scenic or more beautiful route. It goes around and not through the towns and cities.

No doubt the most important difference between the parkway and the highway is in what HAPPENS along the two types of road AFTER they have been built. Along the ordinary highway the land is privately owned land and for the very reason that the road is where it is, the land becomes built up with

private homes, stores, gasoline stations, garages and telephone and power poles. In short, the usual new highway becomes the main street of new towns and new farming communities. As more people use the road, the land becomes valuable for advertising and soon great signs tell the motorist how, when and what to eat and drink, as well as the when and what of other products. While necessary to life itself, this type of road clearly does not answer the needs of the tourist or the needs of the man who takes his family for their Sunday outing in his motor car.

We have said that the parkway seeks the scenic route. More important is the question of how to keep this scenery natural and beautiful. The answer is that the parkway type of road owns its right-of-way and owns at least 100 feet of land on both sides. Thus, while the highway is built on a narrow right-of-way, the parkway road is built THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF A PARK. Thus the surroundings remain free from man's buildings, pole lines and sign boards. The open views, the forests, the flowers, and all natural conditions are kept natural for all of us to enjoy.

In addition to the scenery saved by the parkway lands, much larger tracts of very scenic land are often acquired for recreation parks and playgrounds along the way. These parks also safeguard the scenery and make fine settings for picnics, camping, fishing, swimming, and hiking.

All of these ideas are being carried out in the Blue Ridge Parkway in the

very sight of many of you who read this paper. The scenery in the Virginia and Carolina Mountains is among the finest in America. We believe sincerely that the parkway will bring thousands from all over the nation to use it. You who are close to this great playground should enjoy it most of all.

LANDSCAPE PROGRAM STARTED

During January the program for landscaping the parkway was started near Smart, Virginia, and near Cumberland Knob in North Carolina. The first job is cleanup of the right-of-way, which will go on during the year over all sections where the road has been built. Dead timber and debris are to be cleaned out of the woodlands to improve the appearance and to lessen the danger of fire. Old buildings and fences will be taken down and fences rebuilt on property lines.

Only a few men started on the work, but the force will be built up to 20 men in each state in the early spring. In another issue of the NEWS we shall describe the landscape program more fully. All labor is hired through the local offices of the Re-employment

Service, to whom those interested should apply.

FIREWOOD AVAILABLE

From the cleanup we shall pile much cord wood in random lengths, which we have permission to give to families who are in real need of wood for heating their own homes. The wood must be loaded and hauled by the family who will use it, and only light trucks or wagons may be used where hauling must be over the parkway motor road. Anyone interest should talk with the foreman in charge of the work, who will point out what wood is available. He will also approve the methods of hauling the wood where it is necessary to take it over the parkway road.

NEW CONTRACTS ADVERTISED

Many construction companies have bid recently on the grading jobs for 20 miles of the parkway near Linville, North Carolina, and the construction of several bridges which will carry the parkway over or under main state roads in North Carolina.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
National Park Service
Eastern Division, Branch of Plans and Design

Blue Ridge Parkway
611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Teacher:

The enclosed copies of the BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS are sent to you for such use in your classes as you deem proper. We feel that the work being done in the construction and development of the Blue Ridge Parkway merits some attention and that our bulletin is a good means of describing the parkway.

The improvement or extension of all roads and highways undoubtedly has a direct effect upon the community. In the country, the primary effect is to increase the margin of profit to the farmer, so economists tell us, by bringing the market closer to his products. The benefits are too numerous to mention in the brief space of a letter although each would offer material for class discussion. On the whole, a larger and more intimate contact with other communities brings benefits greater than any disadvantages which might result. Even culture, which might be considered more as belonging to a community than as coming from outside, may grow through the additional contacts afforded by good roads.

The older people are perhaps best qualified to make comparisons of the present with the past of 25 to 50 years ago. They are able to note how a whole community has changed almost entirely because the state built or improved the highway to or through the neighborhood, thus bringing to it the opportunity to develop. While the parkway differs from the ordinary highway, we feel that it will have many advantages to the region through which it lies.

We believe that the school child today will be the principal beneficiary, economically, educationally and culturally from this rather vast undertaking, the Blue Ridge Parkway. It is important, therefore, that every boy and girl see the parkway not only in the process of its development, but also have some conception of the finished project. To explain wherein the "parkway" differs from the "ordinary highway" is the principal function of the Blue Ridge Parkway News. The PARKWAY is a new conception which is difficult to describe in few and simple terms.

Please feel free to write to us about any question arising in your own mind or in the class discussions on the bulletin. If extra copies are in demand, we shall gladly provide them as long as the supply lasts, if you will write us.

While we cannot carry advertisements, it is our purpose to carry small items of interest to the communities served. Contributions, especially of an historical nature, will be appreciated. Even the pupil, if he does not expect payment therefor, has an opportunity under your guidance to become an amateur reporter.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Stanley W. Abbott,
Acting Superintendent.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

March 1938

Number 5

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

PAVING CONTRACTS FOR 100 MILES

Contractors are being asked to bid on black-top surfacing for some of the parkway motor road where grading contracts have been completed. The work should begin when the weather opens in the spring which we suppose means about April 15. By the middle of the summer, therefore, we should be able to ride over a smooth road from Bent Mountain near Roanoke to Pinnacles of Dan, Virginia, and from the State line in North Carolina to Deep Gap near Boone. These two stretches of the scenic road total about 50 miles in each of the two states. For the present, U. S. Highway 58 through Hillsville and Galax will provide a good connection between them.

NEW GRADING CONTRACTS EXPECTED

Meanwhile, we look forward hopefully to the beginning of the grading work in Virginia on the 30-mile section from Pinnacles of Dan to the State line. This work will connect 140 miles of continuous parkway. Funds are available and the shovels should be getting up steam as soon as right-of-way problems are cleared by the State of Virginia. These sections pass through Volunteer, Fancy, and Piper Gaps, crossing over U. S. Highway 52 between Hillsville and Mt. Airy at Fancy Gap.

Plans for a 10-mile section of the parkway in North Carolina between McKinney Gap and Gooch Gap (Section 2L) are now completed and it appears that advertisement for bids on the grading may be made soon. This is a high section of the parkway, reaching as high as 3,700 feet through the so-called "Little Switzerland" area of the Blue Ridge. This work

will leave one section of 7 miles remaining to be cut through to connect with parkway now being built in the vicinity of Mt. Mitchell. This mountain, by the way, is 6,700 feet in elevation and is the highest east of the Mississippi river. State route 26 between Spruce Pine and Marion crosses the middle of section 2L through Gillespie Gap. Alongside the State road in this Gap is a monument describing its history which dates from the Revolutionary War when troops passed through bound for the Kings Mountain Campaign.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKWAY
SELECTED

Many of you know Mr. Sam P. Weems and will be interested to learn that he was recently appointed Assistant Superintendent of the parkway with headquarters in Roanoke. Mr. Weems is well known from his former dealings with you who live along the way. He personally appraised or purchased almost all of the lands for Pine Spur, Smart, Rocky Knob, Cumberland Knob and Bluff Parks. We believe he did a very fine job and that he made many good friends. Mr. Weems has also been managing the construction in the parks. He will continue to look after and guide this work from the park office in Wilkesboro. His work as Assistant Superintendent of the parkway will mean he will be doing most of the business between you and the parkway office. Leasing of lands, fire protection and operation and maintenance of the parkway and the parks will be under his control. He will also be in charge of the ranger service.

PARKWAY RANGER SELECTED

Final organization of the parkway ranger service or patrol began this month with the transfer of Wallace D. Barlow from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to this office where he will be in charge of Virginia sections of the parkway. We are expecting three more such men in the near future--a second for work in Virginia and two for assignment in North Carolina. These men have been selected from the Civil Service lists, since all jobs of this nature are subject to Civil Service examination.

As we have previously said to you, these men are on duty not only as officers of the law to protect the Government's property, but also to be helpful to all who use the parkway and the parks. We have noted lately that there has been much less trespass on parkway lands for unlawful timber cutting and other damaging acts. We feel sure, therefore, that the rangers will be busy most of their time with more constructive duties, such as boundary and sign location, planning for leases of land and watching for fires and making maps for fire control.

The appearance of Mr. Barlow on the job will be made in the regular uniform worn by all rangers in the National Parks throughout the country and he will travel in a car bearing a National Park Service license. You should recognize him easily and we hope you will make yourself and your problems known to him. Mr. Barlow replaces Mr. Frank Farrell who was temporarily doing this work and who will now spend all his time on the picnic and camp ground construction at Rocky Knob.

FIREWOOD STILL AVAILABLE

This is to remind you, in case you did not see the last bulletin, that firewood is available free to families who are in

real need of it for use in their own homes. Applications are received by the foremen in charge of the landscape work on the parkway near Smart, Virginia, and on the parkway near Cumberland Knob Park just south of the North Carolina and Virginia line. The wood is dead and damaged timber and brush cleaned up by the men who are working on the improvement of the parkway lands. It must be hauled away by the family desiring it in light trucks and in a manner acceptable to the foremen in charge of the work.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

April 1938

Number 6

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, 611 Shonandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

A MATTER OF SAFETY

In making plans for the parkway, the National Park Service has fought against unnecessary cross roads, side roads and intersections. They are always points of "friction" along any highway and they are a major point of accident. In the mountains the sharp curves and steep grades on the roads and the high cuts and fills often cut off the vision of the driver and the danger of accident is much greater than in flatter country where one can see the on-coming car far ahead. For the safety of the thousands who will soon be using the parkway and for those who must cross it as well we have tried to reduce the number of entrance points and to place them where conditions were most safe.

The Service has considered this problem so important that bridges are being built to carry the parkway over or under the main state highways, avoiding the cross traffic entirely. The amount of traffic on other roads may not justify the cost of a bridge, BUT the danger is just as great for those who do cross.

In locating the parkway, the Service has tried not to disturb the regular activities of the communities through which the parkway passes. Where it comes close to existing roads or crossed them, it is planned to rebuild them so that they will be fully as good and as useful to you as they were before the parkway development. Generally, therefore, as a private property owner, you will still have your same rights of access to the state highway system. We do not feel that the individual owner ALSO needs a private entrance to the parkway. Accordingly

we have discouraged private roads to the parkway or crossing it and we have asked that you enter the parkway road from the nearest public access provided. In very few cases will this mean driving on the secondary road system more than a mile or two at the most before you can get on the parkway. Then, once on it, we believe you will realize as you drive it in the future the safety value of the "FEW ENTRANCES" idea.

The parkway is not a "local" road; it is a "national" road.

USE OF UNAPPROVED ACCESS IS ILLEGAL

Lately our rangers have reported that a number of abutting property owners are crossing the parkway lands to the motor drive where no easement or right to cross has been granted. This is often dangerous and it is always damaging to the parkway land itself and must be considered by us an act of trespass. The rangers are being asked to check carefully on these problems and to issue warnings. In cases where the trespass continues the rangers have been authorized to obtain court orders. We hope that such injunctions will not be necessary and that owners will co-operate, abiding by their agreements.

C. C. C. CAMP

During the month word was received from Washington that a Civilian Conservation Corps camp of 200 men will be placed in Rocky Knob Park, Virginia. This is the first camp to be placed on the Blue Ridge Parkway and their work, will consist mainly of landscape development on the section of parkway between

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Smart, Virginia, and the Pinnacles of Dan. The program will include forestry and erosion control work, grass seeding and planting of trees and shrubs to beautify the parkway lands. The camp is expected to move into place in the early spring.

RANGERS APPOINTED

During the month parkway rangers E. M. Dale and B. T. Campbell arrived on the job. Mr. Dale's assignment of territory will cover from Tuggles Gap, near Floyd, Virginia, to the North Carolina State line, headquarters, Hillsville, Virginia. Mr. Campbell's patrol is from the State Line south to in the vicinity of Laurel Springs, North Carolina, with headquarters at North Wilkesboro, North Carolina.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

May 1938

Number 7

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF ALL

Recently we have been told that a few people along the way have referred to the Parkway as "a rich man's road". They have expressed the belief that its use will be restricted to one class of people. They have said that the local people will not be invited to use it.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Blue Ridge Parkway will be opened for the use and enjoyment of all the Nation alike, whether they live within "the stone's throw of the road itself" or whether they come from the far corners of the United States.

While the rich folks may use it as they please, we believe that these people will probably use it least of all. They are able to spend vacations at the expensive resort hotels. It is for those of lesser means that the parkway will provide a new vacation land - those many Americans who work in the factories and business houses of the towns and cities and who are not often able to visit natural park areas.

NOT FOR BUSINESS TRAFFIC

Perhaps the "rich man's road" idea grew from a misunderstanding of why it is that we wish to limit the use of the parkway to passenger or pleasure automobiles. In the first place, the parkway is being developed for purposes of recreation - not for business. That is the part of the State highways. Incidentally, it is important for you

to realize that the parkway will not interfere with the important truck and farm roads which serve the local communities. We explained in the last issue of the NEWS how we planned to rebuild any road of this type which the parkway construction may disturb.

Secondly, we feel that business and pleasure do not "mix" on a parkway. Heavy trucks and busses on the scenic road would be dangerous to all who use it. They move more slowly on the steep grades than the lighter cars and thus cause congestion, delay and accidents which often involve human life. Because of their size, trucks obstruct the view of the "sight distance" which enables a motorist to judge when it is safe for him to pass. Because of their weight, they are damaging to the road surface which is being placed on the parkway and which is not meant to carry loaded trucks.

We believe that, because of the long grades and sharp curves on the parkway, the through trucking would do as well to travel on the straighter and more level State roads in the lower country. If we are to prohibit successfully the long-distance trucking, it is necessary that we treat all alike and prohibit local trucking and business traffic as well.

The speed limit on the parkway will probably be the same as that on the State highways, which means that the cars will probably average a

speed of 35 miles per hour. Again, for reasons of safety, we believe it necessary to prohibit slow moving vehicles drawn by horse or oxen.

Incidentally, we would point out that in certain park developments we are building many miles of horseback trail. On these trails, of course, horseback riding by local people and others as well will be encouraged.

In connection with this problem of keeping the trucks off the parkway, we are talking about trucks when they are being used to haul produce of any kind in connection with farming or any other business. We know that trucks are used to carry children and often grownups back and forth from picnics and other outings of Sunday School, Church and other community groups. You may be assured that when the cargo of a truck is one of children or of older people pleasure bound, they will be allowed to use the parkway as much as any other passenger car.

Our belief is strong that we are correct in the idea that the Blue Ridge Parkway should be considered as a "park", and that business traffic should not be permitted. We hope that you will help us to operate on this basis.

LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

Spring arrived early in the Blue Ridge this year, with the bright, yellow bloom of the Spicebush and the white of the Shadblow or Sarvus. They are only heralds of the glorious display of color yet to come.

The Parkway region has been particularly favored by nature, as the vegetation includes not only most of the trees and shrubs found farther north, but also many found in profusion only in this area, such as the brilliant Flame Azalea and the Catawba or Purple Rhododendron.

In the month of May the Dogwoods, Hawthorns and Wild Crabapples, of the small flowering trees, and the Laurel (or Ivy), Flame and other Azaleas, and many other varieties of shrubs and wild flowers will attain their greatest effect.

While you drive along and enjoy the beauties of nature, we hope that you will remember that this is your parkway, and, if you see anyone damaging or removing plants or flowers, you will remind them that every flower taken leaves one less to be enjoyed by others.

Next month we hope to tell you about our plans for landscape development, by which we hope to reveal the natural beauty that exists and improve the immediate road slopes.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

June, 1938

Number 8

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

NEW PARKWAY APPROPRIATION VOTED BY CONGRESS

An amount of \$3,500,000 for construction on the Blue Ridge Parkway during the year ending July 1, 1939, was voted by the Congress of the United States as part of the Interior Department Bill, which carries items for construction in all of the national parks. These new funds bring the total of money, therefore, to the parkway to about \$14,000,000.

Plans for work under this fund include the construction of 20 miles of the parkway south from Rock Fish Gap in Virginia. There is also a possibility that the parkway will be placed under construction for 10 or more miles near the Peaks of Otter, Bedford, Virginia.

In North Carolina, the plans call for construction south from Wagon Road Gap at Mount Pisgah for a distance of 14 miles, and the construction of a section near Blowing Rock and Boone.

A number of bridge contracts, and contracts for additional paving work, guard rail and landscaping will also be provided for by the new money on those sections of the parkway on which the first contracts have been finished.

NEW CONTRACTS ADVERTISED

During the past month bids on the grading work were asked by the United States Bureau of Public Works engineers for section 2-L of the parkway, leading to Mt. Mitchell

from the north. This stretch is 10 miles in length.

In Virginia, right of way difficulties were worked out on section 1-U south from the Pinnacles of Dan for 10 miles. Although bids for the grading work on the parkway have not been asked for as yet, it is expected that the various contractors will be sharpening their pencils by the time this bulletin reaches you.

The two sections to the south which will connect the sections now built in Virginia and North Carolina we also hope to see placed under construction this summer.

BLUFF PARK GETS C. C. C. CAMP

We are glad to report that a second C C C camp for the parkway will move into the Bluff Park near Laurel Springs, North Carolina, and will be ready for work by October. The young men in this camp will work on the landscaping of the parkway, including forestry cleanup, planting of shrubs and trees and grass seeding of the slopes and shoulders.

The United States Army expects to build the camp immediately.

Incidentally, work on the recreation park at the Bluff is now going forward rapidly under the W P A program, which has been employing as many as 250 men. The new C C C camp will not be used on the park work and the W P A program will go forward the same as before.

VIRGINIA CAMP MOVES IN

As this paper is being written, the buildings which will house the C C C men at Rocky Knob Park, near Floyd, Virginia, are fast going up.

It is expected that actual work on the parkway will begin about July 1. This camp will also be used to do landscaping on the parkway and this will not interfere with the park construction under the W P A program.

VISITORS TO PARKWAY ARE PLEASED WITH LAUREL AND RHODODENDRON

With some of the picnicking and camping areas on the parkway available, and even though the loose stone on the parkway does not make pleasant driving, our rangers report an increasing number of visitors along the way, especially in the picnic areas. The small development at Cumberland Knob, near Galax, had over 400 visitors on a Sunday last month. The Bluff Park in North Carolina and Rocky Knob Park in Virginia have also been reported nearly filled at times with people from nearby. A number of automobiles bearing out-of-state licenses have been noted along the parkway and in the areas to the side.

Many people have written into this office about the wonderful views that may be seen from the parkway. But lately they have talked more about the fine bloom of the Flame Azalea, the purple Rhododendron and the Laurel (or Ivy). We are very happy to say that we

have had much less trouble this year with people picking the flowers. A number of reports have come into this office about the help which local people gave us in this respect. We have long realized that those who live in the mountains see these flowers in bloom in their own back door yard and that it is the city people who are so taken with them--a few of them are "much to much taken"; but we believe that everyone will realize in time that, if the parkway is to remain beautiful, these flowers must "remain". We appreciate what many of you did to help the rangers in this work.

INSPECTION BY OFFICIALS

National Park Service Director, Mr. Arno B. Cammerer, accompanied by Mrs. Cammerer, drove over the parkway from Blowing Rock to Roanoke recently and were among our most enthusiastic visitors.

Miss Isabelle Story, editor in chief of the Park Service, also spent some time with us. The editor's office will write the stories for the newspapers and the magazines about the parkway. We told Miss Story that by next year we will begin to be ready for all the tourists she wants to invite.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

July 1938

Number 9

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

APPROPRIATIONS VOTED BY CONGRESS

The June edition of the News announced that three and a half million dollars had been voted by the Congress for work on the Parkway during the twelve months which began on July 1. Since that time an additional two million dollars has been appropriated by the Second Deficiency Act. This brings the total of all Parkway appropriations to sixteen million dollars and it all mean that in the near future one half of the entire length of the 500-mile Parkway will be underway. The States of Virginia and North Carolina and the Federal Government are now working to put this new money to work as soon as possible. Grading of the Parkway in sections of about ten miles in length is expected in Virginia south from Rockfish Gap for 20 or 30 miles and for 20 miles near the Peaks of Otter in Bedford County.

In North Carolina the new money will build about 14 miles from Mount Pisgah south toward Great Smoky Mountains National Park and a section between Boone and Blowing Rock with possibly another short section nearer Mount Mitchell. A number of road bridges and overpasses will also be built in both States.

ANOTHER SECTION ADVERTISED

The 10-mile section from Meadows of Dan south toward the State line was advertised by the Bureau of Public Roads during the month. The necessary construction money is also at hand for building the remaining

20 miles to connect with that part of the Parkway now built in upper North Carolina and it is expected that this work will be advertised in the near future.

OILING BEGINS

Word has recently been received that oiling of the road has begun in both States though progress has been poor because of the rainy weather. Over 100 miles of paving is now under contract and it is not expected to be finished before late September. Meanwhile, travel over the Parkway will not be at its best. The engineers have asked us to say to all tourists that the road is "closed" until fall. Through this paper we have already asked those living in the vicinity of the Parkway to keep off the road as much as possible when the oil is fresh. Where there is need to cross the road or to drive on a part of it to carry on farming or regular business, the engineers have made arrangements with the contractor to permit such travel. We know that "hay must be made while the sun shines" and the engineers want to co-operate.

PARKWAY LANDSCAPING

We have for a long time been saying that we were going to write about this work and while there is some space left in this Bulletin, we will make a start. In March, we undertook the first of this work on a section in Floyd and Franklin Counties, Virginia. Also work has gone forward on 10 miles in North Carolina just south of the State

line. The first job is to remove from the woods and fields on the Parkway land the dead and down timber and debris which, of course, helps reduce the danger of fire and improves the looks of things as well. In the next job, the stump growth is removed so that the better trees may have the light and air and so that they may be seen. Here and there, under careful supervision, some trees and branches are removed to allow views off the mountains and to show the rhododendron, laurel, and azalea in the background. During the summer and next winter this work will be carried on throughout 100 miles of the Parkway. This past spring we have done, in addition, tree and shrub planting on three miles in Virginia as an example of what is proposed all along the road during the fall planting season. During the summer one of the most interesting parts of the work is to go ahead with the improvement of fields and pastures. Many fields will be allowed to grow back naturally into woods or they will be planted with seedling trees. Other fields will be limed, fertilized, and seeded. Some are planned as wild flower and game food meadows. In co-operation with some of the county agents and with the advice of experts on wildlife, we have arranged to get the proper seed to build up food for quail and the other game. One of the important ideas is to get a growth high enough to be above the winter snow line. These game food areas will, of course, require cutting in the spring to keep down the locust and sassafras.

We have written before about the idea of leasing certain lands after this program is finished, so what we mention above with regard to this is not new to you. It was said that this Service is interested in helping all it can to make the farms as seen from the Parkway road

part of the picture. We also propose to co-operate with you, the county agents, and other Federal agencies toward making the whole vicinity of the Parkway a show place for good farming practice.

In the landscape program we think we are making a right start on those Parkway lands which need improvement and rest before they are in shape to be worked on the basis of leases. In this connection, there has been more talk of making leases on a "sliding scale", basing the rental on the value of the land, plus other considerations. Thus far we have rented all lands, as you know, on the basis of one dollar per acre per year and have included in the agreements other benefits. Before anything definite is decided along these lines, we will write about it. Meanwhile, give us the benefit of your ideas as to the best way to handle the matter.

FOR THE FISHERMEN

A number of fishermen have asked us what we are going to do for them. While final plans have not been made, we have a program in mind for stocking some of the streams on the Parkway with fish. Fishing is permitted in the national parks but hunting is prohibited. We will write about this subject in more detail in subsequent issues of the News.

* * *

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

August 1938

Number 10

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

VIRGINIA LEGISLATORS VISIT PARKWAY

Senator Harry F. Byrd, Congressmen A. Willis Robertson, Clifton A. Woodrum, and Thomas G. Burch, through whose districts the Parkway passes, spent July 11 and 12 inspecting the Blue Ridge Parkway through Virginia. They were accompanied by Parkway officials. They traveled the route south from the Shenandoah Park boundary to the Rocky Knob Park at Route 8. Here oiling of the Parkway surface necessitated a by-pass through Stuart to the Pinnacles of Dan Hydroelectric project which was also visited. The Legislators have been greatly interested in the development of the Parkway and expressed the belief that the project, now well under way, would become one of the outstanding recreational features of the East when completed. They reviewed the plans and schedules as outlined by the State of Virginia, the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads, and the National Park Service, which agencies are cooperating closely in the work.

HE MIGHT HAVE TRIED A SADDLE

As this issue of the "News" is to be about wildlife, here is a yarn which proves (?) that we still have big game. We heard it just a few hours ago, third or fourth hand, so we cannot vouch for it -- but -- it seems an old black horse strayed from home the other night in upper Carolina. The owner, with bridle in hand, looked about in the dark and finally his eyes caught what he thought was the horse browsing near the Parkway, but when he tried to bridle it, the animal reared up and growled -- it was a bear.

This reminds us of the old "chestnut" about the hunter treed by a bear who prayed, "Oh, Lord, if you can't help me, for goodness sake don't you help that bear."

WILDLIFE PROGRAM BEGINS

Last month we mentioned that our landscape development would be of benefit to wildlife and that we intended to stock some of the Parkway streams with trout.

Now we are ready with a preview of the whole wildlife program, planned not only to improve conditions on the Parkway, but with your assistance, to develop the whole region for better hunting and fishing.

The Parkway itself will become a great sanctuary, offering a safe place for game to breed and feed. Coveys of quail, instead of being hunted until the last bird is killed, will flee to the Park protection so that seed stock will remain for the next year. Quail and other birds not only offer food and sport, but assist by eating the insects that destroy crops.

It is our hope that the Parkway will become a great breeding ground and that wildlife will increase to such an extent that they will spread out over the surrounding country and restore it to its former glory as the "Happy Hunting Ground" of your ancestors and the Indians.

We have a real job ahead, but our program is actually under way. Following is a brief outline of the work we are undertaking to help wildlife:

(1) Parkway slopes will be planted to native grasses, shrubs, vines and trees.

(2) Worn-out and eroded fields will be restored to pasture or wildlife and game food areas. Gullied or very steep fields will be returned to forest.

(3) In granting permits for pastures or agricultural use, we shall ask you to preserve the old rail fences and to leave uncut the shrubs and trees necessary to provide food and cover for wildlife.

(4) Streams will be improved by construction of log and boulder dams, providing brush cover, and in other ways improving conditions for fish and game that are dependent on water.

(5) Rearing ponds, fishing ponds, and lakes will be built and prepared to provide proper conditions for fish and waterfowl.

(6) Small streams will be stocked and closed to fishing so that fish may grow safely. As they grow they will continually seek larger streams and ponds and many will move to the waters outside of the Parkway to supply you with better fishing.

(7) The Parkway and the Parks will be stocked with birds and other game as soon as they are available.

You probably know that some of the Parks include as much as 6,000 acres and many portions of the Parkway will pass through very large holdings of the U. S. Forest Service. These Park areas may be stocked with deer and wild turkey.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

The above, in brief, is our program. We can only work on Parkway lands, but you can do much to help the wildlife that spreads to your land by leaving cover along fences, leaving a little uncut grain along the fences to provide food, and many other things that will mean little to you but much to the wildlife that needs your help.

The job is so big that it can succeed only if we have the help of Wildlife and Game Federations, County

Agents, and all government organizations interested in this work, but you as the landowner are the most important.

The government has published many bulletins on wildlife, but as these do not always apply to your particular condition, we have in mind extra issues of the "News" entirely about wildlife and we hope to have these written by experts on each subject.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

September 1938

Number II

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

WHY HERE - WHY THERE

With the general location of the Parkway now tied down we look back five years to the time when there were many lines being proposed for the Parkway — in four separate States, on four different mountain ranges many miles apart. People have often asked how will they know "where to go in all that pile of mountains," "will they find their way out," "can such a road be built on modern standards for modern automobiles?" These problems were not simple, but they were far simpler for the trained engineer and landscape architect that they would appear to you and me.

Many of the routes proposed could be and were given up on the basis that they went too far off the straight line between the two parks, or for the reason that they did not touch the most scenic points. After review by the State Highway Commissions, — the various States presented to the Federal Government two major routes, one down the Blue Ridge, and another lying in the Alleghenys, together with a third line combining parts of both. In this early location work the part of the State Highway Departments was most important. The Virginia and North Carolina Commissions have continued to be most helpful in selecting a location for the Parkway as more detailed problems arose. A large responsibility, however, was placed upon the engineers of the United States Bureau of Public Roads. The "flagging" of the road was started by the engineers from various gaps in the mountains which were picked as controls through which the road would need to pass. The locators of the Bureau of Roads, working closely with landscape architects of the National Park Service spent weeks at a time "looking out" the country before the levels were run.

Standards set up in Washington had to be met — grades could be only so steep and curves only so sharp. The costs of grading, tunnels, bridges, and viaducts had to be measured against the scenic and recreational qualities of the several lines. The cost to the States for buying the land had to be weighed carefully and many other policies of planning taken into account.

After the route had been flagged, the State Highway Department placed survey parties at work to make topographic maps of the entire line and often of alternate lines where smaller choices between this line or that remained to be made. Especially when winter winds swept across the ridges, the job of these survey parties was no easy one. Their maps form the basis of the various steps toward building of the actual roadway. First there is the making of right-of-way maps showing the lands needed. Then follows the acquisition by the State of these lands from many private owners. With each problem differing from the next, this work is probably the hardest of all. Meanwhile on many drawing tables in Roanoke, in Washington, and at various points along the line the design of the engineering and architectural features of the road goes forward. Upon these "contract plans" private companies from all over the East and parts of the West submit their bids. To the low bidder goes the job, in comes the fleet of trucks, the power shovels, the graders, the sticks of dynamite, and the project has reached the construction stage so familiar to all of us.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume I

October 1938

Number 12

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 611 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Va.

