

Re-Supply, 2007

Part Three: Harpers Ferry, WV to Kent, CT:

How much you want to carry out of Harpers Ferry is up to you: There are any number of small grocery stores in Maryland and southern PA that are quite close to the Trail:

*The Harpers Ferry Hostel on Sandy Hook Rd. has limited hiker supplies, and is also very close to a convenience store. They also accept mail/parcels.

*At Turners Gap/US40A one can hitch 2 miles or so to a small market in Boonesboro.

*.4 from the Trail crossing at I-70, there's a small camp store at Greenbriar State Park.

*At Wolfsville Rd. (MD17) one can go 2.4 miles west to the small market in Smithsburg; this is 39.9 miles from the Potomac River. At MD64, 2.1m from the AT, there's a Food Lion supermarket as well as a pharmacy, hardware store, and other shops. Also, there's a new hostel on Wolfsville Rd., the Free State Hostel, that will have bicycles available for guests, which should make re-supplying a lot easier.

*12.5 miles later, at PA16, there's a small market in Blue Ridge Summit, 1.2m East.

*At PA30, just under 60 miles from Harpers, there's a small market about a mile to the West. In Caledonia State Park, which the Trail goes thru, there's a snack bar by the pool. PA30 is also the road crossing where you can hitch into Gettysburg, which has all major services and is an extraordinary place to visit.

Note: Do not go anywhere near Gettysburg between 28 June and 7 July unless you want to be overwhelmed by two hundred thousand Winnebago-driving Civil War enthusiasts and their boisterous offspring.

*There's a very small camp store at Pine Grove Furnace Park, about 78 miles from Harpers. Not much there, but you can get some snacks to last you the 19 quick miles to Boiling Springs. The Ironmaster's Hostel in the park may also have limited hiker supplies for sale.

*At Pine Grove Road, there are two private campgrounds to the West; both maintain small camp stores.

*At PA34, you're just .2 from a small grocery store; at PA94, you're a couple of miles from the market in Mt. Holly Springs, but you're so close to Boiling Springs at this point that you may as well wait and shop there instead.

*In Boiling Springs, there's a good supermarket, but if you don't need it badly, you can probably get what you need at the convenience store that's visible from the Trail. You won't need much as Duncannon is just 25 miles North.

*At Trindle Rd. (PA641) one can hitch about two and a half miles to the west, towards Carlisle; there's a new shopping center with many shops, including a Target.

Note: It's about 98 miles from the Potomac River to Boiling Springs, and unless it's very hot, these are fairly easy miles. It will take most folks 6-7 days to cover this section.

*Duncannon PA is one of the great Trail towns. The century-old Doyle Hotel is a legendary hiker stop, with wonderful owners and a very friendly staff. The food, served in the famous bar-room, is great. The Doyle is undergoing a long-term gradual renovation, so if you haven't been there for awhile, you'll be pleasantly surprised at the changes. A very great deal of hard work has been put into the building in recent years, and it shows. That being said, the rooms are quite spartan, and people needing amenities such as TV's and telephones might do better at the Truck-stop motel at the North end of town. Stodgy folks, especially older ones, might also turn up their noses at the Doyle's accommodations, and it can get fairly festive at night, so this is probably not the best spot for anyone who has embraced sobriety. For those on a limited budget, the little campground at the north end of town is quite simple, but is also friendly and cheap. For your Re-Supply, the Post office is a few blocks away, and the Doyle also holds parcels. The town Supermarket, Mutzbaugh's, is quite large, but DON'T try and walk there unless you want to get killed. It's on a very busy street with no sidewalk, so try and get the daily van shuttle from the Doyle instead. The nearby Ottebein Methodist Church welcomes hikers, and offers internet service; the Doyle also has a computer available for a small fee. Hikers having any problems or emergencies, or who need a shuttle elsewhere, or medical service, etc. would do well to find Mary Parry, a local who has been taking great care of hikers for many years. Many folks seem to get to Duncannon right around the 4th of July. As gritty and hardscrabble as it seems to some folks, Duncannon is one of the friendliest towns on the whole Trail, and is a great place to take some time off.

*One has different options leaving Duncannon. At PA501 (about 46 miles from town) you can hitch to a market in Pine Grove; from the Shartlesville/Cross Mtn. Rd., (17 miles later) you can go into Shartlesville, which has restaurants and a convenience store.

