

In Remembrance of Jacqueline P. Jenkins

January 1, 1928—December 12, 2016



A collection of memories from her friends in the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club.
Compiled by Mal Higgins

[Editor's Note: Jacque (also often referred to as "Jackie") was an extremely influential member of the early days of the TATC, although not an original "founding member". She was president of TATC during the calendar year 1977, serving one term. Those of us who contribute below knew her from so many times together. She was a mover and a shaker in the club, as you will read. Of course, this is but a small part of her life, and told only from our narrow window of TATC activities. I have kept the stories as submitted to me by their authors, retaining their voice and style, with only minor editing.]

Biographical information: Jacque was born in Lynchburg, Virginia. We knew Jacque as the first woman TATC president in 1977. Jacque is survived by her companion, Bill Newsom, one of the original founders of TATC, and two children, Laurie Holmes and Scott Jenkins.

REESE LUKEI: Jacque was our "camp cook" during the building of the TATC cabin and the construction of the MauHar Trail. On one of the early MauHar trips Otey Shelton and I captured a very large Timber Rattlesnake that was right in the middle of the trail about 1/4 mile from the MauHar cabin (where small stream crosses). We decided that we wanted everyone to get a chance to see the snake so he and I took turns carrying it to the cabin. What to do with it???

The only secure thing we could find to put it in was Jacque's food box, so I emptied it and put the snake in it. Later that day when Jacque and others returned, Otey and I had gone back to work. We had put a big note on the box saying the snake was in the box, but Jacque thought someone was playing a joke on her and opened the box. Jacque exploded!! Boy was she mad. When she learned that I was the one who put the snake in her food box she declared that the only thing I was getting to eat was "grits" which she knew I hated. In the photo files I have turned over to Bob Adkisson are photos of the snake in Jacque's food box as well as Otey and I holding the snake.

MARILYN HORVATH: I don't know of any woman through the years who I admired more than I did (Jackie) Jenkins. She was a real mover and shaker.

One of the many restrictions she overcame in the times of the emerging feminism of the 70's was the reluctance of some men to follow orders from a woman, plus the suspicion of the wives of the men of the club when she called to remind them of their promise to help most every monthly weekend in the construction of the cabin. "Who is that woman who keeps calling?" they'd ask and Jackie would have to practically beg to get everyone out to help. She needed in the beginning to round out a small bunch until it got a momentum of its own. She faced some nasty hostility from those who claimed the cabin would bring down the club with liabilities it couldn't handle.

But Jackie, having led many a winter hike with its biting cold, had a vision of having a warm place of our own to come to after a Friday night 200 mile trip, and not have to set our tents in the snow. Plus the pleasure and comfort it provides all the rest of the year. With a dry sense of humor she goaded us along until she completed her project that we all enjoy now, although I've missed her presence each and every time I've enjoyed what she so lovingly provided.

Thank you, Jackie!

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MAL HIGGINS: I join other long time members of TATC in lamenting the death of Jacque. Jacque was the first woman president of the club, which today boasts over 400 members, and maintains an 11 mile section of the Appalachian Trail in Nelson County, Virginia. Jacque was instrumental in working with Phyllis Putman, mother of Douglas Putman, who provided the money used by TATC to acquire the land and build TATC's Douglas Putman Memorial Cabin during the years 1979-1983, when major construction was completed. The 15 acres was purchased for \$5500.00 by deed dated January 3, 1979.

Jacque relentlessly sought and eventually found the ideal spot to buy land and build the cabin--Entry Mountain, 15 acres off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Nelson County. In those days the club met in the parish hall of Church of the Advent, in Ocean View, Norfolk, which was Jacque's church. TATC club members were divided over the wisdom of buying or building a cabin. A cabin committee studied the issue for several years. Opponents feared the "softening" of our hard core mission of maintaining the Appalachian Trail and backpacking. A cabin would be a sacrilege! Others argued that a cabin would be a retreat where members could go after a hard day of working on our section of the A.T. This latter group eventually prevailed by a wide margin in votes taken.

