

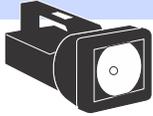


The

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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL



STAFFER SPOTLIGHT



The longest serving member of The Lodge housekeeping staff, Linda Griffin committed herself to the job in 2016 after working a two-week trial, much to the delight of everyone who knows her.

She and her colleagues maintain The Lodge tidiness through weekly cleaning of apartments and common areas and the laundering of bed linen. Housekeepers are on duty five days a week and one weekend a month. "I love the people here," says Linda.

Born at the former hospital in Waynesboro, Linda has lived in Stuarts Draft all her life until her recent move to Crozet. She is one of a close-knit family of six sisters and four brothers (one is deceased) who still get together on weekends for cookouts and "having a good time" sometimes until as late as midnight. Linda is divorced and raised three daughters.

Passionate about everything she does, Linda developed an acute fondness for plants. She has worked for several nurseries, grading and grafting trees and preparing young plants for shipping to customers.

She later worked for Hershey's in Stuarts Draft, but her attraction to growing things has not waned. Her yard is literally a botanic garden with flower gardens, vines, and orange, avocado, and lemon trees. Inside she grows palm trees, air plants, and a native Hawaiian tree. One of her daughters says all her mother needs to do is to poke something in the ground and it will grow.

Two of her other passions are mountain hiking and photography. She posts many of the scenic pictures she takes with a cell phone camera on Facebook.



Her bucket list includes owning a small Harley motorcycle and going skydiving.

"Mom, you are like a hummingbird," says a daughter. "You gotta keep going to keep going," replies Linda.

A man in Australia saw this picture of Linda taken by her daughter on Facebook. He called attention to the ice formation that he said looked like "a statue of Jesus."

RESIDENT FOCUS

Judy LeHardy is the most mobile woman you will ever meet. She and her army officer husband, Ward, hop scotched from one duty station to another 28 times in 32 years during his military career. But that was only the beginning. Judy took on an experience that many of us might dream about but would never seriously consider—a 33,000 mile trip around the world alone with Ward in a sail boat! Sounds scary, but Judy says it was utmost confidence in her husband that removed all fear of the unknown. Judy moved to The Lodge upon Ward's death in April. They were married for 62 years.

Ward spotted high schooler Judy at a dance she attended with another date at Fort Myer in Northern Virginia, now what is called a joint base. Ward was a cadet at West Point and was determined to get to know her. That resulted in their marriage in 1956 upon Ward's graduation from the military academy.

Judy left Sweet Briar College to marry Ward after attending the school for one year made possible by two full scholarships. That did not, however, quash her appetite for higher education. Throughout Ward's army career, she enrolled in college classes accumulating credits from several schools including Penn State and Panama Canal College. While stationed at Fort Campbell, Judy in 1982 earned her Bachelor's degree in history and art history from Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

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Resident Focus (continued)

Both Judy and Ward were raised in Navy families. Born in Plainfield, New Jersey, Judy moved to Alexandria, Virginia with her mother, who had remarried after the death of Judy's father. Her step-father was a Naval Academy graduate who rose to the rank of rear admiral. Judy graduated from St. Agnes Episcopal School in Alexandria, Virginia. Her cousins had taught her to sail beginning at age 14 on Barnegat Bay along the New Jersey shore.

Ward's father was a naval officer who was killed at sea in the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal. Ward vowed from an early age to go to where his father died in the Pacific, a precursor to the LeHardy's round the world trip.

After serving in the U.S. Army for 32 years, including volunteer tours of duty in both Korea and Viet Nam, Ward retired in 1988 with the rank of brigadier general. The LeHardys settled in Fredericksburg, Virginia. By then, they had raised four children. Son Ward Jr. is a producer of film and video projects in northern Virginia and son Marcel remodels and sells homes in the Roanoke area, both of whom are army veterans. Son Peter is a retired naval officer living in Annapolis. Daughter Sally, who lives in Crozet, teaches French privately and via the Internet for a French Academy.

