



Discover America

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ADT Featured Site Serpent Mound



Snow lightly dusts the curves of the serpent during winter. The walkway can be seen bordering the mound.

Photo courtesy of Pat Hayes

Each year the South West Ohio Trails Association takes a winter camping trip along the Buckeye Trail. Pat Hayes, ADT state coordinator for Ohio, writes of this year's adventures and the historic site they visited.

By Pat Hayes

This year's winter campout took place at one of the most archaeologically important and geologically significant sites on the American Discovery Trail. On Jan. 5–6, seven hardy souls braved the elements to camp out over the weekend and three others showed up Saturday for a day of temperatures in the 40s and intermittent rain. Through the generosity of the Ohio Historical Society and the site manager, Keith Bengtson, we were allowed to camp in the parking lot of the Great Serpent Mound of

Adam County, Ohio.

According to the Ohio Historical Society's website (<http://ohsweb.ohiohistory.org/places/sw16/index.shtml>), Serpent Mound is situated atop a plateau overlooking the Brush Creek Valley and is the largest and finest serpent effigy in the United States. Nearly a quarter of a mile long, Serpent Mound apparently represents an uncoiling serpent.

In the late 19th-century Harvard University archaeologist Frederic Ward Putnam excavated Serpent Mound and attributed the creation of the effigy to the builders of the two nearby burial mounds, which he also excavated. We now refer to this culture as the Adena (800 B.C.–A.D. 100). A third burial mound at the park and a village site near the effigy's tail belong to the Fort An-

Possible World Heritage Site?

Serpent Mound may one day be ranked alongside Stonehenge in England, the Acropolis in Athens, and the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

In January, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced its final tentative list of 14 U. S. locations to be considered for World Heritage Site status. The World Heritage list is maintained by the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and recognizes natural and cultural sites of significance to all peoples of the world.

Serpent Mound, a state memorial administered by the Ohio Historical Society, is probably the best known archaeological site in Ohio and features the earthen effigy of a snake.

This is the first time since 1982 that the Department of the Interior has prepared a list of U. S. cultural and natural areas for consideration by UNESCO. The preparation of the tentative list is a first step in the process of nominating a site to the World Heritage list because a country cannot nominate a property until it has been on its tentative list for at least a year. The United States is allowed to nominate two sites from its tentative list every year between 2009 and 2018.

If World Heritage status is granted, Serpent Mound will join 851 World Heritage sites in 141 countries, including 20 sites in the United States.

cient culture (A.D. 1000–1550). A more recent excavation of Serpent Mound revealed wood charcoal that could be radiocarbon dated. Test results show that the charcoal dates to the Fort Ancient culture. This new evidence of the serpent's creators links the effigy to the third mound and the village rather than the older burial mounds.

(Continued on page 5, column 3)

West Virginia: Back on Track

Several years ago the ADT had to be relocated from the high plateau area of Dolly Sods when unexploded ordnance left over from the World War II era was discovered. That area was closed to hikers and the ADT was re-routed to the roads south of the main plateau.

When the area was re-opened, the ADT Society was eager to move the trail back to its original location because Dolly Sods is one of the premier scenic areas of the mid-Atlantic. Although the original trail is legally open to mountain bikes, it is single-track, and therefore might be inappropriate for a fully laden bike. So, the current main route, which is on roads, will remain a bicycle alternative. This alternative route may also be appropriate for some long-distance hikers who arrive in this area when there is snow on the ground.

A complicating factor in procuring approval to have the trail moved back to its original route was the fact that in the intervening years, the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge was created. Permission had to be obtained from both the national forest where the trail runs on the plateau and the Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the land to the west of the plateau.

The original routing of the trail was from Red Creek Campground across Dolly Sods on the Blackbird Knob trail to Forest Road 80 and Freeland Road. (The route then enters Canaan Valley State Park on its access road, goes north on the Allegheny Trail to Blackwater Falls State Park, and then heads

west.) Hikers on the newly re-opened trail may actually still see ADT markers that were placed there by the West Virginia Department of Transportation several years ago. Also, a kiosk at either end tells visitors when they are entering and exiting the Wildlife Refuge.

Delaware: On the Map

The Delaware Bicycle Council has recently produced brochures and maps about bicycling in Delaware. The American Discovery Trail is described in the brochures and marked by dotted lines in the maps.

To view the brochures, visit www.deldot.gov/information/community_programs_and_services/bike/. Then click on "Bicycling in Delaware," then Delaware Bicycle Touring Map (Kent and Sussex Counties). If they still have them, this map is also available in printed form from the state.