I remember one weekend of September 1978, Jacque, a couple other stalwarts, and I drove over to Nelson County. On September 8, an extremely hot and muggy day, Jacque and I parked in a little meadow some 100 yards off the Blue Ridge Parkway, the site of a demolished cabin from days long ago. We walked an old wagon road deep into the woods to explore the potential 15 acre purchase and along the way found two springs, one of which was identified on a rough sketch. It was important to the decision to buying the land that we verify it had a water source and a well would not have to be drilled. Finding the springs meant getting into the heavy summer growth of all kinds of stuff, and being stupid about poison ivy, I thrashed around with no regard to what I was in.

We then drove to the Nelson County courthouse, and I did a title search of the land to determine its past ownership and verify it was lien free. The search went well, and Jacque joined me in reading the old deeds. That chain of title is reported in an article under "Cabin" on the current TATC website, "History on Entry Mountain [Feb. /Mar. 1982 Newsletter]" That night, camped out, was when I first learned the meaning of poison ivy!

Jacque also supported innumerable work trips during the construction of the cabin, which kicked off on a weekend in January 1979. On most all of these work trips, Jacque joined the workers, camping out in tents with the club members and acting as "camp cook" to prepare wonderful group meals in the forest over a wood fire and grate. She pitched in with the rough work of hauling wood, stone, and building supplies to the site.

By spring 1982, the Club had the cabin built sufficiently with walls and roof (though at the time with a dirt floor, no shingles over the roof, no stove, no shutters, and no front porch; all these refinements were yet to come). Jacque, who was an artist, presented several of us, with tiny coffee mug size ceramic replicas of the cabin, with the cabin dedication date on it of May 7, 1982. I still treasure my cabin replica today.

Later, she provided the same cheerful "camp Mom" support in the early 1980s as TATC built the MauHar Trail, an iconic, beautiful side trail along Campbell Creek near the Appalachian Trail. The naming of the trail provoked a controversy among club members. Should it be the Campbell Creek Trail? Or the MauHar Trail (a contraction of Maupin Field and Harpers Creek)? As I recall Jacque wanted Campbell Creek Trail, which I too wanted. We voted repeatedly and the votes were tied evenly after several votes. Finally, someone got tired and went home, or changed their vote, and "MauHar Trail" prevailed.

Jacque was popular with her fellow club members and always ready to add encouragement and fun to any situation. The club was sad when she moved to Florida in the late 1980s, and her legacy in TATC will long be remembered.

[Editor's Note: The below remembrance of Deborah Putman is via an email received by Bob Adkisson. Deborah is the daughter of Phyllis Putman, donor of the money used to buy the cabin land and build the cabin, and the sister of Douglas Lee Putman, after whom the cabin is named in his honor.]

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DEBORAH PUTMAN: Jacque was a key figure in helping us build a true memorial to my brother Doug, who hiked and camped on the Appalachian Trail, sometime with and sometime without fellow hikers and campers. Doug lived a very full but much too short life in his 24 years, and I'm sure he is looking down on this cabin and the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club with great pride and appreciation for those who support the dreams of the hikers, campers, and explorers of nature, who only ask for a safe place to rest as they try to commune with nature.

ROBERT ADKISSON:

PART ONE: [Robert Adkisson] Rescued by a stranger. . . .

I remember well the first time I met Jacque Jenkins-- it was in November of 1977, as I attended my first meeting of the TATC.

I had just turned 24, had just, the week before, completed the last in a series of section hikes to finally (over four years time) finish the entire Appalachian Trail. I'd also just become acquainted with a member of the club, who told me where and when the meeting would be; I thought I'd go and check it out (this club member had to work late that night, wouldn't be arriving until maybe halfway thru the meeting).

Unfortunately, I myself arrived about 10 minutes after the meeting started, found myself pushing open a door to a large meeting hall, stepping in front of a room with about 60 to 80 people in it-- a room full of complete strangers. And, it seemed like every eye in that room left the speaker on the stage and turned to stare at me. Having just spent a month on a nearly deserted Appalachian Trail, seeing and talking to almost no one, and being a fairly introverted, private person anyway, my instinct was to turn around and run.

Instead, like a deer caught in the headlights of a speeding truck, I just stood there, trying to decide what to do.

[Editor's Note: The following description of the meeting place is the parish hall of Church of the Advent, on Norfolk Avenue, in Ocean View. Jacque was a member and arranged for the club to use the space, which continued for many years.]

