



The Appalachian Trail “2020 Lockdown” Pat’s Diary – Day 1

Saturday 9th May – Springer Mountain - Plumorchard Gap

Here we stand at the Springer Mountain gate next to the famous arch in Amicalola Falls State Park, Team AT from the Bandon Hillwalking Club. Jerry McSweeney, Brian Payne, Gillian Crowley, Mick Doyle, Anne Marie Galligan, Gary Abbott, Gina Pendency, Robert Wilmot, Pauline Harrington, Rosemary O’Leary, Pat Downing, Peter & Angela Fehily. Mick took the photo but he missed us.



Robert starts to tell us that “Amicalola” is derived from a Cherokee language word meaning, "tumbling waters". Mick says right lets go, we walk out through the arch leaving Robert behind and Payno reminding us we need a combined distance of at least 80km per day, Rosemary said that’s 50 miles in the old U S of A, Anne Marie says always the teacher even on holidays!

We walked 72 miles through forest paths up through Hightower, Horse, Cooper, Gooch, Woody, Dan, Jarred, Bird, Flatrock, Neels, Bull, Swaim, Bags Creek Gaps and what seemed every gap the world bar a windy one.



We had made our way through the Raven Cliffs Wilderness and the Chattahoochee National Forest to Plumorchard Gap shelter in the south of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Gillian pointed out some poison ivy that I was sitting next to while Gary and Pauline went off looking for bears.



Robert started to tell us that the Chattahoochee National Forest is named after the river flowing through it and comprises two United States National Forests, The Oconee National Forest in eastern Georgia and The Chattahoochee National Forest located in the North Georgia Mountains so we left him there and started to pitch our tents for the night.

Jerry was standing next to his rucksack scratching his head looking around at Thomas's 6 Moon Design's Lunar Solo tent weighing approx. 698g and my MSR Huba Huba 2 man tent when he said FFS I forgot my tent. Everyone laughed, it's no wonder your rucksack was only 12kg.

We only had 2 x 2man tents and Peter said he wasn't swapping his place with Jerry even though Angela didn't seem to mind. Looks like I drew the short straw again. While I was trying to nod off to sleep, Jerry, whispered push over I forgot my sleeping bag as well.

