

TRAILMARKER

The Piedmont Hiking and Outing Club Newsletter

Since 1982

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Photo courtesy of Clare Strayhorn

*View from the Top - Shortoff Mountain, Linville Gorge
September 2016*

Visit us on the Web <http://www.PiedmontHikingandOutingClub.org>

About our Hike Rating System

Our rating system provides a useful, general gauge of a hike's difficulty. It factors in distance and elevation gain and is intended to help you choose hikes that you will find most enjoyable.

R0-R10 These are more walks than hikes. They're usually close to home, the trails are flat, and distances are generally short. An after-dinner walk around the block would be rated R1 or R2. Our Wednesday Night Walks are R5.

R10-R20 Most of these hikes will be in the lower mountains and foothills. Distances will be about 5-8 miles, with vertical ranging from 500-1000 feet...not easy if you're new to hiking! Trails will be dirt and rock. As long as you're in moderately good shape, you should be able to enjoy the outing.

R20-R30 Hikes in the low end of this range will be too hard and overly stressful for many new members. Plan on an all-day trip, with at least 4 hours of continuous hiking in rugged and steep terrain. At a minimum, be sure to pack two quarts of water, lunch, a snack, and rain gear.

R30-R40 These are strenuous hikes. They will usually be 10+ miles, with climbs of 2000+ feet. They're appropriate only for those who have done a number of lower rated hikes.

R40+ These hikes are usually 12 or more miles with 3000 feet or more of elevation gain. They're appropriate only for fit, experienced hikers. Check with hike leader about the trip if you are wanting to do this trip for the first time.

Outings Protocol

- Inform the outing leader you are going to attend. Arrive early for the outing.
- If you carpool, reimburse your driver for driving costs. A suggested amount is \$4.00 for each hour of driving.
- Always take snacks, lunch, water and rain gear.
- Bring extra clothes to change into after the outing.
- To keep vehicles clean and the air fresh, always carry something to hold muddy boots and sweaty clothes for the ride back from a hike.
- Your participation is at your own risk.



Outings

Wednesday Night Walkers will meet every Wednesday evening in the parking lot beside Tex & Shirley’s at the Friendly Shopping Center at 6:30 pm for a brisk walk before dinner. The group will have rotating leaders. The leaders are Carol Hamley, John Hanson, Barbara Hanson and Joe Regan. The group will go to dinner after the walk. If bad weather cancels the walk, the group will still meet at 6:30 and go to dinner.

November 2 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info above.

November 5 Doughton Park Loop
Saturday Doughton Park

This will be a long, strenuous hike covering trails on Bluff Mountain, Cedar Ridge Trail, Bluff Mt. Trail and Flat Rock Ridge Trail. Fantastic views from the top of the ridge. Expect a good workout from this hike. Please contact me for meeting details. 17 miles, 3500 ft. [R-52]

November 5 Hanging Rock
Saturday Hanging Rock State Park

We begin at the Visitor Center and proceed to Wolf Rock. Next, we continue to Cook’s Wall out and back, and then head to Moore’s Knob Trail, up to the fire tower, weather permitting, to see the Fall leaf colors. From Moore’s Knob, we will descend by the stairs, back to the Visitors Center. Bring water, lunch, and rain gear. Call or email for meeting times and places. (+/- 9 miles; 2000 ft. elevation gain; R-29)

November 6 Greensboro Watershed
Sunday Piedmont Trail

Join me at the Piedmont trailhead at the parking lot on Lake Brandt Road just past the marina at 1:30 for an easy out and back 6-mile hike. No need to contact me, but feel free if you have questions.

November 9 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info above.

November 10 Bangkok Café
Thursday at 7 PM 1203 S. Holden Rd. #3

A couple of club members told me about this restaurant during a hike. I managed to go visit with my Dad and loved the Green Curry dish and am anxious to try more. Let’s meet for dinner at 7 pm at this laid

back, casual atmosphere Thai restaurant with a Trip Advisor rating of 4.5 out of 5. Please call or email me before noon on Thursday so I can let them know how many will be attending as the restaurant is pretty small.

