

Craighead House Chronicles

Volume II No. 4 Summer 2017



City Dweller

President's Message

**I would LOVE to study
Nature...but I live in the CITY.**

We can't all live in the Grand Tetons. And if everybody went there, most of the wild animals would probably move out. So if nature books or photographs have stirred our innate interest, how will those of us stuck in the big city study nature?

Let's consider how Frank, John, and Jean handled that.

Their school-year home in the 1930s was on the outermost edge of Washington, D.C. with city in front of them and fields behind. Taking full advantage of that location, , they GOT OUTDOORS at every opportunity. Next, they used whatever was at hand... wood and wire for cages, mason jars, ropes, pencil and paper, magnifying glasses, etc. Library books and talking to others enriched their fund of knowledge. They probably

John Coyle

watched local pigeons and squirrels. They hiked & played by the Potomac River. And as soon as school was out, they kicked off their shoes by the Yellow Breeches Creek and didn't put them on again until fall.

As for me, last week I was on the roof cleaning cypress needles from



Drawing by Catherine Anne Coyle

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Craighead House Committee Corporation is to preserve Craighead House and put it to use as a community learning and support center for educational activities related with the Craighead Naturalists' areas of interest and to house offices and museums related to conservation, writing, art, and local history.

Grants & Projects

We have submitted grant applications to the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau (CVVB), Cumberland County Planning Department, PA Department of Natural Resources (DCNR) and PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) for the improvements to the parking lot required by PennDOT and the township.

The work covered by these grant requests would include narrowing and paving the driveway entrance to Old York Road; grading, graveling & marking the parking lot; installing a storm water management system; paving a handicapped parking space and the ADA-compatible pathway from the parking lot to the house; and building an ADA-compatible restroom adjacent to the pathway. CVVB has informed us that they will grant us \$15,000 for this project. The other granting institutions are still evaluating proposals.

Craighead House also received a landscaping grant from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the Yellow Breeches Watershed Association. They awarded us funding to purchase native plants that have since been planted in the front and sleeping porch side of the house.

The exterior house painting is finished, completing the work done under the 2016 grant from the CVVB, the first grant received from a governmental agency. These

(Continued on last page)

In the 1920s and early 1930s, moments after our family arrived at the old Craighead house to spend a weekend or holiday with family, my cousin Bill Craighead would dash up to our car and ask me, “Wanna go minnie fishing?” Before he spoke, Bill knew my answer. Fishing for minnows was a special activity we both enjoyed during those elementary school age years.

Within seconds we were raiding his mother’s sewing basket for strong black thread and straight pins. We each bent a pin into a wide V, carefully forced its sharp tip into a slight hook, and tied thread to its head, a meticulous procedure. Then we made dough for bait, wetting a piece of crust-free white bread and kneading it to the perfect consistency. Dough had to be wet enough to wad into a tight, tiny ball to bait the hook, but if too wet, the ball would fall apart in creek water. In a final touch, we rolled the dough on our pants legs to avoid any excess water. There was a science to it, and Bill was a master.

Now we needed poles. Barefoot as always at Craighead, we ran down to a special bush at the end of the yard where a short, steep path led up to the railroad bridge. The bush’s straight twigs provided perfect fishing poles. We tied the thread line to the narrow end of the twig and set off, well equipped for fishing.



First cousins Bill Craighead and Barbara Gawthrop feed baby gulls, 1933.

Usually we fished from the dock first, putting our catches into a small bucket of creek water. If action was slow, we dumped those minnies back and crossed the railroad bridge to a familiar watery place on the other side of the creek. We knew from experience a place where water depth and flow were ideal, and minnies of many kinds abounded. Bill and I spent happy hours lost in our minnie fishing world.

The two-to-four inch long fish were a paltry catch by fisherman's standards, not much better than fishing for guppies, but skill was required. The challenge of landing the smaller scale catch was every bit as satisfying as the challenge of pickerel, bass, and trout. Our business was riffle minnies, fall fish, sand minnies, chubs, silver fins and other names long lost. We put our catch into a bucket of creek water, watched them swim a bit, then poured all back into the creek.

In later years, as Bill and I reminisced over these happy times of twig poles and thread lines and dough-baited hooks, his generous Craighead grin inevitably showed me that his memories of minnie fishing were every bit as happy as mine.

Allow me to add that what Bill & I enjoyed especially while fishing were simple things, like the different sounds of the creek water flowing in our side stream, then over small rocks, then over the dam. The patterns of leaves in the water and clouds against changing sky, the sounds of insects and birds we knew, when taken together, all created an unparalleled ambiance that was our beloved Craighead place. I regret that so many youngsters, young adults, older folks, and seniors do not have opportunities—or take opportunities—to enjoy such surroundings these days. The *natural outdoors* was a prevalent and strongly influential part of our Craighead family upbringing. Bill and I shared a love for all this deeply.

* Barbara Gawthrop Hallowell is a daughter of Ruth Craighead Gawthrop and a granddaughter of Charles and Agnes Craighead. Growing up, she spent many holidays and long weekends before WWII at Craighead House with her Craighead first cousins: Jean, Frank Jr., John, Sam and, especially, Bill.



Barbara Gawthrop in front of the privy, 1926.

Master Gardeners Garden Tour Brought More than 200 Visitors to Craighead House!

