

Cabin Trivia [Dec./Jan. 1991/1992 Newsletter]

[This Newsletter article is by Jeanne Everitt who was, at the time, both a fairly new, enthusiastic member, and editor of the club's newsletter. With her first visit there, she quickly developed a love for the cabin, shared that love with her family, and here celebrates the project, shares a bit of its history]

As those who have visited there will verify, the TATC cabin isn't just any ordinary building. It is OUR building, and it was built by OUR members. AND, IT WAS BUILT TO BE ENJOYED FOR YEARS TO COME!

The first time I took my boys there, for what has become an annual event, they marveled over and over at the beauty of the spot and the solid construction of the building. Believe me, it doesn't shake—not even at open house!

When the site was chosen in January of 1979, there was snow on the ground. By contrast, it was a beautiful spring day when Building Permit #2905 was issued to the TATC on the 12th of April of that same year.

Snow played a heavy role that spring as construction got underway. It sometime, along with ice, caused the Parkway to be closed. On those occasions, weekend carpenters and assorted helpers backpacked to work.

Many of us have hiked with our personal gear neatly stowed on our backs. But, how many of us have carried lumber, cement and tools as well?

Finally, the spring sun melted the final winter snow, and the location of the foundation was marked. Another important event took place about this same time—Jacque Jenkins' kitchen became a "temporarily permanent" entity.

A bit of noteworthy trivia is that the outhouse was the first of the buildings to be completed and that occurred also this spring. It is noted by Margaret Crate, Club Historian, that it was inspected and tested by Otey Shelton. (I had heard of Otey's love of the outdoors but had to read Margaret's notes to learn of his credentials as a building inspector!)

Through the summer of 1979, the foundation was dug, reinforced and laid. The first stone and the doors were positioned that fall.

Women's lib came along about the same time as the need for the transport of building supplies. So, the women were the perfect candidates to move these items from the Parkway to the construction site. They also mixed cement, carried rocks and skinned logs.

The men, through sheer manpower, slid and pulled logs to the site. If you aren't impressed with the magnitude of this feat, look at the beams on your next visit to the cabin. Let your eyes wander, just before drifting off to a sound, away-from-the-city sleep, over the logs overhead.

Remember too that these logs not only had to be transported from the woods but then had to be lifted to their present resting place. Ask Harold Crate about the human cranes they set up to do that job.

Last summer, while enjoying a weekend at the cabin, an unfamiliar couple walked down the path. Since it is fairly well hidden, I was curious as to how they had found it and why they were venturing this way. The fellow said he was returning to the cabin, wanting to share it with his female companion.

He continued his story by saying that, during the early stage of construction, he had spent several work weekends at the cabin. He was in the Navy then and had since moved away. Now in Charlottesville, he wanted to see the finished product and to share his memories with his friend. Even having given some life to this project, he was amazed at the finished product.

Fall is the most popular season for the cabin; summer the least. Always, however, it provides a restful, serene setting—a perfect spot for regaining balance in our personal lives.

By Jeanne Everitt