FIRE

The California forest fire of last fall swept away in ash and smoke millions of dollars worth of timber, many homes, and several lives. The cause? Carelessness. No one meant to be careless, but some one failed to think. A cigarette butt tossed from a car. The burning of a pile of brush or a small field when all nature had connived to make a tinder box of fields and woods. Whatever started it, the result is the same. That was in California. IT CAN HAPPEN HERE.

Blue Ridge Parkway runs through some of the most beautiful country in the Mountains of Virginia and North Carolina. The Park lands are very narrow, especially so when compared with other National Park lands. The very fact that it is so narrow makes it still more important to save it from fire, its worst enemy. We have worked out plans for fighting fires and have men working along the entire length of the Parkway who are trained to fight and, what is more important, PREVENT fires. Any of these men will be glad to help you when you have burning to do. The Ranger in your District is probably the man you know best. He will be more than willing to help out and can possibly point out some factor in your burning that might otherwise be overlooked.

Because we want to lease back some of the good farming land to farmers and stockmen along the Parkway and to maintain all the land at its best, we called on Professor Thomas Hutcheson in Blacksburg, Virginia, at V. P. I. and asked him to tell us what he had learned about land that was burned over. Professor Hutcheson is one of the ablest soil men in the South, and besides being a master

of the science of soils, he is also a practical farmer and dairyman. He is quoted below:

"From the standpoint of forty years' experience and observation, I know of no poorer land than that which is burned over from year to year. The short dry seasons in the fall and spring are followed by the periods of most destructive rains. When burning takes place the organic matter which is the food for the next generation of plant life is destroyed. The minerals are either blown off as ash or washed off by the rains. Seeds and young sprouts of legumes are destroyed. The bare land quickly erodes away. When the cover is removed from land MOISTURE DOES NOT ENTER THE SOIL. It runs off, carrying with it the soil itself. The removal of cover from the land has resulted in the drying up of springs and streams. All water that ENTERS the land serves a useful purpose. That that flows OVER the land is destructive.

"It is my belief that the majority of fires are set on purpose and allowed to run. Where they are set to improve grass stands the real result is destruction, not improvement. A poor stand can be improved by lime and fertilizer, never by burning."

Knowing that a number of you would be interested in the game and other wildlife, we asked Mr. C. O. Handley, one of the foremost authorities on the subject of wildlife in the country, what he thought of fires. He summed it up in a very few words:

"Fall burning destroys the food supply. Spring burning, from the first

of April, destroys nesting areas, often nests containing eggs. Early summer burning destroys the young, especially insect-eating birds."

What these men have said you and I don't often think about, but we have all seen our wooded areas go up in smoke and ash, leaving desolation and the way open for gulleys. Locust trees that would have been fence posts in another few years, oaks and hickory, pines and gums and poplars, all gone. In their place just sour, galled land.

Fire, one of mankind's best friends, is under many conditions mankind's worst enemy. The National Park Service is first interested in keeping fires away from Park lands. That is because fire will destroy the thing we are trying to build. You who are farmers or dairymen or sportsmen are first interested in better returns from your land in terms of money or game. We will appreciate your help, and you may be assured of ours in return. Report fires to the nearest Ranger or Park Service office. The telephone numbers and addresses are listed in this bulletin. We need your help and believe that we can be of help in return. A few simple suggestions that will help prevent fires anywhere:

BE CAREFUL.

Never leave a fireline, either in a field or woods.

Be sure of enough help to hold the fire under control NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS. (The wind may change, or a spark jump the line.)

Burn slash or brush only on damp, still days. (That brush will be worth a lot to you in a gulley.)

Never throw down a lighted stump of cigar or cigarette, or

knock out your pipe in grass or leaves.

Never leave a trace of fire or coals to burn unattended after a fox hunt or a picnic. A gust of wind, a spark in leaves or grass, and the damage is done.

ON THE PARKWAY (The same can apply anywhere):

Build fires only where a place has been provided for them.

When you leave, be sure your fire is out.

Do not throw burning tobacco from a car.

Report any fire immediately to the Ranger.

TO REPORT FIRES, CALL

From Shenandoah Park to Rock Fish Gap (Route 250)
Call Park Service Headquarters, Luray, Virginia.

From Waynesboro, Va., to North of the James River.

Call District Ranger Kramer, National Forest Service, Buena Vista, Va., phone 104

From James River to Peaks of Otter
Call District Ranger L. R. Smith, NFS, Buena Vista, Va., phone 159 MW

From Peaks of Otter to Smart View
Call Park Service Headquarters, Roanoke, Va., phone 24327

From Smart View to Virginia line (Includes Smart View & Rocky Knob Parks)

Contact E. M. Dale, Park
Ranger, Hillsville, Va.,
or
CCC Camp NP-14, Woolwine,
Va., (Mr. B. J. Kyle, Park
Service Supt.)

From Virginia line to Deep Gap
Call Deputy Park Warden
A. G. Dillon, Route 2,
Galax, Virginia

From Deep Gap (Route 421) to
Blowing Rock
Call B. T. Campbell, Park
Ranger, Wilkesboro, N.C.,
Office 245, Residence 35-
F-21

or
Hartley Hunt (Elk Creek
Asso. Caretaker) Lenoir
Rural 2402.

From Blowing Rock to the Cherokees
get in touch with the nearest of
the following District Rangers, NFS
District Ranger G. C. Huffman,
Lenoir, Office 17, Residence 11
District Forester J. F. Spratt,
Lenoir, 387J
District Ranger N. F. Rogers,
Marion, Office 221
District Ranger C. C. Davenport,
Hot Springs, Office 17
District Forester J. R. Spratt,
Asheville 6343J
District Ranger J. W. Squires,
Office Brevard 2501, Residence
call Transylvania County Opera-
tor 6206

PROTECTION OF PARKWAY SURFACE

The final running surface of the
Parkway is now in place on several
sections. Many people have told us of
the pleasure they have had from driving
over this roadway. The people who live
along the Parkway use it most of all
and therefore would seem to be the ones
most interested in "keeping" it.

There has been some misuse, and
we would like to call your attention
to it. As you know, tractor cleats,
iron wheels, and the shod hooves of
horses gouge and cut the surface.
Some travel by this type of traffic
is necessary, but the damage it does
can be reduced with little effort on
the part of the users and would help
a great deal toward keeping up the
road.

Tractor wheel bands are cheap,
easily put on or taken off. Tractor
cleats are the most damaging factor
we have to contend with. Next in
point of damage is the use of old
auto wheels. A quick, easy, and
simple remedy is to use old tires
over the wheels. As for the narrow
iron wagon wheels and shod horses,
be as careful as possible and only
cross the Parkway when it is abso-
lutely necessary.

While there are laws covering
all these things we don't want to
use them, believing that if the
seriousness of the damage is called
to your attention you will be glad
to help rather than hurt the road.
Certainly it is to your advantage
to help. If you have any doubt
about the proper use of the Parkway
your ranger will be glad to advise
you and help in any way he can.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

November 1938

Number 1

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

PAVING CONTRACT NEARS COMPLETION IN
VIRGINIA

Final surfacing of the Parkway from Bent Mountain Post Office through to US 58 near Meadows of Dan, a stretch of about fifty miles, has been nearly completed and the barricades have been removed. While the Parkway is not officially opened, travel will be permitted at the driver's own risk during the late fall and winter. Sections of the Parkway in North Carolina between the State line and Boone are partially completed as to surfacing and will be opened on the same basis.

Official opening of the Parkway is set for early spring in Virginia and July 1 in North Carolina where mileage of completed roadway will total one hundred odd miles. No opening ceremonies are planned for next spring, but the official opening will be widely announced and an invitation extended to the tourists to drive over the road. Next year's issues of the various road maps published by oil companies and travel bureaus will show these sections of the Parkway as being opened to traffic.

The official opening is being delayed until next spring in order that a number of items of work may be finished which will be required before the Parkway is considered safe, including placement of traffic and informational signs, construction of log guard rail and guard wall, and painting of the Parkway center-line stripe. Also during the winter and early spring work will go forward in the landscaping of the Parkway roadside. Plans for this work will mean that by spring portions of the Parkway will be very nearly a completed sample of what the final roadway of five hundred miles will be for its entire length. The opening planned for next spring will see

completion, or near completion of three of the recreational parks with facilities for picnicking, camping, hiking, and other sports ready for use. These are Rocky Knob in Virginia and Cumberland Knob and the Bluffs in North Carolina.

TRAVEL AT YOUR OWN RISK

A word more for the benefit of those who choose to drive over the Parkway prior to next spring when it will be completed. A number of signs along the way advise a speed limit of twenty-five miles per hour for the present time. This is for your own protection because warning signs and guard rail have not been placed. Also, we are interested in traffic moving slowly to insure the safety of workmen along the Parkway roadside. While in a few places it is necessary for local trucks to cross the Parkway pavement, its use by commercial or business traffic is prohibited. During the winter rebuilding of certain secondary State roads paralleling the Parkway will make it possible then to remove trucks from the Parkway entirely. (An earlier Bulletin pointed out, you will remember, that we speak of trucks which are being used for business purposes. When they are loaded with Sunday School children on a picnic or others seeking recreation, they will have the same rights as any passenger car.)

THE PARKWAY, A GAME REFUGE

The season has opened for hunting,

BUT it is not opened for hunting on the Park or Parkway lands. Many of you will have friends shooting on your lands, perhaps some others too. Please help us by showing the hunters the Parkway boundaries and seeing that they do not follow a trail across them. Your help in this matter may save your friends from trouble and will surely help to protect seed stock for the long range comeback of game along the Parkway which will make in the future more and better hunting.

QUESTION AND ANSWER COLUMN

Due to the number of questions being asked our field men, we have decided to attempt a "Question and Answer Column." To be published the questions must be of general interest - farm practice or improvement, game, fish, forestry, or matters of Parkway use. This will be in line with our policy to help where we can in farm improvement adjacent to the drive.

About questions with which we are not familiar we will get for you the best information we can. Many bulletins on various agricultural subjects have been printed by the Government, and we may be able to point out one that will answer your question in detail.

Mail your questions to:

Blue Ridge Parkway,
633 Shenandoah Life Ins. Bldg.,
Roanoke, Virginia,

or hand them to any Parkway Official.

ING UNDESIRABLE WEEDS AND GRASSES

Several farmers and gardeners along the Parkway have asked for a formula that will kill the tough, wiry weed grasses so damaging to crops. We called on our friend, Professor T. B. Hutcheson, of V. P. I. for the answer. Here is what he told us:

"The best commercial poison I know is a product of the Chipman Chemical Co. of Boundbrook, N. J. It is called "Atla-cide" and costs about 12¢ per pound in 100 lb. lots. For the best results use

about 75 lbs. to the acre, dissolved in water and sprayed on WHILE THE GRASS IS GROWING. The land cannot be used for six months following application.

"Kerosene sprayed on at 60 gallons to the acre is also effective."

Do not overlook the fact that land treated to kill these grasses will be useless for a season.

Several people have asked if the Park Service intended using wire, quack, or crab grass on fills and other banks. Be assured that no plantings of undesirable plants or grasses will be made. Our aim is to improve, not damage the land.

FIRE WOOD AGAIN AVAILABLE

We have saved from the clean-up of dead and down timber along the Parkway a considerable quantity of cord wood, largely dead chestnut. We have permission to give free a certain amount of this wood to families in need of relief on a basis similar to that which was followed last year. The wood may be collected only on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10 A. M. and 4 P. M., beginning Thursday, December 1. A letter from your county relief agency may be addressed to the following foremen in charge of the work who will advise what wood may be taken and the route that must be followed in hauling the wood away:

From Adney Gap to Smart, Va.,

Mr. E. W. Ramsey, B.F.R.

From Tuggles Gap south on the Parkway for six miles,

Mr. J. W. Whorley

NC State line to Air Bellows Gap (Twenty miles)

Mr. O. T. Ballentine, B.F.R.

Air Bellows Gap to Meadow Fork near Laurel Springs (ten miles)

Mr. L. A. Sharpe

Remember that the wood may be collected only on Tuesdays and Thursdays although arrangements may be made in advance with any of the above listed.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

December 1938

Number 2

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

THE 35 MILE SPEED LIMIT

Traffic regulations on any public highway have but one purpose, the safety of those using it.

The Blue Ridge Parkway was designed for the pleasure of the motoring public and to make accessible to them the beautiful views and mountain scenery that is not generally found along the route of the ordinary highway. This Parkway road differs from the regular public highway because it is not designed to take you from one town to another over the most direct and least expensive route, nor is it designed to carry great volumes of commercial traffic at high speed between such points. The Parkway motor road was planned primarily so that the public could enjoy the natural scenery without encountering commercial traffic hazards and unsightly roadside developments.

For those who wish to drive the Parkway at this time it is necessary for us to use every means at our disposal to safeguard them against accident. In addition to certain technical reasons this speed restriction of thirty-five (35) miles per hour has been placed on the Parkway traffic at this time because the curves are unmarked, the shoulders especially on fills have not sufficiently settled and are still soft, the centerline stripe has not been placed, guard rails have not been set up, and the banks through cuts have not been sloped to their final position which will allow proper sight distance. These factors should be considered if you have a tendency to want to "step on the gas" in places where it might look safe to those who have not considered the absence of these safety provisions.

There are hundreds of men engaged in the various construction jobs along this motor road who must be protected from high speed traffic. At each point where these men are engaged in their work there will

be found equipment being used that might be difficult to move at a moment's notice. High speed under such conditions would endanger both the motorist and the workmen. Traffic regulations are therefore essential to their safety and yours.

Because of these temporary unsafe conditions the surfaced sections of the Parkway have not been opened officially and can be used by the general public only on the "travel at your own risk" basis. Under those conditions, however, it has been determined that a maximum speed of thirty-five (35) miles per hour on the open road and fifteen (15) miles per hour through sections where working crews are engaged in construction are the highest speeds consistent with safety. It will be necessary for us to enforce these regulations in order to protect both the public traveling the Parkway and the workmen engaged in its construction.

When the Parkway motor road has been completed and officially opened to the general public new speed regulations will be established and posted along the motor road. Until this time, however, traffic on the Parkway must observe the regulations now in force--that is thirty-five (35) miles on the open road and fifteen (15) miles through work crews.

GAME - WINTER FEEDING

Every farmer saves his choicest and hardest grains for next year's seed. He knows that without the seed for the next planting he will have to dig deep in his pocket before he can plant again. The same is true with game. Once gone, it is hard indeed to replace.

A wise hunter and true sportsman will always leave seed. If he doesn't it is he and the landowners who lose. We all know that one quail alone will freeze to death, and even when coveys

muddle together some freeze during a severely cold winter. Leave at least six, or better, eight, after the hunting season. If the food is short or the snow heavy, or if you want to attract quail to your land, feed them. Feed them in sheltered places where they have protection from hawks and an even chance to elude cats, fox, and mink. Edges of briar patches, young pine, or thick brush are good places, also a corn shock at the edge of a field opened to form a shelter. Cracked hard grains or whole small grains are fine bird food. Birds will eat almost anything they can get when snow is heavy. Brush shelters help as do any sort of shelter that is neither too high nor too low that it fills with snow.

A few hours' work will mean less bug poison to buy next year.

GOOD FIRE RECORD

The October issue of the News carried an article about Fire Prevention in which we asked our Parkway neighbors and patrons to aid us in preventing forest fires along the Parkway, particularly during fire season. In the year 1938 only two fires occurred which damaged Parkway lands. One of these was started by a careless smoker who threw down a cigarette stump. The fire was discovered by an alert employee and extinguished before it had burned over more than a quarter acre of land. The other fire was started by some one burning brush and letting it get out of control. This fire burned over two or three acres before found and extinguished.

This good record could not have been made without your help, and it shows that our neighbors and visitors have joined with us in preventing damage by our common enemy, Fire. Let's keep up the good work.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Are the stamps issued for hunting on National Forest areas good for hunting on Blue Ridge Parkway lands or on any land owned or controlled by the National Park Service?

They are not good, since no person has or will be given permission to hunt

on any land controlled by the Blue Ridge Parkway, these lands having been set aside as a game preserve.

It is hoped that the numbers of all game species along the Parkway will be increased by planting food and cover and by protection of all wildlife and that this increase will be felt in the adjoining countryside. Although private land owners are privileged to do as they choose in regard to wildlife on their property, it is our wish that they will help build up the supply. We will be glad to answer any questions in regard to wildlife if you will mail them in to us.

The Park Service heard that there were snows and frosts to be found on the high mountains almost any day in summer, and certainly during the other seasons. We tracked the rumor to Coleman Ridge and found that it was certainly true. Whole families of Snows and Frosts, big and little!

To our Readers we extend best wishes for happiness and prosperity throughout the coming year!

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

January 1939

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Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

MORE ABOUT PRIVATE ROADS

In the "News" of last April we explained why we have fought to keep private roads connecting with or crossing the Parkway to the smallest possible number. Surely they are thorns in the side of any high speed highway, and like thorns they are not only uncomfortable but also they may endanger human life itself--the life of those who cross and those who travel along the highway.

Dates have been set for the opening next spring of portions of the parkway in Virginia from Adney Gap to US 58 at the Meadows of Dan, and in North Carolina from the State line south to US 221 near Boone. While we do not expect a very large number of people to use the Parkway until more of it is ready, nevertheless next spring we will see the beginning of the long and ever growing stream of motor cars through your section of the mountains. The State agents who purchased the right-of-way have now almost completed the adjustment of claims for the land taken. It has been necessary to grant a limited number of permits for private roads where abutting landowners might otherwise have been "bottled up". No additional grants on these sections will be made. As new State Highways or county roads are developed we hope that the use of private roads over Parkway lands may be further reduced. You will remember that we have said that the Parkway is for the pleasure of the people and that it has not been built for business or farming purposes. It is a "National" road, not merely a local road.

We shall in the near future send a letter to each of the owners who now has a permit for a private road in order to make clear certain things about these permits.

A "private" road is a special right allowing adjoining landowner or a group of landowners to travel across a certain portion of the Parkway lands to and fro as may be necessary for the use of his land for farming and residential purposes. Also such a road is for the use of those outsiders who wish to see him or his family.

On the other hand it is not a "public" road, and the farmer has a right to place a gate at his line and to keep it locked so that the general public does not trespass. In controlling this we will attempt to help by placing warning signs. At the same time since it is a private road the landowner cannot ask, or expect later to ask, the Parkway tourist to come on to his land if he should build a new store or a gas station which would, of course, be a commercial or a "public" business. It will be remembered that the permit reads "for farm and residential use".

Each permit or deed describes the width of the private road which generally is eight feet for actual travel, plus shoulders. Thus a private road on the Parkway is a one-way road, whereas many public roads are two lanes wide because they carry much more traffic, and there is need for vehicles to pass.

We have had complaints from landowners that this width is not sufficient to pass a full load of hay or other produce as farm wagons often load twelve feet wide. We agree, and we have said that when we place fences along these roads, as we may sometimes do where lands are being leased for farm work, that we will not place the fences closer together than fourteen feet clear.

As to regulation of traffic on the cross roads there are three important points:

1. A man crossing the main Parkway road must be sure to see that the way is clear. He should always come to a full stop before crossing.

2. The Parkway is built for passengers not for trucking or farm use. Each permit describes how loaded trucks or wagons must take the shortest route across, or the shortest route to the nearest State road.

3. The last, and a very important thing, is that the permittee should cross only at the point where it has been

agreed that he should come on or off. To enter his lands with a car or a wagon at any other point along the Parkway means that he is illegally trespassing, and we don't want to charge our neighbors with that.

It is important to realize that the Parkway will not "keep up" or maintain these private roads, but that this work is the job of those using them. We may do certain work at the point where private roads join the Parkway, because here we are interested in your safety and that of the man on the Parkway. We are interested too in keeping mud from tracking up the Parkway road; however, we wish all to know that we are in no way bound to do such work.

As a last word, we believe you understand why we have had to keep down the number of crossings and why we have made careful agreements as to their use. It is not because we wish to work a hardship on anyone, but rather that we are concerned for the safety of all on the Parkway property. We know that you who have these special rights will think of them as special and will not abuse them.

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT LET IN SOUTHERN VIRGINIA

Work has now been started on a contract for the construction of Section 1-W of the Parkway from Piper Gap to the Virginia-Carolina line. This places the Parkway under construction all the way from Adney Gap near Roanoke to Boone, North Carolina, a distance of 140 miles.

JAPANESE BEETLE

We have just been informed that the Japanese Beetle has been found in certain area of western North Carolina, and there is the possibility that it may spread into the Parkway region. The State and Federal Departments of Agriculture are cooperating to prevent further spread of these dread beetles. It is our desire to cooperate in

every way with the other Government agencies, and we shall appreciate reports to our Rangers if you should see an insect which you think may be a Japanese beetle.

This beetle is similar in shape to a potato bug and is between this and a June bug in size. It is of a bronze-green color.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

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THE FIRE SEASON AHEAD

The Spring "Fire Season" may last a week or three months, depending on how much and how often rain falls. The "bad conditions" will begin when the warm spring sun and winds thaw and then dry the moisture from the dead leaves, grass, and small limbs that lie on the ground. This dangerous "dry" will continue until the spring rains have brought out new grass and the sap has risen in the trees. After the woods are leafed out the dead leaves being in shade and warmth rot fast and pack down so that unless there is a long dry spell in summer they hold water, and if fired they burn slowly.

The dry time before the new green comes out is made more dangerous by the brush and grass burning done by farmers. No doubt this dry time is ripe for brush burning from the farming standpoint for it is between the spring plowing and planting season, and the brush piles require less effort to burn. We suggest that readers look over the State Forestry publications distributed with this issue of the Parkway News. They contain some good information about brush burning. As for grass burning the time spent is more than lost. Professor Hutchinson told us last fall that burning grass plots takes away the food for the new crop and reduces the strength of the new grass which opens the way for erosion. Sore mouths in cattle and sheep can be traced directly to burned fields.

Broom sedge thrives on burning. If you want to kill a field of this useless grass use a disk or spike toothed harrow set to break deep, drill in lime, fertilizer, and a good grass seed. Lespedeza is good, but your County Agent can give you the best combination for your farm location and soil condition.

Burning under the best conditions is still a dangerous business for a controlled fire can get out of control so quickly. Once out of control it may

cause so much damage that to try it at all is often the height of folly. You always take a chance. Perhaps there is a better use for the brush, possibly in gulleys where it certainly will help slow down the erosion.

Good farm practice is based on conserving everything of value. Safety and good farm practice go hand in hand in this case as always and that makes a double reason for **BEING CAREFUL WITH FIRE.**

LET'S ORGANIZE TO FIGHT FIRE

There are a few counties through which the Parkway passes that do not have organized forest fire protection. Several are in the process of being organized, and several are waiting for State funds to help pay expenses of such an organization.

This Service and other Federal Bureaus have several trained fire fighters along the Parkway and some officers qualified to train others. If any citizens are interested in organizing fire-fighting units we will be glad to give a training course in fire prevention and fire fighting. We also have available motion pictures dealing with this subject. We realize that it would be hard to find a man who works outdoors who has not fought fires, and most farmers and other outdoor men are good at it. But we know also that 15 men trained as a unit are more valuable than 50 working as individuals.

A big advantage to property owners adjoining Federal lands is that where trained crews of fire fighters cover adjoining land, the agencies responsible for the crews may make "Co-operative Agreements" with Federal authorities. This means that if a crew goes to a fire and finds the job too big for a small group they may call on the

Government forces for help even though Federal land is not afire.

The advantages of such an arrangement are easily seen. When fires occur--and they occur despite our best effort---a small trained crew can usually take care of it. If the fire gets out of hand, even though not on Federal lands, CCC and other Government agencies may be called on to help. In return such fire-fighting groups often make the first attack on fires originating on Federal lands where our own forces are several miles or hours away.

FIRES AND WILDLIFE

Of all the enemies of wildlife, fire is the greatest. When fire strikes a forest every bird and animal leaves the vicinity immediately. Recently a Ranger from a western park told us of being one of a party of four men who were surrounded by a fire. Their salvation was a small island of less than an acre in a boggy swamp. On the same island at the same time were black and grizzly bear, fox, coyote, skunk, snakes of all kind, moose, deer, elk, antelope, lynx, wild cat, squirrel, and several others. Natural enemies were crowded together, cheek to jowl, yet not one made any move to harm the other during the six hours the fire raged about them. On the other hand, I have witnessed one instance and heard of others in which quail hens would be burned to death rather than desert a brood of young in the face of fire.

But it doesn't take a forest fire to kill wild things. A grass or leaf fire, after April 1, is sure to burn nests and later the young of ground nesting birds. One of the quickest ways to kill fish is to burn along a stream. Ash in water forms lye. Fish are in a tough spot when their stream is polluted. They have nowhere to run. If the pollution is strong enough the fish die. With as many foxes as there are in the mountains be thankful for rabbits. When the rabbits get scarce your poultry will suffer, and ground burning drives out rabbits.

It is true that some brush burning must be done, but it is highly doubtful that grass burning must ever be done. If broom sedge is burned it will come back stronger than ever unless deep-ploughed and turned under. Burning grass in spring for early pasturage is more than wasted time according to Professor Hutchinson of V. P. I. To burn the grown of last year is to destroy the food of this year's crop, sour the land, and cause sore mouths in cattle and sheep. Sour land soon becomes galled land, and then erosion starts.

If you have to burn for any reason **DO YOUR BURNING EARLY!** By all means be through burning by the first of April.

The ground-nesting birds start laying as soon as the ground is thawed and warm. They are probably the most valuable and most underpaid friends a farmer or gardner has, especially the bobwhite. If you plan to raise potatoes encourage quail to live near the patch. They are lusty eaters and are one of the few birds that eat potato bugs. There are at least two varieties of sparrow that nest on or close to the ground. These little fellows do a great job of insect and bug catching, as do many other birds.

We have a lot of friends wearing feathers, and they work hard for the farmer and ask no pay but what they eat. You can easily increase their numbers planting fence corners and the edges of good cover with buckwheat to be left standing for winter feed. But, whatever else you do, **DO NOT BURN THEM OUT.**

SUGGESTIONS FOR ALL

All good farmers and outdoor men know these rules of behavior we write below but all of us sometime forget. All of us can help the other fellow and the tourist by asking him to remember:

"Stump-Flipping" cigar and cigarette smokers should grind out the stump in earth or on a rock, never in leaves or grass. In a car use an ash receiver

or pinch out the fire before you "flip".

Heel-knocking pipe smokers, knock your ash in your hand. It is easier on the bowl rim, and if the dottle doesn't burn your hand it probably will not burn anything else.

Campers, picnickers, and fox hunters--be sure your fire is dead out. A spark, a shift of wind and a fire is started long after you are gone. Remember that if you liked the place well enough to eat there you may want to do it again.

Field, woods, and brush burners--be sure you have enough help to keep control, no matter what happens. In this connection we remember a fire last spring. A man and his son were clearing land. The wind was just right on the day he lit his fire. Man and boy were doing fine--until the wind changed. Several neighbors came at his call, but before the fire was again "under control" he had lost four acres of the best hardwood in the county, plus two acres of mill size poplar. An expensive lesson in BEING CAREFUL WITH FIRE.

TO REPORT FIRES

We suggest that you place this issue where you can easily reach it, preferably by your telephone, and in case of fire call the nearest fire suppression personnel listed below:

From the Shenandoah National Park to Rockfish Gap (Route 260)

Park Ranger Eckley, Waynesboro 187W

From Route 250 to north of James River
District Ranger George Kramer (U.S. Forest Service) Buena Vista 104

From south of James River to Peaks of Otter

District Ranger Louis Smith (U.S. Forest Service) Buena Vista 159 MW

From Peaks of Otter to Smart View
Park Service Headquarters,
Roanoke 2-4827

From Smart View to Va.-N. C. line
B. J. Kyle, Supt., CCC Camp NP-14,
Call the residence of J. M. Flippen,
Stuart, Virginia
Ranger E. M. Dale or call
W. A. Cockram, Meadows of Dan, Va.

From Virginia-North Carolina line to Deep Gap, North Carolina
Park Ranger B. T. Campbell
Wilkesboro 245 or 35-F-21

or
Contact L. A. Sharpe, Supt., CCC
Camp NP-21, Laurel Springs

From Deep Gap (Route 421) to Gooch Gap
District Forester J. R. Spratt
(N. C. Forest Service) Lenoir 260
or 387 J

From Gooch Gap to Balsam Gap
District Ranger Wm. Huber, (U. S. Forest Service) Marion 221 or 140

From Balsam Gap to French Broad River
District Forester J. R. Spratt
Asheville 3860 or 6343 J

From French Broad River to Rheinhardt Gap
District Ranger Jack Fortin
(U. S. Forest Service) Brevard 2501

From Rheinhardt Gap to Cherokee, N. C.
Call nearest N. C. County Warden:
J. P. Allison, Waynesville
Sheriff's Office, Residence
Waynesville 80 W

Mack Ashe, Sylvia 0904

A. J. Sutton, National Park
Service Office, Bryson City.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

April 1939

Number 5

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

FIFTY MILES VIRGINIA PARKWAY OPEN

Fifty miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway south of Roanoke was opened to through traffic beginning Saturday, April 1. Opening of a like mileage in North Carolina will, however, await completion of black-top paving under existing contracts expected to be completed about July 1.

