

In the early 2000's Leslie Romer was hiking two or three times a week, leading small groups of women to Forest Fire Lookout locations on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. These destinations offered, not only great exercise, but often breath-taking views, beautiful flowers, and fauna along the way.

By 2008, Leslie had visited 300 (!) fire house locations, and ultimately she hiked to an astonishing total of over 500, across the U.S. She realized she needed to learn GPS so that her screen would match her (don't leave home without it) map. Armed with this skill she continued to hike and to research and record the history of each lookout's location.

When she realized she had become an expert on fire lookouts, she decided to write a hiking guide focused on the Olympic Peninsula and Willapa Hills, which she knew best.

Nonetheless, Leslie spent four years drafting her book, determining its organization, incorporating pictures and maps, indexing and footnoting, until she finally found an editor and cartographer that would publish and distribute it: Sidekick Press.

Lost Fire Lookout Hikes and Histories is so well written it was a 2022 finalist for an Eric Hoffer Award. If you missed this mini, and even if you never get to Northwest Washington, we recommend purchasing Leslie's book. It's guaranteed to inspire you to don your hiking boots and set off on many more "Mountain Days" of your own!

This write--up is adapted from the review by Elizabeth "Sunny" Eaton Steadman of a presentation by Leslie Romer at our Class Mini-Reunion, May 14, 2022.