Round the world trip planning began soon after Ward's retirement, a task that took two years to complete. Ward routed the trip on a series of navigation charts. The LeHardys purchased *Cormorant*, a 39-foot ocean going sailboat complete with engine, a galley, washing machine and dryer, sleeping space for up to eight but perfect for two, radar, a pole mounted wind generator, radio communications, and seven sails for every kind of wind. The boat was made from a kit produced in Quebec and completed by previous owners, "ruggedly built for ocean sailing yet appointed to make it feel like home."

Official departure occurred at West Point on September 22, 1991, where 150 people, including Ward's classmate General Norman Schwarzkoff, bid them farewell. Families and friends, including Judy's 87-year-old stepfather, bade them a second send off in Annapolis. That is when "we had plenty of mixed emotions wondering when, or even if, we'd see them again" wrote Judy in her journal of notes.

Five years later, The LeHardys sailed *Cormorant* back to Annapolis in August 1996 and glided into a pier at the Naval Academy amidst some 200 friends and relatives who welcomed them home. During their adventure, the LeHardys crossed three of the earth's oceans, visited 66 countries and major island groups, battled a fierce storm in the Mediterranean, almost lost their mast in a major storm in the Pacific, and outran Hurricane Bertha in the Atlantic. Ward accomplished his dream of honoring his father by tossing a shell lei into the sea near the island of Guadalcanal at the exact spot where his father was killed on the bridge of the *USS San Francisco* in 1942.

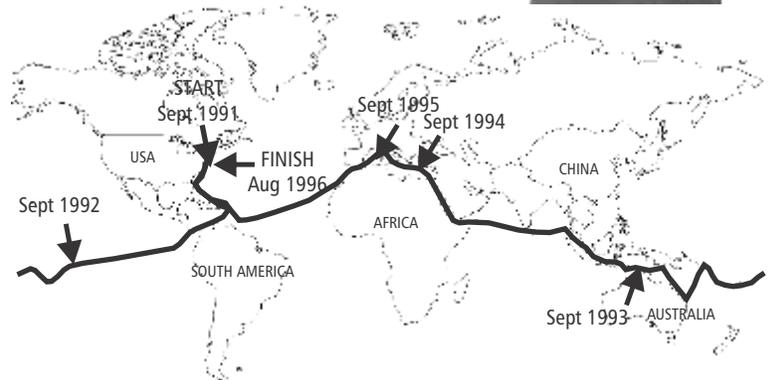
For the next 20 years, Ward and Judy lived in Kilmarnock on the Northern Neck where they were active in the local Anglican Church, played golf, sailed, and traveled. Ward made arrangements for living at The Lodge before he became ill and died from cancer.

Judy has 15 grandchildren and two great-grandsons.

The LeHardys compiled a fascinating book on their voyage based on the notes they recorded throughout the trip. *Once Around* is available for purchase on Amazon and for loan from the library at The Lodge.

Congratulations, Judy, for all you have accomplished, especially for your courage and resiliency to sail around the world!

Clockwise from the right, Judy's high school photo, the route of Cormorant, Cormorant off Martinique in 1996 with Ward at the helm, and Ward and Judy in 1978 with Sally, standing, and from left, Marcel, Ward Jr., and Peter.



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Ward LeHardy Jr.

'The Greatest Scenic Road in the World'

One of Virginia Senator Harry F. Byrd's greatest legacies was his role as a major proponent of the road we call the Blue Ridge Parkway, declaring it to be unrivaled for its scenic qualities. History does not say whether the parkway was Byrd's or President Franklin Roosevelt's idea, but Roosevelt authorized the "depression baby" project in 1933 as part of his New Deal. Roosevelt's Secretary of Interior ably settled the many early squabbles that almost doomed the project, allowing construction to begin on the first link in 1935. Connecting the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia with the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina, the 469-mile parkway was completed 52 years later when the last link was opened to traffic in 1987. The parkway in most years is the most visited unit of the National Park Service with over 15 million users.

Built along the spine of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the southern parkway entrance is at the junction with Skyline Drive at Rockfish Gap. The road travels the mountain crest for 220 miles through 12 counties in Virginia and 250 miles through 17 North Carolina counties. The average elevation is 2,500 feet above sea level, dipping to 649 feet where it crosses the James River in Virginia and rising to its highest point just 13 miles south of the river to almost 4,000 feet.