Indiana: Trail Wins Award

The Dearborn Trails project in Dearborn County, Ind., received an award at the Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference in Chicago in December. The trail project, part of the visionary trails network that Gov. Mitch Daniels called for in the state trails plan, was the one outstanding trails project selected for the state of Indiana.

The Dearborn Trails Project is a 5-mile trail connecting Aurora, Lawrenceburg,

and Greendale. With 3.5 miles of the trail completed and a short gap separating another mile of completed trail in Greendale, this scenic trail follows the Ohio River and will serve as an integral segment of the Discovery Trail.

New Trail Built

The town of Madison, Ind. has been busy building a new non-motorized trail. The Heritage Trail starts along the banks of the Ohio River in downtown Madison and currently runs one mile up the bluffs above the city. Plans are to eventually extend the trail to 3½ miles in length and reach Clifty Falls State Park.

The impetus behind the trail construction has been a core group of private citizens that has been working on this project since the mid 1990s. City government has charged the parks department with overseeing the day to day maintenance while the trail committee helps with volunteer efforts. The trail has already resulted in the clearing of tons of trash in the riverfront section.

As the ADT route currently enters both Madison and Clifty Falls State Park, the Heritage Trail seems like a natural future addition to the ADT.

Missouri: Katy Goes West

The Katy Trail on the old Rock Island railway line will be edging closer to Kansas City providing even more off-

PICKLES



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road experience for American Discovery Trail travelers in Missouri.

The *Kansas City Star* reported in November 2007 that Ameren Corp. and the state of Missouri had reached a \$180 million settlement following the collapse of the Taum Sauk Reservoir in 2005. The ensuing flooding heavily damaged the Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park and injured the park superintendent's family.

Although the bulk of the settlement will go for repairing damages, part of the agreement included \$18 million to extend the Katy Trail on a 46-mile segment of the former Rock Island line that Ameren controls from Windsor to Pleasant Hill. The new trail will be built beside rather than on railroad bed and clearing brush from the path could begin as early as this spring.

Pleasant Hill mayor Terry Wilson said, "We really saw this as being a tremendous boost to the economy on this side of the state," since the Katy (and the ADT) brings visitors from all over the world. The new trail extension should open in a few years.

Trail enthusiasts hope to eventually make connections between Gateway Arch in St. Louis and Liberty Memorial in Kansas City. Although discussions for this are on hold until the settlement is complete, negotiating with Union Pacific for an unused railbed running from Pleasant Hill to the Leeds Industrial District of Kansas City would be a likely next step.

And Possibilities Expand

Darwin Hindman, the mayor of Columbia, Mo., and the state coordinator for the ADT in Missouri, is planning to improve hiking and biking opportunities in his town. The Columbia News reported that this community was selected last year to receive \$25 million in each of the next five years. The experimental program chose only four areas to receive this money.

As people become more concerned about the rising cost of gasoline, traffic congestion, and childhood obesity, cycling is gaining popularity. Non-profit advocacy groups have pushed for increased funding. There is a demand for new programs such as safe walking and cycling routes to school.

The American Discovery Trail passes just

Nebraska: Spanning the Big Muddy



The new Missouri River Bike/Ped Bridge is under construction between Omaha, Neb., and Council Bluffs, Iowa. It should be completed in the fall. ADT Society Secretary Ross Greathouse said, "Soon you'll no longer need to swim your bike across the 'Big Muddy.' When it's done, this bridge will surely become Omaha's iconic signature."

Photo courtesy of Ross Greathouse

south of Columbia on the Katy Trail. With this additional funding, it should be easier for ADT users in that area to extend their visit throughout the city.

Nebraska: Health Expo

The Omaha Health, Wellness, & Fitness Expo – The Mind, Body, & Spirit Fair is coming to Nebraska April 26–27 at the Omaha Civic Auditorium. This is the largest health fair pertaining to wellness, fitness, the mind, body, and spirit in the Midwest.

The Omaha Health Expo – Most Healthy Company Challenge will also take place April 26–27 as the kick-off event for the springtime running, walking, and biking season. The walking event is on April 26 and the biking event on April 27. Companies earn points for their employees and family members who participate in the event. For more information call 402-346-8003 or visit www.omahahealthexpo.com.

Illinois: Volunteer Vacation

The Mississippi Bluff Ranger District of the Shawnee National Forest is hosting a volunteer vacation opportunity along the Ameri-

can Discovery Trail/River to River Trail April 20 to 26.