No dedication or ceremony is planned until a larger portion of the nearly 500-mile scenic roadway through North Carolina and Virginia is linked together. The sections now open in Virginia have been paved with a preliminary hard surface and extend south from the vicinity of the Bent Mountain Post Office on top of the Floyd plateau where temporary connection has been made with U. S. Route 221 highway to Floyd. This point is about 18 miles from the center of Roanoke City. The 50-mile parkway section terminates in a clover-leaf grade separation, crossing U. S. 58, the Martinsville-Hillsville road near the Meadows of Dan. Major contracts were completed last fall, and since then this part of the drive has been open on the "travel-at-your-own-risk" basis under a speed limit of 25 miles. The speed limit is 35 miles an hour and the Parkway is maintained clear for traffic although wayside park development, roadside planting, parking area, and guard rail construction will continue during much of the summer. As this incidental work is progressively completed, it is planned to put final speed zoning into effect in which the top limits posted for passenger car traffic will probably compare with those in force on State highways in Virginia and North Carolina.

The Parkway will be administered by the National Park Service, and traffic control laws will be enforced similar to those governing the State highways. In addition, special Park Service regulations will govern the protection of the Park scenery and conservation of wildlife. One of the impor-

tant regulations prohibits the use of the parkway drive by commercial or business traffic, the Parkway having been set aside for purposes of recreation rather than for business. The Virginia parkway patrol will be continuous during the tourist season and is now staffed with three National Park Service rangers who are Messrs. Thomas K. Garry and Wallace D. Barlow with headquarters in Roanoke and Edwin M. Dale with headquarters at Meadows of Dan, Virginia. In addition to being authorized law-enforcement officers the rangers are charged with responsibility for fire protection and general public relations work with the adjacent landowner and with the tourist.

Tourist bureaus and roadmap makers have been advised of the opening of 100 miles of the Parkway with an explanation that the drive is still under construction and that while convenient connections are provided with paved State highways at the temporary termini it will be a matter of possibly two years before major units of the Parkway will be continuous and tourist facilities well advanced between Roanoke City and Asheville. At that time it will be more fitting to extend an unqualified invitation to the people of the Country to tour the Parkway. During the coming summer a total of 270 miles of the Parkway will be in various stages of construction, 220 of which lie between Roanoke and Asheville, North Carolina.

It is estimated that intensive use of the Parkway will not likely develop until the Roanoke-Asheville unit is completed and will probably not reach a peak until the entire drive has been linked with the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Parks. The Parkway will, however, see a substantial use this summer based on numerous inquiries which have been received from tourist bureaus, motor magazines, Chambers of Commerce, and individual citizens within the past few months in the Parkway office in Roanoke. Many have inquired whether or not completed

parkway sections might be easily visited as a side trip by traffic bound to and from the New York World's Fair. Another influence for use of the Parkway is the scheduled dedication of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee during the height of Rhododendron bloom. A particular effort will be made this year to introduce the Parkway to the Virginia and North Carolina people. The mountains should prove most attractive to visitors during the flower bloom season. In early June the flame Azalea is expected to reach its height of bloom which is as profuse on the Floyd plateau as in any section of the United States. The Azalea is preceded during May by the blossom of the Shadblow, the Dogwood, and the Redbud, and is followed by the bloom during June of the Mountain Laurel and Pink Azalea. The spring flower season closes with the bloom of the purple and the white Rhododendron. The Blue Ridge is particularly noted for the lengthy bloom of native shrubs which extends continuously for almost three months somewhere along the Parkway. The bloom period begins with late April and extends well into July in many of the higher altitudes where the cool air delays the spring.

In addition to the availability of 50 miles of the Parkway this summer, recreational developments in Smart View Park, 36 miles south of Roanoke, and Rocky Knob Park near Floyd will be partially opened to the public, facilities including scenic parking overlooks, picnic areas, and foot trails. Rocky Knob Park which is one of the major recreational units planned for the Virginia sections is a Federal reservation of 4,200 acres purchased with Federal funds, featuring Rocky Knob, a 3,700-foot peak towering above the Floyd plateau, to the top of which trails have been constructed. The area includes Rock Castle Creek, reputed to be one of the finest trout streams in southwest Virginia.

THE FIRE SEASON STILL WITH US

The March bulletin was devoted to sounding an alarm as to the dangers of the spring fire season. It is quite probable with warm weather somewhat delayed that the season will last for some weeks. As

we write this bulletin we have been much concerned over reports coming into this office that as many as a dozen fires have been burning at several different times during recent weeks in the Roanoke area alone. So far we have been quite fortunate, however, along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and we believe that a large part of the credit for this record is due to the care and interest which is being shown by our neighbors along the way. Only four small fires covering two or three acres at the most have been reported actually on Parkway lands. May we continue to rely upon your help along the lines that we suggested in the last bulletin which we are hoping you are keeping near at hand in order that if you discover fire you can notify the local fire officer in accordance with the complete list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers included in that bulletin.

To report fires discovered at night please call Mr. W. D. Barlow at Salem 621, Mr. T. Garry at Roanoke 4089, Mr. Sam P. Weems at Roanoke 5876, or Mr. B. T. Campbell at Wilkesboro 35-F-21.

NEW CONTRACTS ADVERTISED

Contracts were advertised recently for construction of 20 miles of Parkway in Nelson and Augusta Counties from Humpback Gap south to Love, and a section from Love to Tye River Gap. As yet no information is available as to the successful bidder.

A contract was advertised for the reconstruction of secondary roads interfered with by the parkway construction between Adney Gap on Bent Mountain and US-58 near the Meadows of Dan. The work to be done under this contract also includes construction of three parking overlooks in which provision will be made for the motorist to turn off the main line of the Parkway to view especially fine scenery at these points. The contract also includes construction of a permanent parkway connection with US-221 in the vicinity of Bent Mountain Post Office.

A fourth contract advertised recently was for a bridge to carry the Parkway over Route 608 at Ward's Gap in Carroll County.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

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Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

HOW LONG SHALL WE CONTINUE THE BULLETIN

You may recall that in our first issue we frankly said that this bulletin would be published "from time to time", that is, as and when we thought that there was something of importance to say to you. We admit that it has been sometime since we placed the last issue in the "take one" boxes, as several people along the way have called to our attention, but please do not feel that this has been due to the fact that recent days in Roanoke have been very warm.

More seriously and to review the history of these pages, we wonder whether those of you along the Parkway sections which are now open to traffic have not had enough of us. Possibly there are a number of things which we have left unsaid in which you would be interested. If so, we should like to know what the subjects are because of late we have received relatively few inquiries from our neighbors who are readers of the "News." We have even considered that as far as the bulletin is concerned, and where all of the issues have been circulated, we might say good bye and direct our bulletin all over again to those people along sections where the Parkway is new and just getting under construction. This would not mean, of course, that we would be forgetting our old friends, and doubtless we would take an opportunity now and then to come out with a special edition. Let us have the benefit of your ideas about this plan.

WORK GOES AHEAD

During the present summer almost 290 miles of the Parkway will be in various stages of construction. In northern Virginia just south of the Shenandoah Park, one 10-mile section has been let, and we expect the shovels in on two additional sections in the near future. Near the Peaks of Otter ten miles of work have been advertised for bids, and a second ten miles should be advertised soon. The contractors on Sections U, V, and W from the Pinacles of Dan south to the north Carolina line are making excellent progress, and it looks like we may be able to travel through at least to Pipers Gap by some time in the fall.

In North Carolina, Section 2-F between Deep Gap and Blowing Rock is expected to be advertised soon, and as you have already been informed much work is underway in the heavy mountains between Linville and Asheville. Also we are biting into the big mountains in the vicinity of Pisgah. Landscape planting and seeding and restoration of fields will continue during the summer and help to keep us occupied.

FIFTY-FIVE MILES OF PARKWAY IN UPPER NORTH CAROLINA TO BE OPENED IN JULY

South from the vicinity of Galax to Deep Gap near Boone, fifty-five miles of paving work is expected to be well along by the first of July so that the Parkway may be opened informally to use by the public. There

may be some oiling work to be done after this date, but arrangements have been made so that traffic will not need to be blocked. At the same time picnic and camp facilities in Cumberland Knob Park near Galax and in the Bluff Park near Sparta will be opened for use. We expect that by this time next year with the Parkway pretty well along between Asheville and Roanoke many of the out-of-state tourists will begin to use the drive, and since North Carolinians and Virginians must then begin to play hosts, we are particularly anxious for local people this year to get to know the Parkway that goes through their backdoor yards. Needless to say we hope that you will enjoy and that you will help us to make it more worthwhile as time goes on.

SCENIC EASEMENTS EXPLAINED

In the early part of the land acquisition program we requested the States of North Carolina and Virginia in a number of cases to get us what we chose to call a scenic easement. Our purpose was three-fold:

1. To keep certain farming lands in their present form in the picture which will be seen by the tourist on the Parkway.
2. To prevent unsightly development of lands in full view of the Parkway with commercial buildings such as gasoline stations, soda shops, and possibly in the distant future even factories. Especially do we want to prevent the erection of bill boards and advertising signs.
3. To reduce the cost of acquisition to the States.

We have felt as it has worked out that perhaps the scenic easement idea was not one of the best ideas we have

had. This is for the reason that more often than not the farmer has objected to the restrictions and has asked as much for the land as he would have asked if it were sold outright. As a result we have reduced the amount of scenic easements in the right-of-way plans which have been prepared more recently.

We have received in this office a number of inquiries from property owners over whose lands scenic easement has been taken as to just how far we expect to go in enforcing the various agreements, and we will attempt in this article to show you that we do expect to be reasonable and practical in working with the individual owner on this question.

In general, first let us say that it has always been our intention that the scenic easement would permit the owner to farm or use the land in the same manner as before we came along. Now, taking the easement, item by item, we would point out the following facts which may help to explain to you further our good intentions of co-operating and not unnecessarily restricting. The easement states that no building, pole line, or structure shall be erected on such lands. We intend that farm buildings may be erected in accordance with former practices, and we would be very glad at any time to send a representative around to discuss with you any new farm buildings that you may wish to build. Also we realize all buildings must be repaired occasionally and otherwise altered, and where minor work of this kind in accordance with good practice is involved, we do not expect that it would be necessary for you even to get in touch with us about it.

The easement says that no road or private drive shall be constructed on such lands to the Parkway motor road.

This we intend to enforce to the full extent since, as we have pointed out in previous bulletins, we are most anxious for reasons of safety to limit the number of roads coming into the Parkway.

Next, with reference to plant material the easement roads that "no tree, plant, or shrub shall be removed or destroyed on such lands." This refers to the mature or fully grown trees and shrubs which we feel are an important part of the scenery. We will have no objection at any time to the owner's removing and trimming any orchard or fruit trees, setting out or planting new trees, plants, or shrubbery. Also we realize that it is often necessary for good maintenance of pasture to cut certain weed trees or seedlings that crop up from year to year, and we have no objection of course to this type of work being done.

With regard to the dropping of ashes, trash, saw dust, etc., upon such lands, we do expect full co-operation from you, and the reason for this we are sure you will understand.

Also the item in the easement about signs, bill boards, and advertisements

we will expect to be taken at its word. As pointed out, however, we have no objection to one sign, not more than 18 x 24 inches, advertising the sale of the property or products raised thereon.

We hope that this explanation has made clearer to you that the Park Service expects to be most reasonable in working with you where scenic easements are involved. After all you should remember that you still own the land and that all we have is a legal agreement with you covering only the items stated in the easement. We are sure that there will be no difficulty between us as long as both parties fully understand and abide by the "spirit" of the idea behind the scenic easement, because we feel that you are as interested in having your property appear well as we are. We will be glad to receive any further inquiries that you may have with regard to this question. Also please let us know if there are other subjects bothering you that we can tell you about through the means of this paper.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

July 1939

Number 6

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

In the June issue we put forth the idea that maybe the time had come for us to quit writing this little paper--that is in anything like a regular edition. Remember that our thought has been to describe to our near neighbors the general ideas and plans which are in back of this new and large undertaking which is the Blue Ridge Parkway. We have written 18 of these bulletins and we thought we had drawn a pretty good picture. Moreover, we have had a fear that we might be called "long-winded".

Well--since that June issue more people than you would think have taken the trouble to write in and to say in one way or another that we ought not to quit. That makes us feel pretty good and as long as some of you feel that way about it, we will keep on talking about the work just as long as our breath holds out.

There is one thing which bothers us. Since we started passing the time of day with you in November 1937, the parkway has grown about three times and we have that many more neighbors. Very few of these have read the first copies of this paper which explained some of the most important ideas in back of the parkway. So we have decided to reprint some of the old stories but we will mark them "reprint" so that you older readers can pass them up if you wish.

NEW CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The present Congress appropriated \$3,150,000 to further construction of the parkway. This brings the total of appropriations to date up to nineteen and a half millions. When the contracts

are let under the new money about 320 miles, or better than three-fifths of the entire job, will then be in various stages of construction. The new money has been earmarked for big grading contracts on the following sections:

From Tye River Gap, 18.5 miles south to connect with Route 60, the Lexington to Charlottesville road which crosses the Blue Ridge near Whites Gap. Also in Virginia 11 miles will be built south from Route 501 which is the Natural Bridge to Lynchburg highway through the James River water gap. On the southern end, this section of parkway will connect with work now underway from Thunder Hill to the Peaks of Otter.

The share of the new appropriation to be allotted to the parkway in North Carolina will grade two heavy sections through the Craggy Mountains and this will connect the last remaining major gap in the parkway line between the vicinity of Roanoke and a point on the Asheville scenic highway. Note that from Blowing Rock to Linville the famous Yonahlosse trail around Grandfather Mountain will be used by the parkway motorists for the present time. "The Craggy" sections total 12.5 miles but the plans call for almost as much dirt and stone to be moved as in the 29.5 total miles of the Virginia work. That makes us all concerned about the problem of erasing the "scar of construction" that must of sheer necessity result in certain places. Greatest care is taken in the first plans for grading and during construction to reduce the damage to the natural beauty. Moreover, your

editor is told by the landscape planners that in time the great cuts and fills can be made green again as is being shown by the landscape work which is going ahead fast on other parkway sections now.

HUGE PLANTING AND SEEDING PROGRAMS BEGUN WITH NEW WORK RELIEF CREWS

Thousands of native shrubs and seedling trees will be planted and countless grass seeds will be sown on the Blue Ridge Parkway during the year ahead. More than 200 miles of parkway will be involved. A total of 1,000 laborers will do the work. The Works Projects Administration has announced they will assign about 200 men from Asheville and Marion, North Carolina, and from Galax, Virginia, and vicinity to the nearby parkway sections. In addition, 200 men from C. C. C. camps at Rocky Knob, Virginia, and The Bluffs, North Carolina, will carry on the forestry and roadside beautification work already started on the parkway at these points. Also work crews being supervised by the Bureau of Public Roads will continue on their program of landscaping. All the plans for landscape development are prepared by the National Park Service, whose landscape architects also inspect the work in the field. The native plants used are largely collected from the adjoining parkway lands. Soil erosion control, forest cleanup, vista clearing, planting of trees and shrubs and grass seeding are part of the program made possible by the various work agencies.

PARTIALLY COMPLETED PARKWAY SECTIONS NEAR ASHEVILLE OPENED TO TRAFFIC

An 8-mile section of the parkway from Bull Gap to Craggy Gardens near Asheville has been opened to traffic on the "travel-at-your-own-risk" basis. Crossing the Asheville City watershed, this section of parkway is patrolled by the

watershed authorities and is opened only between the hours of 9:00 a.m., and 5:00 p.m., daily.

Also a 10-mile section of the parkway from Buck Creek Gap to Mt. Mitchell has been opened. While these portions of the roadway await final surfacing, a crushed-stone base has been placed and they may be driven with safety at reasonable speeds. In time, the crushed stone becomes quite compact by traffic and is kept in shape by road blades.

All sections of the parkway are being paved on what is called by Bureau of Public Roads engineers "stage construction". The crushed stone base surface must remain in this state until bound together by traffic when a first coating of low-cost bituminous or black-top surfacing is applied. The final and high-grade black-top surface cannot be immediately applied in the case of this mountain highway because of the very high fills required in the construction which are subject to "settlement" over a period of years in some cases.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

August 1939

Number 8

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States
Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

"WE MOW THE HAY"

There has been much cutting of hay on the Parkway lands during recent days. As you may have noted the crop is used to mulch the grass seeding on the road shoulders and slopes. Since we have a big program of landscaping ahead our needs are likewise big. That is why we had to turn down some of you who asked to share crop this season. We mention this because we don't want you to think that we have gone back on the idea. In fact, quite the opposite.

PARKWAY GRADING SOUTH OF
LINVILLE NEAR COMPLETION

Grading of the Parkway in two Sections (2-J and 2-K) South from the vicinity of Grandfather Mountain is nearing completion. These 20 miles of work were inspected just the other day by Engineers William Austin, who heads the Office in Roanoke and S. L. von Gemmingen, the Resident, in charge for the Public Roads Administration (that's the new name given to the Old Bureau of Public Roads when it was made a part of the new Public Works Agency on July 1st in line with the Reorganization Bill passed by the recent Congress). The Engineers surely had some problems on these Sections and so of course did the Contractors. We are told by people who have visited in the West, which is famous for its roads, that nothing can beat the viaduct on 2-K nor the "Bear Den" for a thrill. There is something about this country with its cliffs and its timber and "its views that end nowhere" that makes you

say "A-a-a" when you see it and then you just can't think of anything else to say (unless you are a poet and we don't think we are). Of course, we realize there is a great deal of Parkway elsewhere that is just as fine for scenery and we are going to keep our promise about not playing favorites.

Sections 2-J and 2-K will not be given a final black top surfacing now, probably this will wait until Sections to the South have been graded. However, there is talk of putting calcium chloride on the crushed stone now in place. This settles the dust and makes a fairly good riding surface for the time being. More important it makes for a good base. These Sections will be opened to the public on the "travel at your own risk" basis as soon as they are finally approved, and that should be soon.

The sizable bridge over the Linville River is being built as a day-labor job supervised by the Public Roads Administration, John L. Humbard, being the Engineer in charge. This construction is not expected to be completed until next year.

ROANOKE TO ASHEVILLE

As we have said before funds are on hand to put all the Parkway under construction between these two cities. The Virginia end is coming along, even though

the almost daily rains have made it hard for the paving work on the three Sections between the Meadows-of-Dan and the State line. This 34 mile length should nevertheless be out by next Spring and then there will be clear sailing on the Parkway, all the way to Boone. From Blowing Rock the Yonahlossee Trail around Grandfather Mountain will lead to the Parkway at Linville and we have already said enough about Sections 2-J and 2-K. Sections 2-L, near Little Switzerland, and 2-M to Buck Creek Gap should be out next year. At the latter point a tie will be made with the Mt. Mitchell Sections of the Parkway, which are already being used, even though final surfacing remains to be done. Thus only two Sections remain to have us through to Asheville, and the shovels should be in on the Craggy Sections before the leaves fall.

NOTES

A folder describing the Blue Ridge Parkway has been published recently by the National Park Service, and is available upon request to the Roanoke Office.

The picnic areas at Bluff Park in North Carolina are now ready for use. However, drinking water has not yet been supplied, so it is best to bring your own canteen.

The picnic grounds at Cumberland Knob near the State line and at Rocky Knob Park south of Route 8 in Virginia, have been popular on recent week-ends. They have been reported filled on some Sundays. We suggest a week day evening for your family get-together when you can have the choice of tables and the rest.

The paving on the Parkway between the North Carolina State line and Deep Gap near Boone is advancing and the weather permitting, the work should be completed this month. Meanwhile, traffic is being maintained and it is little trouble to get through.

Section 1-J of the Parkway which is the 10 miles to the North of the Peaks of Otter is now underway. Bids are due on August 24 for Section 1-K, South of these famous Virginia Mountains.

It has been suggested that soft ball diamonds should be provided in some of the parks for the many picnickers who like to work up a "will to eat" while the ladies are spreading out the contents of the luncheon basket. We have the baseball players in mind.

Horseshow pitching, badminton and other game grounds are being planned, although probably those will not go in until we have some of the proposed park buildings. No charges will be made for the ball fields and horseshoe courts, but it may be necessary to charge a few cents for the use of the badminton bats and the funny looking balls they play with. This is a new game that seems to be popular with the city folks and country folks, old and young, from coast to coast.

One thing that disappoints us is that we haven't been able to develop the lakes and swimming pools we have planned, but the Parkway and the picnicking and camping places, with all the water supply, and the sewerage and what not, have to come first, of course.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

September 1939

Number 9

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

A MODERN SYSTEM OF SIGNS WILL CONTROL PARKWAY TRAFFIC

Traffic signs are now being placed on 45 miles of the Parkway in Virginia and 60 miles in North Carolina which have been surfaced and are open to the public.

The "Speed Zone" signs are an effort on the part of our planners to make the motorway as safe as possible and to warn the driver of the safe speeds. The Parkway road was designed for a maximum speed of 45 miles per hour. This means that the curves have a certain amount of superelevation which causes the vehicle to lean into the curve and helps to prevent sideways skid, but there is a limit to which we are able to "bank" the curves because slow moving vehicles might slide sideways to the inside of the curve during winter weather. Sharper curves mean that we must reduce speed in order to travel them safely and with comfort. Thus we find that the safe driving speed varies with the amount of curvature, how far the driver can see around the curve or over the hill; and it varies with the grade going up or going down, and with weather condition of rain, fog, sleet, or ice. These many points have been considered in marking the Parkway for speed. We realize that the familiar sign symbols which only show a curve to the right or left do not tell the driver many of these things.

We have all at some time or other misjudged the sharpness of a curve and driven it too fast, our tires screaming out a protest and a warning of the danger. Other times we have found that curves are deceiving in that they could actually be driven faster than we judged upon first appearance. Both instances subject the driver and passengers of the vehicle to unnecessary wear and tear, and the accumulated effect can be very tiring on an extended journey. We plan to use a white centerline stripe to show the direction of curve to the right or left. This will eliminate many curve symbol signs. In addition, the white

centerline stripe is of great value to us all in the mountainous country for night driving and particularly for foggy and rainy weather. Here again our first thought is for safety of driving.

The system we have adopted is based upon experience of several states, notably that of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, and other states who have indicated in conjunction with their curve symbol signs the safe speed "under normal dry weather conditions". In order to avoid a large number of signs, which would appear if placed on every curve, we consider a group of curves of the same general degree of sharpness to be one "zone" and reduce the speed to cover the group. Thus we have a system which is somewhat like the familiar business zone, hospital zone, and open highway, which we have become accustomed to drive according to the implied and legal limit within those zones.

PARKWAY CONSIDERED MAJOR ROUTE

As in the case of the major highways, boulevards, and arterial routes, the Parkway is considered "through-traffic", and therefore all vehicles must come to a "full stop" before crossing the Parkway. This will apply to all persons using the private access roads just as the state highway department places the full responsibility on the person entering or crossing the major highways to make a full stop. The Parkway Rangers will personally visit and explain to each occupant of land adjoining the Parkway the exact status of any easement or special use permit granted to him. Also we expect to post a notice near the Parkway boundary which will caution the property owner regarding his responsibility in the use of the access road, cattle crossing, or other right of use. This sign will face the road entering Parkway lands. On the other side we will place a sign which will show the tourist that the road is private. This should avoid any nuisance to the local people. The study of the exact

wording of these signs has delayed their printing, but we hope to have them in place before another tourist season.

It is interesting to note that for staggered crossings of the Parkway we had to design a special sign. Some of the crossroads leave the Parkway at a considerable distance from their point of entry and often out of sight. For them we developed a sign symbol on which the arrow indicates the turn to the right or left as the case may be. Of course commercial vehicles will have to be permitted on the Parkway motor road through the length of the stagger. As we have said in other bulletins, the signs which read "Commercial Vehicles Excluded" apply to all trucks except when used for carrying passengers.

The manufacture of the metal signs-- especially those with reflector buttons-- the posts, the placing of signs and their maintenance is a costly matter, and we ask your help in protecting your investment. Tell the children that throwing stones may crack the enamel and rust the metal back, requiring replacement at a cost of several dollars. Tell them the buttons on the reflector signs are worthless when removed from a sign, but are very valuable in the sign in preventing accidents. The children's safety, as well as that of their families and the traveling public, is the basis of our entire sign system.

IMPROVEMENTS EXPECTED TO BE MADE IN THE SIGN SYSTEM

We expect to improve the sign system. There will need to be some additions, some changes of location, perhaps some can be eliminated, but soon we hope to reach the point where the traveler will be sufficiently warned in advance of the actual condition of driving and thereby make the road safe, easy to drive, and with a minimum of risk to life and property. As the system is perfected it will be extended throughout the entire 500 miles of Parkway as it is completed.

PROGRESS HERE AND THERE

The secondary road contract along the Parkway between Bent Mountain and the Meadows of Dan is nearing completion. Included are the permanent entrance from

route 221 to the Parkway at Bent Mountain Post Office and three parking areas in the scenic section between that point and Pine Spur. The tying together of the secondary roads themselves will mean that all truck traffic can be routed on the old basis and will not use the Parkway.

Section 1-K south from the Peaks of Otter to Bobbitts Gap in Bedford and Botetourt Counties, Virginia, is now under way.

The three sections of the Parkway from Meadows of Dan south to the State line where paving operations have been hampered by the rainy weather which we had during most of the summer have speeded up in the steady sunshine of the last two weeks.

Sections 2-K and 2-L of the Parkway south from Linville, North Carolina, are shaping up rapidly and are expected to be completed before winter. The Linville River Bridge which is being built directly by the Public Roads Administration is progressing well. This stone arch bridge, 534 feet long, which includes three spans of 86 feet, is an interesting piece of construction and is being visited by many local people over weekends. While we are glad to have this show of interest we add a word of warning as to the dangers of accidents. We suggest that you be satisfied to look down on the operations from the two high points on either side and that you keep the children in hand.

Bids have been asked for the construction of a part of Parkway in the Craggy Mountains, Yancey and Buncombe Counties. Bids will be received in Washington on October 5 by the Public Roads Administration. Running from Toe River Gap on Mt. Mitchell south toward the Craggy Rhododendron Gardens this section is one of the highest and most spectacular on the Parkway. When Section 2-P immediately south of the above and Section 2-F north of Blowing Rock are let, the entire Parkway will be under construction from Bent Mountain near Roanoke almost to Asheville.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume II

October 1939

Number 10

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 833 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

THE FIRE SEASON AHEAD

The danger of forest fires is always with us from the beginning of the fall until the rains and snows of the winter have set in. As we write this bulletin, this year looks like a bad one for the forests because of the long spell of dry weather.

We believe we are somewhat better prepared this year along the Parkway to cope with the fire problem if there is any such thing as being "well prepared for fire". Plans have been drawn for a close working together of the Parkway agencies and other Federal and State agencies within the Parkway area. Recently we added to the fire fighting equipment a special fire truck for use along the Parkway. This "little red wagon" is stationed near Rocky Knob Park in Virginia, and while it may not be so much to look at when you compare it with the big hook and ladders they have in the city, it will pump more than 250 gallons of water a minute, picking it up from a well or stream. That means a stream of water on a woods fire that would make a lot of difference, but we still have the big problem of getting the pump to the scene of the fire as soon as possible after the outbreak. The question then becomes one of getting the information about fires to the right people.

During work days from 8:00 in the morning until 5:00 in the afternoon there are many men working along the Parkway, and there are a number of trucks available to carry the alarm to headquarters as well as men to the fire. The worst hours are from the time these men leave the Parkway until they return. That time will include Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, as well as the night hours. Every big fire on the Parkway so far has occurred during these times, and it has been the alertness and co-operation of our neighbors, either in reporting or fighting the fire, or both, that has saved many acres of the public land and private land as well.

We are sincerely grateful for the co-operative spirit and action and hope it will continue to grow. Remember the fire does not have to be on the park lands. We want to know about any fire near or threatening those lands. If there is a phone nearby call the nearest man on the list in this bulletin. If you can help put down the fire do it. It may be your woods next time, and you may need help. The Ranger on your Parkway District will answer all fire calls night or day. If he decides that men and machinery are needed he will know how to get them. If the first report is clear enough he will bring the equipment with him.

Remember this: If everyone is careful enough and thoughtful enough we will have no fires. A match is easy to put out; so is a cigaret and the ashes from your pipe. A little care would keep brush-burning fires from "getting away". So again we say to all our workers and neighbors BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE.

TO REPORT FIRES CALL

From the Shenandoah National Park to Rockfish Gap (Route 250)

Call Park Ranger C. L. Croghan
Shenandoah National Park
Waynesboro, 187-W

From Route 250 to north of James River
Call District Ranger B. A. Eager
U. S. Forest Service
Buena Vista, 104

From south of James River to Peaks of Otter
Call District Ranger Louis Smith
U. S. Forest Service
Buena Vista, 159-MW - after office hours call Natural Bridge 23W

From Peaks of Otter to Smart View
Call Park Service Headquarters
Roanoke 24827 - after office hours
call Ranger T. K. Garry, Roanoke 4089

From Smart View to Va.-N.C. line
Call Park Ranger E. M. Dale
c/o W. A. Cockram, Meadows of Dan
or

Contact Supt. B. J. Kyle,
CCC Camp NP-14, Woolwine
Call Clark Bros. Gen. Mdse, Stuart.

From Va.-N. C. line to Deep Gap, N.C.
Call Park Ranger B. T. Campbell
Wilkesboro 245 - after office
hours call Wilkesboro 30-F-04

or

Contact Supt. C. L. Fink,
CCC Camp NP-21, Laurel Springs,
N. C.