The entrance door was, like I said, near the front corner of a rectangular room. A low stage was immediately to my left, with a man behind a lectern addressing the group. There were rows and rows of folding chairs, all filled with people; there was a walkway at each side of the room, and a central aisle as well. I wanted (I needed) to get to the back of the room, out of the line of fire of all those inquiring eyes, to sit in anonymity and safety, but I dared not cross in front of anyone to get to the middle aisle. I noticed that the walkway along the wall nearest me was half blocked by several people, people who preferred to stand, or lean against the wall, rather than take a seat. I didn't want to walk between them and the speaker either. All paths seemed blocked, and I didn't know what to do, so I just stood there.

I couldn't help but notice an empty seat right in front of me, in the front row, beside a well-coiffed woman I judged to be in her early 50's (a woman about the age of my own mother). Surely the seat had been claimed by someone else-- it probably belonged to the man on stage-- and I didn't presume to sit there, or even ask about it.

Before I knew what was happening the woman half rose to her feet, took me by the hand, and pulled me down beside her. She'd reached out and saved me! A feeling of gratitude and security washed over me. I felt forever indebted to her.

A few minutes later, during a brief lull in the talk, or a quick change in speakers, the woman leaned in close and asked me my name; was it the first club meeting I'd attended? Nothing too complicated. I said yes, but I couldn't help blurting out something else-- that I'd just completed hiking the A.T. I guess it was my way of saying I belonged there, I wasn't just some schmuck who'd wandered in off the street (I'd recently heard someone say that there were two types of people who'd hiked the A.T.—those that told everyone they met that they were a thru-hiker, and those that kept it to themselves, who didn't introduce it into every conversation. I definitely felt I was from the latter group, but there I was, desperate to belong, feeling a sudden need to justify walking thru that door).

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An hour or so passed. The meeting with all the announcements and talk mostly flowed pleasantly over my head. I was content just sitting there, beside this woman, who herself occasionally got up to speak to the group. She was a club officer, apparently. Eventually I realized she was the club president, and that her name was Jacque Jenkins.

She'd saved me, and I both liked and trusted her. And so I wasn't prepared when, near the end of the meeting, she stood and, in a fashion, betrayed me-- announced to the group that they had a visitor, a first timer, a man who had just hiked the entire A.T. I had to stand up again, turn and face that crowd of strangers, while they banged their hands together in applause.

I survived it, but barely. I also, eventually, forgave her.

In a couple of years, when I somewhat belatedly fell in with the cabin construction regulars, she became a sort of 2nd mother to me, and I think I a sort of 2nd son to her. We became good if unlikely friends. I guess you could say, in Hollywood terms, we met cute.

PART TWO: [Robert Adkisson] Good work. . . .

After attending my first club meeting late in November of 1977, several things soon transpired, things of great import (though not everything was immediately apparent to me, and the consequences would stretch on for many years).

Just a few weeks after that meeting, out of the blue, Jacque Jenkins (the club's first female president) received a phone call from Mrs. Phyllis Putman. Four months earlier Mrs. Putman, from northern Virginia, had lost her 24 year old son Douglas in a car accident. She was calling to see if our club would be interested in building a cabin (or some type of shelter for hikers) as a memorial to her son, with money that she would provide.

Both the Putman family and the many members of our club (both the members at that moment, and people that weren't even born yet but would one day become members) are so lucky that it was Jacque who took that call. Things would not have turned out as they did had it been a different person.

I think it is fair to say that Jacque and Mrs. Putman made an immediate personal connection; having a sympathetic ear and a kind heart, Jacque was about the same age as Mrs. Putman, and she too had grown children. Jacque was independent, strong willed, and had a can-do spirit, and, beyond that, she knew that our club had been trying to buy or build a cabin in the mountains (or lease and repair a place) for a couple of years-- with little to no success.

She immediately passed the offer on to the club's board-- many of whom simply didn't believe, or couldn't grasp, that it was real.

As a counterpoint to this, about 6 weeks later (in January of 1978) Jacque ran for a 2nd term as president, but lost a bitterly contested race-- lost to a man about half her age, one who opposed the club's idea of having a cabin (he considered himself a purist, even eschewed using a tent when camping out).

Fortunately, the cabin idea had enough support and momentum that, after considerable deliberation, in July the club voted, overwhelmingly, to accept Mrs. Putman's generous offer. Soon after that, with Jacque among the search party, a suitable piece of land was scouted out and purchased and, just 13 months after that fateful phone call, construction began on the Douglas Lee Putman Memorial Cabin.