You can spend five days constructing trail tread and features and camp in a nearby campground. Evening education and entertainment programs will be offered. All camping equipment including tents, sleeping bags/pads, a camp kitchen, and all necessary tools and personal protection equipment will be provided, as will ground transportation to area airports and train stations. Participants will need to provide their own food.

For more information contact Jennifer Sublett or Kelly Pearson at 618-687-1731 or see the ADT website for a link to the national forest website under "News and Information."

Or Take a Ride

Northwestern Illinois prairies, the Mississippi River bluffs around Palisades State Park, a day off in the trail-friendly Quad Cities, and down-home small town hospitality! What's not to like?

The Grand Illinois Trail & Parks Bicycle

2007 Long-Distance ADT Travelers As of March 23, 2008

Spring is in the air and hikers are coming back to the trails. Here are those who have traveled at least 500 miles as of press time. Others are just starting out or in the planning stage. For more up-to-date information, the ADT Society website (www.discoverytrail.org) has links to many of their journals.

Traveler	Start Date	Mode	Heading	ADT Miles	Last Location
Michael Daniel	6/17/07	Hike	E	3,131	Cimarron, Kan.
Jim Hopson	4/30/07	Hike	W	2,023	Kansas City, Kan.
Josh James	4/12/07	Hike	W	2,630	Canon City, Colo.
Trey Crispen	3/13/07	Hike	W	996	Cincinnati, Ohio
Jim Shaner	2002	Walk	W	825	Pike Lake, Ohio

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Tour is a week-long biking loop focusing on the Grand Illinois Trail and including a portion of the ADT, combined with overnights at three state parks and one college campus. This year's ride will be held June 15-21 and is jointly sponsored by the League of Illinois Bicyclists and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

The route is generally flat with some optional hilly areas. Mileage choices range from 300 to 550 miles for the week. The event is limited to 160 riders. For information, see www.bikelib.org/gitap or call ADT northern Illinois coordinator Chuck Oestreich at 309-788-1845.

Ohio: Storm Damage

Along the ADT in southern Ohio, the Counterfeit House overlooks the Ohio

River, and is known for its infamous past as a home built to conceal its stashes of illegal money. A local weekly newspaper, the *People's Defender*, reported that the house sustained heavy damage in a storm that blew through Adams County on Feb. 6 (www.peoplesdefender.com). An article about the storm's damage to the 160-year-old Counterfeit House said part of its roof was ripped open and one of its seven chimneys blew apart and crumbled to the ground. Ten trees in the yard were also uprooted.

The owner of the house, Jo Lynn Spires, hopes to restore it as closely as possible to the original. She currently lives in a trailer behind the house and opens it to visitors on the first weekend in May, although in recent years she has had difficulty with its upkeep due to illness.

Iowa: Persistence Pays off

The Iowa Trails Council has seen fruition for its labors in the form of a number of ADT-related trail projects.

The city of Slater received its second \$75,000 grant to pave a former railroad right-of-way that is part of the ADT in their city.

The city of Madrid received \$75,000 to hard-surface three-quarters of a mile of ADT trail within its city limits.

The Heart of Iowa Nature Trail is obtaining bids for the construction of trail from Cambridge to Highway S14, which will include building a bridge over the Skunk River. The project is expected to take about one year to complete.

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A mileage marker along the Knobstone Trail.

Photo courtesy of Gary Eckard

Letters to the Editor

At the end of October I hiked the Knobstone Trail in southern Indiana. I found this trail in your most recent newsletter and obtained a map and hiked the 46-mile trail in four days and three nights. I enjoyed the trail very much as it reminded me of the Appalachian Trail, only shorter. The weather was in the 50s during the day and 30s at night. I had purchased a winter tent and this was a trial period to see if the tent would keep me warm at night. I was very warm in my new tent along with my 20 degree sleeping bag.

The trail is in the woods and crosses a few roads throughout the hike. The trail is straight without any loops. There are some short steep climbs but the entire trail is a good beginner trail for someone interested in long-distance hiking. Mile markers were even provided and I was able to clearly track my mileage per day. I have included some pictures of my trip and I would recommend this trail to anyone.

For those who need a ride, you can call Tom Kirtley at 812-967-4704 and for a reasonable fee he will drop you off at one end of the trail and you can take your time hiking back to your vehicle. I used his service and he was kind enough to call me on my cell phone to see if I was OK. However, cell service is spotty.

I have hiked all over the United States and until now have not found any trails in the Midwest this enjoyable. The best part is that

it is located near where I live in Chicago and I plan to return the Knobstone Trail soon.