November 12
Saturday

Primitive/Cedar Ridge
Doughton Park

From Longbottom Rd, this hike warms up with a gentle 1.6 miles along Grassy Gap Rd, followed by a very strenuous ascent of 2,200 ft. over 2.8 miles to the shelter atop Bluff Mountain. It then winds along the Parkway for 4 miles until beginning the descent near Brinegar Cabin. The Cedar Ridge Trail brings us back to Grassy Gap Rd near to our parking spot. Meet at Carolina’s Diner on Regional Rd at 7:30 AM or W-S Jonestown McDonald’s at 8:00 AM. Email me if you intend to participate, or with questions. 13 miles [R-44]

November 12
Saturday

Brinegar Cabin
Doughton Park

Let’s hike up the Cedar Ridge Trail in Blue Ridge Doughton Park to Brinegar Cabin, sit on or with our backs to the wall, or on the grass by the cabin, appreciate the view of Longbottom Valley far below, talk, have a nice lunch, and then hike back down Cedar Ridge to the cars. The trail up to Brinegar Cabin is a gentle, steady pull for about 4 miles, but this is an out and back and all reasonable paces will be accommodated. Please call for time and place. 9 miles [R-35]

November 12
Saturday

Stone Mountain
Stone Mountain State Park

This is a figure eight trail at Stone Mountain State Park. We may catch the last of fall’s blaze. We will begin at the lower parking lot and hike immediately to Wolf Rock and Cedar Rock then down to the Outer Loop Trail circling toward the Stone Mountain Trail. We will climb to the top of Stone Mountain for lunch, then descend on the Outer Loop Trail to Stone Mountain Falls, continuing down the stairs on the Outer Loop trail past Climbers’ View and the Homestead to our cars.

So far as I know, this is a new hike, so the rating is approximate: 8 miles, 2,100 feet [R-29]

November 13
Sunday

New Member Orientation
& Walk, Lake Higgins Marina
Greensboro

Thinking about joining but wondering what it is all about, new member and not sure how to get started, or recent member needing a refresher course? Meet with us at 1:30 p.m. in the small conference room at Lake Higgins Marina on Hamburg Mill Road in Greensboro. Participants will hear about the PHOC, its opportunities, appropriate gear for PHOC hikes, what to

expect and how to stay safe on the trail. The orientation will take about 45 minutes. Afterward we hope you will join us for a short walk in the woods – of course all members are welcome! Those interested in the walk should bring plenty of water, a snack, and wear appropriate clothing to be outside. The orientation and walk should wrap up no later than 5:00 p.m. If you need additional information please contact Butch or Terri. We look forward to seeing you in the conference room and/or on the trail!

**November 13 Piedmont Watershed Trail
Sunday at 1:30 Lake Brandt Road**

Let's meet at 1:30 PM and hike the Piedmont watershed trail out and back for a total of 6 easy miles. Proceed North on Lake Brandt Road past the Marina on the left, cross over the bridge at the dam, and park in the gravel parking lot on the left. No need to call, but please do if you have questions. 6 miles [R-9]

**November 14 PHOC Membership
Monday 7 pm Meeting**

**“What Can You Do to Delay
Cognitive Aging”**

Presented by Dale Dagenbach

The November meeting will be held at New Garden Friends Meeting House located at the corner of New Garden Rd. and West Friendly Ave. with the driveway on New Garden Rd. across from the entrance to

Guilford College. 801 New Garden Rd., Greensboro 27410. Refreshments and socializing at 7 pm followed by a short business meeting then our evening program. Longtime PHOC member, Professor and Psychology Department Chairman Dale Dagenbach will talk about the current state of research on normal cognitive aging and what kinds of interventions offer hope of delaying that process. The good news is that virtually everyone in the audience is already doing one of them.

**November 15 “Don't forget to mark your
calendar and to RSVP for
the Holiday Party.”
Saturday, December 10**

**November 16 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info on page 5.**

**November 17 Vito's Italian Restaurant
Thursday @ 7 pm 2258 Golden Gate Drive**

Vito's is a family-owned restaurant in Golden Gate Shopping Center. Join us at 7:00 p.m. for great food, good service and modest prices. Call or email by Tuesday evening, November 15, to reserve.

