

NEWS RELEASE
March 9, 2018

2018 Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Inductees Announced

GARDNERS, PA. – The eighth class of Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame honorees will be inducted on Friday, May 4, during the annual Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Banquet at the Allenberry Resort in Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania.

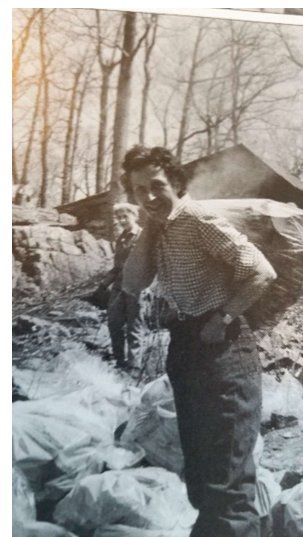
The 2018 Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame class honorees are **William Kemsley, Jr.** of Taos, New Mexico; the late **Elizabeth Levers** of New York, New York; the late **George Masa**, of Asheville, North Carolina; and **Robert Peoples**, of Hampton, Tennessee.



Bill Kemsley

There was no one publication that spoke to the needs of backpackers until Bill Kemsley started Backpacker Magazine in 1973. At Backpacker, he published numerous articles and editorials on the Appalachian Trail. He lobbied, held meetings and testified before various hearings in Washington to pass HR8803 in 1978, providing \$90 million for land acquisitions to permanently preserve the Appalachian Trail.

He later co-founded the American Hiking Society. As the national voice for America's hikers, the American Hiking Society promotes and protects foot trails, their surrounding natural areas, and the hiking experience. Among Kemsley's publications are The Backpacker & Hikers Handbook, The Whole Hikers Handbook, and Backpacking Equipment. Over several decades, Bill has provided leadership, inspiration, service and achievement to both the A.T. and the hiking community.



Liz Levers

Elizabeth Levers was known as the "Mother of the A.T." in New York State. She was known for her key activity in the early land acquisition planning for the A.T. in New York as well as setting the standard for AT management for that region. Liz was a no-nonsense woman who devoted her energies seven days a week to the AT after her retirement from an administrative post at Columbia University.

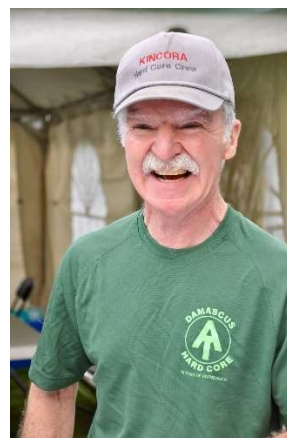
Lever's disgust over the trashed conditions of Harriman Park shelters inspired the creation of Litter Day in 1965. Among her many trail-related roles, Liz served as President of the New York - New Jersey Trail Conference, and director of the Appalachian Trail Conference (now Conservancy).



George Masa

George Masa was a photographer in Asheville, NC early in the 20th century, and his nature scenes were instrumental in garnering support for the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Masa was an immigrant from Japan who arrived in the US in 1914. He also laid out much of the route for the Appalachian Trail on the land that was eventually incorporated into the park. He was a founder and early leader of the Carolina Mountain Club and famously responsible for the club's motto, "More walk, less talk."

Masa's photographs of Mount Oglethorpe contributed to its selection as the initial southern terminus of the AT. While Masa did not live to see the creation of the park and the completion of the Appalachian Trail, he is remembered in the naming of Masa Knob, near Charlie's Bunion. He worked tirelessly with his colleagues Horace Kephart and Paul Fink to preserve and protect the lands and trails of the Smokies.



Bob Peoples

After retiring from the U.S. Air Force in 1988, Bob Peoples decided to devote his life to hiking trails. He initially helped to maintain the Long Trail in Vermont, a portion of which is also the A.T. Then, in 1994, Bob and his late wife Pat purchased a cabin adjacent to the A.T. near Hampton, TN and founded the legendary Kincora Hostel. Thousands of A.T. section and thru-hikers have received Bob's gracious hospitality there.

Each year, immediately after the Trail Days festival in Damascus, VA, Bob leads the Hard Core crew, comprised of the current year's class of thru-hikers. For a couple of weeks, Bob and his crew take on the most difficult and challenging trail maintenance tasks on the A.T., before they resume their adventure on the trail. Bob is perhaps the A.T.'s greatest living ambassador, inspiring young people who have experienced the Trail to give back afterwards.

Seven classes have previously been elected to the A.T. Hall of Fame. The Charter Class, elected in 2011, comprised Myron Avery, Gene Espy, Ed Garvey, Benton MacKaye, Arthur Perkins and Earl Shaffer. Members of the 2012 class were Emma Gatewood, David A. Richie, J. Frank Schairer, Jean Stephenson and William Adams Welch. The 2013 Class was Ruth Blackburn, David Field, David Sherman, David Startzell and Everett Stone. The 2014 Class was A. Rufus Morgan, Charles R. Rinaldi, Clarence S. Stein and Pamela Underhill. The 2015 Class was Nestell K. Anderson, Margaret C. Drummond, Stanley A. Murray and Raymond H. Torrey. In 2016, Maurice J. Forrester, Jr., Horace Kephart, Larry Luxenberg and Henry Arch Nichols were inducted. The 2017 Class was Harlean James, Charles Parry, Mildred Norman Ryder and Matilda Wood.

Jim Foster, chair of the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame selection committee, said a 6 p.m. reception will precede the dinner, which begins at 7 p.m. The cost of the reception and dinner is \$40 for museum members and \$50 for others.

Complete information on the Hall of Fame Banquet is available at <https://2018athalloffamebanquet.eventbrite.com> Tickets may be purchased either at that website, or directly from the Appalachian Trail Museum by sending a check to:

Appalachian Trail Museum
1120 Pine Grove Road
Gardners, PA 17324

Questions about the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Banquet may be sent to atmbanquet@gmail.com.

The Hall of Fame Banquet will be the kickoff of the Museum's Hall of Fame Weekend. Questions about the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Banquet may be sent to atmbanquet@gmail.com. For lodging options during the Hall of Fame Weekend, go to the Museum's website: www.atmuseum.org

About the Appalachian Trail Museum Society

The Appalachian Trail Museum Society, a 501-C-3 not-for-profit organization formed in 2002, organizes programs, exhibits, volunteers and fundraising nationwide for the Appalachian Trail Museum. The museum opened on June 5, 2010, as a tribute to the thousands of men, women and families who have hiked and maintained the approximately 2,190 mile long hiking trail that passes through 14 states from Maine to Georgia. Located in the Pine Grove Furnace State Park in Gardners, Pennsylvania, the museum is conveniently near Carlisle, Gettysburg and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Additional information is available at www.atmuseum.org.



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