Gary Eckard

It's been 2,128,734 steps since I started my virtual hike of the ADT on July 8, 2006. That is 1,064.4 miles! I am "hiking" Indiana along the Ohio State Line taking the southern route to Clifty Falls State Park—thanks ADT!

Karen Whitfield

Herculaneum, MO

Serpent Mound

(Continued from page 1)

The head of the serpent is aligned to the summer solstice sunset and the coils may point to the winter solstice sunrise and the equinox sunrise. Today, visitors may walk along a foot-path surrounding the serpent and experience the mystery and power of this monumental effigy.

A public park for more than a century, Serpent Mound attracts visitors from all over the world. The museum contains exhibits on the effigy mound and the geology of the surrounding area.

We were lucky indeed to have Delsey Wilson, director of Friends of Serpent Mound, and her father, James McKenzie, give us a guided tour of the effigy mound and surrounding area. We were also treated to a visit on private property to a view of the ancient crater referred to as the Serpent Mound disturbance.

The Serpent Mound disturbance is a nearly circular geologic feature approximately four miles in diameter located where Adams, Highland, and Pike counties intersect. The Serpent Mound disturbance is referred to as a cryptoexplosion structure and is thought to have originated from some powerful explosive event due to the impact of a large extraterrestrial body sometime between 299 and 251 million years ago. When hiking from east to west, the American Discovery Trail enters the area of the crater south of the town of Sinking Spring and exits the crater shortly after leaving Serpent Mound.

Welcome Aboard!

The American Discovery Trail Society would like to introduce the following people and their new positions with the ADT Society.

Allens are WV State Coordinators

No strangers to trails, D. J. and Ron Allen of historic Cairo, W.Va., are going to do what they can to promote the ADT, the North Bend Rail Trail (NBRT), and trails in general to those who pass their way! The couple bought Country Trails Bikes in Cairo in 1996 but were bike enthusiasts long before that. They were accustomed to biking two or three times a week and on weekends with their daughters, sometimes going out at 7 a.m. and not returning until late in the day.

The couple realizes the importance of trails and has made their bike shop/general store/info center into a unique stopping point for those who visit. With their love of history, they not only relay information about the trail, they also like to give guests a glimpse of what lies in either direction on the trail. They want others to find the same enjoyment along the trail, with the scenic getaway provided in the great outdoors.

Their shop was listed as a 2006 Rand McNally Best of the Road and Editor's Pick. That follows their desire to see others enjoy hiking, biking or horseback riding on the NBRT/ADT. Look for the ADT sign on their outdoor sign. As you pass their way, sit on their front porch and relax before hitting the trail again. In January, D. J., with daughters and grandson in tow, hit the road to the state

capitol in Charleston, for Trails in the Rotunda Day where they displayed photos from the ADT and NBRT and distributed info to legislators and guests. As in the past, they will continue their efforts to inform others about the ADT and assist those travelers who pass their way on the ADT/NBRT. Nature, history, the great outdoors and people having fun. Isn't that what trails are all about!

Cottrells Join ADTS Board

Peter and Joyce Cottrell have walked the entire distance of the ADT's northern and southern routes and now they are eager to share their enthusiasm for the trail by serving on the ADT Society board of directors. Lifelong residents of New Hampshire, the Cottrells raised two sons and participated in Boy Scouts before moving to the White Mountains to make the backcountry more a part of their everyday life.

They cut their teeth on long-distance hiking on a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail in 1998 and since then have continued their healthy lifestyle change by walking the Long Trail in Vermont, the American Discovery Trail, the Cohos Trail in New Hampshire, and the C&O Canal Trail in Maryland. They spend many weekends exploring local trails.

The Cottrells said, "Memories are the best. So many sights, events, and beautiful people fill those memories. Promoting the ADT is our goal since it brought such a warm spirit to us. We want that spirit to

spread. There is no better way to be part of this great country than to walk its earth and meet its people!"

Stark is National Coordinator

The American Discovery Trail Society has recently elected Brian Stark to serve as its new National Coordinator. This position was filled for many years by Reese Lukei but after he stepped down there has been no active national coordinator. Stark's responsibilities include coordinating and supporting the state coordinators, recruiting replacements for them as they occur, and serving as a clearinghouse for ideas and methods to improve their effectiveness.

Stark brings a wealth of knowledge to this position. He ran across the country on the ADT in 1998 and served as leader of the ADT Ford Adventure Team, attending events and giving information about the trail to numerous groups along the route. Stark's book about his experiences along his journey, *Getting to the Point*, was published in 2006. He has served on the ADT Society board of directors for ten years.

Making Connections...

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