From Deep Gap (Route 421) to Gooch Gap
Call District Forester J. R. Spratt
N. C. Forest Service
Lenoir 206

Residence telephone, Lenoir 387J

From Gooch Gap to Balsam Gap

Call District Ranger G. H. Griswold
U. S. Forest Service
Marion 221

Residence telephone Marion 140

From Balsam Gap to French Broad River
Call District Forester J. R. Spratt
Asheville 3860

Residence telephone 6343J

From French Broad River to Rheinhardt Gap

Call District Ranger Jack Fortin
U. S. Forest Service
Brevard 2501

From Rheinhardt Gap to Cherokees

Call District Forester J. R. Spratt
Asheville 3860
Residence telephone 6343J

or

Call nearest N. C. County Warden
J. Q. Allison
Waynesville Sheriff's Office
Residence telephone, Waynesville 80W

Mack Ashe

Residence telephone - Sylva 0904

A. J. Sutton

National Park Service Office, Bryson
City, call Bryson City operator

PARKWAY TO BE CLOSED TO THROUGH TRAVEL DURING THE WINTER MONTHS

It has been decided to close the Blue Ridge Parkway beginning November 15 to through travel as it is thought that the amount of traffic wanting to use it would not justify the expense of removing the snow and sanding icy pavements. The Parkway will not, however, be blocked off, and during open days there will be no reason that people cannot visit the Parkway providing they wish to travel on their own risk.

This period of "Parkway closed because of the weather" will end about March 15 (if the groundhog does not fool us too much), and from that time on tourists will again be encouraged to use the scenic highway. Incidentally we look forward to the likelihood that there will be 140 continuous miles of the Parkway ready for the next tourist season. This unbroken stretch will begin at the Bent Mountain Post Office, seventeen miles south of Roanoke, and continue through to Deep Gap near Boone, North Carolina. We do not think that we can guess very closely at this time when the three sections in southern Virginia will be ready, but we should be able to make this judgement in the late fall. With the opening of 140 miles, out-of-state tourists should begin to be attracted in greater numbers to the Blue Ridge Mountains for their vacation trips. At the northern end this Parkway stretch will connect with hard surfaced US-221 into Roanoke and at the southern end with US-421 into Boone and Wilkesboro. Wayside picnic and camping areas at Smart View, Rocky Knob, Cumberland Knob, and the Bluff Parks will be finished including the water supply.

PARKWAY FIREWOOD TO BE GIVEN AWAY

We have on hand a quantity of wood, mostly chestnut, which we cannot use for construction purposes, but which is satisfactory for firewood. Again this winter we have arranged to give this wood to families in need of firewood. No wood will be given except for use in the home, and those who are given permission to obtain it must provide for loading and hauling.

If you need firewood secure a letter from your County Relief Agency addressed to the Acting Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway and present this letter to a Park Ranger who will make the necessary arrangements.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume III

November 1939

Number I

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Va.

FIRE FIRE FIRE

We jump every time the phone rings lately expecting to hear of another fire threatening Parkway lands. The conditions are very bad in North Carolina, and for that matter we would welcome a good rain in Virginia too. So far we have been fairly lucky along the Parkway, but we can't stretch luck too far. We have got to keep sharp watch. And by the way, most every fire this year has been reported in by some good citizen, and we are mighty grateful.

GATES AND FENCES AND CHICKEN WIRE

We had a chuckle the other day when a party of ladies from a distant city stopped in the office to tell us how they enjoyed a ride over the Parkway. The high point of the trip, they said, was when they ran up on a "whole flock of wild turkeys" just south of Roanoke. Well we thought that was news too, and we asked for more about it, but we kept our tongue in our cheek. From the description, they (the turkeys) sounded just a bit domestic, but we did not let on, thinking that we could get by with our conscience on the basis that we were not quite "sure".

A day or two later we drove down the Parkway, and there they were all right--but they were back in the yard. We guessed the fence had been fixed. That same day down in North Carolina we almost got us a Thanksgiving dinner ourselves, and probably would have but for the fact that we just had the

brakes adjusted, and they worked on all four wheels. But that's not all. A little later on the same day we almost got us a beef steak and a glass of milk.

Well, our point is that there are still a lot of cattle and chickens running around loose, and they seem to get curious about the tourist on the road--dangerous, of course, for man, and beast, and fowl. We wrote quite a while ago in this paper about fences along the right-of-way line, and we hope that there will be a lot of fences built before the big season opens next spring. Frost is getting deeper in the soil and that means fencing time. We hope you believe with us that "good fences make good neighbors".

HUNTING SEASON HERE AGAIN

The hunting season is on again, and from all reports the birds are plentiful and fat. Please remember that the regulations permit no hunting on the right-of-way of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the same law applies to the recreation parks like Rocky Knob, Smart View, Cumberland Knob, and Eluff. The reason for this all good sportsmen will understand, and we hope that you will help the game wardens and our rangers in enforcing the rules. Incidentally there have been many forest fires reported in the first few days of the season as being caused by careless hunters, and the fires that get away are the worst enemy of good hunting.

PROGRESS HERE AND THERE

After the freakish snow storm of early November the weather turned warm enough again to make possible some good progress in the paving work on the three sections in Virginia above the State line, and all the contractors tell us they hope to finish their work before old man winter gets his grip. That would be a big help, of course, toward an early opening of 140 miles of the Parkway in the spring. Of much interest to the local people also, work is now going forward on completion of the secondary highways and minor roads along these three sections.

Bids have been asked for Section 2-F of the Parkway between Boone and a point near Blowing Rock in North Carolina. This 8-mile section will connect with US-421 about three miles west

of Deep Gap which is the present end of Parkway contracts in that section. The contract will carry the Parkway grading through to Thunder Hill near Blowing Rock.

Contracts for grading Parkway sections 2-K and 2-L have been completed during recent weeks. Calcium Chloride will be applied to the crushed stone surfacing as a temporary measure for settling the dust until a permanent hard surface can be applied.

TWO CANDLES ON THE CAKE

The calendar tells us that today is the birthday of this modest little paper (we never know quite what to call it). We find it hard to believe, but we've taken the calendar at its word--hence at the top of this sheet is Volume III, Number I which seems to be just simply a hard way of saying that we enter our third year.

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS

Volume III

December 1939

Number 2

Issues by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia

1939 VISITORS TOTAL 290,000

More than 290,000 persons visited the Blue Ridge Parkway during 1939. Of this total 147,000 visitors in 48,000 cars were counted on the 50-mile long Virginia sections of the Parkway south from Bent Mountain to US-58 at Meadows of Dan. Forty-three thousand automobiles carried 130,000 persons along the scenic drive in North Carolina from the State line south to Boone, while a total of 5,500 cars were counted on other portions of the Parkway not so complete as to construction and scattered through the Blue Ridge Mountains. A periodic check on the number of Parkway visitors was made at various connections with important highways on Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, and on occasional weekdays during the season, and this formed the basis of our figures.

We feel that this census indicates a real public interest in the Parkway, particularly since the new roadway was not fully completed (traffic being maintained on only 100 miles during most of the summer) and was operated on the "travel at your own risk" basis under reduced speeds. In North Carolina paving operations were underway until late August, limiting use of the Parkway to one-way traffic past the oiling work which of course discouraged use in that State until late summer.

Partly for the reason that little or no advertising was given to the Parkway out of the States, eight out of ten cars visiting the drive bore either Virginia or North Carolina license tags. West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York State, and New Jersey cars made up most of the remaining.

We were also interested to find that the most popular period with visitors was between one and three

o'clock on Sunday afternoons and holidays which also shows that most of the cars came from the towns and the country side local to the Parkway. The record traffic for any given day occurred during the Asheville Rhododendron Festival when 2,400 persons traveled to see the Craggy Gardens in the height of their bloom on June 25 by way of the partially completed section of Parkway just to the north of that city.

We think that these figures show that we may expect a greatly increased number of tourists beginning next spring when 140 continuous miles will be opened to use from a point on Bent Mountain south of Roanoke through to the Boone, Blowing Rock, Linville resort area in North Carolina. The through connection will be ready in the early spring since grading and surfacing of the southernmost sections in Virginia between Meadows of Dan and the State line have recently been completed. During the past year this 37-mile gap was closed to traffic, and the use of State highways through Hillsville and Galax was necessary to reach the North Carolina sections from Virginia. The Parkway unit to be opened next spring will form a convenient through route for tourists and may very likely be chosen by many people traveling between Roanoke and Asheville since connection is made at either end with primary State highways. We plan to announce this 140-mile continuous section of Parkway more widely as being available for tourists and expect to see a definite increase in our 1940 traffic.

PROGRESS HERE AND THERE

Sections L-U, V, and W, the three contracts in Virginia just north of the State line were completed during December linking the Floyd Plateau sections

(over)

and the completed Parkway in North Carolina into a continuous 140-mile unit. Since the three contractors on I-U, V, and W won their race against frost and winter weather there need no longer be any doubt about the opening of this unit of Parkway in the spring. Black top paving was included in the grading work just finished.

Rebuilding of secondary State roads along the Parkway on the Floyd Plateau was completed during the month. Now that these roads which were disturbed by the Parkway construction are again linked together the regulation prohibiting trucks and commercial vehicles along the Parkway can be put into effect throughout, and such traffic will be required to use the local roads.

This contract also included construction of two large parking overlooks in the vicinity of Pine Spur which should be popular with tourists.

Contractors on the two sections north and south of the Peaks of Otter are reporting good progress with the open weather.

Satisfactory progress can also be reported on the 50-mile section in

North Carolina between Grandfather Mountain and Toe River Gap near Mt. Mitchell. The Linville River Bridge is rapidly nearing completion and the tunnel between Little Switzerland and Buck Creek Gap is finished so that it will soon be possible to drive through from Grandfather Mountain to Toe River Gap on the finished Parkway grade with a crushed stone base. The three bridges overpassing State highways at Linville Falls, Gillespie Gap, and Little Switzerland are in various stages of construction and short detours are necessary.

THE SEASON

As the old year 1939 draws to an end and gives way to frost and snow, fifteen Parkway contractors are shutting down their work. Looking back, 1939 has been our busiest construction year to date. Work was in progress on 275 miles of Parkway scattered all along the Blue Ridge, the northernmost job in Virginia being better than 400 miles from the southernmost in North Carolina. Looking ahead, 1940 will likely be busier still, when better than two-thirds of the entire 480 miles are expected to be in various stages of development.

Another main objective for 1940 will be to increase our friendships with you people along the way, and with that prospect the Blue Ridge Parkway wishes you all a happy and prosperous New Year!

B L U E R I D G E P A R K W A Y N E W S

Volume III

January 1940

Number 3

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

THE SOIL, A SCIENCE

In our age of science it is hardly possible for any one man to know everything about his subject, whatever his life work may be. Among the doctors, for example, there are those who specialize in the ailments of just one part of the human body, others who are expert in the use of the surgeon's knife, and of course those who practice "general" medicine. The "general" physician often finds it necessary to call in the specialist when he is puzzled by a hard case.

In a way the Blue Ridge Parkway has been a puzzling patient, and it has been necessary to call in men of varied experience--the road engineer, the bridge engineer, the landscape architect, the forester, the architect--all of whom we have found necessary to draw the plans; then there has been the contractor, the power shovel operator, the mechanic who keeps the equipment in shape, the mason, and countless laborers. No one of these men knows everything about this job. If results are to be truly good, there must be close working together among all of these people. When we came to landscaping the Parkway some of our people who had built many parks knew how to arrange the grass, the shrubs, and the trees and how to get them to grow under the ordinary conditions, but they were doubtful about how to treat the steep fills and cuts and certain eroding fields. These were part rock and part subsoil and washed badly with every runoff from the heavy rains. "To fix" these steep slopes with grass and shrubs became a subject of special study. We asked the Soil Conservation Service, a separate

bureau of the United States Department of Agriculture, to help us find a way to handle this situation, and we have learned a great deal from their advice.

The more we talked with these men who have made a life work of studying the soil, the more we came to believe that there might be many farmers along the Blue Ridge who would like to hear what the Soil Conservation people have to tell. Agriculture is the oldest, and many people think the noblest, of all the world's work, but at the same time this "oldest science" is also one of the most complex. Millions of people the world around are still learning more about it.

The purpose of the Soil Conservation Service is something like that of the County Agent, only the first named is a service maintained by the Federal Government to keep in close touch with farmers throughout the Nation and to spread information about what other farmers are doing elsewhere. The Soil Conservation Service during recent years has been able to show by actual results how a farm can be managed so as not to lose the top soil through erosion, at the same time producing better cash returns from the land. They have worked together with farmers in many rural communities throughout the country. Perhaps some of you have seen some of the farms in the Shenandoah Valley and in the Piedmont section of Virginia and North Carolina where a number of farmers have worked along S.C.S. lines. We are sure that your County Agent will know the work and will give you a frank opinion about it.

The methods of the S.C.S. system of farming are simple and not costly, and many farms can be worked according to these methods with the labor and equipment on hand.

The Soil Conservation Service has completed many of its demonstration projects, and these are to serve as demonstration areas for many years to come and will be available for farmers to visit. The work of the S.C.S. is also being continued on a cooperative basis within farmer-organized soil conservation districts. Districts wishing the advice and cooperation of the S.C.S. enter into an agreement with the Department of Agriculture, thus enabling them to obtain technical assistance from the Service.

So far there has been little soil conservation work done in the Blue Ridge where the soil problems differ very much from the farms in the low country. After talking with some of the County Agents we suggested that the Soil Conservation Service might work together with a few farmers along the Blue Ridge to demonstrate the newest ideas about mountain farming.

VIRGINIA FARMERS CONSIDER AGREEMENTS FOR COOPERATIVE WORK

The Soil Conservation Service together with the various County Agents followed up the suggestion, and during recent weeks they have talked with a great many farmers along the Parkway. A number of owners along the Virginia sections have shown great interest and are considering adopting Soil Conservation programs on their farms. A group of boys from the CCC camps of the S.C.S. nearby will help to get the work started, and arrangements are being made to try lime and various fertilizers, crop rotation, and other measures in an effort to show what can be done with some of the new ideas in the old science of agriculture.

Since we on the Parkway are road and park builders and know little or nothing about farming, we are of course taking no active part in this program.

We will watch with a great deal of interest from the sidelines, however, and the work has our best wishes. We have high hopes that much good will come to the program and that the results on these farms will provide a source of ideas and information to other farmers all along the line. Also we feel that the countless tourists who will ride along the Blue Ridge Parkway in the days to come and who will look upon these interesting projects will carry away with them ideas of value to distant places in the United States.

NORTH CAROLINA PROGRAM BEING STARTED

We understand that steps are also being taken to start a program of this kind along the Parkway in North Carolina, and while all the arrangements have not been completed it is expected to work out in the near future. Again our good wishes.

In future issues of the Blue Ridge Parkway News we hope to describe some of the work that is being done, and we will ask the Soil Conservation people, County Agents, and the farmers to comment about the work. In the meanwhile we know you will watch their progress with a lot of interest.

PARKWAY CLOSED BECAUSE OF ICE AND SNOW

It is no news to our neighbors along the Parkway that we are having the most severe weather we have experienced since work was started. Right before Christmas we had a very heavy snow with drifts in some places as high as five feet. This plus a two to three-inch coating of ice has made travel on the Parkway so dangerous that we have placed signs at all intersections with State routes which read

"DANGER - ICE ON PAVEMENT - ROAD CLOSED".



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

March 1940

Number 5

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

WALKING INTO TROUBLE

The other day we looked up some facts about death and injury on highways, and they don't make pleasant reading. Those who study highway safety have grouped accidents by causes, and by far the largest number are classed as "might have been avoided with ordinary care." The group that most surprised us for its size involved not vehicles alone, but persons on foot. More than any other type of accident it would seem to us that these should be unnecessary.

All of us along the Parkway are concerned with this "persons on foot" problem. Especially must we consider the children for there are numerous schools and churches near by the Parkway. It is quite common during the school year to come upon a group of young children walking along or even playing on the Parkway pavement. The danger of this sort of thing should make us all shudder, and it will grow more serious with the steady increase that can be expected in Parkway travel beginning with the Spring.

We suggest that the parents of school children and the school teachers join with our Rangers in a crusade to reduce the liability of child accidents. In that direction we are asking the Ranger to deliver this bulletin in person to the various Parkway neighborhood schools in order to discuss the situation with the teachers and to help by talking to the children or otherwise in a program of safety education.

We have no desire to force the children to take a longer way home from school by doing any such thing as passing a regulation to prohibit walking on the Parkway which is often their shortest route. We do, though, want to urge parents and teachers alike to find out what way each child takes to and from his home to satisfy yourselves that he follows the best and safest path. IF they must follow a part of the Parkway, THEN we would suggest that the children be advised in simple terms about the things we discuss below.

This habit "of walking into trouble along the highway" is by no means limited to the children; it is only that they get our first sympathy. Indeed, the adult is probably the worst offender, since we do much of our roaming after dark when the dangers increase many fold.

We on foot somehow always place the blame on the motor car, and we mutter under our breath almost every time we cross a busy city street or have to step aside along the highway to let the vehicles go by. It is interesting to note, however, that the Courts more often place the blame for accidents upon the "jay-walker" than they do upon the motorist.

We suggest the following accident preventatives:

1. The biggest help would be to Stay Off the Parkway and other fast highways and let your footsteps safely guide you along the trails or lesser roads.
2. And this is most important. If you walk on the Parkway, FACE THE ONCOMING CAR--in other words keep to the left side of the road.
3. If there are more than one of you, walk single file.
4. If you do much walking along the highway at night wear clothes that are light in color, or carry a white handkerchief so that you show as more than shadow when the lights hit you.
5. If the driver of the car seems to be a "road hog" (and we will have some of these), or if the driver happens to need your share to pass a car coming in the other direction, give him ALL OF THE ROAD.

TO RENT OR NOT TO RENT

In other issues we have talked at brief (and at length) about the rental of some of the Parkway lands to the nearby farmer. We think that this idea has grown in popularity with us and with

the farmers. It will help to keep the Parkway picture as we would like to see it and to some farmers at least the agreements for share cropping of hay and rental of pasture and field will be good business. It will be good business for us because it will cut down our costs for keeping the views "open" to the visitor.

You will note we say above that the "idea" of this scheme grows in popularity. The actual program is still in its infancy. We did lease a goodly number of acres last year. We do expect that there will be a number of agreements made for the coming summer. But we want to make it clear that the program really is just getting started. There is a lot of room for future growth in size and number of leases. Recent inquiries and letters from farmers lead us to believe that we haven't made clear just why we must go slowly. Here is our answer.

Much of the land that we have in mind for leasing in the future must be withheld for the present for one of two reasons. First, while our landscape work is underway along the Parkway we need large amounts of hay for mulching the seeded slopes to prevent erosion. We are cutting this hay from our own meadow lands, and otherwise we would have to buy mulch with Parkway funds. This would not only be an added cost, but there would be the chance that seed from any hay which we might ship in would bring Johnson grass or other kinds that none of us want to spread along the Parkway and on the farms. Our second reason is that we hope to restore the fertility of certain of the Parkway lands by resting them, by liming, fertilizing, and cover cropping until they are once again in good shape. After that we propose to lease them, and so in the long run the farmer will stand to benefit also.

These are the reasons that we have so far and for the time being turned down the largest part of the requests for use of Parkway farmlands. We do not want to discourage the program, and a refusal at this time does not mean that we won't be glad to talk business after landscaping has been completed.

We have made a lot of progress with landscape plans during the past year and in most cases we will now be able at least to tell you definitely whether the land will be for lease in the future and when. This will allow you to look ahead.

The Parkway Rangers represent us in the land rental programs and will be glad to talk with you about the future as well as about the present possibility of rentals. We have set May 15 as the closing day for requests for 1940 permits, and we

suggest you see your Ranger in plenty of time. This year we must continue to draw permits on the one-year basis. Our hope is that when we finish landscaping we will then be able to make agreements for longer terms. Such permits as we will be able to give for the 1940 season will be subject to the following regulations:

1. Fee \$1.00 per acre, or on large boundaries charge can be made per head of cattle grazed in accordance with rates prevailing in the community.
2. No Parkway land will be let for tending unless permittee agrees to maintain as called for in the agreement which will cover:
 - a. Kind of crop planted and harvested.
 - b. Type of cover crop or grass to be left on land at expiration of permit.
 - c. Amount of lime or fertilizer to be used.
 - d. Arrangements for fencing and other special conditions.

REQUESTS FOR LAND LEASE DUE BY MAY 15

Remember that the closing date for rental of Parkway lands is May 15, and we suggest you see your Ranger in plenty of time if you wish to talk permit.

Permits for the 1940 season are subject to the following regulations:

1. Fee \$1.00 per acre. Large boundaries to be calculated to the nearest acre of per head of cattle grazed.
2. No Parkway land will be let for tending unless permittee agrees to maintain as called for in the agreement which will cover:
 - a. Kind of crop planted and harvested.
 - b. Type of cover crop or grass to be left on land at expiration of permit.
 - c. Amount of lime or fertilizer to be used.
 - d. Arrangements for fencing and other special conditions.

SPRING FIRE SEASON LOOKS BAD

Records of the weather bureau show that precipitation for the year is very low. During the cold dry periods much of the winter snow evaporated leaving the moisture level high in the ground. This bodes ill for the spring fire season unless we get heavy rains during March and April--and so once again may come the worry of great forest fire hazard.

It doesn't help our frame of mind to read through the final fire reports for the Parkway

covering the year 1939, even though much luck was with us in the Blue Ridge as compared with some of our neighboring mountain ranges.

Last year seventeen of the eighteen fires along the Parkway were man-caused. If we include the expenses of all the county, state, and Federal agencies who fought these fires, the cost to the public was nearly nine thousand dollars! The fires which threatened the City of Asheville watershed last fall cost about five thousand dollars, which would mean ten cents if every man, woman, and child in that City were to pay his direct share.

Our Forester reports that the eighteen Parkway fires were caused as follows:

Seven - by the careless smoker who flipped his burning match or cigarette.

Three - by hunters who left their warming fire unattended.

Three - by Spring and Fall burning on the farm.

Three - were intentionally set by our poorest type of citizen.

The happy thing about last year's fire record on the Parkway was the fine cooperation of you people along the line and the good work of the many fire fighters. The biggest part of the fires were reported into us by our neighbors or the tourists.

We look forward to your help again this year and we'll hope that together we can better the record. Please help us spread the news that courteous visitors and good woodsmen follow these suggestions:

1. Build your campfire only in fireplaces provided.

2. Before leaving your fire even for a short time, put it out with the water which is furnished nearby.

3. Chaperone your cigarette - don't let it "go out alone" as the North Carolina State Forest Service says.

4. If you burn slash or brush, do it on moist, still days.

5. Report all fires to Park Rangers or employees.

TO REPORT FIRES

We suggest that you place this issue where you can easily reach it, preferably by your telephone, and in case of fire call the nearest individual listed below:

1. From Route 250 (Rockfish Gap) to north of James River - call

U. S. Forest Service Ranger B. A. Eger, Buena Vista-104

2. From south of James River to Peaks of Otter - call

U. S. Forest Service Ranger Louis Smith, Buena Vista-18-F-4

3. From Peaks of Otter to Roanoke - call

Camp Supt. Overstreet, NP-15 Bedford, Bedford, 40-F-04

OR

PARK SERVICE HEADQUARTERS ROANOKE, Roanoke-24827

4. From Roanoke to Route 8 (Tuggle Gap) - call

Park Service Headquarters, Roanoke-24827

5. From Route 8 to Virginia-Carolina line - call

Park Ranger T. W. Barnett, c/o Mr. Mitchell, Fancy Gap (through Hillsville, Va., operator)

6. From Virginia-Carolina line to Blowing Rock - call

Park Ranger R. H. Coombs, Sparta 49

7. From Blowing Rock to Beacon Heights - call

U. S. Forest Service Ranger G. C. Hoffman, Lenoir-177 or Lenoir-524-M

8. From Beacon Heights to Asheville - call

Park Ranger E. M. Dale, Marion 140 or 44

9. From Asheville to Richland Balsam - call

U. S. Forest Service Ranger J. B. Fortin, Brevard-2501

10. From Richland Balsam to Soco Gap - call

Jackson County Warden, Mack Ashe, Sylva-0904

OR

Haywood County Warden, J. Q. Allison, Waynesville Sheriff's Office.

PARKWAY TO OVERPASS ROUTE 52 OUT OF HILLSVILLE

The Public Roads Administration has asked for bids by March 28 for construction of the bridge which will carry the Parkway over U. S. 52 at Fancy Gap. Spans of this type have already been built on the Parkway at Route 58 in Virginia and at three important highway intersections with the Parkway line in North Carolina.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

April 1940

Number 6

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

TOURIST TRADE AND THE PARKWAY

In the mails recently there has been an increased number of letters asking us "What new tourist business may come as a result of the Parkway" and "What does the Parkway plan to do about it?" These are questions of great importance and of joint concern to us and to all of you. We have made no attempt to say out loud just how many people we think the Blue Ridge Parkway may attract. We have, of course, our private opinions reached through much study in connection with the planning, and we have said, and here willingly say again, that the capacity of the Parkway to handle large numbers of people and the scenic quality of the Blue Ridge to attract them is unlimited.

On 110 miles of partially completed Parkway, we estimated 290,000 visitors during a portion of the 1939 tourist season. This spring will see the opening of 140 continuous miles of Parkway to public use. 1941 will see the entire 240-mile stretch between Roanoke and Asheville nearing completion. Thus the need of the tourist for places to eat and sleep and for gasoline and motor oil is "just around the mountain".

Although little has been said, we have since the first days of planning for the Parkway done a great deal of thinking about this part of the picture. Here are some of our thoughts, and we say "thoughts" because no matter how carefully we may look ahead the final picture can only come into sharp focus as the Parkway is completed and its full use becomes known. This is one of the reasons that our first thought has been to proceed slowly. We have planned for early construction on Parkway land only those buildings which would provide a center of activities for the recreational parks and which would provide motor supply service and food where the need seems to us to be clearly indicated--that is, where such facilities for taking care of the tourist are not already available reasonably nearby.

As a further reason for proceeding slowly, the Service believes that the demand of the tourist for accommodations will in time be answered largely on private lands adjacent to the Parkway and fronting on the numerous approaching State highways. Likewise facilities in the towns and summer resorts will naturally grow with the demand. We wish to emphasize that federal authorities are not at all inclined to favor a wholesale development of tourist units on Parkway lands; neither is it their intention that Parkway developments should enter into competition with existing business which relies on the tourist trade.

On the other hand the Service does see that it has a definite obligation to provide some "day-use" facilities on the Parkway lands at the "in between" locations. This seems necessary to us in order to round out the usefulness of the whole Parkway project, which is as much a chain of recreational parks as it is a highway.

By "day-use" facilities we mean shops for the sale of gasoline, oil, food, and picnic supplies which are the day-time need of the tourist. We do not see at present a need for overnight facilities on the Parkway because we assume that a great many of the Parkway visitors will plan to arrive in the resort towns and cities for their overnight stops. We wish to point out, however, that certain of the larger parks along the Parkway have been so laid out as to accommodate cabin or modest inn developments, if and when a need is clearly shown for such facilities within the Parkway proper. This should not be looked upon as an indication that the Service expects the need to develop; rather it is foresight on the part of our planners that in such a case the units may fit into the park plan in logical relation to the recreational features. Also we wish to announce at this time that these plans for the future anticipate such overnight facilities at only two points on the 140-mile stretch of Parkway now open to the public. One

of these is within the Rocky Knob Park in Virginia, about 48 miles south of Roanoke, and the second within Bluff Park in Alleghany County in North Carolina. These parks roughly split the distance between the Roanoke area and the resort area of Blowing Rock and Linville, where, of course, accommodations for the tourists are already extensive.

The National Park Service at this time is considering a plan for the provision of small gasoline stations and sandwich shops to serve the day-time needs at the following parks: Smart View and Rocky Knob in Virginia, and Cumberland Knob and the Bluff in North Carolina. The proposal being studied would invite private individuals and corporations to construct the buildings and to operate the business at these various points under an agreement with the Department of the Interior covering the architecture of the buildings, scale of prices to be charged to the public, sanitary provisions, and other matters of joint concern. If it is decided to proceed with these buildings during this year the plan will be outlined in more detail in a future edition of the PARKWAY NEWS and will be otherwise advertised publicly. We hope that the Virginia and North Carolina people with their reputation for fine hospitality will become interested and organize to bid successfully for the operation of any such facilities as may be built on the Parkway. Likewise we hope that those already engaged in tourist enterprises in the towns and cities nearby the Parkway will keep alive to the increasing needs of the tourist for new and well-rounded service. As we see it, there will be a new business opportunity for local people both on and off the Parkway, and this of course means the entire business community from the farmer who produces through to those who directly play host to the public.

BIDS RECEIVED SECTION 1-H

Bids were received recently for construction of a 11-mile Parkway section from the James River south to connect with the work already underway from Thunder Hill to Peaks of Otter. Chandler Bros. Construction Company of Virgilina, Virginia, were the successful bidders. Letting of this contract will place under construction all of the major grading work scheduled with 1940 Parkway appropriations.

NORTH CAROLINA BIDS DELAYED BY WEATHER

The receipt of bids for Section 2-P requested some time ago was delayed because of the inability

of the contractors to get into the great Craggy Mountains where the work is to be performed. Week after week the efforts of the construction men to reach the job were blocked by the unusually heavy snow and ice. Bids are, however, expected to be received by the Public Roads Administration in Washington on April 4.

WE CHAFE AT THE BIT

We are still grumbling about the weather, and we guess we are not alone in that. The snow and ice have delayed the progress of the Parkway work beyond our worst fears. Snow covered much of the Parkway as late as March 24, and no one we talked to seemed willing to promise that the end was in sight even yet.

FIELD BURNING

Already this spring a few of our neighbors along the Parkway have burned off their grass lands or brush, and these fires have gotten out of hand and spread over Parkway lands. May we suggest that if you plan to burn you contact your ranger. He would like to talk the matter over and may be able to help, especially if there is any question as to the boundary lines.