Disappointed to have lost the election, Jacque did not give up on the club or her place in it-- she stayed involved in numerous ways, and threw herself into the cabin project. An excellent and resourceful cook, she took it upon herself to go on just about every cabin work trip for the next seven years, preparing delicious and filling meals for the work crews over an open fire (or in a Dutch oven). The first four years the work crews camped out, ate beneath tarps, sitting on stumps or crude benches, buffeted by icy winds or summer heat.

Jacque was the head cheerleader of the cabin project, its tireless champion, the person who endlessly phoned members and tried to persuade them to drive 200 miles, one way, to work in all types of weather, doing all sorts of bone wearying work. One work trip every month, for seven years. Some people joked her, sometimes called it 'Jacque's Cabin'-- because she worked so hard to promote it, worked so hard feeding the workers, worked so hard doing whatever chores needed to be done. She took it as a compliment.

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She did herself proud, and would later say that, other than her two children, the cabin project was the biggest and best thing she was ever involved in.

Anyone who ever enjoys time at the cabin owes her a great debt of gratitude, for she is one of a handful of people that most made it happen, that put their heart and soul into it for an extended period of time.

And then, almost ironically, once the project was nearing completion, she was one of several long time cabin workers that moved far away, and would hardly ever see it again (Jacque's daughter married in the mid-1980's, moved to Florida, and soon had children of her own; as much as she loved the cabin, and all of her many Trail Club friends, for Jacque the pull of family was greater, and she went south with tears, but without regrets).

As a lifetime club member (something she was quite proud of), she kept up with the club over the years, and both my wife and I made a point of visiting her several times in Florida. She was a wonderful and generous host, always glad to see us, happy to hear about the club and its members, and about how the cabin was faring. Besides her family, in Florida she returned to her great interest in art, at which she was very talented, and she continued to travel, though no more hard bunks or camping out for her-- it was mostly cruises, where other people cooked her meals.

I feel a special debt of gratitude to Jacque because it was the cabin project that drew me into the club, and the club has proven to be such a big part of my life. I will never forget the year 1981, when I went on every cabin work trip, including ones in April and October that lasted 9 nights each. Several times I rode to or from the mountains with Jacque, and the fact that I threw myself into the work, made the project a priority in my life, forever endeared me to her.

Besides the cabin work though, there were fun trips too, like the two week canoe trip Jacque organized in the summer of 1981, all the way up in Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park-- it was my first experience paddling on lakes, portaging from lake to lake, and seeing moose (and bear) from the seat of a canoe. All the people on the trip were cabin workers, and, as Marilyn Horvath would always say (she was my canoe partner on this trip) -- 'all of us had a wonderful time!'

Thank you, Jacque. You did good.

PART THREE: [Robert Adkisson] Jacque handed me the keys. . . .

[When the TATC cabin construction began in 1979,] Jacque assigned herself the thankless job of phoning club members, month after month, year after year, trying to get people to come up and work on the cabin project. But, as intent she was to get the cabin built, and keep her promise to the Putman family, there were sometimes more important things too-- like friends and family.

In April of 1982, with the promised Cabin Dedication only a month away, and so much work to do, something came up that showed this other side of Jacque.

It was an extended, spring-time cabin work trip—nine nights total: back to back weekends and, for those that were retired (or who took a week off from their real jobs), the five weekdays in between. Twenty three people came that first weekend and a lot of work was accomplished-- nailing roof boards into place, mixing mortar and laying rock on the inside of the fireplace, general cleanup work and preparation for the Dedication, etc. I was staying all nine nights but, without a trustworthy car, I had gotten a ride up with someone.

Sunday, after dinner, with only a handful of people staying over for the mid-week work, Harold Crate returned to his home in Newport News to complete something for the cabin. The plan was for him to drive back with it early Tuesday morning and meet Jacque in Waynesboro; they'd buy some supplies together and then return to the cabin. Margaret Crate was, like me, one of about half a dozen people staying on at the cabin, continuing the work. But when Jacque went into town Tuesday morning Harold wasn't there to meet her; instead, somehow, she got word that on Monday night, because of concerns about an irregular heartbeat, he had checked himself into Riverside hospital, near his home.