**November 19 Grayson Highlands
Saturday Mount Rogers, VA**

Join me in hiking this club favorite in the scenic Mount Rogers area of Virginia. From

Massie Gap in Grayson Highlands State Park we will hike north on the AT via Pine Mountain Trail to Rhododendron Gap then back to the cars via Wilburn Ridge. Bring lunch and water, dinner in Sparta is an option on the way home. Please contact me for details, 13 miles [R-35].

**November 19 Overmountain Victory Trail
Saturday (OMVT), W Kerr Scott Dam**

Join us to hike this well-maintained single track trail through tall stands of hardwoods primarily beech and oaks along the shores of W Kerr Scott Reservoir near Wilkesboro NC. This moderate trail is 6 miles with an optional 2.5 mile loop for a total of 8.5 miles. Bring a lunch or snack, water and rain gear. Rating is approximately [R-22].

**November 19 Bald Eagle Trail
Saturday at 9 am Lake Higgins**

This is a hike Mike Bianco often leads on Sundays, but since I can never get away on Sundays, I thought I would lead one on a Saturday. Let’s meet at 9:00 am at the Lake Higgins watershed trailhead for an out and back total of 8 easy miles. Proceed North on 220 (Battleground Ave), past the turnoff at Owls Roost Road to Bur-Mil Park, past the spillway at the bottom of the hill, and then left onto Hamburg Mill Road. Proceed past the Marina entrance gate at the top of the hill, and park in the gravel parking lot on the left just past the fence [R-7].

November 23 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info on page 5.

**November 26 Rock Castle Gorge
Saturday Stuart, VA**

This hike is a club favorite because of the beauty and variety. We hike through dense woods, across open pastures, and along a rushing stream. The views from our lunch spot on the Blue Ridge Parkway are spectacular. We will have 2-3 miles of steep, strenuous ascent, several miles along a ridge, and a gentle descent back to the trailhead. 11 miles [R-41]

**November 26 Hanging Rock State Park
Saturday Wolf Rock to Moore's Wall**

Let's hike at Hanging Rock State Park starting at the visitor center via Wolf Rock, House Rock, Cook's Wall then via Magnolia Springs to Moore's Knob then back to the cars. Bring food and water, please contact me for details, 9 miles [R-25].

**November 27 Owl’s Roost Loop
Sunday at 1:30 Bur-Mil Park**

Let’s meet at 1:30 PM at the Wildlife Center in Bur-Mil Park and hike the Owl’s Roost watershed trail from the fishing pier to the greenway, and then back again, using the fire lane trail for part of the return trip. Proceed North on 220, past Horse Pen

Creek (on the left), then right at the traffic light at Owl's Roost, and then left into Bur-Mil Park. Bear right at the club House, and park in the circular driveway at the bottom of the hill, just below the Wildlife Center. No need to call, but please do if you have questions. 7 miles [R-12]

November 30 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info on page 5.

December 3 Caudill Cabin
Saturday Doughton Park

Let's drive over to Doughton Park and hike up to historic Caudill Cabin and back. There are many stream crossings as we cross back and forth over Basin Creek, so you might want to wear some kind of waterproof shoes if there has been any recent rain. This is a very scenic hike, much of it as if walking through a cathedral of green, surrounded by cool waters. Please call for time and place to meet. 10 mi [R-26]

December 4 Bill Craft Trail
Sunday at 1:30 Watershed Trail

Join me for an out and back hike of approximately 7 miles on this quiet, scenic trail off Plainfield Rd. Pace will be moderate. No need to call unless there are questions. Directions: Head north on Church St, crossing over Pisgah Church Rd. Cross Lake Townsend twice, turn left onto Plainfield Rd. Trailhead is on the right about

a mile. Or head north on Lake Brandt Rd, turn right onto Plainfield Rd. Trailhead will be on your left after a few miles.

December 7 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info on page 5.