While we hope it won't be necessary for us to talk the "law", we would point out that there are laws in both Virginia and North Carolina which protect any property owner, be he government or citizen. We are having our own fires watched carefully, and ask the same of you. Let's all stay out of court.

The record thus far for the spring fire season has kept us worried, and we probably won't see the end of it before late in June. Our plea once again for your co-operation.

DESCRIPTIVE FOLDER OFF THE PRESS

The ink is just drying on the 1940 folders which will tell the prospective tourist the how, what, when, and where of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The clerical office here is quite akimbo with mailing them in bundles to the Chambers of Commerce and travel bureaus hither and yon, and the list is long too of the individuals who have asked to have a copy. Extras may be had from the rangers or by writing us.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

May 1940

Number 7

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

BIDS ADVERTISED FOR PARKWAY CONCESSIONS

Sealed proposals will be received in the Office of the Chief of Operations, National Park Service, Interior Department Building, Washington, D. C., until 2 p.m., June 18, 1940, and then opened, preparatory to awarding a 10-year contract for establishing, maintaining, and operating on certain portions of the Blue Ridge Parkway (in Virginia lying between U. S. Highway 220 near Roanoke and U. S. Highway 58, Public Operator Division III, and in North Carolina lying between the Virginia State Line and Blowing Rock North Carolina Public Operator Division V); gasoline filling stations and coffee shops for the accommodation of the public, including the sale of gasoline, oil and automobile supplies, meals, lunches, magazines and post cards, photographs, souvenirs (comprising only native handicraft articles of the Blue Ridge Region), confectionery, ice cream, drinks, cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, and such other services as are necessary in the judgment of the Secretary of the Interior for the convenience of visitors. Spirituous liquors, if sold, must be sold in accordance with State law. These facilities are to be operated under such regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior, including specifically the fixing of rates and the character and standard of the services and accommodations furnished and the submission of business reports. All facilities and additions thereto must be constructed from full and detailed plans and specifications prepared by a qualified architect and engineer satisfactory to the Secretary of the Interior, such plans to be approved by the said Secretary in advance of construction. The operator will be furnished by the Government, in so far as it is practicable, with available utility services such as electricity, water, sewer, and other public services for which a charge will be made at rates to be fixed by the Secretary, but not to exceed the approximate cost of furnishing those services. However, the operator will be required to furnish any such utility services incident to the authorized operations which are not furnished by the Government. As the primary purpose of the proposed contracts is to provide

satisfactory services and adequate accommodations for all visitors to the said Parkway, all proposals must be made as one offer for the complete undertaking in each State. All proposals must contain a provision for the payment as compensation for the privileges to be granted of (1) a definite and fixed sum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100) per annum plus (2) a percentage of the net profits, to be named by the bidder, in excess of 6% of the invested capital, with the provision that the operator may include as an item of expense a manager's salary not to exceed Twenty-five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) a year. Contract, if awarded, will be awarded to the best and most responsible bidder in each State. Demonstrated financial ability to carry the project to a successful conclusion and personal experience will be considered in making the award. The working capital and investment necessary for the initial installation will be approximately Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) in Virginia and Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) in North Carolina. Additional investments will be required as may be necessary from time to time to meet the demonstrated needs of visitors to the parkway. A bid bond on Standard Form 24 in the amount of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) must accompany each proposal. The concession contract will provide for furnishing a performance bond in such amount as may be deemed necessary by the Secretary. The right is reserved by the Secretary of the Interior to reject any and all proposals. The successful bidder will be required to commence construction operations not later than sixty days (60) after the award of the contract by the Secretary. For form of proposal, form of bid bond, copy of concession policy of Department of the Interior, copy of standard concession contract provisions, copy of specifications under which public utility services will be installed, type of annual report required, and other pertinent information, apply to the Acting Superintendent of Blue Ridge Parkway, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia, or Room 5230, the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.

CAN YOU TELL ME?

Can you tell me how to reach this Parkway, and where can we go, and where can we stop? When the tourists ask these questions, and many of them will, we hope that they receive a courteous and correct answer. Just like any stranger in any land, none of us are very happy when we have that sense of "being lost", and when we are unhappy in a country or city, we seldom return. And people from the "low" country and the big towns along the rivers and seacoast are not used to the mountains. The Blue Ridge will seem a strangeland to them indeed. That is why it seems so important that all of us who are "at home" in the Blue Ridge should be helpful and hospitable. Once the visitor is on the Parkway we expect to see that he is taken care of. The Rangers have been schooled in the general information. Signs will direct the motorist to the towns and cities at the intersections. Descriptive folders telling about the scenic drive will be made available.

The folders have been given to a number of gas stations, hotels, Chambers of Commerce, tourist bureaus in the Parkway locale, and more are available for free distribution if you need them. We are glad to put them out in any place where they will reach the traveling public. But beyond these things we must depend upon the thousands of you who are in touch with the tourists in your daily business to extend the courtesy of the Blue Ridge. We suggest that you ought to know the Parkway, and that means getting out on it and seeing for yourselves. We wonder how many know how far it is from your town, or gas station, or tourist home, or hotel to the Parkway, and what highways lead to it, and what the numbers of these highways are? How many know how far one can go on the scenic drive? If you will write us we can supply you with this information, and the Rangers are always glad to talk Parkway with you.

TRUCKS AND OUTINGS

We had a letter this morning asking for permission to take a truck load of children on the Parkway for a day's outing and a picnic. We said, "Fine, go ahead", and we always will, and so will the Rangers when it is a question

of a truck load of folks out for a day's fun. That is what the Parkway and Parks were built for, and we think there is more fun for a group of kids, or grownups for that matter, in a truck than in any other way. This applies to pick-up trucks or to larger trucks WHEN THEY ARE LOADED WITH PEOPLE, but NOT when they are hauling anything else. It is important that the group of people be picnic or pleasure bound and not just "looking at the scenery as an excuse" to use the Parkway for commercial purposes. We are not going to try and say how many people are necessary to make a picnic group--rather we shall leave it to the Ranger to determine whether the use of the Parkway is warranted or not. If you will co-operate with us in using this Parkway for pleasure purposes we shall do all we can to make it available for all who want to go on an honest picnic outing. As we have explained in the bulletin before, the Parkway is meant for pleasure use, and there are roads a plenty built and kept up by the good highway departments of Virginia and North Carolina which are meant for business use and the hauling of farm and other produce.

And by the way, we like the spirit in which this gentleman wrote in and asked because he wasn't sure. He wanted to be right. That is good citizenship, and we like to be working with people like that.

THE BROKEN PAVEMENT BEING REPAIRED

The break-up of the paving on some of the Parkway in upper North Carolina has resulted in discomfort to travelers, and no one is very happy about it. The severe winter freezes which caused trouble all over the East were partly to blame. Moreover this first treatment coat was "light" (too light it is realized now) and was meant to serve until the big dirt fills had settled when a second and higher type pavement was to be placed. We hope that the patching now under way will put the worst of this condition behind us, and meanwhile traffic will be maintained with as little inconvenience to the traveler as possible.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

June 1940

Number 8

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

THE GHOSTS OF THE FOREST ARE COMING TO LIFE?

"Green chestnut trees are growing on the mountainside, and there is the sound of chestnuts falling on the ground when the summer is here." Sounds like a page out of some old, old book doesn't it? Or it sounds as if someone working on the Parkway were seeing "spooks" -- "tree spooks" -- doesn't it? Because we all know so well the sad sight of the ghosts of the old chestnut trees in nearly all the forests of the Blue Ridge and we all know they have been just skeletons since early in the century.

But truly this is not all ghost talk, and anyone can see green, living chestnuts in the broad daylight if he will go to Rocky Knob Park where we have planted an orchard nursery of them. To be sure the trees are not the old American Chestnuts, but they are close kin to the old type and are called the Chinese Chestnut. The nuts are of like size to the American and taste much the same, though some people believe they are somewhat sweeter. The newly developed tree is "blight resistant", grows rapidly, and begins to bear when five years old. There is a Chinese Chestnut tree at Woodlawn, Virginia, which is now fifteen years old and bears a half bushel of nuts a year.

We first learned of the development of this "blight resistant" species from a gentleman in Roanoke City who has made a study of them. (By the way, it is not the "chestnut worm" that killed the original trees, but a tree disease or blight; the worms appeared later in the dead wood.) We purchased the nursery seedlings and planted them at a 3,200-foot elevation in the Park in order to develop this promising tree in the higher altitudes. The plan is to tend the trees by means of the CCC Camp at Rocky Knob as a propagation nursery. As the trees begin to bear we plan to distribute the chestnuts to Soil Conservation farmers along the Parkway who wish to start chestnut orchards.

The Chinese Chestnut likes good soil and requires a fertility something like that of the apple orchard. The trees do not require care other than keeping the brush down around them. They should be planted like apple trees in good soil mixed with a little well rotted manure, and they should be spaced about forty feet apart for good bearing. We are also told of another "blight resistant" chestnut of the Japanese variety. This is similar to the Chinese Chestnut except that the nuts are larger and more starchy. This type is excellent for hog feeding since it bears more nuts per tree, and we have reports that the Japanese Chestnut is producing more hog feed per acre than corn grown on the same soil.

Therefore, it is our hope and our expectancy that the years will bring back something of the old days when the chestnut was perhaps the mountains' most important "cash crop". And so the ghosts of the forest come to life!

CONGRESS DISCUSSES PARKWAY FUNDS

The Senate and House of Representatives have in turn considered the appropriation of funds to the Parkway for the year beginning July 1, 1940, and the committees have recommended \$1,300,000 for the work. In addition they would authorize other contracts to be started during the year to a total of \$3,900,000--these last mentioned moneys to be made available in the following fiscal year. The Interior Department Bill which includes the Parkway item is not law, of course, until signed by the President. This plan, if passed, will allow the Parkway work to go forward about at its present rate. The program which will say where and for what the new money will be used is now being studied for submission to the Secretary of the Interior. Upon its approval we will carry the detailed story in the "News".

USE THE PICNIC AREAS

We have noted with a good deal of satisfaction that the various picnic areas along the

Parkway are increasing in popularity, and we've had some very kind letters commenting on their usefulness. Smart View, Rocky Knob in Virginia and the Cumberland Knob and Bluffs in North Carolina are rounding out now to where we can call them near-complete. By this time there should be clear spring water running from the fountains in handy places, and that is our last big hurdle (except for the sandwich shops where picnic foods will be sold).

Our hope now is all picnickers will use these carefully complete areas and that there will be less and less of this stopping along the Parkway at random under this and that "shady tree". We know that the "shady tree" is a habit long formed and that it's nice too, but it does make our problem of keeping the Parkway clean a very hard one. In the special park areas there are refuse cans, tables, benches, and a fireplace in your own individual spot along the wayside park roads. This gives you just as much privacy and all the facilities to boot. In these parks built just for that purpose we can afford to have a man come by from time to time to keep things clean and attractive. So welcome to the picnic parks.

That suggests another thought. Use is very heavy of these developments on Sundays and holidays. Some have already been filled to overflowing. For your own enjoyment, and remembering that we locals must be hospitable to the out of

State or out of section tourists, why not plan your big group picnics on a weekday. Our rangers will be glad to hear when the church or school group or the sewing circle are planning their outings, and they can help see that all is ready for you. Or write us.

DEER

We are told (second-hand, but we pass it on) that as many as four deer have been seen from time to time feeding along the Parkway just south of the State line. This wouldn't be unusual in other parts of our 500-mile route, but the Cumberland Knob section is quite heavily farmed. Some thought the deer were attracted by the white clover along the fresh-seeded Parkway shoulders. If so we'll continue planting it so they'll stay in the park and raise big families.

Rebuilding of secondary State roads along the Parkway between the State line and Deep Gap in North Carolina has been completed. Now that these roads which were disturbed by the Parkway construction are again linked together, the regulation prohibiting trucks and commercial vehicles along the Parkway can be put into effect throughout, and such traffic will be required to use the local roads.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

August 1940

Number 9

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

FIVE MILLION OF NEW FUNDS PROGRAMMED

With \$1,300,000 direct appropriation and an additional \$3,900,000 to become available for the work progressively during the year, big strides will be made toward closing in on the gaps in Parkway grading. A total of 45 miles, or about in each of the two states, has been approved for construction by the Secretary of Interior. Section 1-E south from Tye River Gap will place all the Parkway from Shenandoah Park to Route 60 above Buena Vista under contract. Section 1-L from Black Horse Gap to Route 460 five miles out of Roanoke City limits will provide a continuous grade through the Roanoke to Lynchburg sector past the Peaks of Otter.

The new money allows for paving of the Parkway entrance at Adney Gap on Bent Mountain, as well as the parking overlooks and picnic area roads in Smart View and Rocky Knob Parks.

In North Carolina work will be started on the stretch within the Cherokee Indian Reservation including a spur to Black Camp Gap in the Great Smokies Park. The middle section of the Sgah line will be plugged through. Also the up-state sections will be resurfaced in part, and the spring should see black top going down on the Linville to Mitchell Parkway sections. A number of bridges to eliminate crossing at grade of important state highways are programmed with the new money.

Yes, the big map which hangs in the office here and which charts progress is an almost unbroken line of colored buttons. Of a total length of 480 miles, more than 350 are now programmed, under construction, or completed.

USE OF PARKWAY JUMPS

The total number of visitors to the Parkway during June jumped to 147,000, or three times the aggregate for May, and brought the estimated total for the spring season to 261,141. Partial figures for July show further increase, especially in out-of-state cars. The "News" is happy to be revising upwards its private guess at the season's total.

BIDS ASKED FOR GAS AND FOOD CONCESSIONS

The Park Service will again receive bids on November 5 in Washington for the operation of four concession units to be located along the Parkway sections now open between Roanoke and Boone, North Carolina. The two proposals, one in each state, are almost identical with those advertised last spring. These were widely advertised and were discussed in the "News", but no complete bids were received.

The Service now urges those in the tourist business to review the proposition. And especially we invite the Virginia and North Carolina people to interest themselves in the possibilities. Briefly we are asking private business men or corporations familiar with the gasoline and food business to undertake the construction of buildings in certain of the Parkway recreational areas and to operate there much needed facilities for the tourists. In Virginia a gas station and coffee shop is proposed in Smart View Park and in Rocky Knob Park, and these would involve an investment of about \$40,000. In North Carolina at Cumberland Knob Park a concession for picnic supplies is proposed and a gas and coffee shop at Bluff Park. These buildings would require about \$30,000 for construction. The lease term will be ten years, at the end of which time the operator may renew the lease or sell the buildings to the incoming concern. With traffic mounting on the Parkway there will be an increasing complaint by visitors at the lack of facilities. It is a long, thirsty, hungry "way between" in portions of the Blue Ridge, and it is a longer walk for the man with the empty gasoline tank. This is poor advertising and hardly encourages our 1940 visitors to come back. We suggest that the need for these accommodations will be yet greater in 1941.

Those interested may write the Acting Superintendent, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia, for information. We will gladly meet by appointment interested parties at the building sites for review of the problem.

MORE ABOUT THE CHINESE CHESTNUTS

Our story last month about the Chinese chestnuts brought forth some sharp comment from one of our very good friends. He charged that we were needlessly introducing a foreigner into the select company of our American forest trees. Well, we hasten to add, lest others feel likewise, that we have no intention that the blight resistant chestnut be planted as a forest tree. We are thinking of it only as a "hill culture crop" for orchard planting and to take the place of corn and wheat now grown on steep slopes where perhaps corn and wheat were never meant to grow.

No, we are wholly satisfied with the fine families of trees that make our Blue Ridge woodlands.

NO GUARDRAIL?

Here is a story we enjoyed. A visitor from Ohio stopped one of the Rangers to ask if we were going to build guardrail or wall along the Parkway embankments. The Ranger not being sure admitted as much. Then came the surprise, for the Ohioan said, "Well, I hope you don't because I think it's more beautiful without it, and folks shouldn't speed along this road anyway. It would be like running down the aisle at church."

We wish we might comply fully with the friendly visitor's wish, but of course for safety we must place rail through the more dangerous sections, and we plan to do so as we can. However, we won't think any the less of the sentiments of the gentleman from Ohio.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

September 1940

Number 10

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

We suppose that the mid-August and early September floods of 1940 in the Blue Ridge are no longer spot news, and yet we venture that the hundred and one things that happened will be re-ashed around many a wood stove this winter. And we have even noticed that time is now being reckoned in terms of before and after "the" flood. The worst in fifty years old timers tell us, and we have no desire to doubt it. The Parkway, taking it end to end of the three hundred odd miles underway, suffered enough damage to cause us some real worry. However, the scenic mountain top road was not as hard hit as highways in the valley generally were. Most of our storm repair is behind us except for a few bad spots. The worst was the section between Horse Gap and Deep Gap on the Boone, North Carolina, end. This the Public Roads Administration hopes to have cleaned up well before snow flies so that it should be in good shape for next spring and the 1941 tourist.

In the meanwhile, except for this southernmost stretch, the Parkway has been kept open through from Roanoke and was not barricaded at any time though we have asked that people use extreme caution in driving it because of the need for short one-way stretches around workmen repairing the road.

In the Linville-Asheville area the Parkway was closed except to local traffic, and we are still advising caution though many adventuresome motorists are still visiting these incompletd sections.

Well, the water has receded, and we've learned a great deal. We hope that fifty years from now when the next one comes, if it must, that the Parkway will be a hundred per cent like a "duck's back".

DRIFTWOOD FROM THE RECEDING WATERS

The old notion about the ill wind held for

a farmer on 321 near us. He had been "prospecting" for feldspar without any luck--until the floods came and uncovered the vein only a few feet from his diggings.

A nine-year old girl stopped one of our men just outside of Blowing Rock not long after a good bit of her daddy's farm had slipped down and covered the road. "See that," she said, "that's my pa's wood lot. No trespassing." She did let our man go through, however.

On the morning after, some of us were caught in Galax, Virginia, which along with Wilkesboro was one of the towns hardest hit. It took us four hours to reach the Parkway which is only five miles as the crow flies from Galax. Our route to the Parkway was a sort of crazy quilt made up of farm roads, here a stretch across farm fields, through a dozen gaps in fences, and we even built about a half mile of new road of our own--all of this to circumvent the flood.

In Boone, North Carolina, so they say, the main street was good trout fishing during the rainy days, and several boys were reported as having caught fish up to three and a half pounds. Apparently main street had not been posted.

One day the thoroughbred horses brought in to Linville for the annual show were sleek and well groomed. The next they stood knee deep in mud, and the flood had carried away their feed. Owners were permitted to take them out over the Parkway.

Our hats are off, by the way, to the heroic work done by many folks during these distressing times, and especially by the State Highway crews.

The Journal-Patriot of North Wilkesboro had a good word for one of our camps in an editorial, part of which we quote: "The assistance given this flood stricken city during the past ten days by the C. C. Camp crews from the camp at Laurel Springs is something to be appreciated. The manner in which the boys have so faithfully performed their tasks and their general behavior have been subjects of much favorable comment. The manner in which they have performed here gives evidence of good training. Their work has been extremely helpful and of much value to the city. We are glad to commend them highly."

PARKWAY VISITORS

Some 461,000 persons had visited the Parkway by August 1 this year according to our check-up. This compares with a total of 391,273 persons for all of 1939. Totals for July were 164,430 persons, which was our heaviest month to date and which exceeded by seven per cent our traffic counts for June. June, of course, sees the best of the flower bloom which is the biggest drawing card with "in-the-state" motorists. As would be expected then, there was a big increase in the percentage of cars from States other than Virginia and North Carolina.

WATER, WATER, BUT ITS DRINKING WATER AT SMART VIEW AND BLUFF PARKS

Pure spring water is now to be had by picnickers and thirsty motorists at Smart View Park in Virginia and Bluff in North Carolina. The end of September should see water flowing from the taps in Rocky Knob, and the Cumberland Knob area near the State line has been provided with drinking water for some time. We are all set now we think, and glad we are. It is not an easy job to supply water to the highest crests of eastern America. The Bluff water system was a real big job--a 35-foot reservoir dam, 2 tanks, and a "few" feet of pipe line. Also the permanent comfort stations are nearly completed in these parks.

AND SOON AGAIN ITS FIRE

Nearly every year some wide-spread forest fire devastates a portion of the United States, destroying human lives, burning homes, and laying

waste to forests and wildlife; and incidentally, it is so much in our minds, making way for the quick runoff of rain water and hence floods. Again this year great fires raged in the West where men and equipment were parachuted from planes to the burning area. Lest we say it can't happen here, remember that vast fires have swept the Blue Ridge and that the fall fire season is just ahead.

Perhaps you recall the fire season of last fall which was one of the worst the Blue Ridge has seen in a decade. Many of the fires were started through human carelessness and were fanned by high winds and a long dry spell. The key to success in fire protection is the same old ounce of prevention, in other words the ability to prevent fires from getting started. The Parkway has a trained and equipped organization which consists of three CCC camps, two ERA projects, and a staff of six Park Rangers assisted by two Park Wardens; yet this work organization must have the wholehearted co-operation of everyone in the vicinity of the Parkway if we are to be effective. Please PREACH AND PRACTICE PREVENTION.

To report fires call:

From Route 250 (Rockfish Gap) to the James River
call

Park Ranger D. C. Hieb or Forest Ranger B. A. Eager, Buena Vista operator

From James River to Roanoke (Route 116)
call

Park Ranger B. T. Campbell, Roanoke 2-4827 or
Forest Ranger Lewis R. Smith Natural Bridge
18-F-4

From Roanoke to Route 8 (Tuggle Gap)
call

Park Ranger T. K. Garry, Roanoke 2-4827

From Route 8 to Virginia-Carolina line
call

Park Ranger T. W. Barnett, Hillsville operator
or Park Warden C. K. Dale, Floyd Operator

From State line to Blowing Rock
call

Park Ranger R. H. Coombs, Laurel Springs Operator

From Blowing Rock to Balsam Gap
call

Park Ranger G. B. Liles, Spruce Pine No. 9

From Balsam Gap to Great Smokies
call

Park Ranger E. M. Dale, Marion 145M or 140

VIRGINIA ITEM CHANGED IN 1941
CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

We are advised from Washington that Section 1-G from Robinson Gap to the James River will be built with 1941 funds instead of Section 1-L near Roanoke as we first reported. Except for the James River bridge this shift of money will place all of the scenic roadway under construction from the Shenandoah Park to Black Horse Gap, twelve miles south of the Peaks of Otter. The work is expected to begin in the spring on the fourteen miles of "G" section. By that time more than 106 miles of grading will be underway or completed in the Park to Roanoke division. Eleven major contracts are involved.

HUNTING OR NO

Come September, and we are once again asked about hunting on the Parkway. The answer is "NO"; for, as our old readers will remember, the Parkway and park lands are set aside as game preserve. We think that the belt of Parkway lands will form an important refuge for game in the Blue Ridge and that in the long run the restriction will make for better hunting in the whole region. Incidentally guns if carried through the park or Parkway lands should be carried with breeches broken--this, to avoid any misunderstanding with our Rangers.

WE BUILD A CAMPFIRE

We've had a notion in the back of our heads for some time that we should organize group campfires from time to time at desirable spots along the Parkway. The vision isn't very clear as yet except that we see a big fire under a star lit sky, and a gathering of as many folks from local and distant points as might be interested in swapping yarns, group singing, and general entertainment.

We put up a "trial balloon" recently and lit the first fire at Rocky Knob. Over two hundred folks from the nearby countryside and from some of the towns gathered around, and from what we hear the affair was an unusual success. All the entertainment was furnished by members of the audience and included an introduction by Preacher Woods, a variety of songs, some remarks by a visiting camper, and a few words by the Park Service people who were present. Ranger Ted Barnett did the handling and is one of the chief backers of the program.

Since this first balloon floated so readily--and if the one or two campfires that may yet be lit this fall do as well--we want to get started with more definite plans for next year. As they form we'll have more to say on the subject in the "News".



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume III

October 1940

Number 11

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

PARKWAY OFFICIALLY CLOSED DURING WINTER

The first of November, unless the weatherman changes his habits, will see the beginning of wintry weather in many of the high spots along the Blue Ridge Mountains. Fog and rain change to ice and snow on a moment's notice when the cold winds strike across the higher altitudes. To take care of such conditions most highway budgets carry big maintenance items--sand for slippery pavements, plows for snow removal, and men and trucks for the work. We have done a deal of thinking about the desirability of maintaining the Parkway pavements clear for travel during the winter, and it has been decided that the required expenditure of Parkway moneys would not be justified in view of the relatively few motorists who come this way during these months; consequently, again this year the Parkway will be officially closed during the winter. We do not intend, however, to barricade the entrances; only to warn the motorists that the Parkway should be avoided during times of ice, snow, and fog. The roadway will be available for local use on the "travel-at-your-own-risk" basis, but we urge that greatest care be used to avoid accidents.

MORE PARKWAY WORK

Bids were received during the month for the grading of a 4-mile section of the Parkway high in the Pisgah Mountains. The work will link the two contracts now under way and will provide a continuously graded Parkway from Wagon Road Gap through to Beech Gap where the Tennessee Bald road crosses the ridge.

Bids were also invited during the month on Section 1-E of the Parkway between Tye River Gap and Irish Gap in Virginia which will place the Parkway continuously under construction from the Shenandoah Park south to a point eighteen miles from the James River. Funds are available for the river section too, and this work is expected to be under contract next year.

1940 VISITORS WILL TOTAL OVER THREE- QUARTERS OF A MILLION

With the 1940 travel year drawing to a close, census records indicate that well over three-quarters of a million persons will have used the Parkway by the end of October. July saw the heaviest use with a total estimated figure of 164,430. This was previous to the August flood which made it necessary to close part of the Parkway in North Carolina.

The travel figures, which are based on periodical actual counts, are a barometer of increasing public interest. As additional sections are opened to traffic, it becomes clear that the Parkway is serving not only for its wayside parks, overlooks, and other recreational facilities, but more and more as a useful through artery for motor travel.

NEW RANGERS ON THE PARKWAY

We have been falling down in our introductions to you of the new men on the Ranger staff. Of course we never thought it important to talk about the people here in the office who are behind the lines, but the Rangers, we realize, daily come in contact with our neighbors and our visitors.

We are starting with a sad note, saving our happier thoughts for later. Our sigh, which is deep drawn, is for the fact that Ranger Ted Barnett who has made so many friends in his territory between Rocky Knob and the State line in Virginia has found it necessary to pull up stakes and transfer to a National Park in the West. We understand that he dislikes the idea of his leaving as much as we do, but the reason goes back a year or more to the time when Barnett was a Ranger in Glacier National Park patrolling some really back country during hunting season. It seems that a local Indian of a tribe that has long forsaken its bow and arrow for the more modern shotgun mistook Barnett for wild game which resulted in

a bad injury to Barnett's leg. Well, the damp weather in the Blue Ridge has not been too good for that leg, and so we have arranged the shift to a job in the southwestern part of the country where the dry desert air should help things along. We know that a lot of people, especially those who attended the campfires at Rocky Knob, join us in wishing him good luck.

Incidentally Ranger Tom Garry has taken over Barnett's territory, and Carlos Dale, Park Warden at Rocky Knob, is assisting.

Among the newcomers, and reading from north to south, is Ranger David Hieb who has the territory from the James River north to the Shenandoah Park and who hailed about a month ago from Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. New by about the same length of time is Morrison King who is the Park Warden at Bluff Park, assisting Ranger Coombs. King is a Carolinian and not so far from home. From Sparta a while ago came Granville Liles who resides at Spruce Pine and who ranges the territory of the Parkway between Blowing Rock and Buck Creek Gap in North Carolina.

ODDS AND ENDS

We'd like to thank that majority of picnickers who when forced by lack of facilities to lunch by the road go their way afterwards without leaving a trace. There are yet a few who have not discovered how easy it is to take back with them their trash and debris of papers, cans, and boxes, but their number seems to be growing smaller all the while. Was a time when a litter left at the most attractive spot was the calling card and hallmark of the picnicker. We loathed the breed. Now, we are glad to see these groups of pleasant people who make the best of lack of facilities and enjoy their out-of-doors meal wherever there is room to spread it.

One of our prides and joys is to note how well used are the developed picnic areas at Smart View, Rocky Knob, Cumberland Knob, and the Bluff. We even wonder whether they are big enough. The same sort of thing will be done, of course, on other Parkway sections as soon as plans can be carried out for other recreational areas.

Of all the remarks made about the Parkway the one that makes us most unhappy is that the Parkway is a "rich man's road." Nothing can be further from the truth. Though a man possess little else, he usually has a way to borrow some sort of automotive transportation and uses it to air his family and friends on days off. Few roads take a man further away from everyday things so quickly and completely as the Parkway. Here is travel for a day or days, and welcome.

A six-year old's excited and thrilled "Oh Daddy - it's a DEER!", heard recently was to us a reminder that our wildlife is a very real factor in outdoor enjoyment. That boy's Dad was almost as thrilled as was the boy himself. A lot of questions were promptly asked, and we'd bet that boy - and his Dad - will be back and that they will always mark that spot in passing.

We have observed on several occasions the reaction of people on seeing game birds, ground-hogs, deer, bear, fox, coons (all of which we have). Even a rabbit scurrying across the road means a lot. They are the spice of the wild places. The most familiar countryman is impressed. The city folk are ecstatic. We want more wildlife, and we think the next years will see them many times multiplied.

Flood-filled August, says the weatherman, was the wettest month on record - September was the driest!