The Master Gardeners Garden Tour organized by the Penn State Master Gardeners of Cumberland County, toured the grounds, met the 2017 PA Honey Princess, Samantha Stouffer, and saw two beautiful hawks and presentations by their handlers, Sean Young and his daughter, Margaret. aka, Falconry Girl! The Youngs have agreed to spend Craighead 80/85 Day with us.



Margaret holds Non Ame, the year-old red-tailed hawk.
Sean holds an unnamed juvenile red-shouldered hawk.

Upcoming Events at Craighead House

July

- 11th Tues. Swimming and a walk in the meadow - 2 pm to 5 pm
12th Wed. Metal detecting and Exploration - 6 pm to 8 pm
18th Tues. Tubing and swimming - 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm
22nd Sat. Tubing and swimming - 1 pm to 4 pm
26th Wed. Metal detecting - 6 pm to 8 pm
29th Sat. Fishing - 9 am to 11 am *

* For experienced kids who can cast reels and put bait on hooks. Extra rods available.
If interested in the summer children's events contact Laurie Rudolph at rudolphlaurie@ymail.com. Please leave your email and phone in case of bad weather or if I need to get a hold of someone.



September

- 9 Sat. *Craighead 80/85 Celebration* 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.
Fun activities for the whole family!
24 Sun. *Geology of Cumberland Valley* 2:00 pm, Dr. Kip Bollinger,
Educator and former PA Science Education Advisor

October

- 22 Sun. *Scots-Irish in the Cumberland Valley* 2:00 pm, Dr. Cotton Seiler, Professor of American Studies at Dickinson College

Volunteers in Action

Lori and Larry Smarr (and dog Milo) pose in front of some of the new native plantings at Craighead House. They worked with CH Board member Lu Conser in planning, preparing and installing the plants that were purchased with a grant from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the Yellow Breeches Watershed Association. When not giving time to other local projects and community groups, Lori and Larry care for their passion, the nearby Bonnybrook Vineyard. Leslie Sobel from the Penn-Cumberland Garden Club also helped with garden planning.

Donations of time and materials, such as a pump for drawing water from the creek for the new plants from Joe McCorkel of McCorkel Contracting, have allowed Craighead House to be well along in its restoration journey.



You can donate to Craighead House:

on-line at CraigheadHouse.org

OR

By mail to:
Craighead House Committee
P.O. Box 335
Boiling Springs, PA 17007

City Dweller (from page 1)

my gutters when my 12 year old daughter Mary Louise said: "There's an animal up in that tree!" We were 25 feet above the sidewalk and she was pointing 20 feet higher, at a grey/brown shape barely discernible in the triple fork of our large bald cypress. After 10 minutes of vigorous discussion, we decided it was a raccoon taking a noonday snooze in the middle of the Borough of Carlisle. She then heard the story of "Charlie the Coon."

About 1960 he was our family pet who used to prowl under the Coyle dinner table as we ate meals... until that one day when he chomped quite hard on my big toe and earned his freedom. We watched him climb our big oak tree then, to seek his fortune.

I wonder what's in YOUR back yard? Click off your digital device and take your kids out to see.

Crants & Projects (from page 2)

funds came from local hotel tax receipts. Craighead House was also awarded a \$2,160 SNAP Grant from the CVVB to develop and print 5,000 copies of a brochure about Craighead House. Copies are available at the CVVB office, Bosler Library and various other sites in the area.

The Family

THE CRAIGHEAD FAMILY CAME TO THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY IN THE 1730'S. EARLY GENERATIONS WERE MINISTERS, FARMERS, AND BUSINESS OWNERS. 20TH CENTURY CRAIGHEADS EMBRACED THE STUDY OF NATURE.

FRANK CRAIGHEAD, SR. WAS NAMED "The Scholar of the Everglades" by Florida Governor Reubin Askew.

Twin sons JOHN AND FRANK, JR. helped continue their father's work here and popularized the sport of falconry in the U.S. Their research helped save the grizzly in Yellowstone Park, and they also co-authored the national Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968).

Daughter JUAN CRAIGHEAD GEORGE wrote Newberry's *Frontiers My Side of the Mountain* and *Jiller of the Wolves*—among 180+ children's nature books. *The Summer of the Falcon* is set at Craighead House.

The House

CHARLES COOPER CRAIGHEAD BUILT THE HOUSE FOR HIS BRIDE, AGNES, IN 1886. TODAY ITS HISTORY IS INSPIRING THE FUTURE.

We've completed the new roof, restored the sleeping porch, and painted the exterior. Gardeners are being revitalized with native plants.

Restoration has begun on the original art that decorates the kitchen and documents decades of visiting friends and family.

Eagle Scouts built our outdoor education area on the banks of the Yellow Birchtree that provides a lovely setting for programs and activities.

Our Programs

OUR PRESENTATIONS AND HANDS-ON LEARNING PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS INCLUDE A VARIETY OF FASCINATING OPTIONS, INCLUDING:

- Make a falcon and learn about falconry.
- Make a bamboo pole and fish in the Yellow Birchtree.
- Learn about the historic Cumberland Valley and the Craighead family.
- Take an Appalachian Trail talk.
- Learn about the Yellow Birchtree or just take a relaxing float.
- Explore our grounds, go boating or fishing, picnic, or hike—accessible parking available.

Learn more about Craighead House and sign up to receive our newsletters at www.craigheadhouse.org.

And don't forget to Like Craighead House on Facebook!

If you would like to schedule a presentation on the Craigheads, local history or share natural environment, please contact us at craigheadhouse@juno.com