December 10 Flat Rock/Grassy Gap
Saturday Doughton Park

This Doughton Park hike incorporates some nice uphill, downhill creek crossings, and great views. Steady but not exhaustive. Contact me for more information about meeting times and to indicate you plan to participate. Cheers. 13 miles [R-35]

December 10 Eno River MST
Saturday Orange/Durham Counties

This will be an out and back hike in Eno River State Park covering the MST from Rivermont Rd to Pleasant Green Rd Trailhead. While the elevation gain will be minimal, this hike will be lead at a brisk pace which will allow for a good workout. Please contact me for meeting details. 12 miles [R-20]

December 11 Lake Townsend Trail
Sunday at 1:30 Greensboro Watershed
Trails

Let's meet at 1:30 PM for an easy, scenic hike along the wooded Southern edge of

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Annual Holiday Party



Saturday, December 10, 6 PM
Bur Mil Club House
5834 Owls Roost Road,
Greensboro, NC 27410

This is that special time of year when we come together to reconnect and to extend Peace on Earth and Good Will to All. This year the Holiday Party will be a covered dish dinner. PHOC will be supplying the main meat dishes (beef, turkey, pork), mashed potatoes, soft drinks, and hot coffee and tea after dinner, so bring something to complement the meat and potatoes, and, always optional, a dessert to share. We recognize this is a busy time of year for all, and if you are unable to find the time to bring something, we want you to come along anyway. There is no charge, guests included, but please do RSVP so we can get a sense of how much PHOC needs to provide. There will be a bartender to serve any adult beverages you might want to bring. There will be a DJ during dinner, and for dancing after the meal! Please send any music selections you might like to request to social@PiedmontHikingandOutingClub.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

*RSVP to Social@
PiedmontHikingandOutingClub.org*

Lake Townsend. From Battleground Ave or Lawndale, proceed East on Pisgah Church, continue East on Lees Chapel, to Yanceyville Road. Turn left at the light at Yanceyville, and proceed 1.9 miles to the Osprey-Lake Townsend parking lot. It is on the left, just around the corner from the Reedy Fork Baptist Church. No need to call, but please do if you have questions. 8 miles [R-12]

December 14 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
See description and contact info on page 5.

December 15 Pho Hien Vuong
Thursday @ 7pm 4109-A Spring Garden St

Let's meet for dinner at 7 pm at the Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Hien Vuong on Spring Garden St., Greensboro. This is an informal, casual atmosphere restaurant with outstanding food. Please call or email me before Noon Thursday so I can let them know how many will be attending.

December 17 Nat Greene and Palmetto
Saturday at 9:00 am Watershed Trail
Greensboro

Join me for an 8-mile hike on the Nat Greene and Palmetto trails. These are pretty trails with views of Lake Brandt. We will meet at the Lake Brandt Marina—Nat Greene watershed trailhead (on the left as you enter the marina parking lot) at 9:00 am. Bring water and a snack. Call or email me if you have questions. 8 miles [R-12]

**December 17 South Mountain State Park
Saturday Outer Loop – Short Version**

South Mountain Park is a favorite in cooler weather. Due to shorter daylight hours, we will do an 11-mile version of this hike. With the leaves off, there will be beautiful long-range views. Those not in a hurry to return to the Triad can dine together in Morganton. Email me to confirm or for further details. 11 miles/2400 ft [R-35]

**December 18 Lake Higgins Trail
Sunday at 1:30 Greensboro Watershed
 Trails**

Let's meet at 1:30 PM for an easy out and back along the Northern shore of Lake Higgins. Proceed North on Battleground, AKA 220, past the light at Owl's Roost, and down the hill until you come to the water on your right. Turn left onto Hamburg Mill Road, drive up the hill, past the Lake Higgins Marina gate, and park in the gravel parking lot on the left just past the fence. No need to call, but please do if you have questions. 8 miles [R-12]

December 21 Wednesday Walk & Dinner
*See description and contact info on page 5.***December 28 Wednesday Walk & Dinner**
See description and contact info on page 5.

PHOC enjoy hike to Tory's Den, Sept. 2016



View of Stone Mt. from Cedar Rock, Sept. 2016

Tales from the Trail....