Senior Highway Engineer William Austin of the Public Roads Administration, and in charge of Parkway engineering and construction, has returned after a special assignment of several weeks in Panama. Mr. Austin who has had much experience in mountain road location was called by the Federal Government to advise on highway work in the Canal Zone.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

December 1940

Number 1

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

WINTER FEEDING OF BIRDS

Of all our Blue Ridge wildlife the species that have the hardest struggle to carry through the winter are our nonmigratory birds. Quail and grouse (or "pheasant") probably have the toughest time of it because, by natural instinct and physical build, theirs is a limited range. Both quail and grouse stay within about one mile of their original chosen "yard" unless driven out by unusual circumstances.

Both quail and grouse are of sufficient value to man to justify our efforts to help them through the winter. They are valuable to the farmer for insect and weed control, to the sportsman as game, and to all of us as mighty interesting parts of the natural picture. We might then count the time and feed which it takes to help them as well spent. If you have never tried feeding birds you'll discover a thrill equal to the effort it takes.

Here are a few hints on winter feeding:

The point is, of course, to get the feed to the birds. That means knowing or discovering where quail coveys and grouse range. If there is a patch of grain in which they fed earlier in the year the birds will probably visit it later, hoping to find food. Pick a good spot near cover under which the birds can escape if a hawk happens along. Clear the snow away, down to the ground. (Feed scattered on snow is lost.) Use small grain--husked ears of corn, or coarse-cracked chicken feed. A shelter over the food either of cornstalks in a shock, boughs, boards, or anything else is a help. A long leader trail of grain may be needed to toll the birds to the feeding station the first time. After that they know where to look and will return as long as their natural supply of food is frozen in.

Never scatter a covey while snow is on the ground. Quail are dependent on each other for warmth to carry through cold nights, and if scattered so as to be separated overnight, they freeze.

AS COLD WINDS WIND UP CONSTRUCTION SEASON

North of the James

Completed are two of the several grading

jobs under way in the sector between the Shenandoah Park and the James River. Section 1-B, the 6-mile section south of Rock Fish Gap, and Section 1-D between Love and Tye River Gap have been "finalled", which is the engineer's term signifying that all items called for have been finished satisfactorily by the contractor.

Three other grading jobs in this vicinity of the Parkway will carry over the winter for completion next year. Progress has been good, and the work on each of these is well in line with schedule. Bridge construction at Rock Fish Gap has been given a good start. The construction of several other bridges in this sector is expected to begin in the spring.

Near the Peaks of Otter

Jobs to the north of these famous twin mountains have progressed well, but the work is not likely to be linked together as a continuous grade before well along in the next construction season. Thirty odd miles of grading are under way in this portion of the Parkway in four separate contracts reaching from the James through to Black Horse Gap. Incidentally the local folk who have been adventuring upon the grade are beginning to bear us out that here is some very outstanding scenery. Apple Orchard Mountain, where the Parkway reaches the all-high for Virginia sections of 3950 feet, has been praised before in these columns. We must remind in this connection that the roadway is "closed" while under construction and that motorists enter at their own risk. Much of it will be coated with ice and snow this winter, and we suggest waiting for the open weather in the spring. Then, if great care and judgment is used you probably will not find the contractors or us objecting when you take that cautious look at what is to be.

Fancy Gap

The bridge at Fancy Gap where Route US-52 crosses the Blue Ridge is nearing the final stage and glad we are, for this is a busy crossing.

In Carolina

In North Carolina there are several "going jobs," high up in the cold winds, and activities

have slackened among the contractors. Most of the big shovels have holed in like the bears. On the two heaviest jobs under Mt. Mitchell and the Great Craggies, as well as the one up in the Pisgahs above Waynesville, they kept biting away pretty well along in the fall, and another season we hope will see the roadway leveled through to Asheville. Likewise Section 2-Finto Blowing Rock has opened out during the year, and the extension from Thunder Hill into the famous tourist town should go forward speedily in the spring. The stone arch is almost meeting over Buck Creek Gap which is the largest bridge now under way in North Carolina. This is being built by the Public Roads Administration day labor organization under the supervision of John L. Humbard. Mr. L. H. Kidd is his assistant. The same group you will remember built the three-arch span over the Linville River.

Flood clean-up in upper North Carolina and the paving work which is under contract have gone forward, and these will be finished we hope in the early spring.

So ends another construction season which seems to us to be a fairly productive one on the Parkway, taking it to end. We can't forget that August flood, however.

SAFETY ALONG THE PARKWAY

We notice a rise during recent months in the number of accidents occurring along the Parkway. Some of them were serious, and all, even the scraped fenders, regrettable. We don't like to admit that we must expect this along with the rise of traffic volume on the Parkway. So many of the accidents in the past, and there will be more in the future, may be classed as avoidable. The Parkway is a scenic mountain road, and most of its visitors will probably be interested in the scenery--in the opportunity it gives for quiet recreation. Must there always be those people who insist upon using the Parkway as an express road on which to speed to some distant point? The State highways through the valleys are designed for the faster traffic.

2 U-3 BIDS REJECTED

The bids received last month for grading four miles of Parkway in Pisgah Mountains south of Asheville have been turned down by the Department of the Interior. The prices quoted were a great deal higher than the Public Roads Administration estimates for the job, and it is planned to readvertise in the spring in the hope of more favorable bids.

PRICES INVITED ON BRIDGE NEAR BUCHANAN

Bids were called during the past month on

grade separation bridge to be built over Route 43, Bearwallow Gap on the Blue Ridge above Buchanan. The proposal calls for a segmental arch faced with native stone.

PARKWAY ENGINEER ASSIGNED TO NEW WORK IN PANAMA AND COSTA RICA

Mr. William M. Austin, Sr., Highway Engineer, who has headed the Public Roads Administration engineering and construction forces in Roanoke since the beginning of the Parkway work has been assigned to important highway construction in Panama and Costa Rica. Mr. Austin, whose transfer became effective in early December, has had a long experience as contractor and as engineer with the highway department of Virginia, his native State, and with the Federal Government. He headed the engineering office which laid out and supervised construction of the famous Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. This and other park and parkway experience has established Mr. Austin's preeminence as a locator and builder of mountain roads in difficult terrain. Officials of the Parkway staff and others who have worked closely with Mr. Austin will keenly feel his leaving the Parkway work. They wish him continued success.

The appointment of Mr. Austin's successor is expected to be made known shortly and will be announced in the next issue of the NEWS.

PARKWAY LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT TRANSFERRED

Mr. H. E. van Gelder, Landscape Architect with the Parkway from the earliest days, has been transferred to a new assignment with the National Park Service in Washington where he will engage in the design of highways in the National Capital Parks system. Mr. van Gelder's work with the Blue Ridge Parkway was especially important on the Virginia sections where he was in charge of general Parkway location and landscape design. He worked closely with the State Highway Department in the acquisition of Parkway lands. We hope that he may frequently revisit us and the Parkway.

NO BIDS RECEIVED ON CONCESSIONS

For the second time we must report no bids for the gas stations and food shops between Roanoke and Blowing Rock. The due date, November 5, did bring in a number of informal proposals, however, from interested business people, and the Service is giving consideration to the problem in light of their comments.

We are more than ever of a mind that the time has come to provide the Parkway visitor with such service, and indeed we hope yet to announce that the next season will find the buildings up with doors open and curtains at the windows.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

January 1941

Number 2

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge National Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

PARKWAY ON THE AIR

Since the first days of the Parkway we have suspected that 500 miles of the Blue Ridge is a giant piece of geography. We shortened the mileage of travel between many of the gaps when the roadway was graded through, but even now the country is one of large distances. The way through is only as fast as the automobile, and this is not fast enough when there are motor car accidents and injured people need help, when high winds fan forest fires that quickly get out of hand, or when the motorist should be warned of fog, ice, and snow which often settle suddenly on the high peaks of the Parkway. The modern answer is, of course, short wave radio, and we proudly announce that we are Station WSEL.

Three radio stations have been under construction during the last month, and we expect to be on the air next spring. The system will operate with a 75-foot steel antenna tower at Roanoke, another at Rocky Knob Park, and a third at the Bluff Park. The Ranger cars are being fitted with receiver and sending sets so that cruising field men may both talk and listen to headquarters as well as car to car.

The remaining radio stations, which are to be at roughly 60-mile intervals, will be built from time to time as Parkway sections are completed and opened to the public. The system is being designed by W. C. Hilgedick, National Park Service radio engineer from San Francisco, who is also supervising the installation. Completion of the first three stations will put the Roanoke office in continuous touch with the 140-mile section of Parkway between Roanoke and Blowing Rock. And so we look forward to short-cut communication and to faster handling of many important aspects of the Parkway's business.

AGREEMENT REACHED ON SOUTHERN TERMINUS

Final determination of the site of the southern terminal section of the Parkway was

made during the month when the United States Department of the Interior, through its Office of Indian Affairs, conveyed 1,333 acres of land in the Qualla Indian Reservation to the State of North Carolina and received a check for \$40,000 to be held in trust. The lands will be retransferred later to the National Park Service for construction and administration of the new portion of parkway.

The southernmost section is a 12-mile route which will traverse the Reservation and join State Highway No. 107 near the eastern entrance of Great Smoky Mountains National Park not far from Bryson City, North Carolina.

MIDDLETON REPLACES AUSTIN AS PUBLIC ROADS ADMINISTRATION ENGINEER

E. G. Middleton assumed the headship early this month of the Public Roads Administration engineering office in Roanoke. The position had been left vacant when William M. Austin was transferred recently to Costa Rica for work on the Pan-American Highway. Mr. Middleton is by no means new with the Blue Ridge Parkway, having followed its location and construction closely through its first four years. He returns to Roanoke from Florence, Mississippi, where he had been resident engineer on a large section of the Natchez Trace National Parkway, a kind of "sister" to this project running through that State and parts of Alabama and Tennessee.

Mr. Middleton will have charge of engineering and construction of the central section of the Parkway from the James River to Asheville. G. Y. Carpenter, with offices in Waynesboro, holds this position for the northern Virginia sections, and Col. W. I. Lee, with offices in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and Waynesville, North Carolina, heads the work in that territory.

Since the last News, others well known along the Parkway have answered a call to Costa Rica and Panama. Glenn I. Gibbs, assistant to Mr.

Austin, and a principal designer for the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park and the Parkway, was among those to leave. He will be replaced here by Ernest Woodrow, an experienced man in this work and with the Parkway. Others leaving are E. W. Allfather, A. B. O'Mohundro, and T. W. Starbuck. S. L. Von Gemmingen, in charge of the Public Roads office in Spruce Pine, has been transferred to the Natchez Trace, leaving W. M. Smith in charge of Parkway field work in the Grandfather Mountain to Asheville sector.

While glad for their new opportunities, we think of all these changes with a measure of regret as will their friends and associates along the Parkway line.

INDIAN VILLAGE DISCOVERED AT THE PEAKS OF OTTER

Announcement was made during the month by the Smithsonian Institution of important historical finds at the Peaks of Otter. Arrowheads, spear points, and the like unearthed at various times were clues to the important discovery. Belief that further diggings may evidence much of scientific interest, the Smithsonian plans to continue its study in the spring. The unfolding of this new chapter in the history of the famous Peaks will enrich greatly the story which the Service will present there for the benefit of visitors interested in history.

We drove along the newly graded Parkway through the Mons vicinity late one evening just after the story was given out and pictured a "redman" on the very tip of Sharp Top, his arms uplifted in worship of his ancient Sun God as it sank amid the hills of Roanoke. We remembered that in his day there would have been no Bedford and no Roanoke, only virgin forest--a vast hunting ground teeming with wild game. For the moment that we thus let go of our imagination the past seemed not so distant, and indeed there is a special something in the air that hovers about the Peaks these days.

RANGERS TO CONFER

Once a year we call all Rangers into Roanoke for an exchange of ideas. The 1941 three-day

session will take place January 15-17. A United States Commissioner will talk to them of law enforcement, Radio Engineer Hilgedick will explain the complexities of short wave radio, foresters will discuss fire fighting and tree diseases, etc. The Park Wardens also will attend.

ODDS AND ENDS

Bids were invited during the month for the construction of a stone faced bridge to carry the Parkway over VA C-600 just south of the James River in Bedford County. We also learned that the contract for the construction of the Bear Wallow Gap Bridge went to C. M. Francesca Company.

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Prices were asked for the repaving of 20 miles of Parkway between Sparta vicinity and Boone which was the heart of the flood damage during August last. This work will provide top coating similar to that placed on the upper North Carolina sections during the last year.

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It was found necessary to readvertise for the grading of Section 1-E, Tye River Gap to Irish Gap, above Buena Vista. New bids were received at the office of the District Engineer of the Public Roads Administration in Washington on January 9.

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While talking to a group of Parkway visitors recently we were startled by hearing one lady remark that they had been most interested in the cannon lined up at the roadside. A few questions soon cleared up the matter and disclosed that a number of the contractor's wagon-drill rigs had been mistaken for a battery of small cannon.

Perhaps the fact that one of the ladies had fled Paris just before the Germans took that city made them a bit more gun shy than (thank heaven) is yet necessary in our land.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

March 1941

Number 3

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

PARKWAY WOODLANDS IN 1960

One of the bright spots in the future, and one we like to visualize, is the "look" that the Parkway woodlands ought to have after a score of years has passed. Each day of protection from logging and from fire and the trees grow more like the tall ones that the early settlers found when they scouted for a wider space between them to make the first homestead clearing.

And each year the greater will be the difference from the picture along ordinary highways through the Blue Ridge, for there the big woods are fast disappearing. This is part of the old scratch for a living, and we can't do much about it. But we can along the Parkway where the first purpose is to save this important part of what we call the scenery. The biggest job is fire prevention--and we must keep talking about it even with some risk that we strain your good will. Let it be said though that we are not complaining for the record hasn't been too bad, and we want only to enlist more of you for the cause.

The fire threat to the Parkway comes most from the careless individual, whether tourist or neighbor, and as more of the road levels out each year we gather more of each. One lighted match tossed away, a single cigarette butt stuck in a dried stump, a smoldering camp fire left unattended, or the brush pile burnt on the wrong day--these are growing problems.

A few days ago a seemingly innocent pile of brush was burned at the edge of a Parkway broom sedge field. And the flames swept into the forests beyond! The fire was out after 35 acres were destroyed. How much cheaper if the brush pile had been placed in a nearby gully, thereby retarding the wash, or at the very least, had a fire line been scraped about the fire. The well-meaning fellow admitted his fault and said he didn't intend to start the forest afire, but this doesn't pay the 20 men who worked half a day to

put it out; it doesn't grow big trees, and we probably won't be so proud of this 35 acres a score of years from now.

Distributed through the vicinity of the Parkway with this issue of the "News" is a copy of "Forest Fire Laws" for your State.

LINVILLE SECTIONS TO BE SURFACED

Prices have been asked by the Public Roads Administration for paving 23 miles of the Parkway between Grandfather Mountain and McKinney Gap, and bids are due March 14 in District Engineer H. J. Spelman's office in Washington. The engineers call for a high-type black top surfacing in their plans similar to the second coat now being laid on the sixty miles in North Carolina just below the Virginia State line.

This marks a departure from the "stage construction" plan employed heretofore and by which a preliminary and cheaper top was placed to be followed later by a more final surface. The change looks ahead to a possible opening sometime in 1942 of the Asheville to Roanoke 260-mile unit--first big objective of the construction program. The "possible opening" is dependent upon appropriations which in turn are dependent on a number of things; so we say this with bated breath. Probably funds on hand will allow another surfacing contract to be let during this year for additional mileage between Little Switzerland and Mt. Mitchell.

HIGH WINDS

The old man with the shaggy gray head did more than his usual share of blowing during the week of February 17, and the Parkway suffered. Many fine old trees were twisted and broken in the three-day gale. We spent a few sleepless

nights in Roanoke at 1,000 feet, but Winter really rattled his teeth in the high places. In the Mt. Mitchell area, at 6,700 feet, the wind blew for long periods at near hurricane speed. Damage to trees was greater through this region. Fortunately there was no ice storm with it.

WHAT WE OFFER IN 1941

The descriptive pamphlets for 1941 are on the press and will soon go out to the traveler. There isn't much change in the story this time, but there are some new pictures and a new chart of mileage between important eastern cities and various points on the Parkway. The order seemed big to us, but from the requests we wonder if big enough. Travel bureaus, chambers of commerce, hotels, and tourist places should check to see that they are on the mailing list. The Rangers will help.

COLORADO FIRM LOW BIDDER ON CHEROKEE SECTION

Lowdermilk Brothers of Denver, Colorado, were low bidders for the work of grading Section 2-Y of the Parkway between Soco and Big Witch Gaps through the Cherokee Indian Reservation. 754,000 cubic yards of mountainside must be moved, 3 tunnels built, and the base course of crushed stone laid on the 5.89 miles of Parkway, adding up to one of the heaviest grading jobs we have yet tackled.

GAME CONSERVATION SHOWS EFFECT

A hint of the results that we may expect from the game conservation program comes from the Bluff Park. Due to the growing raccoon population within that area, these animals have been moving out across the boundary and into the neighboring hollows. This we have from those who live nearby, and they say, "This year is the best coon hunting that's been seen for six or eight years hereabouts." Moreover, we are told that this much enthusiasm for the "season" doesn't hold elsewhere.

From our viewpoint on the park side of the fence we are still partial to the wily coon who stays put and out of range of the dog and shotgun. But the "effect" of the conservation program as shown by this story should please the hunter as much as it does us.

PARKWAY RADIO NEWS

Work was completed ahead of schedule on the radio tower on Mill Mountain at Roanoke, and since mid-February we have been on the air with Rocky Knob and Bluff Parks as Station WSEL (Blue Ridge Parkway network). The strangeness is already wearing off, and we are talking between parks and ranger patrol cars as casually as old-timers over a fence. The radio is a big help, we find, toward a quick handling of Parkway business.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

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Number 4

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Building, Roanoke, Virginia.

SCENIC EASEMENTS YOUR RIGHTS AND OURS

This subject keeps coming up along the line which is to be expected we suppose, because of the nature of the thing itself. As one farmer puts it, "I own the land and I don't"; and we have to admit that he is right except that he makes it sound worse than needs be.

If we could have our way we'd sit down and talk it out with each of you over the cracker barrel, and we still feel that your questions are best answered by the Ranger in your territory who will be glad to do just that. But since we keep getting requests for a story on it in the "News", once again we sharpen our pencil with some hope that we can make it clearer than before.

The general idea behind the scenic easement is simple enough. It allows the farmer to use the land for *farming* and it prevents his using it for *other* business. The reason behind it from our point of view is that we want the farms as part of the picture and we do not want factories or hot dog stands or billboards. It means that the land has been earmarked for farm use. This is like town zoning, which guarantees to a man who has just built a home that a factory will not be built on the next lot.

From the State's point of view in buying the Parkway right-of-way it was cheaper in most cases than it would have been to buy the same land outright.

Some see it differently, but we have always believed the scenic easement had good points for the landowner too. It meant that he could continue to farm just about as he always had, and often meant the difference between leaving enough land to make a farm unit or buying the whole place outright.

The thing which keeps bothering the landowner about the easement is the question of his rights on his land, and it is important to remember that as far as farming and crops are concerned the land is still his. When the States of Virginia and North Carolina bought the scenic easements they bought for us certain definite rights and they are clearly stated in the deed. All of them are for the purpose of preventing unsightly development within view of the Parkway

motor road. Taking each one of these agreements in turn, we have this to say:

The easement states that no building, pole lines, or structures shall be erected on such land without the approval of the Government. This prevents the landowner from building a hot dog shanty, a gasoline station, or any building intended for a new use or a new sort of business. We realize that when there are farm buildings already on the land they must be repaired from time to time, and we expect that such work will be done upon them. If such work is in the nature of ordinary repair and maintenance, it is not necessary to obtain permission from us or from the Ranger. If, however, the landowner wants to rebuild or add to the size of an existing building, he should talk to the Ranger about it. Unless we feel that your plans will result in a building which is unsightly from the Parkway, you will find that the Ranger will seldom object. While the scenic easement intends that any new farm buildings should be built elsewhere on the farm than on the land covered by the scenic easement, we can see that a farmer may often have a good reason for desiring to put a farm building on the easement land, and there is no reason that this cannot be taken up with the Ranger. If such a new farm building would not be unsightly from the Parkway, we would no doubt permit its construction. If, on the other hand, the building would blank out a view that we would like to keep open for the tourist, we would have the right to refuse and you would have to build elsewhere.

With reference to plant material the easement reads that "No tree, plant, or shrub shall be removed or destroyed on such lands." This refers to the fully grown trees and shrubs which we feel are important to the scenery, particularly those shrubs and vines along fences which will provide food and protection for birds (which assist in destroying insects). We do not intend to stop the owner from trimming orchard or fruit trees or from removing diseased trees or from setting out new trees, plants, shrubbery, or crops. We also realize that it is only good farming to cut certain weed trees and seedlings that crop up from year to year in pastures, and we would expect that the landowner would do this general work as he has always done.

(over)

When it comes to the piling of ashes, trash, sawdust, and the like upon the scenic easement lands, you can readily see that we had in mind keeping the picture as neat and clean as possible, and we would expect full co-operation from the landowner in this. Likewise for reasons that you will also understand, we do not expect to make any exceptions to the clause with regard to signs, billboards, and advertisements which would take away from the beauty of the mountain picture along the Parkway.

All in all, the scenic easement seems to us to be a very reasonable agreement and like most agreements, it can work well if both parties enter into the spirit of the general idea. On the other hand, agreements seldom work if all the "agreeing" has to come from one of the parties and none from the other. In a number of cases the States paid the people's good money to buy the scenic easements for the Parkway, and both your rights and our rights under the easement are fully protected by law. We don't expect that it is going to be necessary to take any landowners into court on the scenic easement problem. We haven't thus far had a single case and we think the good record can continue as long as all concerned will continue to work together.

FIXING FENCES

We chatted the other day with a dairy farmer who was headed back to his native State of Vermont after a trip through the South. He had to get back, he said, to let his cows out now that spring was on the way, and that meant a week or two of mending fences. The herd is bedded down in the barns in the fall, he said, and they don't get out except occasionally in the barnyard because of the cold New England winter. He was much surprised to see the cattle abroad in pastures in the South.

He reminded us of the custom that's grown up around the spring mending of the stone fences that abound in his part of the country. The walls are loosely laid up and when the last snow melts away, they're pretty much full of gaps. The frost heaves some of them, they say, and the fox and deer roll other stone aside jumping fences on winter forays for food. Anyway, it is a sizable chore of patching, and on a given day the farmer meets his neighbor at a familiar corner and they start off down the boundary fences - each man putting back the stone which have fallen to his side. Makes a great chance to talk over the events of a long winter and it must make for good neighbors, as the writer, Mr. Robert Frost, comments on the subject.

Coming back to the Blue Ridge, we have to depend pretty much on you to keep the fences up. Stray livestock on the road are dangerous to themselves and to the motorist. The cattle do no good to the Parkway lands. We have had the best co-operation in most cases but there are still a few farmers along the Parkway who are holding off with their fencing longer than we think is right. It must be remembered that the States of Virginia and

North Carolina allowed special money for rebuilding fences when they settled for the land. For our part, the Rangers are ready at any time to help locate boundaries where you are in doubt.

While we are still astraddle of the fences we want to state our liking for the split rails which we think are a part of the "picture" in the mountains. Any number of visitors from other parts have talked about the snake fences and the post and rail, and some of them say they have never seen such picturesque fences before. So whenever you can, use what rails you have to fence along the Parkway side of your fields so that the city folks may have an eyeful of their beauty.

ODDS AND ENDS

The contractor started work on Bearwallow Gap Overpass near Buchanan, Va., and on another small overpass near the James River.

Bids have been asked for a small overpass at Bobblets Gap, north of Roanoke, Va.

W. W. Tuck & Sons, Virgilina, Va., was low bidder for grading the 4.25 miles immediately south of Route 60, near Buena Vista, Va.

The American Asphalt Products Company of Washington, D. C., was low bidder among those who quoted prices for paving of the Parkway between Grandmother and Gillespie Gaps in North Carolina. Bids were received on March 14 by the Public Roads office and work is expected to go forward as soon as weather opens in spring.

Grading has started on Section 2-Y at Soco Gap through the Cherokee Indian lands.

By the time this reaches the press all contractors should have resumed work.

Robert Green, stonemason on the Rockfish Gap bridge above Waynesboro, Virginia, has been much impressed by the efforts of the architects to obtain a rough or "rubble" type of stone masonry rather than the dressed up stonework style used on the town post office. Green commented that "Dressed masonry in the mountains was like putting a shiny new bureau in a stable for a feed box." We think that says it.

We've had some queries from readers as to the whereabouts of their copy of the February issue of the "News." There was no February issue, which harkens back to the right we reserved, you will remember, to publish from "time to time."



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

May-June, 1941

Number 5

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

PLEASE LEAVE THE FLOWERS FOR OTHERS TO ENJOY

Each flower season we are more impressed with the number of comments we have from Parkway visitors expressing their joy with the beauty of the vivid displays of the azalea, rhododendron, laurel, and all the other flowers that make of the Blue Ridge a slowly unfolding drama of spring loveliness. One lady wrote us from New York that after two weeks back at home she could hardly remember the beauty of the big mountain views for the loveliness of the flowers which she said impressed her even more.

We people who are in the park business will never understand, we guess, why it is that some visitors will be so thoughtless of the pleasure of others as to pull up or break off flowers along the roadside for their own small purposes. We realize that most visitors who enjoy the flowers must be tempted with the desire to pick for themselves a "bouquet" of such bloom, but fortunately the big majority have too much sense of good citizenship and the rights of others to do so. More and more we become impatient with those few who do forget. And the most discouraging part of it all is that none of the mountain flowers when thrown into the back seat of an automobile will last until they are back home in the vase--no, most of the flowers picked will wilt quickly and are thrown out somewhere along the roadside.

We wonder whether we can rely on the signs which we have posted "PLEASE DO NOT PICK THE FLOWERS THAT OTHERS MAY ENJOY THEM". We still prefer to be this courteous. We don't want to replace the legend on the sign with one which would read "FLOWER PICKING FORBIDDEN - FINE \$500 OR IMPRISONMENT FOR SIX MONTHS - OR BOTH". Such a sign just doesn't seem to us to be in the spirit of the Parkway. People are out there for enjoyment and refreshment, to get away from the "do this" and "don't do that" rules and regulations that govern our lives in the work-a-day world.

It has been a long and drawn out campaign not only on the Parkway but in all the National

Parks and the State parks and along the State highways. Not to sound too pessimistic, we do think we see a ray of improvement, and we do intend at least one more year to stand by with our sign which begins "Please".

Folks along the Parkway who have lived with the mountain flowers and who are justly proud of them have been a great help to us in preventing the outside visitor from damaging the Parkway show spots. All the Parkway Rangers have reported incidents where our neighbors have stopped vandalism. This we see as our best means of control. All our worries would be over if the 99% of all the Parkway visitors who are law abiding would help to see that the other 1% are reminded gently at first, firmly if necessary.

CUMBERLAND KNOB VERSUS BLUFF PARK

It is strange but true that we are worried about the popularity of the Cumberland Knob Park. There is parking space, including that within the picnic areas, for about 100 automobiles. On Saturdays and Sundays there have been several times that number of cars in the park. Cars along the entrance road and cars in a long line out on the Parkway. Picnic tables, trails, and other facilities have, of course, been overcrowded in the same degree.

Here are some of the reasons that we shake our heads about this overuse of this small park near the State line:

1. Automobiles parked along the entrance roads and on the Parkway are dangerous to through traffic.

2. Any park which is overcrowded soon gets that "motheaten" look. Grass and shrubbery are trampled. Folks cut new paths because those which were provided are crowded. In time parks that are overused lose their beauty.

The first remedy one thinks of when a park is overcrowded is to build more park, and we do have in mind extending the parking facilities at Cumberland Knob. However, as those familiar with the area know, we cannot go far in any direction without falling off the mountain, and so

the capacity of Cumberland Knob cannot be much increased. The only other thing we can do is turn folks away when the park becomes filled. Warden Carico has been asked to direct visitors to the Bluff Park 20 odd miles to the south where many more people can be accommodated without overcrowding. We take this "inhospitable" position of closing the gate believing that you would have us protect the park from such overuse as would lead to destruction of its beauty, and believing that nearby folks will work with us.

Once again we would like to suggest that Cumberland Knob is at its best during weekdays when its facilities are not overtaxed. On almost any weekday you may have your own corner of the picnic area. The latch string is always out at Bluff.

A CITIZEN'S PARKWAY GROUP

Governor Broughton has recently announced the membership of a Blue Ridge Parkway Commission of North Carolina. The citizen's group by authority of the General Assembly will co-operate with the Federal Government and represent the interests of the near-the-Parkway counties in problems of joint concern. It has always been our belief that the success of any public improvement may be measured directly by the support which is given it by the individual citizen and by groups of citizens who make it a special point to be posted about its progress. This new group should add much to the efforts of Chambers of Commerce, civic clubs, and other groups which have been co-operating with so fine a sense of disinterestedness and public spirit. Notably active during recent years is the Virginia Citizen's Parkway Committee which derived its authority from the various Chambers of Commerce. The Virginia Committee is composed of:

C. B. Short, Chairman, Roanoke; Powell Glass, Lynchburg; R. D. Ramsey, Secretary, Lynchburg; J. Calloway Brown, Bedford; J. R. Goodwin, Amherst; Frank C. Wiley, Salem.

The Commission recently appointed by Governor Broughton is as follows:

Monroe Redden, Temporary Chairman, Hendersonville
Wilkes County - T. E. Story, J. B. McCoy, and Dr. H. B. Smith

Caldwell County - Mark Goforth, F. L. Townsend, and R. L. Gwyn

Alleghany County - Eugene Transou, W. D. Edwards, and W. F. Osborne

McDowell County - L. J. P. Cutlar, J. C. Rabb, and William W. Neal, Jr.