Six visitor centers containing exhibits and travel information, a variety of restored historical attractions, and numerous parking pull-offs align the road from start to finish. While the pull-offs are called overlooks in accordance with the original parkway description, some provide fantastic views of the valleys hundreds of feet below while others serve as access to hiking trails.

The design features of the parkway make it a special kind of road, one designed for the pleasure of the people who use it. Designated for non-commercial use, it eliminates major grade crossings, has widely spaced entrance and exit points, and a maximum speed limit of 45 mph. A right-of-way measuring up to 1,000 feet wide, with no portion less than 200 feet, consists of purchased land and scenic easements insulating the road from abutting property holders and preserving scenic values. The linear product is often referred to as an elongated park.



The Humpback Rocks Visitor Center is adjacent to a farm museum consisting of a cabin and out buildings representing mountain life in the 1890s.

Lodge residents have several choices for visiting the parkway. A day trip can include spending an hour or so at the Humpback Rocks Visitor Center and adjoining handicapped-accessible cabin and out buildings reminiscent of an 1890s mountain farm, just six miles from the parkway entrance at Rockfish Gap. Take your



The parkway entrance sign at Rockfish Gap.

lunch and eat at the 91-site picnic grove 2.5 miles further to the south with an entrance on the left.

Spend two days on the parkway for a round trip to Peaks of Otter at milepost 86. The Lodge at Peaks of Otter is one of the most popular parkway attractions where you can stay overnight and eat in the renowned Lake View Restaurant overlooking Abbott Lake and Sharp Top Mountain, one of three mountain peaks attributing to the place name. A one-mile ADA accessible loop trail surrounds the lake and bus service is available to a short trail leading to the summit of Sharp Top for a 360 degree view of the surrounding area. The National D-Day Memorial is only a 14-mile drive to the east in Bedford, Virginia.

The parkway is a bonanza for viewing spring blossoms and fall foliage. It is best to avoid weekends, if possible, because that is when traffic is at its heaviest.

Bringing this huge project to fruition was not without hurdles to overcome. Routing the southern end pitted Tennessee against North Carolina, each claiming to have the best gateway to Great Smoky Mountains National Park before Interior secretary Harold Ickes ended the dispute by choosing North

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One of several overlooks on the way to Peaks of Otter.



The dining room at Peaks of Otter Lodge overlooks Abbott Lake and Sharp Top Mountain

Blue Ridge Parkway cont'd

Carolina as the most scenic. Ickes balked at the federal government paying the total cost and finally persuaded the states to pay for the right-of-way. He scrapped the idea of an extension to Washington, D.C. and settled for the Blue Ridge Parkway name after hearing a variety of proposals including The Roosevelt Parkway. "One of the most ridiculous undertakings," cried a member of Congress, and "one of the most colossal steals perpetuated" on Congress, said another, in their vain attempt to derail funding.

After approval was granted, contractors had trouble getting to job sites, having to build access roads before parkway construction could begin. Cutting rock to avoid ugly scars and marring the natural scenery made construction more challenging than expected. Cooperating landowners became disillusioned after discovering the new road they hoped to use would be limited access.



This 1936 photo shows the difficult conditions workers faced in carving out the parkway on the side of a mountain.

Construction was completed in 1966 except for a 7.7 mile section around Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina. The section was agreed upon in 1968 and opened in 1987 after consideration of many proposals and counter proposals to minimize alteration of the mountain. The last link includes a viaduct claimed to be the most complicated concrete bridge ever built.

Hooray for the resistance to FDR's plan to make the parkway a toll road, allowing us to witness the extraordinary scenery from atop the Blue Ridge at no charge.

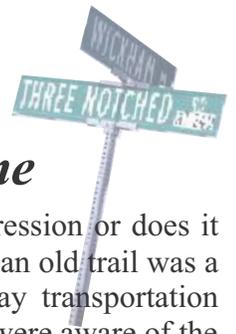


Although Stanley Abbott remains an unsung hero, the Blue Ridge Parkway would not be the road it is without his vision and the way he threaded the road through the mountains. Only 25 years old and just three years after graduating from the Cornell University landscape architecture program, he was hired in 1933 as the first parkway superintendent.

