

# First Seven Miles of the Horse-Shoe Trail

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**S**urrounded by the beauty of a brisk October day, sixteen members and friends of the Tredyffrin Easttown History Club climbed into the Berwyn Community Bus, driven by William Pyott and said, "All Aboard for the Covered Bridge at Valley Forge."

Down the hill and into that beautiful valley lined with hillsides of trees, colored by Dame Nature to match the rainbow, the bus continued on its way until we all scrambled out, took our canes and started north along the west side of Valley Creek. But it was not long until Mr. Teamer, the leader, started the hikers up a very stony hill for a five hundred foot climb to the top of Mount Misery (so named by William Penn because he was lost on this hill). A climb and then a rest, another climb and a rest and finally we all reached the top in good shape to continue our seven mile walk along the Horse-Shoe Trail which runs along the top of the ridge of hills west of Valley Forge.

Following Mr. Teamer, Mr. Burns, and the yellow horse shoes [used to mark the trail route], rattling the leaves as we walked along, and looking at the soil, all made the trip a most interesting one.

All at once we came upon a narrow gauge railroad, and being a group who never want to miss anything, we deviated from the trail to follow the railroad to a great sand quarry. Here we saw one of the finest views of our trip, the Great Valley, the beautiful hills on the south side and, of course, each tried to locate Berwyn, Paoli and Malvern as the High School or a church steeple peeped above the trees.

Back to the trail again and on a little farther we found another place about twenty-five feet from the trail where I believe the view was just a little lovelier than the one by the sand quarry. The reservoirs to hold and supply water for Berwyn and surrounding country were found along the trail; one is in use and the other dry. Rock quarries, too, were to be seen and of course the sand along the trail, which we are told was the beach of either the ocean or an inland sea.

Walking from 2:30 until 5:15 p.m. the travelers began to feel the need of food. According to all the rules of the History Club Trips (unwritten rules), food was at the end of the trail; for coming out of the woods, we walked north about a hundred yards to find our bus with all kinds of food ready to be cooked over an open fire. The men carried wood and soon we were sitting at the base of a great stone wall eating hamburgers, hot dogs, bacon and eggs and Ruth Moore's chocolate cake. The fire was laid in an old quarry with quite a lot of flat ground at the base of the wall where we sat around and sang the old songs. A few feet away was a quarry hole filled with lovely sparkling water. A more beautiful picture of nature could not have been found than the moon coming up over that great wall of rock and beaming down into the pool of water with the soft glow of the fire and sixteen happy people enjoying nature in its loveliest harvest costume.

Background: The Horse-Shoe Trail on Mt. Misery. Inset: Horseshoe trail blaze. *Images courtesy of Tim Lander, March 2009.*