Burke County - A. B. Stoney, W. L. Davis, and Frank S. Thompson

Watauga County - Gordon H. Winkler, Sam Horton, and Lyles Harris

Jackson County - Dan K. Moore, Dan Thompkins, and T. Walter Ashe

Swain County - McKinley Edwards, W. E. Elmore, and Frank Hyatt

Avery County - J. V. Bowers, J. F. Hampton, and J. P. Dellinger

Polk County - Jack Arledge, Charles J. Lynch, and George A. Cathey

Buncombe County - James S. Howell, Hubert C. Jarvis, and Jack Enwright.

Ashe County - Judge H. C. Tucker, Lem Hafer, and L. P. Colvoid

Mitchell County - C. A. Peterson, W. F. Hughes, and B. C. Burgess

Yancey County - Dover R. Fouts, G. Leslie Hensley, and R. N. Silver

Haywood County - Glenn Palmer, Arthur Osborne, and J. C. Lynn

Henderson County - L. L. Burgin, Harry Buchanan, and M. M. Redden

Surry County - Dr. Moir S. Martin, Truman N. Woodruff, and Henry C. Dobson

Madison County - Guy V. Roberts, Philip Elam, and Dr. J. H. Hutchins.

MONEY TO BURN?

The fire season just passed was the most severe single season experienced since the inception of the Parkway. Drought combined with human carelessness caused 14 of the Parkway's 16 fires.

To control this waste the big problem is educating the careless smoker or indifferent debris burner. This spring we found it necessary to take some folks to the law courts where gross neglect in debris burning was clearly the cause of a costly fire. This action was taken with the thought of protecting for you and others the beauty of the Blue Ridge. We didn't enjoy the court scenes any more than they did.

Records from the spring fires show that 2,850 acres, or about four and a half square miles of mountain land was burned adjacent to or upon the Parkway. In the putting out of these fires 9,425 man-hours of labor were spent which would amount to 1,200 men working one full eight-hour day. The costs to the Park Service alone through its CCC and ERA and Ranger staff totaled about \$2,575. This might properly be termed "money to burn".

Next fall let us make an all out effort to cut the record of this spring. Halfway efforts are not good enough. Your Ranger will be glad to help you should you have problems about debris burning.

ODDS AND ENDS

David Vecellio of Roanoke, Virginia, was the low bidder on the I-E viaduct near Montebello, Virginia, bids being received on May 22.

J. M. Francesca, Fayetteville, West Virginia, was low bidder on the grade separation structure at Bobbletts Gap near Buchanan.

Construction of two new utility areas by the CCC was started, one in Virginia near the James River, the other in North Carolina at Gillespie Gap near Spruce Pine. From these points 60 miles of Parkway and nearby recreation areas will be maintained and operated. The utility areas are similar to those now in use at Rocky Knob and Bluff Parks. Buildings are of cinderblock construction and will provide storage space for trucks and supplies, a repair shop, and a fire house.

Construction of a Trail Lodge by CCC has started at Rocky Knob Park and is progressing rapidly. This will consist of cabins for overnight or weekend use by groups of young people

such as Boy Scouts and Campfire Clubs. No charge will be made, but permits must be obtained from the Parkway Superintendent and groups must be supervised by an adult. More of this another time.

On June 19, bids will be received by the Public Roads Administration office in Washington for grading, draining, the construction of two tunnels, and other work on Section 1-G.

We have heard complaints from some of our visitors to the Rocky Knob picnic area about the lack of water supply, and we understand it. Last fall in the "News" we forecast that the water system would be ready for use this spring, and we have not as yet fulfilled our promise. We think it quite safe to say now that water should be running from the taps by mid-July.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS.....a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

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Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

AND NOW OUR STORY'S BEGUN

If we had to put our finger on the one thing that impresses us most about the Parkway visitors, it would be the number of questions they ask. Talk to a group of them and you find yourself between a cross fire of "What mountain is this?", "What flower is that?", and the where, what, when, how, and why of a number of things. This we like, of course, because it shows that they are interested, and we intend to give as many of the answers as we can at the spot where the questions are most often asked--this by the relatively simple means of informational signs.

In the Bluff Park a group of CCC boys have been working on special signs and markers for the Roanoke to Blowing Rock sections of the Parkway, and many of the markers are in place. This first batch are "place names". One has been erected in each parking overlook as "Pine Spur", "Devil's Garden", and the message will carry the height above sea level of the parking area as well the elevations of any important peaks in the view.

Another set of answers ready for the tourists are milepost markers. One has been placed on the Parkway near the entrance to each of the recreational parks--Smart View, Rocky Knob, Cumberland Knob, and Bluff. The posts are fourteen feet high. On the face toward southbound traffic is the mileage to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and on the northbound side the distance to Shenandoah National Park. The two parks are, of course, the terminal points of the Parkway when completed, and the idea was borrowed from the railroad depot where you'll remember the traveler is told by a similar sign which way which track goes and how far.

Hanging from a crossarm of our milepost is a carving of the Parkway emblem, the one which appears in the masthead of this paper.

So much for the beginning of our story about the Blue Ridge. There is much more to the tale, and there are ways we have in mind for the telling of it--lectures, campfires, historic markers, restoration of old buildings--but one chapter at a time.

AGRICULTURAL LAND LEASING

From time to time in stories about the rental of Parkway lands for farming we have said that we are aiming for a long-term planning which would enable the farmer to look far ahead toward the use of Parkway lands. Thus far, as all of you know, we have been somewhat on a temporary year-to-year basis while we have been pushing the landscape program and the reconditioning of Parkway lands. In this article we want to report that the land use study is now making good progress and to explain briefly the purpose of it. In other articles we will go into more details about use of our lands for grazing, hay, crop rotation, clean cultivated crops, small grains, orchards, etc.

What is now in progress is only a classification of our lands (we wish we could find a shorter way of expressing it). First we study the land and try to judge the type of use which is fitted to a given piece and which would make an attractive picture from the Parkway at the same time. We must find a use that will be reasonably profitable for the farmer who is near enough to work it. We must also find a use that would keep the land in good shape for time to come. At the same time we must consider the agricultural methods that would be suitable; that is, the type of tillage, amount of lime needed, type of fertilizer and how much; how many heads of cattle can graze the piece without eating the grass roots, etc. After this we can figure the fair fee, taking into account the fact that the farmer who leases the land has to make a reasonable profit.

In making these studies we have in mind the ways of farming that have become good practice in the locality. These are the ways that are recommended by your County Agent and are being used by successful farmers. We want to make it clear that the successful farmer to us is not the man who tries to get out of the land all he can without thinking of the future of the land itself. We think that the good farmer is first of all a good friend of the land, who makes a living without working the land to death. We must think of these things because it is our job to think of the picture of the Parkway in the future as it will appear to the long line of visitors who will come to enjoy its beauty. As we have said many times before, we want them to keep a picture of well-kept farm lands along the way. Run-down fields and thin pastures are not a beautiful picture. We want the farmer who will take pride in handsome cattle and tall hay, and who would use the Parkway land with as much pride as he would if he owned it himself.

We now have authority to lease the Parkway lands that are suitable for farming for a period of time as long as five years, which will make it possible for a farmer to get the full benefit from any land improvement work that he does. At the end of any lease period and providing both parties are satisfied, we would have a right to renew the contract.

In the land classification study we are following through one section of the Parkway at a time. As landscape work nears completion we go over all our lands that we think might now or later be leased. Some fields, as we have mentioned before, are still in use for hay mulch which we need in our work. Some other parcels we wish to improve before we offer them for lease. The Rangers will keep you informed when we are ready to rent any given piece of land, and we hope that many leases can be arranged well before you get to planning your next year's crops.

CONVERSATION ON THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

Not long ago we met a Mr. S. W. Edwards of Silver Spring, Maryland, near Sweet Annie Hollow on the Appalachian Trail. He was on his way to Bent Mountain for the night, having covered from Graysville to that point on the day we met him. On the previous day he said he had walked from Tuggle Gap to Vesta together with his wife and fifteen-year-old son. Mr. Edwards was carrying a Bergan's "Swede" pack and he wore Russel Boots, which was a good indication to us that he is no tenderfoot hiker. He told us of his trips over other sections of the Trail which parallel the Blue Ridge Parkway or perhaps we should say,

other sections where the Parkway parallels the Trail since the famous walk-way was in place long before we came along. At Thanksgiving time Mr. Edwards covered that portion of the Trail between Cloverdale and Bent Mountain, and during the Christmas recess he walked from Rockfish Gap near Waynesboro south to Black Horse Gap just above Roanoke. He had some nice things to say about our part of the country, and compliments to the mountain scenery from one who has walked the Trail really do mean something.

In all, Mr. Edwards and his family have covered 1,400 miles of the Appalachian Trail during the past four years, and he has yet to cover only those portions of the Trail in Vermont and Georgia.

Incidentally, we expect a visit in the near future from Appalachian Trail Club President, Myron Avery, who has worked closely with us with the U. S. Forest Service in the relocation of certain sections of the Trail made necessary by the Parkway construction. We have in mind asking Mr. Avery to play guest editor for a story about the Trail in a future issue of the NEWS. He is a fountain of enthusiasm where the Trail is concerned and no one could better describe the pleasures of the close contact with nature in the mountains which the Trail affords to the hiker.

Last year Parkway CCC Camps completed relocation of the Trail south of Roanoke from Adney Gap to the State line in co-operation with the Roanoke Trail Club, and more recently markers have been placed along the Parkway at all Appalachian Trail crossings.

RANGER SENTER ON SOUTH VIRGINIA SECTIONS

The NEWS has not so far introduced to you the new Ranger on the south Virginia sections. He is an old Ranger rather than a new one so far as experience in the National Parks is concerned. He is Oren P. Senter and comes to us from Boulder Dam out of the southwest desert country where every coyote comes to heel at his whistle. Get him aside around your campfire and he'll tell you a tale or two. The Senters were first from the Eastern States, however, so they say they are back home here in the Blue Ridge. Ranger Senter has the job left vacant by Ted Barnett.

ELBOW ROOM - IN THE PICNIC AREAS

Last issue of the NEWS we pointed to the heavy use of Cumberland Knob Park and as courteously as we could we attempted to "chase you

away" to other less-crowded parks for your picnics. Reports keep coming in, however, that this smallest of all of our areas tallies from 1,200 to 1,500 visitors on Saturday and Sunday alone, or twice what the facilities can take care of properly. Here we are back again with another plea.

The hardest use these parks get is from the large organized picnics--Sunday School, church, and club groups. The Park Wardens tell us that large family gatherings often number from 20 to 100 persons. These groups are just the sort of people we want to use the Parkway, and we intend to take care of them, but they require space and longer tables and bigger fireplaces. For just this purpose we are building what we call "group-size picnic facilities" at all of the Parks. At Smart, Rocky Knob, Cumberland, and Bluff Parks these are ready for your use. Each is located right next to a playfield with teeter totters and swings for the kiddies, and near each is an open field developed for soft ball games and horse shoes. (Regulation baseball is forbidden as dangerous to others in the park.) The tables at these areas will seat large groups. We have other portable type tables we can move in from the maintenance yards when there is a big day and several gatherings at one time. To take care of your group in good shape we require only one thing of you and that is *advance notice* of when you are coming and in what numbers. A word

to the Park Warden or the Ranger or a note to headquarters, address as above, and we'll take care of you. Without notice we can't be sure.

NEW PICNIC AREA AT PINE SPUR

A number have asked questions about the construction near Pine Spur, and checking up on our past issues we find that the NEWS has neglected this new picnic area--closest of all to Roanoke from whence comes many a picnicker each week end. The work has been under way as part of the W.P.A. program since late fall. The park was 75% complete as of July 1, which closed out our fiscal construction period. Paving of the roads and parking areas and construction of water supply and sewage system remain to be accomplished and will be set up if we have funds this summer. The area will be put in use by next spring. Meanwhile, we have barricades at the entrance and ask that you spread your lunches at Smart View which is all in readiness twelve miles south on the Parkway.

GOOD RECORD FOR THE PARKWAY VISITOR

We rap the top of our wooden desk as we write this so as not to slight Dame Fortune. There have been no serious accidents anywhere on the Parkway since the opening of the tourist season on April 15. So good a record should not go unsung and we sing. Should it hold through the year, you may be sure we'd lift the chorus.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume IV

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Number 7

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

LITTLE RAIN FALLING LEAVES FIRE DANGER

All signs point to a bad fire season. Last year's open winter was followed by a rather dry spring and a drier summer, and the result has been a five-inch deficiency in rainfall at this writing. To combat this danger we are seeking your help once again for the sake of the Blue Ridge forest, and we especially need your help in keeping the watch, since nine out of every ten fires on the Parkway have been man-caused as shown by the none too good record of the past.

For four years we have kept a complete check on all fires which burned on or near the Parkway, and we learned that one in every three is caused by a smoker, one in every four starts from debris burning, and one in every ten results from a campfire. The rest are started on purpose. Many of the large fires during the fall of the year have been traced to a careless sportsman who hardly graces the title of sportsman. Hunting, of course, not permitted on the Parkway lands, but one-third of all our troubles at this season of the year spread from a warming fire onto the Parkway right-of-way. During this period of National Emergency or any period, sportsmen should set a good example in being careful of our national resources, and especially the sportsman. Last year's fall fire season was about normal and only a little more than one-third of all the fires for the year occurred during October, November, and December. This fall, unless we get a change of weather, is abnormal, and so we feel that the record now being written will not be as favorable unless we get full cooperation from everyone. Everyone can be helpful if he or she will spread the gospel of fire prevention. When smoking do not flip your lighted match or tobacco. When hunting, dress warmly enough that you don't need a warming fire, and if you do be sure it is out before you leave it. Whenever you are in the woods or in the fields be careful with fire.

CIVILIAN PUBLIC SERVICE CAMP MOVES IN TO WORK ON PARKWAY

A group of about 70 young men of various religious faiths who conscientiously object to bearing arms against their fellow men made camp early in September in an abandoned group of CCC buildings near Buck Creek Gap and are now at work on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The men were assigned to the work camps by their Local Draft Boards and will be supervised by the Friends Service Committee of the Quaker Church, but a number of religious faiths are represented in the group. The expense of maintaining the young men in camp will be paid either by themselves, their families, or their churches, and none of the cost will be borne by the National Park Service which will, however, technically supervise the work programs.

While in camp the men will work eight hours daily on the Parkway in erosion control, landscaping, forest fire protection, construction of maintenance buildings, and in developing the Crabtree Meadow Park south of Little Switzerland.

From our observations to date we have in this encampment a group of hard-working young men, and we expect they will do much to forward completion of the Parkway in the mid-North Carolina sections. The need for development of picnicking and camping grounds to round out the usefulness of this part of the Parkway is one of our most pressing needs. Likewise the landscape planting and seeding of the heavy cuts and fills which were required to level a road through these rugged mountains will go a long way toward reducing cost to the United States for maintenance of the scenic road bed. Nowhere, we think, could such a camp be employed to a more useful purpose than in this region of the Parkway.

ARRANGEMENTS BEING COMPLETED FOR LANDSCAPING AND PARK DEVELOPMENT BY W.P.A.

We have spent a restless summer since the Emergency Relief Act programs shut down on July 1

when the funds expired from which they were set up. Our "champing at the bit" has been caused by seeing all this good work weather go by during the summer without the progress we had hoped for in furthering the landscaping of the Parkway and the construction of recreational facilities in the wayside parks along the route. These programs, together with the CCC, have been largely responsible for the Smart View, and Rocky Knob Parks in Virginia, and for the Cumberland Knob and Bluff Parks in North Carolina, the worth of which is pretty well shown by the record of attendance at all of them during the past year. Every one of them operated to full capacity during weekends in the tourist season, and we seldom drove into a picnic area on week days when the facilities weren't being used and enjoyed. This park development work and the Parkway landscaping were supervised up until July 31 by our own organization, with the workmen being provided by WPA and paid from ERA funds under a kind of special arrangement for work in Federal areas. With the project we lost a number of well trained construction and development men.

During recent weeks we have been working closely with the WPA District Offices in Winston-Salem and Asheville, North Carolina, and in Roanoke, Virginia, to work out a new program which we will sponsor through State WPA administrators to carry the same sort of work forward. We feel a lot better now that we can report that our applications have been favorably received. Before this paper goes to press we hope that 515 men will be at work again on the Parkway in the following areas: Asheville, Bluff Park, and Rocky Knob Park.

The work will be planned and sponsored by this Service, but will be carried out by the WPA.

NO BIDS ON PARKWAY LINK TO MITCHELL

We watched with a great deal of interest while the North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission requested bids for the construction of a spur road from the Parkway to

Mt. Mitchell. While a part of us was disappointed that no bids were received, another part of us realized that important as the Parkway work seems to us, it should not be allowed to interfere with important defense work. No doubt the failure of the Commission to receive bids may be traced directly or indirectly to the effort the Nation's industrial machinery is putting out for the sake of defense. Since then we have had a number of our interested friends ask us whether or not this incident would indicate that Parkway construction may slow down. Our opinion amounts to little more than a guess, but it is our guess that the defense work will and should come first. Whatever may be done toward advancing the Parkway construction without taking men and materials and equipment otherwise needed will doubtless have general support. The speed at which the Parkway work is advanced will be geared accordingly.

CRABTREE MEADOWS PARK

We have been impressed, but not surprised with the popularity of the unfinished Parkway between Linville and Mt. Mitchell during the past tourist season. This area has some of the most dramatic scenery in our entire 500-mile route and that, of course, is why we say we are not surprised at traffic counts which have mounted into the hundred thousands. Our attention has been called by any number of visitors to the need for wayside parks along the lines of the picnicking and camping areas which have been so heavily used in the sections between Roanoke and Boone. As we have said before, plans do call for the building of these waysides along all of the Parkway route at intervals of thirty to sixty miles. We know that the people local to the Linville-Mitchell section will be glad to learn that work will soon be started on the Crabtree Meadows Park midway between Little Switzerland and Buck Creek Gap. So are we glad.

Another time when the danger of forest fire requires less space in the *Bulletin*, we'll give the story of Crabtree more of the room it deserves.

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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS.....a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

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WE PAINT THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

Early in the month workmen and a special machine started south from Adney Gap painting a center-of-the-road-stripe on the Parkway. A 4-inch wide band will be dashed where there is passing distance and solid where it is dangerous for a motorist to overtake a car moving in the same direction. All of the 140 miles of Parkway from the present northerly entrance near Roanoke to Deep Gap near Boone in North Carolina will be marked. The pavement south from Grandfather Mountain to near Gillespie Gap at Little Switzerland will also get its stripe.

Center marking will not only show where it is advisable to do your "passing" but it will help to keep the middle-of-the-road driver on his side. But most important we think is the value the center line will have when the fog clouds hang low on the Parkway mountains. The motorist can now set his Parkway course by the center stripe and know that he is headed for port just as the mariner on the sea puts his faith on the ship's needle.

The machine which does the striping is patterned after those used by the Virginia Highway Department who helped us a great deal with our rigging. The outfit is Parkway owned and is available to various other national parks in the East for their work.

NO MORE FIREWOOD

As clean-up of Parkway woodlands goes ahead this winter we will again be stock piling a certain amount of cordwood as a by-product of the work. Unfortunately, however, the supply of wood thus accumulated is sufficient to supply only the visitors' needs in the picnic areas and campgrounds, and none will be available for distribution elsewhere.

NEARLY A MILLION PERSONS USED PARKWAY OVER TWELVE MONTHS

According to our estimates, about 965,000 persons visited the Blue Ridge Parkway during

1941, and of this total about 517,000 in 161,911 cars traveled the 140-mile paved section of parkway between Roanoke and Boone. Our figures were based upon periodic counts of cars entering from important state highways. The census covers the twelve months period ending September 30, and the figures for the 1941 tourist year show approximately a 30% increase over the 750,000 visitors estimated in 1940. Our findings would indicate that there was about the same proportion of rise in the number of out-of-state visitors. Nearly 25% of all cars actually counted bore tags other than Virginia and North Carolina. If the interchange of state traffic between Virginia and North Carolina was also taken into consideration, the out-of-state figure might be closer to 40% of the Parkway traffic. These figures show that use of the Parkway by visitors originating in the local countryside or nearby towns and cities still overbalances the number of visitors from the long distances.

The recreational park areas, Smart View and Rocky Knob in Virginia and Cumberland Knob and The Bluffs in North Carolina, were visited by about 160,000 persons. Thus about one in every three who use the Parkway also visits the recreational areas. Cumberland Knob Park near the State line was the heaviest used. During August alone 16,000 guests were counted at this attractive but overcrowded park, bearing out the several stories which we carried in the "News" during the summer about the Cumberland Knob area's being, we think, "too popular."

It surprised us that North Carolina Route 21 near Roaring Gap was the most popular entrance. There nearly 103,000 visitors were checked. The largest part of this count originated, we assume, from the vicinity of Winston-Salem, Mt. Airy, and Greensboro. Adney Gap near Roanoke, the present northerly terminus of paved Parkway, was the second most popular entrance point, which surprised us less. Neither of the above can claim the highest entry for any single day, however. This record was set at North Carolina Route #18 near Cumberland Knob where 2,756 visitors entered the Parkway on Sunday, July 27.

We were encouraged at the showing made by the 160 odd miles of Parkway graded but not paved and opened in various stretches for "travel at your own risk." Especially did we admire the hardened motorists who ventured over these gravel sections in the long drought period between August and September when admittedly the drive was dusty and therefore not too comfortable. It shows the mighty attraction of the scenery between Linville and Mt. Mitchell where the heaviest use of uncompleted Parkway was estimated. We wonder if the same pioneering won't take place next year on the Peaks of Otter sections near Bedford, Virginia, which will be opened but not paved from the James River south to Bearwallow Gap. Here is some of the finest scenery on the Parkway in Virginia. There may also develop an increase of traffic next year over the attractive sections near Waynesboro and Staunton.

All in all we were quite satisfied with the figures. Use of the Parkway is steadily rising. No doubt it will jump when and if the much needed facilities for the tourists are completed in the parks, which will permit our putting out an unreserved invitation to the visitors to come. Even under the present circumstances our rangers recorded much enthusiasm on the part of the Parkway visitor this year, our guess being that many of them will come back.

PARKWAY AND PARKS SETTLE DOWN FOR THE WINTER

On October 15 we went on a winter basis. The water systems and comfort stations in the parks were drained and locked up, signs went up at all of the important Parkway entrances reading "PARKWAY NOT MAINTAINED FOR WINTER USE--AVOID DURING PERIODS OF ICE, SNOW, AND FOG." So we close another official tourist season and settle down until the sun of another April 15. Be careful if you drive the Parkway in the meantime. You do so on your own.

NATIONAL PARK IDEALS AND STANDARDS

The Blue Ridge Parkway is but one of the 164 Federal park areas--national parks, national monuments, national historical parks, military parks, etc.--administered by the National Park Service of the Interior. The 26 national parks, established by act of Congress, are distinguished for natural scenery set aside for preservation as nearly as possible in unspoiled condition and dedicated to the use and inspiration of the people.

In establishing the Yellowstone (first) National Park, Congress quaintly designated it "a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people" and provided against "injury or spoliation of all timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities or wonders

within said park, and their retention in their natural condition."

In establishing national parks no thought is given to geographical location. The area proposed for National Park use is considered primarily from the standpoint of whether or not its principal features are of broad national interest.

Commercial use is not considered in creating a park. The major purpose is the promotion of the wellbeing of Americans through the health giving qualities of inspiration, relaxation, and recreation in pure unpolluted air in natural surroundings of enduring beauty.

Many of the parks contain noble forests, but the trees are preserved for their beauty and never considered as lumber. It is a strange fact, but often the trees that add most to the beauty of the landscape in reality have no commercial value.

There are many wild animals, but they never are considered from the standpoint of food supply. All hunting is forbidden except that called in park language "hunting with the camera." Many an erstwhile hunter having laid down his gun for a camera while in a park never cares to shoulder a gun again. The gentle eyed deer becomes a friend, not an intended victim. A lesson learned in the National Parks is that wild animals greatly fear man only when man is cruel and murderous. Another lesson from National Park experience is that practically no wild animal will injure human beings except in self-defense. The monster cat of our rock fastnesses--the mountain lion--big enough and powerful enough to drag down a full grown deer is one of the most timid of all the beasts in National Parks, fleeing at the first sight or scent of man.

There are great water falls, but they are not harnessed. Outside the National Parks are more than enough falls to supply the power needs of the Nation. Those in the Parks feed man's hunger for beauty, a demand that long denied seems stifled, but that given a chance in the unmarred outdoors thrives, increases, and gives a broader outlook on life.

CCC CAMP NP-14 ABANDONED

CCC Camp VA-NP-14 at Rocky Knob was abandoned on November 7. The loss of this camp will, of course, be felt in our work programmed for Virginia. This was the first CCC Camp established on the Parkway and is the first to be abandoned. It was through the work of the personnel in this camp that the Rocky Knob Utility area and many of the facilities in the Park, as well as Parkway landscape development, was accomplished.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume V

December-January, 1941-42

Number 1

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

WHAT OF THE PARKWAY NOW

There was a little incident this fall that showed us how important recreation is these days. A handful of men from the British warship HMS Ormidable in dock at Norfolk for repairs came up wanting to get away. The Parkway and the mountains must have given them that change for one of them remarked on leaving, "It was a bit like spring after a beastly winter."

A good many of our friends have come up to us of late and asked, "What of the Parkway now?" And there, in what the Englishman said, is part of the answer. Many think that the next season may see fewer visitors on the Parkway. But surely it will mean more than ever to those who can come.

Many of our plans for new construction have been shelved, and building activities will be slow. Despite a reduced staff we hope to continue plans and surveys so that more blueprints may be added to those already on the shelf. If to the order to resume work will find us ready whenever it comes.

During these grim days it is hard to think that our work and yours and the next fellow's is more important than ever. Yet we have made up our minds that our job in these peaceful mountains, unless we are needed elsewhere, is to work harder and more calmly toward the same old end--be it a Parkway for recreation or a field that has need of plowing.

OFF THE AIR

Our headquarters radio was "going out" like a charm the day before Christmas, but on the day following it was a blank, and for a good reason. During the holiday the unit on Mill Mountain at Roanoke had been stolen, lock, stock, and barrel--all 250 pounds of it. Now the Federal agents are on the trail of it, and meanwhile we operate from a temporary set-up.

Here in passing, we might mention that the Parkway radio has proved itself most helpful in many ways during its twelve months at work. When accidents occur and they do, and when fire breaks out and it does, quick action is a great saving. We are sure that radio is our only answer.

BE CAREFUL ALWAYS

We had business on the Parkway one January day when there was snow on the ground. We wouldn't think it possible under such conditions, but there they were--forest fires at two different spots. It seemed like a good day with the snow for brush burning, but it got away which shows that you can't just forget a fire. It is always worth your respect.

CALLED TO THE SERVICE

A score of men from the Parkway (Public Roads and Park Service) have left to join the armed forces, and as many more engineers have been called to defense industries. Among those field men well known along the line are Capt. Lynn Harries and Lieut. Albert Burns who worked on Parkway construction jobs in North Carolina. W. O. J. Bostrom and John Walsh have recently left Galax, and Harry E. Allen and W. J. Franklin have left the West Jefferson-Spruce Pine region, also Kenneth Hayes and Albert Kanipe have gone from the Asheville Public Roads engineering force.

Lieut. R. M. King, former Warden at Bluff Park, has recently been called. Off to camp as a Reserve Officer is Warren Lewis who worked in the Peaks of Otter area in Virginia, and Richard Horne, clerk in the Roanoke office, is reported on the high seas with the Navy. Lionel Mattingly has left from Bedford.

Like thousands of other agencies in industry and business, we shall feel the loss of these experienced men, but we know by the measure

of their worth to us that they will be of greater value in the Number One job of the day. The same goes for the many boys who have left their homes neighboring the Parkway, and we hear of more each day. Many of them have worked in one job or another with contractors in building the roadway or the recreational areas. We hope that they may finish up their new job quickly and return soon to finish this one. We guess we are not alone in this particular wish of ours.

40 M. P. H.

At the order of the Secretary of the Interior we will open in the spring under a forty miles per hour top speed limit. This goes for all national parks and parkways during the present emergency need for saving rubber. We could add some remarks about how the reduced speed will doubtless also save in bumped fenders and in injury to persons. In any event we are sure that this timely suggestion of the Secretary's will meet with popular support and full cooperation. Even though portions of the Parkway may be safely driven at higher speeds, we hope in fact that the *temporary 40-mile limit* may become something of a *permanent habit* where the Parkway is concerned.

CHAMPION BULL

We stopped one day in Meadow Fork Valley south of Bluff Park to admire as we always do this fine farm country, and someone pointed to the white faced bull in the hill pasture looking down on the Parkway. He was a handsome fellow, this Hereford, and we learned later that he was lately judged champion of Alleghany County. Mr. Hort Miller who owns him is a neighbor of ours, and we are told he may lease some Parkway land. If so we hope he stakes his winner out where everyone can see him. He is worth a look or two or three.

MORE GAME

"Better hunting and better fishing are turning out to be important by-products of the Parkway"---so says one of our big brother newspapers in their column for sportsmen, and we are naturally glad that they see it that way. We have written before with the law looking over our shoulder about the "no hunting" in the parks. This has been our rule because our first concern is to save the wildlife. At the same time

we have always preached that our work of saving the wildlife would help and not hurt the sportsman, and like most people we are glad when others agree with us.

A review of our plans comes good at this time for we have just met with officials of the State Game Commissions and other Federal areas to agree on a general program of restocking and game management. No game has been stocked as yet, but jointly worked out plans call for the planting of a number of species of birds and animals in the recreational parks. Deer and turkey will be included. Safe from the hunters, unless they wander, this game should multiply rapidly and before long should begin to overflow into surrounding areas where hunting is permitted.

