

Appalachia

Volume 69
Number 1 *Winter/Spring 2018: Mount
Washington: Summit of Extremes*

Article 15

2021

Letters

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/appalachia>



Part of the [Nonfiction Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2021) "Letters," *Appalachia*: Vol. 69 : No. 1 , Article 15.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/appalachia/vol69/iss1/15>

This In Every Issue is brought to you for free and open access by Dartmouth Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Appalachia by an authorized editor of Dartmouth Digital Commons. For more information, please contact dartmouthdigitalcommons@groups.dartmouth.edu.

Letters

Uncovering the Mystery of the Cover Photo

I read your Summer/Fall [issue] cover to cover, as usual. I knew I would keep this one, as it looks like my family on the cover. I found the cover photo was taken in 1930. In 1930 my mother, Linsley Dougherty (who married my father, Carl E. Walker, in 1938); her father, Harold Taylor Dougherty; and his mother-in-law, Delia Linsley Viles were all living at 35 Court Street, Westfield, Massachusetts. They were all three life members of [the Appalachian Mountain Club] and would have vacationed with AMC. They may be three of the seven in your cover photo. Mum, LDW (sitting), would have been 24; her grandma, DLV (behind Mum), would have been 86; Grampa Harold, HTD (6-foot-5-inches, in the center), would have been 56 and Westfield Atheneum's librarian. At one point HTD was AMC's [vice]president. There was an article and full-page photo of him in *Appalachia* after he died in May 1962 [In Memoriam, December 1962, 34 no. 2].

Family tradition has Delia Linsley Viles as a founder of AMC and on the first AMC hike up Katahdin. We had a photo of DLV at the opening of Madison [Spring] Hut. All the ladies in beautiful long dresses for the celebration! DLV also went with AMC to the Virgin Islands and to Denali. DLV furnished her cabin at Cold River. Both of my grandmothers *always* wore dresses and low heels hiking. But Grandma DLV was wearing pants and boots in a photo vacationing with Mum (LDW) and my [other] Grandma Sarah Viles Dougherty on [AMC's Three-Mile Island] on [Lake] Winnepesaukee. LDW swam like a fish and canoed. She had a beautiful swan dive. Both were birders.

I took the AMC summer Mountain Leadership School course in June 1969 and for 36 years taught Girl Scouts in southern Berkshire County, Massachusetts—map, compass, hiking, camp crafts—and then took them backpacking on the Appalachian Trail. I also did some trail work. Thanks for the memories!

—Sally A. W. Kusek, Chester, Massachusetts

Editor's note: Thank you for these memories. Our December 1962 issue (34 no. 2) includes an In Memoriam article about Harold Taylor Dougherty, or HTD, who died that year. His wife, Sally Viles Dougherty, had been a member since 1903;



This photo, identified as a 1930 scene from an album in AMC's Library & Archives, appeared on our cover last issue. We have solved part of the mystery, and we have an imagined story about this scene, too. W.F. SANFORD/AMC LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

she died in 1961. HTD joined AMC in 1933; earlier, the couple was in the first group of the club to climb Katahdin. The Doughertys were active in the Berkshire Chapter, which HTD chaired in the late 1940s. He was vice president of AMC in 1951. We hope to hear more from any readers who might know some of the other people in the photo. More information about W. F. Sanford, listed as the photographer, might help unlock the mystery.

The Cover Photo: An Imagining

I asked readers to tell us stories about the photo. And we received the next letter, an imagining—totally fictional, and so realistic that I briefly fell for it, even though it diverged from the true story above! (I think I was working too hard last summer.) Read on and don't take this one seriously, but have fun. Amelia Earhart did have ties to the Boston area, and she could have ended up around a campfire.

—Editor.

She usually just likes me to read the accident reports to her. But when I showed the cover photo of the Summer/Fall 2017 edition to my elderly mother, her eyes got all moist, and she quietly said, “I thought I would never see that photo again.” I had been correct in remembering a photo that looked like that in my grandparents’ home at 233 Webster Street in East Boston.

The boy in this photo is Richard Michezney, Jr. He is the father of a current [Appalachian Mountain Club] Boston Chapter leader by the same name. The gentleman in the black leather jacket is Richard Michezney, Sr. The Michezneys were longtime East Boston residents and neighbors of my family.

My mother said that this photo must have been taken before or around 1935, the year she was born. She knew the Michezneys well and heard them relating details of this trip to Deer Hill, although she had always thought that they had gone to the Deer Island in Winthrop. She remembers the photo and stories so well because Amelia Earhart is the woman sitting in the foreground. She heard both that Earhart had come back to Massachusetts to visit her mother in Medford and that Earhart was on a break from flying out of the Boston Airfield (later renamed Logan International Airport). Her 1928 transatlantic flight had begun there. The Michezney home was located on Jeffries Street, next to the Jefferies Point Yacht Club and immediately adjacent to the airfield.

In the 1990s, I was helping with an oral history project for the Boston Natural Areas fund. One of the women I interviewed was Rose D’Amore. Rose was then in her 90s and has since passed away. She remembered Earhart knitting on the roof of the Yacht Club and once saw her in the East Boston branch library. That Earhart had befriended the Michezney clan seems plausible.

The older man behind Earhart may be George Putnam, her husband. My mother speculated that George had a poor night’s sleep because he did not appear that old in photos she had seen of him years after Earhart disappeared. He was ten years older than Earhart but appears much older in the cover photo. The couple on the right of the photo were unknown to my mother. Sibby Michezney, the wife of Richard Sr., is the woman on the far left. Her cooking was infamous. That may explain why the family is so far from her kitchen.

—Mark E. Warren, *Medford, Massachusetts*

The Death of Geraldine Largay

Wanted to write to tell you how much I enjoyed your article on the death of Geraldine Largay (*The Long Way Home*, Winter/Spring 2017, 68 no. 2). My husband and I happened to be hiking on the Appalachian Trail in the Whites when she disappeared, and everyone we met on the trail was talking about it. I very closely followed subsequent news briefings, articles, blogs, etc. for the entire two years after this tragedy. I can't completely explain my fascination/obsession with the event; although my husband is also an avid hiker, he was only mildly interested. I suspect it had something to do with my sex, my closeness in age to Mrs. Largay, and the fact that I occasionally hike alone.

I must admit I thought foul play was the most likely theory and wondered if there was a serial killer lurking on the AT. After her remains were finally located, I initially refused to believe the "getting lost" scenario. The more I thought about it, however, the more I started to think it plausible. Years ago, my husband and I were lost for two days in the Pemigewasset Wilderness in the White Mountains the last week in September. We had adequate clothing and matches for the cold weather, and mercifully it didn't snow or rain. It was, though, one of the most terrifying experiences of my life, and for the first half-hour of being lost, I was in a state of panic with cardiac arrhythmias. Finally I sat down on a rock, realized if I didn't pull myself together I would die of a heart attack, and told myself I was probably smart enough to find my way out. We eventually followed a stream down that intersected a trail.

That experience forever changed how I hike and what I carry in my backpack. We got lost on an ill-marked rough trail; however, noticing the blazes had vanished didn't even initially concern me. A very cocky attitude from many years of experience can often result in a big mistake. They say once you survive being lost, you are much more likely to survive being lost the second time around. Unfortunately, the best way to learn is from past mistakes. Reading about other people's accidents in the woods helps but is a far inferior teacher than experiencing a disaster yourself. As a result of the Largay disappearance, though, I did buy three books on compass navigation and took a short course, realizing that I have always been lacking in such skills.

—*Dr. Charlotte Ryan, Rochester, New York, and Easton, New Hampshire*