Up on the South Downs

By Jon Maxwell, PHOC Member

There are few better opportunities for relaxation and rejuvenation than a long walk. English national trails take it to a new level.

In the bracing air along the Seven Sisters, the prominent chalk cliffs overseeing the English Channel, I encounter a fellow hiker who recommends a 13th-century inn in Alfriston as a perfect first night's stay. Later, in the gloaming along the Cuckmere River, a gentleman farmer pauses while working in his field to point out a distant steeple, advising that if I stick to the river path I will be in Alfriston ere long.

Of the English walks officially designated as "national trails," one of the most historic and varied is but a 50-mile train ride south of London. Beginning in Eastbourne on the English Channel, the South Downs Way wends westward one hundred miles through a national park – along



A walk along England's South Downs Way offers hikers gorgeous views of the English countryside.

coastal cliffs, inland atop an escarpment, and through the woods, to Winchester. (See www.nationaltrail.co.uk/southdowns.) I cannot resist taking six days to walk it solo.

In Alfriston at the George Inn, the young clerk indicates that yes, she has a room and can set me a table while I head upstairs to "tidy up a bit." Refreshed, I savor lamb cutlets and local produce, tacking on a dram of Laphroig single malt Scotch for dessert.

In the morning the flint-strewn trail ascends the ridge line and settles in to

a relentless up-and-down rhythm. Panoramic vistas abound, south to the English Channel and north over flowing open fields and bucolic villages. Other trail hikers, day walkers, and cyclists stop for a chat. A group of para-gliders floating lazily in the wind assure me their hobby is even more delightful than it appears.

Knackered after a 19-mile day, I arrive at the tidy White House B & B in Pyecombe. The smiling owner senses my weariness, hands me an

(continued on next page)

South Downs Way Hike *(continued)*

icy Stella Artois, and directs me to a hot shower. Cordial English fellow hikers and lodgers and I later decide to bring food back to the B & B for an evening of grazing, tippling and enlightening discussion on a range of topics. A deep sleep and full English breakfast leave me eager to resume my amble.

It does not take long to learn that English walkers cherish their canine companions. Irish Wolfhounds, Scottish Deerhounds, West Highland Terriers, German Short-Hairs, and Welsh Springer Spaniels, to name a few, bound along merrily, sometimes dashing into adjacent fields to flush partridges.

Late in the afternoon at the crest of a hill appears what looks like a swaggering black bear. The “bear” turns out to be the family’s imposing Black German Shepherd, highly efficient in protecting the farm’s lambs from foxes. Following my inquiry, the farm’s owner responds that bed and breakfast is available. The next morning at breakfast the dog lies peacefully at my feet while the family’s infant

daughter plays nearby.

Interesting food choices are never far away. Especially memorable are a simply elegant salmon and prawn lunch (with local ale) in Houghton at the George and Dragon, a perfectly cooked venison feast in Cocking at the Blue Bell Inn, delicate fish and chips (with locally produced New Forest Ice Cream for dessert) in Meonstoke at the Bucks Head, and uniquely conceived and prepared beef and local vegetables at the Michelin-rated Black Rat in Winchester. A trailside “sustainability centre” (what is that, I wonder?) features locally sourced organic vegetarian chili, bread, and lager. Alongside the trail, bounteous ripe blackberries provide ideal snacks.

The route abounds with 5,000-year-old forts, burial barrows and villages. These include the Devil’s Jump Mounds, a group of nine prehistoric burial mounds rising about 15 feet above the ground. The most prominent abandoned ancient village



is Old Winchester Hill; it remains little understood and not fully excavated (as a gesture of respect). More recent historic sites are World War II machine gun pillboxes and the field where Eisenhower addressed Allied troops on the eve of D-Day.

Trail’s end at Winchester features its iconic 1,000-year-old cathedral, largest in the world measured end to end. The crystal clear River Itchen, of Izaak Walton fame, flows through the heart of town. An older gentleman intently trout fishing there caught two nice ones the day before; I mightily resist the urge to ask to have a go. That is when I realize that the trout and I have shared a similar fate: I too have been hooked, by my long walk of the South Downs Way.