She returned to the cabin and reported the news to Margaret, who of course wanted to immediately go and be with her husband (but she had no vehicle). One club member was getting ready to head home to Virginia Beach, and Jacque asked him to give Margaret a ride. He had plans though—to stop and visit friends in Charlottesville first.

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With the keys to her car in hand, Jacque turned to me and asked if I would mind driving Margaret back to Newport News. I was more than glad to do this, to be of help; within a few minutes Margaret was packed and the two of us headed out in Jacque's car. I dropped her off at the hospital, turned around, and drove the 180 miles back to the cabin. I see in the Golden Book we kept about cabin construction that Jacque wrote I returned about 7:30 that evening.

Work on the cabin was important, but the friends doing that work were more important. We were very much like a family; we cared for each other. I was so glad to be a part of it, to be taken in, trusted and valued; to be working together towards a common goal, with so many good people. What a privilege!

PART FOUR: [Robert Adkisson] Louisa Ferncliff. . . .

Did we work long and hard building the Trail Club cabin? You bet. Did we also have fun? Even more.

Heck, among all that work, and countless hours on the road driving back and forth to the mountains, we somehow found time to invent a person (also a possible lover and love child) -- almost a whole 'life and times' story book.....

Her name was Louisa Ferncliff.

To be honest, I can't rightfully say who invented what, or when it all began exactly, but quite a bit of it originated with Jacque as she tried to explain to neighbors and friends where it was she disappeared to at least one weekend a month, what she was doing and who she was hanging out with. First she tried the truth-- she was helping build a primitive cabin on the side of a mountain in Nelson County, Virginia; she was tenting out in all sorts of weather, all four seasons of the year; she was cooking over a fire, getting water from a spring, using an outhouse; she wasn't getting paid a dime; she was working with several close friends and any number of people she hardly knew-- the more the merrier!

To look at Jacque at any other time or any other place, you'd be hard pressed to think she was the kind of woman interested in, or capable of, such hardy and unlikely activities, and some of her neighbors and friends from church weren't entirely convinced.

One day on her way to the cabin, driving up the nearly deserted stretch of Interstate 64 between Richmond and Charlottesville, she noticed a sign at exit 143. The big green sign read: Louisa Ferncliff. Louisa is a small, pleasant town, the county seat of Louisa County, just a few miles north of the Interstate. Ferncliff, on the other hand, is lucky to even be recognized as a place, since it seems to consist of only a couple of houses and one crossroads convenience store, located just to the south at the intersection of routes 208 and 250. But, to Jacque, it sounded like a name, the name of a person, perhaps a long lost relative of hers (Jacque had, after all, grown up in nearby Lynchburg).

Louisa Ferncliff soon became a family member that she went to visit once a month or so-- or so she began to tell home-bound skeptics back in the city. She shared her invention with others in the club, including me, since I rode to the mountains with her several times a year. We began to imagine Louisa in various ways, but most often as a well-to-do but at least slightly wayward woman, a woman of high pedigree and refinement with a bit of gypsy eccentricity about her. Perhaps she imbibed a bit, or at least had a moonshine still at the back of her property (sort of like the two ding bat / charming spinster sisters in the TV show *The Waltons*).

Soon we noticed that Louisa Ferncliff had a male suitor, one Yancey Mills. He also lived just off the Interstate, at exit 107-- within sight of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and with his own big green sign. A year or two after their apparent affair began there was a possible love child: Shannon Hill, who lived just a few exits east of Louisa Ferncliff. (Where did the last name Hill come from, we wondered aloud). This was all great fun, an inside joke we shared, something to help pass the miles, and smile about around the nightly campfire.

Sometimes no one would mention Louisa for months, and then one of us would come out with something funny that Louisa had done, and we'd all get a big kick out of it. A few of the new folks wondered what or who the heck we were talking about, and we'd have to fill them in on the details. Sometimes they'd look at us as if we were strange, but that was only because they hadn't been on enough cabin work trips yet.

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After a year and a half of steady work on the cabin project (something like 20 work trips in a row), mid way thru 1982 I claimed some time for myself, went off on a long bicycle tour of the western U.S. But this trip was different from other long, solo trips I'd taken-- I now had a sort of 2nd family to write home to; met thru our shared work on the cabin, I had many trail club friends to keep informed. This too, like building the cabin, was no chore, but a labor of love, all part of the wonderful camaraderie I'd found.

