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MEETS EVERY MONTH THE 2ND MONDAY AT 11:30 A.M. IN RACHEL'S KITCHEN

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JUNE 2021 ISSUE

Stoney Man Mountain Hike & Skyline Lunch by George Darnell

May 20, 2021

What an amazing day! Thirteen travelers left the lodge at 8:30 AM in a Classy Cowboy Van and headed for Shenandoah National Park. The Park is beautiful in the Spring with wildflowers growing along the trails. As we traveled higher in the mountains, we noticed fewer leaves on the trees since Spring arrives later at higher elevations.



We arrived at the Skyland Resort a little after 10:00 a.m. and took advantage of the restrooms below the restaurant before starting up the 1.6-mile Stoney Man Trail leading to a magnificent view of the Page Valley. We saw wildflowers along the way and a few relatively flat areas that probably had farms before the park was built in the 1930's.

(From Wikipedia: The Skyland Resort was originally called Stony Man Camp, was built in 1895 at what later became the highest point on the Skyline Drive, with a sweeping view of the Shenandoah Valley at 3,680 feet. It was built in 1895 by George Freeman Pollock, who owned a great deal of the land surrounding the resort. Skyland was intended to be a place where the affluent people from major cities would come to relax and enjoy the natural surroundings. Early in its life, it was advertised as a dude ranch. When it opened, transportation was by horse or wagon. It competed with the nearby Panorama Resort, which opened in 1924 and closed in 2006)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Meeting
Monday, June 14
Rachel's Kitchen
11:30 a.m.
Potluck
Please Bring a Dish to Share!

Around 1931, the resort was taken over by the Shenandoah National Park, and the Skyline Drive was built in front of it. Rather than destroying the improvements to restore the natural environment, as was the practice in most areas of the park, as it was established between 1924 and 1936, Skyland's accommodations were expanded, and remain available to visitors today.

We arrived a few minutes before the restaurant opened and had time to use the restrooms and browse the book and gift shop. The staff seated us in 4-person tables near the wall of windows overlooking the valley. Our neighbors, John and Catharine Kennedy, who were staying at the Skyland Resort, joined us for the hike and lunch. We enjoyed our lunch and conversation before returning to the van for Rappahannock County.



Just before taking the Route 211 exit of the park, we passed the site of Panorama, the popular restaurant mentioned above that closed in 2006. Rt. 211 winds down the mountain from Skyline Drive to the village of Sperryville and past Little Washington (a trip for another day) to a junction with Route 522 where we turned left. We passed through beautiful foothills and the colonial era town of Flint Hill before arriving at Rappahannock Cellars. They were expecting us and invited us to sit at tables on the shaded patio in front of



the tasting room. We lingered over our “test tube” flights of wine or glasses of favorites as we got to know our neighbors better. We shared stories of waiting in gas lines after Hurricane Sandy and binging on the PBS series “Atlantic Crossing” while sipping our wine. Finally, it was time to take the short ride back to Lake Frederick. We said our goodbyes before returning to our homes.

Many thanks to everyone who joined us:



Fred and Bonnie Ayers
George and Michelle Darnell
Mike and Margy Gooden
Frances Hernandez
Terri Katzenberger
Gary and Janet McDowell
Harry and Marian Roman
Roger and Debra Wickboldt