Few others knew more about parkways than what he learned by briefly assisting the founder of parkway design in Westchester County, New York. A parkway, he said, should "lie easily on the ground, blend harmoniously with the topography, and appear as if it had grown out of the soil." He remained the lead designer and superintendent of the parkway until called into military service during World War II. His architect son Carlton remembers watching his father look out a window musing "Carlton, you know there's never going to be another Blue Ridge Parkway." Abbott Lake at Peaks of Otter was named after him. He died in 1975.

This is an edited version of an article appearing in the first issue of The Lodger six years ago.

Memory of 'Old Trail' Revived by Village Name



Is "Old Trail" merely an invented expression or does it have real meaning? As a matter of fact, an old trail was a significant precursor to our modern-day transportation network. Justin Beights and his family were aware of the existence of a pre-colonial trail when they named Old Trail Village. The Beightses were the original developers of the new community outside Crozet.

While they lack positive proof, historians agree that a trail north of Old Trail Village was used for many years by animals and Native Americans. The path extended from the Tidewater area through western Albemarle County to the Shenandoah Valley.

Beginning in the 1730s, several Virginia counties started authorizing improvements to the trail for travel by wheeled vehicles, section by section from Richmond to the Valley.

At that time it was called Mountain Road and was thought to mostly follow the route of the trail. The road passed through the area that later became Crozet and crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains at what became known as Jarman's Gap.

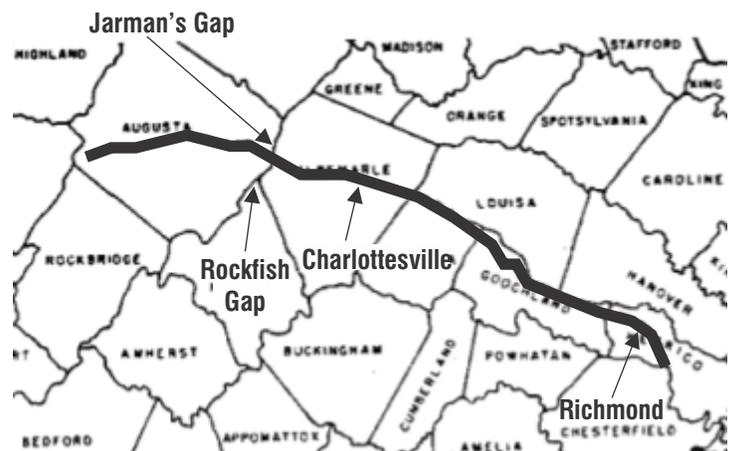
The name Mountain Road was replaced with the name Three Notch'd Road by 1743, perhaps to better differentiate the road from others with the same name. Three notches were regularly used as a blaze mark on trees along the road, seemingly accounting for the new name. Virginia Route 240 east of Crozet carries that name to this day. Some signs change the spelling of notch'd to notched.

The road became the principal east-west artery between the Piedmont and the Valley.

Major road changes began to unfold. A "turnpike" was built in the 1820s through Rockfish Gap, a more suitable crossing of the Blue Ridge Mountains. With the abandonment of the road as a turnpike and its takeover by local governments, Rockfish Gap became the preferred route and the road through Jarman's Gap was closed. During the 1930s, U.S. Route 250 became the successor road, branching from Three Notched Road east of Crozet on its way to Rockfish Gap. In the 1960s, Interstate Highway 64 was constructed to parallel the old trail and functions as the principal east-west artery in central Virginia.

The current Jarman's Gap Road on the north side of Old Trail Village approximates the location of the original trail and road. Most of the old road has been obliterated by land development.

The old trail is now but a memory. Thanks to the name choice of the Beightses, however, this very old trail will be hard to forget.



Three Notch'd Road in 1743 followed much of the old trail, and except for where it crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains was remarkably similar in alignment to present day Route 250.