Towards the end of my nearly 6 month odyssey I made it out to Hawaii which, it turned out, was *not the highlight of my trip*. *All sorts of things went wrong in this so-called tropical paradise-- trips to a bike repair shop and a dentist, stranded in the town of Hilo for 4 rainy days and nights over Christmas weekend, shadowy people skulking around my campsites at night, a teenage boy pointing a pellet gun at me, various people cursing at me from passing cars, plus I almost drowned, twice.*

No joke-- the night of Christmas Eve, in a cramped, sweltering bivy tent near the Hilo airport-- soaking wet and miserable-- I held onto my sanity (by a thread) only by imagining what it was like that very minute at the trail club cabin, back in Nelson County, and wishing more than anything that I was there. Picturing myself there. To survive I also had to dole out promises to myself left and right, short term and long term promises-- things I would do to make up for the hellish spot I found myself in that night in the mosquito filled woods. A long term promise I made to myself was to go to the cabin at the end of the bike trip, spend a couple of weeks there, just taking it easy (that was a promise I found easy to keep).

About a week later, with my bike finally repaired and on the sunny, western side of the Big Island, I went into a gift shop in the town of Kailua-Kona, looking for postcards. Almost immediately my eyes fell upon a greeting card, one with a pastel colored picture on the front. The picture was of an older woman standing with her bike (a bike from about the 1950's), perhaps on a street in Paris. She had an ankle length dress, a large handbag and hat, and, though her face was mostly turned away, I knew instantly: it was Louisa Ferncliff!

I bought the card and, in Louisa's hand, with her voice, I wrote as if she were on my bike trip-- I let her recount some of my latest adventures and travails, let her put her own spin on some of the events. Then I mailed it to my 2nd mom, Jacque.

About 6 weeks later, when I showed up at the February cabin work trip, I think she had the card with her, and she proudly read it aloud to the group. Louisa Ferncliff was back, and as wayward as ever. Sitting around the warmth of the fireplace, we all enjoyed a good laugh.

It wasn't by accident that, before going home to my real family in Norfolk, I stopped at my 2nd home, enjoyed a couple of nights with my 2nd family, there on the side of a mountain in the Blue Ridge.

Years later I was married and, a dozen years after that, we were driving to the cabin. We stopped at exit 143, I got out of the car, and Evelyn took a picture of me standing in front of the LOUISA FERNCLIFF sign. I had a copy made and mailed it to Jacque in faraway Florida. She wrote back and said how much she enjoyed it. We shared a few stories, rumors and speculations, of Louisa's recent activities.

Years after that: now I had a couple of grand kids that I'd shared the cabin with, their first time in such a wondrous place!

And then, one perfect spring day in late April, staying at the cabin by myself for a few nights, I walked out to White Rock Gap to fetch something from my car. Just as I arrived, unlocked the car and started to rummage around for a book or a can of soup, I heard two vehicles drive into the gravel parking lot, pull up just past me, and stop in front of the kiosk the Park Service had recently erected. I glanced over at the two large, nearly identical old luxury automobiles from I guess the 1930's. The windows were rolled up, tinted-- I couldn't see who was in the cars, but then, I already knew, didn't I..... all those years later, it was of course Louisa Ferncliff, still kicking, maybe on her way from a New York penthouse to her new husband's cattle ranch in Texas, taking the scenic route, past the cabin and south along the Parkway.

I grabbed my camera, snapped a couple of photos as the cars slowly pulled away. Again I made copies, sent one to Jacque, told her of my latest Louisa Ferncliff sighting. I may have mentioned a scented handkerchief that Louisa had dropped out of the window as her limousine pulled away.

She is, I know for sure, out there still.

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JIM CRUSE: The main thing I can say about Jacque is that she was always there for anybody who needed help. It has been a lot of years but I don't think I can remember an occasion when she seemed angry about anything, even though she may have disagreed with what was happening. Also, I will always remember her "magic" touch with a wood burning fireplace and her "oven". *[Editor's Note: Jim is referring to a cinderblock outdoor fireplace built for Jacque at the old camp site/cook site with a metal box as an "oven"]* Countless meals were lovingly prepared for the cabin work crews and her cobblers were of the type that made you say "more please".