The other newspaper man points out (and we particularly liked this) that our campaign of education will have even more value for the sportsman. One of the soundest planks in the Parkway's wildlife platform will be the maintenance of natural homes for the game on the Parkway land. Our landscaping work has been shaped along these lines, many of the plants being chosen for their value as food and cover for game. As an example we are making an effort to increase the quail population along the length of the Parkway. Old rail fences and hedgerows which make good nesting spots will be left in place, and a broad strip of ground along them will be left to grow up in brush. We believe that these fence rows will make a good place for the birds to run to when the hunter misses his first shot on the lands to the other side of our boundary fence. In time we are sure the hunters will be thankful for a better game condition, part of which will be traceable to the "escape" we thus afford them. Moreover our neighboring farmers noting an increase in game may look into the reasons for it and take steps on their own as individuals or through their hunting and fishing clubs.

Fishing is permitted in season in the streams along the Blue Ridge Parkway and within the parks for those with State licenses and under much the same rules. Fishing along the Parkway should also benefit from our program, but mindful of the paper shortage and not wanting to run to two pages, we'll let that go for another time.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume V

February-March, 1942

Number 2

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

THE USER WILL PAY

From Washington comes word that beginning in May the Blue Ridge Parkway is to be placed on a pay-as-you-ride basis, the charge to be 25¢ for a daily permit. Those living near or spending several days on the drive may buy a yearly pass for \$1.00 and use the Parkway at will. The permit goes with the car, and the fee is the same for any number of car passengers.

There you have a piece of Parkway news that may surprise you. While it has been talked for some time, we ourselves had no final word until the other day. It is news that some may not like though we think you will come to agree with us that it is sound business from the people's point of view and equally fair to the visitor, local and distant.

Auto fees are collected upon entrance to most of the national parks as Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, and Yosemite. There is also a charge for entrance to the various historical museums and battlefields. So the policy is Nation-wide. Our system is patterned after the one which has been in use on the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. None of us who take special pride in the Blue Ridge Mountains need be told the Parkway is a special roadway for which one might expect to pay a special fee (and a fee which is, by the way, less than we spend for a single show at the local movie house). There will be those who will say, "But this thing has been built with a part of my taxes, and I have already paid for it." To this we can only reply that "Yes, this is true", but we add, "So has the man in New York City, Alabama, and all the distant countryside paid his taxes, and yet he may not be able to afford to get to the Parkway to use it at all." The intake from the fee collection will go to the U. S. Treasury to offset the yearly cost of running the Parkway. Because of the uncertainties that face the tourist season immediately ahead we are not ready to make our guess known, but the figures we have tucked away in our desk for future reference hold much promise.

The check this year will be made on the hard surfaced sections, Roanoke to Blowing Rock,

and Linville to a point near Spruce Pine. Parkway graded with crushed stone surface near Mt. Mitchell in North Carolina and north of Roanoke in Virginia will be open on the same basis as last year. No check will be made. Plans are being rounded out to locate the checking stations on the Parkway so as to control in bottleneck fashion all the recreational parks and the most scenic spots on the drive. The units will be manned by collectors in ranger uniform who will be schooled to give out Parkway information as an added duty. The check will likely be made through to November 1 and eight hours daily. For the present, during the off season and off hours, use of the Parkway will be permitted without payment of fees. We readily admit this is not that we invite free use. We simply believe it will cost us more to collect the fee during the off periods than would be good business.

It should be clear that the \$1.00 annual permit is designed for local folks who visit the Parkway several or many times during the year. It is in the nature of a "wholesale" fee as well for the visitor from the distance who wants to spend several days in our part of the country.

The job of collecting the fee will not prove one of our most pleasant we think, but we do believe it proper business, and we believe it a fair plan.

WHAT BULL AND WHAT PASTURE?

Our face is a bit red about the champion bull we thought we saw down in Meadow Fork Valley. We praised him to the skies in the last number, you will remember. We were wrong! We were right! Indeed, we were generally all mixed up, and it didn't take some of our friends very long to straighten us out.

It seems like we saw a bull, and it was in a pasture at Mr. Hort Miller's place. This was a good looking bull all right enough, but he isn't a champion (yet). As a matter of fact he hasn't been shown. Anyone should be proud of him, however, and we are for one. We still hope Mr. Miller will stake him out where our Parkway tourists can see him.

It also seems that Mr. Miller's young daughter Lucille and his younger son James did raise two calves which took prizes in the "Baby Beef" class at the county fair last fall. We admit this doesn't clear us as the bull we described was no baby beef.

Now the bull we "thought" we saw is already famous. Not only was he champion of Alleghany County, but Grand Champion of North Carolina. Moreover, he took fifteenth place in the great Chicago International Livestock Exposition. This handsome fellow, we learn now, is kept at Doughton-Meadows a-mile or so down the Sparta road from us. He is owned, and proudly, by a good friend of the Parkway and a leader in game and fish conservation, Mr. Horton Doughton of Statesville, who is a son of another very good friend of the Parkway.

That we think gets the proper bull in the proper pasture.

AVAILABILITY OF THE PARKWAY TO THE PUBLIC IN 1942

We are learning, like so many others these days, to adjust ourselves to new conditions, war conditions. We have gone along hoping that it would be possible for us to keep all of the Parkway open for the refreshment of all the visitors who could get to it during 1942. By and large our hopes have not been too high, and we will operate 80% of the 340 miles which we have in various stages of completion.

We will remain open over the 140 paved miles from Adney Gap near Roanoke to Deep Gap near Boone complete with recreation areas. We will be ready for all comers from Grandfather Mountain to Buck Creek Gap above Marion, North Carolina, 22 miles of which is hard surfaced and 16½ miles of which is crushed stone. We will likewise maintain travel over the 7.8 mile section paved with crushed stone from the Asheville Scenic Highway to the great Craggy Gardens. For the first full year we will be open from James River to the Bearwallow Gap past the Peaks of Otter, which 34 miles is crushed stone.

The remaining sections of the Parkway, a total of 66 miles, will be closed for the duration. War budgets for all non-defense items are being cut, and ours has been no exception. Cost of upkeep under heavy use is naturally higher on those Parkway sections which are surfaced only with a base course of crushed stone. At least two applications of calcium chloride are required to lay the dust and keep the base in compact shape for use (under more normal conditions most of these sections would have been hard surfaced this year). By reason of necessity we have elected to barricade those sections which dead

end and those which are more distant from the sources of travel. This, we announce with regret.

FIRE FOLLOWS SNOW

It is hard as we write this on March 3 to put our mind on the warm dry weather of spring. The radio has been blating out reports of fifteen or twenty foot snow drifts in many wind swept spots on the Parkway. As if we were in the far north we are packing in supplies on foot to the marooned boys at CCC Camp NP-29 near Galax. We sent our equipment to make way in from Sparta to Bluff Park also shut off from the world. Even in Roanoke we had a respect for yesterday's storm. But after we cease to be worried about our snowbound areas and friends we suppose we will be thankful for this piece of virile winter.

Such a snow should be a long time melting down, and we venture that patches will be left long after we are in the "take one" boxes, still soaking down and down farther into the farm fields and the loamy soils of our forests and yours. We have needed it after the long dry year, far deficient in rain fall.

This hearkens well for a lessened forest fire danger in the spring, but we can't depend on it alone. Last fall's record was very good along the Parkway, there being only one fire which is the least we have recorded in any season to date. Field burning caused this one, and that always bothers us because it seems a most unnecessary cause of forest fire. The spring which is just around the snow bank may get to be very dry despite the fine source of moisture in the storm of today, and we again join your county agents to suggest that you plow under your fields as the best means of improving them. If you must burn we would like you to keep these things in mind: 1. Make a fire line about the field, 2. Secure enough help, 3. Burn only on moist or humid days, and 4. Never leave the fire unattended.

If you know of a careless neighbor in your community, you could help everyone by talking with him. He may not know that there are certain State fire laws for the people's protection. In protected Virginia counties no fires can be set between March 1 and May 15 except from four in the afternoon to midnight. In North Carolina no fires can be set in State organized counties from April 1 to June 15 except with a permit from the county warden. Federal law makes it a misdemeanor if a fire is built near the Parkway or other Federal lands provided the fire is not put out before leaving. If it spreads beyond control the man on whose property it was started must take the blame. Perhaps next spring's record for fires may be as favorable as that of last fall. It can be.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume V

April, May, June, July - 1942

Number 3

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 633 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

FOUR ISSUES THE YEAR

When the NEWS first came out (almost five years ago) we published by the month. Over the year just passed we have been coming out every 60 days, more or less. And now we are cutting a cloth for cuffless trousers so to speak.

First, we shall publish four issues the year which makes us a quarterly, we suppose, though it sounds a bit "uppity" for the kind of bulletin we are.

Secondly, we are quartering the number of copies printed of each issue. For this last reason we suggest that you not "take one" from the boxes, but that you "read one" and then put it back. This is no hard and fast idea, however, as we want the school teacher, the preacher, or the man with many friends to continue to take one away with him as long as it is passed among several people to read.

So far as our mailing list is concerned we shall maintain it while we can, but we urge any reader who can do without his copy to let us know.

The above puts us on a basis we hope may be considered a sound war policy for a paper of our limited importance. We still lay claim to some!

NO FEE FOR USE OF PARKWAY DURING WAR INTERVAL

Those of you who read us for February-March were no doubt interested in the plan we talked over for collecting a 25¢ daily auto fee for Parkway use. There was also to be a "wholesale" annual \$1 permit. Most of our brothers among the daily press and weeklies carried the news with editorial comment. The plans were made before we knew too much about the tire and gasoline rationing and not without a sense of uncertainty even as we drew them. On the eve of the date set for fee collection, we had our orders to "postpone" until further instructions. So far as we can see, this means until there is a change in the general war and travel situation.

AVAILABILITY OF PARKWAY

Under today's conditions it seems almost like saying that the sun comes up each day to tell you that Parkway travel has gone 'way down

as compared with last year. We have expected it, and you have. For the time being, lengthy trips over pleasure roads are hardly in line with the patriotic intent of gas and tire rationing.

In the last issue we outlined our plan for closing certain of the Parkway sections more remote from nearby towns and cities, to reduce our maintenance costs. The paved sections and the picnic areas are remaining open for such use as may be made of them, however.

PICNIC AREAS OPEN UNTIL TEN OF THE EVENING

For awhile we gave some thought to the possibilities of closing the picnic areas in the various parks at sundown during the war period. Our idea was to save maintenance costs, and we wondered whether there would be enough attendance to warrant our keeping a caretaker on the job any later. It seems like the news got around before we intended that it should, and as a result we had an unexpected number of complaints. It was pointed out that the Parkway and the parks highest purpose this summer would be to provide recreation and relief from the heat for the many workers in defense plants who are located close by. These people, it was explained to us, are not able to get up to the Parkway until after working hours, which are later than in ordinary times. This reason is good enough for us, and we are now planning to keep the park areas open until 10 daily. At that time you will be asked by the caretaker to leave, and your wholehearted cooperation will be appreciated.

SANDWICH SHOP DOES BUSINESS AT CUMBERLAND KNOB PARK

On Decoration Day week end the National Park Concessions, Inc., opened the first food shop for the tourists on the Parkway proper. The small sandwich place now open is located in Cumberland Knob Park just south of the NC-VA line.

Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Galloway are in charge of the sandwich, soft drink, and refreshment counter for the corporation. They will remain open, they say, as long as park attendance and business justify--daily from mid-morning until the park is closed at night. Manager Galloway

and his wife have come to the Parkway from Mammoth Cave National Park, where they have been on the staff of the company which operates the tourist facilities there. The refreshment counter at Cumberland Knob carries all the necessary supplies for your picnic, they have asked us to say.

In some respects we seem to have the cart before the horse in this story, because we have not before announced in the NEWS that the National Park Concessions, Inc., had been authorized by the Secretary of the Interior to operate along the Parkway. We have already talked a good deal about plans for limited tourist facilities--especially in previous years when we twice invited bids for the business.

The new "operator" is a non-profit distributing corporation with a semi-official connection with the Federal Government. The Board of Directors is made up of five members, three of whom are private citizens, and old hands in the operation of national park facilities with a record of long service behind them at Yellowstone Park, Mammoth Cave, and a number of other places. These three directors are paid a salary from the income of their business. The two other directors are members of the National Park Service staff in Washington, and they serve on the Board without additional salary.

The financial background of the National Park Concessions, Inc., is likewise unusual and interesting. Starting from scratch some years ago the profits of their various enterprises have been held in a fund which may be used only to develop facilities for tourists in the national parks. That is, income cannot be distributed as a dividend nor the profit shared in any way. Prices charged will be moderate and tuned to prevailing prices in the community.

THREE CAMPS FOR RELIGIOUS OBJECTORS WORK ON THE PARKWAY

Since the last issue of the NEWS two Civilian Public Service camps have been established along the Parkway, in addition to the one we had previously reported at work near Buck Creek Gap in North Carolina. The new units have been set up in abandoned CCC buildings near Lyndhurst, Va., and near Galax, Va.

Each of the three units will carry a quota of 150 men who were classified by their Selective Service Boards as 4-E. The camps are maintained without cost to the Federal Government. The expense of feeding and clothing the boys is carried by them or the various religious faiths to which they belong. The director of the camp is jointly named by the Selective Service Board and the religious groups.

During 6 days of the week, camp selectees are turned over to the National Park Service for work on the Parkway, including forest fire protection and suppression, maintenance and stabilization work on the parks and the Parkway, and restoration and fencing of Parkway farm fields and pastures.

CCC CAMP NP-29 ABANDONED

Late May saw the Parkway CCC unit, NP-29, near Galax, abandoned and moved to more essential work in connection with the war. This unit, which was composed of Negro boys, had been working under the direction of Superintendent W. I. McGhee. Superintendent McGhee, with some of his staff, will remain with the Parkway to handle the work of the new CPS camp at the same location.

NP-29 was the second camp dropped from the Parkway. The Rocky Knob unit in Virginia was the first; it was dropped last fall.

MORE OF THE STORY

A few issues back we wrote about the signs and markers that we are placing along the Parkway in order to tell the story of the Blue Ridge to the traveler, at least that part of the story which doesn't tell itself. Looking at it one way the whole job of the Parkway has been to take the tourist by the hand, so to speak, and lead him to the scenery and to the history which make ours one of the most interesting pieces of country known to visit. By history we don't mean only the kind that gets into the history books, but the local legends, and the old yarns and human tales about the unimportant things that have happened.

Two things make our highlands different from any other mountains in America. First, they have been lived in for more than two whole centuries by more folks than have made their homes in any other hills. This is because the soil is richer and not so rocky as most mountain soils. Second, the old pioneer ways lasted longer here in these cool vales of life than anywhere else in America. Folks have been contented to do for themselves and have depended less on the machine-made products of the city. The arts of weaving, quilting, pottery making, woodcarving, and a dozen other handicrafts have only lately begun to disappear.

The old dwellings and the barns hewn by hand from the forest itself are beginning to go to. The barbed wire fence takes the place of the split rail. The tin roof covers the riven shake and the chain-store catalog furnishes what used to come off the loom. And so it goes--which is well enough, but the very picture which makes the Blue Ridge seem old and solid and early American and very different to the traveler is changing. Thus, these things are fast becoming a story. It will be the job of the signs and markers along the Parkway to tell it, but words alone are seldom enough. Never since we were kids have we really liked a story without pictures. The same goes for the tourist, we suspect. Therefore, we have picked out a number of old structures along the route as samples of the past, or of what is passing. These will be repaired, furnished, and opened to the public. The Trail Cabin, Mabry Mill, Puckett Home, and the Martin Brinegar Place, four in all, were chosen on the finished Parkway between Roanoke and Boone, and each of the four has its own story which we will sooner or later recount in the NEWS.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume V

August - November - 1942

Number 4

Issued by Office of the Blue Ridge Parkway, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior,
133 Shenandoah Life Insurance Bldg., Roanoke, Virginia.

IT HURTS

Last spring, in the midst of the Parkway's worst fire season, dense clouds of smoke rolled down a mountainside where a ranger was groping his way back to the road from an all-night shift on the fire line. At the moment when the ranger broke out from the brush and on to the pavement a tourist hailed him to ask the shortest route away from it all. "The smoke hurts my eyes," he informed the ranger whose own blood-shot and smarting eyes bore out the testimony. While our man was advising him how to strike out of the mountains, the visitor finished a cigarette and, obviously comforted by the avenue of escape that had been shown him, meshed gears and drove off--flicking as he did so his still lighted cigarette butt into the tinder-dry and as yet unburned grass by the roadside!

This is the careless stuff of which some park visitors are made.

During last April nearly one hundred thousand acres of rich forest land along the Blue Ridge was burned as a dozen fires raged out of control under bad conditions. One day a man was burning a small patch of new ground--and by night fall the escaped fire was sweeping thousands of acres of somebody else's land. Another man meant to burn the bees from a bee tree--but he lost the honey, and the Nation lost thousands of acres of forest. A group of fishermen left a warming fire one evening--and the next evening it had burned to their very doorstep miles away.

This is the careless stuff of which some few of our neighbors are made.

So it is that we have many acres of ugly, blackened stumps in the Blue Ridge, fewer game birds, fewer fish, fewer merchantable board feet of timber for the war needs.

Sure the smoke hurts our eyes, but there's much more about forest fires that hurts--and hurts for a long time.

GO HUNTING--BUT NOT ON THE PARKWAY

Comes another fall with frosty nights and brisk days, and many are thinking again of the hunting dogs and that squirrel gun that's been in the corner for months--long worried ones for many of us. As we've cautioned yearly in the "News," the Parkway

is a refuge for all kinds of game and birds. No hunting of any kind is allowed on our lands--but there is plenty of country nearby where hunting may be enjoyed. So get out the gun and call the dog and go to it. Only remember that hunting, the carrying of loaded guns, the discharge of firearms, and the parking of vehicles on the Parkway, for hunting on nearby lands, are prohibited.

SAVE THE WHITE PINE

If we were asked to name our favorite of all the forest trees in the Blue Ridge we don't think there would be much question but what our vote would be cast for the native white pine. We would choose it not only because of our personal prejudice, but also because we have found that Parkway tourists from other States admire it more than any other. They talk about the seedlings which are coming up in many Parkway meadows from the good seed crops of recent years. We doubt that anyone, with any soul at all, would fail to be impressed by the graceful beauty of the occasional old patriarch. Indeed we gave ourselves away when we chose one of these old venerables to display on the Parkway emblem which appears at the head of this paper.

For these reasons we are concerned when we think that all the white pine could be lost to the Parkway scene if the cursed blister rust should develop in our region. This plant disease spreads from currants and gooseberries to the white pine, and once it gets its start it is deadly. The great hope lies in the fact that the blister rust will not spread from pine to pine, but goes back and forth between the bushes and the white pine tree in a sort of cycle. Therefore foresters call the currants and gooseberries the alternate "hosts" of the disease. We are told that the disease will carry through the air for about 900 feet from the leaves of the host to the needles of the pine tree, but it will not carry further. Thus if the bushes are all uprooted within 900 feet of the white pines, the spread of the disease is prevented. We are destroying all the currants and gooseberries on the Parkway right-of-way wherever they occur near our stands of pine. Our work will not be effective, of course, if one of our neighbors is cultivating currants or gooseberries on his place within 900 feet of the same pine, and so we have asked the

rangers to talk this matter over with some of you. We have already done some talking, and we are highly pleased with the many offers of help. In many cases farmers have undertaken to destroy the hosts on their own, and in others they have been willing to let us do it for them. The States of North Carolina and Virginia have done much good work along these lines. They have legislation which authorizes their men or ours to destroy these cultivated plants after discussing it with the owner.

We hope for your co-operation, and we hope to save the pine. However we're keeping our Parkway fingers crossed.

PARKWAY ON WINTER BASIS BEGINNING NOVEMBER 15

As has been custom the Blue Ridge Parkway travel season will close officially for the winter on the 15th of November. Until next April 15 such visitors as come to the Parkway do so at their own risk, since our maintenance funds do not permit us to remove snow from the roadway, to sand the icy curves, or otherwise to keep the Parkway shipshape for travel. None of the entrances to finished sections of the Parkway will be barricaded.

Gates to the recreational areas, including picnic and camp grounds, will be closed on the 15th of November. While the parks will be available for use until that date, it is possible that freezing weather may force us to shut off certain park water systems ahead of time.

The sandwich shop at Cumberland Knob Park closed down for the year just following Labor Day.

OUR HONOR LIST GROWS

Sometime ago we published our Parkway honor list of staff and field men who had joined the armed forces. That list has grown by leaps and bounds since then, and those of us who remain at work on the Parkway are relatively few. Next time we go to press we will print an up-to-date, honor list of those who have left us for military and naval services.

TALES OF THE WOODS AS TOLD BY THE BIG LYNN

One of the highest, biggest trees in all of our Parkway forest is the "Big Lynn" near Little Switzerland. She is one of the Linden or Basswood family which is a large one of long lineage in the mountains, and she is like an old woman who has been a-living and a-gossiping for 200 years, if you can imagine it, and maybe a lot more. She towers head and shoulders above any of the rest in the family that we know anything about because of her age, her wisdom, and her beauty. Of one thing we can be sure, she has lived quite all of her life on the border line between McDowell and Mitchell Counties with half of her roots put down deep into

the soil on one side of the ridge and half of her roots on the other. Thereby hangs one of her very best yarns.

Any native, and they among us are the ones who have the right to know, will tell you that the "Big Lynn" is the "marrying tree", for in days gone by it was custom for a couple to get married beneath it when the bride was from McDowell and the groom from Mitchell or the other way round. This was said to make a marriage lasting. And when a man was unable to get the blessing of the parents to marry their daughter, then he slipped her away to the Big Lynn, got the circuit rider preacher, and then and there got hitched. One old man who lived in the shadow of the Lynn for 75 years, more or less, told us colorfully how he was wedded under the shade one summer 60 years ago (more or less) after a very narrow escape from the parents. He thought, he said, that the tree was larger then than now; so we guess that the old lady's shoulders are stooping.

According to Mr. John McBee of Spruce Pine who has collected the most complete set of old documents, deeds, and land grants in this section, the Big Lynn was used as a boundary marker in land grants dated as early as 1790, which jibes with our guess at her age.

Upon questioning, and often without, seasoned hunters like to rec-lect how hunts were staged years ago along the Blue Ridge, and the old meeting place was the Big Lynn. From here they split up in parties to chase the fox and bear. It was told us that the first injury to the tree was the result of such a hunt about forty years ago. The story goes that before the hunt a campfire was built beneath the Lynn, and the hunters kept it burning for about a week while the hunt proceeded up and down the nearby ridges. Later on, supposedly about 1913, the weakened base of the tree was struck by lightning.

There is yet another interesting tale about the Big Lynn related to us by an old inhabitant of Crabtree Creek, or near. He remembers how years and years ago people came for miles around to the Big Lynn and here they conducted their shooting matches and other contests. He tells us that the old tree is full of lead after being shot at so many times as a back stop for the target.

P.S. In the spring the Park Service undertook some tree surgery and other repair on the Big Lynn. Over two tons of branches, dead and some live, were cut out in order to reduce the wind load—a big job as such work goes. Many local people, friends of the Big Lynn, followed our work with much interest. We even had a long distance call from Spruce Pine from someone who wondered if we knew what we were about and so feared for the tree. There wasn't much we could guarantee at the time about a tree as old as it is, and we can't hold out too much promise even now. We do believe that it is in better shape for having been worked on, and our hope is that our venerable old tree may continue for many years growing old gracefully and a-gossipin'.



BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NEWS..... a bulletin of popular information for parkway neighbors along the Blue Ridge....

Volume VI

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Number 1

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SINCE LAST YOU HEARD

It has been a longer time between issues of the NEWS--nearly six months since we last went out along the line. This was not that there wasn't a lot we have wanted to say, but because it seemed right that we should help a little in the big job of saving paper and ink. Nor can we be sure just when we'll turn up again, but we can say cheerfully that we believe in our future. Meanwhile here is how things look from the top of the mountains.

CONSTRUCTION STOPS UNTIL POST-WAR

The Parkway is not a war road, and last fall all of our major construction was halted. What the contractors could not finish was tidied up to weather as best it could for the duration. Power shovels, tractors, and trucks were moved out and away to war jobs. Now, there is only a small force of government maintenance men seeing to it that pipes, bridges, pavement, cuts and fills are kept up with as little loss as possible.

Such of us as are left on the job have an eye to putting our blueprints on the shelf, close at hand, so that there will be no lost motion getting back to work after the war. There are many who expect that money will be made available then for public works to employ the returning soldiers. For this reason State highway officials of Virginia and North Carolina have said they want to go on with getting the right-of-way as they are able.

PARKWAY OPENS TO TRUCKS WHEN GAS, TIRES SAVED PERMIT AND FEE PAYMENT REQUIRED

We have talked a good deal in the past about loaded trucks being barred from the Parkway. We have stated our reasons in the NEWS, and we have tried to make them seem to you like good reasons. We haven't given one inch of ground on that score so far as peace times are concerned. We do see it the other way during this time, wartime, when our country needs rubber and gas and war materials.

Hence the Parkway has been opened to trucks under limited load and speed. Five tons, including the weight of the truck, is permitted during the winter, and six and a half tons gross is allowable during the rest of the year granting, of course, your truck is built to carry such loads. The speed of a loaded truck must be kept under 20 miles per hour, but traveling light or empty 30 miles is permissible. Anyone who can show a savings of tires or gasoline may apply to the local ranger. A fee of \$5.00 per truck per 4-month period beginning April 1, August 1, or December 1 must be paid to help offset wear and tear on the Parkway pavement which you will remember was built for light passenger cars only.

PARKWAY LANDS GO BACK TO PRODUCTION

Our program of turning back our good lands to the farmers for pasture and crops has been spurred on by the war. This grazing season will see many more tracts limed, fertilized, and fenced, and your livestock feeding on grass that is greener than last year's for the improvements to the soil. Quite a number of bottoms will this spring be sprouting row crops. This is a help toward more food today. It will help our highlands make a finer picture for the tourist tomorrow. Good weather and good luck! Congratulations too, for yours is good work!

THREE RELIGIOUS CAMPS PROTECT PARKWAY FROM FIRE, FROM WEATHER

A big help in protecting that investment of yours and of ours in the Parkway are the three religious objector camps paid for by the historic peace churches, the Brethren, Mennonites, and Quakers. The units encamped on the Parkway are near Waynesboro and Galax in Virginia and near Marion in North Carolina. There are more than 100 selectees in each camp, and they have been trained and organized for fire fighting on federal and state forest lands. During the workday, unless they are on fire patrol, the men are employed at grading and seeding the Parkway road banks to stop washing and to cut maintenance costs. They are also used to improve the fields and fence Parkway pastures so the lands can be turned back to farmers for more food production.

HIGHSCHOOL BOYS TRAINED TO FIGHT FIRES

With our fire fighting forces spread thinner this year, we may have to rely upon volunteer crews from the high schools along the line to put out the fires we keep hoping won't start at all. The Parkway rangers have been showing movies of fire fighting methods and giving talks during recent weeks at more than a dozen schools so that if they are called upon the school lads will know just where and how to put their shoulders to the wheel. We have had a fine response from the teaching staff and from the boys which we greatly appreciate. We may all come to realize how much it means if there is a bad fire season--if people are careless.

PLEASURE IN THE PARKS A QUESTION

As the picnicking and camping season rolls around, we face the ban on pleasure driving, and the entrance gates to the Parkway's recreational areas will remain locked. We hope that the necessity for a ban on pleasure driving will ease for many reasons, of course, but not until word comes can we open up. Meanwhile be sure we will swing out the gate if we can for we believe in the kind of recreation our parks can give. When that time comes, be helpful in every way that you can for we will have fewer men to keep the parks clean and fewer to watch out for fire.

OUR HONOR LIST

We are proud of our many men who have left the Parkway for the service, in which of course we're not a bit different. If they please the Generals and Admirals like they pleased us when

they made up our staff, they will perform well. Because many of you have known them, here is the still growing list of Public Roads and Park Service men in the armed forces:

Lt. (jg) Rober H. Coombs	USNR
Ensign Carlos K. Dale	USCG
Boatswain Mate E. M. Dale	USNR
S/Sgt. Harold L. Fridinger	USA
Lt. R. Morrison King	USA
Pvt. Roscoe Reeves	USA
Ensign Woodrow W. Zenfell	USNR
Lt. Edward H. Abbuehl	USNR
Pvt. Malcolm A. Bird	USA
Lt. Arthur J. Connell	USA
Lt. (jg) Karl W. Doering	USNR
Capt. Lynn M. Harriss	USA
Radioman Richard B. Horne	USNR
Pvt. Sam L. Huddleston	USA
Pvt. William M. Kennedy	USA
Lt. Warren D. Lewis	USA
Air Cadet Paul W. Van Cleve	USA
Capt. Albert S. Burns	USA
Sgt. Junius Daves	USA
Air Cadet Harold Smith	USA
Lt. Charles Towse	USA
2/C Storekeeper W.O.J. Bostrom	USN
Capt. Mason L. Stroud	USA
Capt. W. J. White	USA
Warrant Officer W. H. Smith	USN
Capt. A. F. Jackson	USA
Sgt. Albert G. Kanipe	USA
2/C Yeoman Walter Long	USN
Corp. Lionel B. Matingly	USA
1/C Carpenter's Mate J. R. Hortenstine	USN
Pvt. K. S. Hayes	USA
Pvt. Graham Liles	USA
Chief Carpenter's Mate John Walsh	USN