In addition to the numerous tips she gave me on working around the cabin she also taught me how to look deeper at what was going on around me. "Don't just hike a trail to go from point A to point B, teach yourself to slow down, look at what's around you." Learn to truly see, not just look. Watch for small movements and barely audible sounds that will reveal a new and wondrous world.

One "lesson" she taught me which I have applied often was "don't worry about what others are doing. Learn to be satisfied with what you accomplish. Work to achieve the goal as part of the team."

Even though I had not seen Jacque for many years, she will always be someone I counted as a friend. I list her with others who greatly influenced my life such as Otey Shelton, Lee Hulten, and Harold and Margaret Crate.

EVELYN ADKISSON: When I started going to TATC meetings, the club cabin was still being built. I signed up for a work trip, and that's where I met Jacque. She was outgoing, fun to be with, and confident in the group and herself to get the job done. I kept going on the cabin work trips and had a great time getting to know the members and learning various ways to help with the work. We were woken up early on those work days by Jacque noisily cooking breakfast for all of us. I still wonder how she fixed delicious homemade wheat biscuits, suppers, and desserts on that wood-burning stove. It was smaller than the present one and needed continual wood added to keep the fire going and provide somewhat even heat.

Some Saturday mornings, she and I left the cabin and drove to Stuart's Draft to buy groceries for that night's supper. On those long drives, we talked about everything. She enjoyed people and sharing outdoor activities with them. I learned about her interest in painting and art classes. I remember on one grocery-run telling her that I felt sorry for one of my friends. This friend's father had always told her he wished she had been a boy, and this felt like a weight on her. After maybe 2 seconds, Jacque said, "If that had been me, I'd have said, 'Well, ha-ha, the joke's on you! I'm a girl, and I'm going to have a happy life, anyway!'"

Thank you to Jacque, for sharing her happy life with us.

SUSAN PUTMAN: (on behalf of the entire Putman family): We were so sad to hear about Jacque's passing. She will always be larger than life to the Putman family.

When we were grieving, Jacque was there with compassion, humor and boundless energy. After our land donation to TATC, she said "Phyllis Putman is an angel sent from heaven." But it was Jacque and a host of other club members who were the real angels. Through the years we watched them build a tribute to Doug, who so loved the trail that he would often strike out on his own to commune with nature and other hikers who crossed his path.

After we spread Doug's ashes so many years ago, from the big boulder overlooking the site, we set out to watch the astonishing progress on his memorial.

TATC's weekend warriors gathered lumber and stone from the property and crafted them into a magical retreat. They poured out their sweat, blood--and sometimes tears.

We often wonder what would've been, if Doug had lived beyond his 24 brief years. But we shudder to think what wouldn't have been, if Phyllis had not met Jacque and forged a living memorial for generations to come. May her light always shine over the ridge.

~The Putman Family
(Phyllis, Deborah and Sue)

(Continued ...)

MARGARET CRATE: *[Editor's Note: The below remembrance of Margaret Crate is from a letter received by Bob Adkisson. Margaret and her husband, Harold Crate, now deceased, played principal roles in the construction of the Douglas Lee Putman Cabin. Harold was the civil engineer who designed the layout and construction of the cabin, and both he and Margaret physically worked on every aspect of its construction. Harold and Otey Shelton were construction partners, instructing and supervising many unskilled workers. Otey oversaw all of the stone masonry work. Margaret became the documenter of the construction through innumerable work trips, photos, and prose, and thus became TATC's first club historian.]*

"Once a friend, always a friend"

Jacque was a very talented person who was the first to recognize the value of building a cabin for our section of the Appalachian Trail. Harold and I joined the club in the early days of the construction. It was a project that drew club members together and continues to do so even today. Jacque's hand was in every part of club life.

In a short while we were involved in hiking, building, and having friends of every age, size, and background join us on work trips. It took many years of gathering the native rock off the slopes of the mountain, hauling them in two-person, hand carried "wheel barrows", and cementing them together into a strong and beautiful cabin, which is used today for shelter, day hikes, weekends, or even stays of weeks at a time.

Jacque was the first to realize that workers needed food and became our cook. We were never hungry! We pitched our tents on a flat spot close and above Jacque's "kitchen", where the smell of breakfast of bacon, eggs, toast, and coffee drifted upwards. Her outdoor cinder block fireplace was a unique, primitive structure, but under her hand we ate well.

Thanks for the memories. We will always link her with the TATC cabin.

— End —