*A lot of folks opt to get a maildrop in Port Clinton, tho it's generally quite easy to hitch or catch a ride to nearby Hamburg, which has a large market, as well as other services, including lodging. Hikers should note that the small outfitter mentioned in older guidebooks has now closed, tho you can get fuel, limited hiker fuel, footwear, and other gear items at the massive Cabela's outdoor superstore near Hamburg. This place is geared more towards hunters/fishermen/car campers, but it does have items of interest to hikers. There's also a gun room in which one could re-enact the First World War and about 12,000 stuffed animals of every persuasion. I think when taxidermists die, they go to Cabela's if they've been good. There is also a cafe restaurant that serves very large amounts of food to the predominantly very large people taking a break from their gun shopping. By the way, there may well be a van shuttle from Port Clinton that will take you to Cabela's and back again.

In Port Clinton itself, the Port Clinton Hotel has simple lodging. It also has great food. Hikers are welcome at the bar, but try and clean up a bit if you plan to eat in the main dining room. Also, don't miss the Peanut Shop, an old-fashioned candy shop that you'd think stopped existing around 1940. There's also an ATM here. Most folks stay at the picnic pavilion; you can also tent by the river across from the pavilion; a great diner is close by for breakfast. Fuel may be available at the pavilion, as well as juggled water.

*At the Blue Rocks Trail crossing, about 12 1/2 miles from Port Clinton, there's a small camp store at the Blue Rocks Campground.

*At Lehigh Gap, about 40 miles from Port Clinton, most folks go into either Slatington or Palmerton, with Palmerton being much more popular, and with better services. If the "Police Station" hostel is still open, please make sure you and your friends obey all posted regulations; along with the church

hostels in Damascus and Vernon, NJ, this is one of the most "threatened" hostels on the Trail, due to abuse by hiker guests.

*Five miles later, at Little Gap, one can walk a mile and a half to a small market in Danielsville.

*Many folks go into Wind Gap (PA33), about 61 miles from Port Clinton. There are all sorts of services here, but be prepared to walk a good bit as most of them are quite far from the Trail.

Note: You're only about 16 miles from the New Jersey border at this point, but this is a nasty, rocky stretch, and may take you a bit longer than you think.

*There's not that much actually in Delaware Water Gap, but there's a great church hostel right next to the Post Office. For shopping, there's a convenience store, a great bakery, and a small outfitter, as well as several restaurants, including a pizzeria and a great diner. Many folks opt to go into nearby Stroudsburg, a large college town that offers full services. The outfitter may offer a cheap van shuttle to Stroudsburg (beware of the unreliability of this!) and there may be real bus service connecting the two towns as well. If so, look for a schedule at the hostel.

*You'll probably want to bring a few days of food out of DWG, but don't over-do it; you'll be pleasantly surprised at all of the shopping/eating possibilities in New Jersey and New York.

*The Mohican Center, a good example of the Appalachian Mountain Club getting things right, offers sandwiches and snacks, as well as lodging. They also accept hiker mail. This is a great place and is an easy 10 mile hike from DWG.

*There are restaurants and convenience stores within walking distance of Culver's Gap, 28m north of DWG.

*At NJ23 (42 miles from DWG), one can hitch into Port Jervis, NY, which has restaurants, motels, and a supermarket.

*Just over 50 miles into New Jersey, the trail zigzags into New York State briefly; Unionville NY, less than half a mile from the Trail, has a friendly deli/market and an extremely friendly Post Office.

*12 miles later, at NJ94, most hikers go into nearby Vernon, which has a wonderful church hostel, a picnic pavilion you can sleep at if the hostel is full, several restaurants, and a large supermarket.

*At the NY17A crossing, about 15 miles from Vernon, there are small markets in Greenwood Lake, Bellvale, and Warwick. Most folks avoid this and carry food from Vernon.

*At NY17/Arden Valley Rd. one can hitch 2 miles to a convenience store.

*The Post Office in Bear Mountain may not be open in 2007. Hikers planning to send mail here would probably do better to send it to nearby Fort Montgomery, which also has restaurants and a small market.

*Just after crossing the Hudson, at US9, one can hitch into Peekskill, a large town with all major services.

*At NY52, there's a very friendly deli/market .4 to the east, with a pizzeria right next door.

*At NY55, there are restaurants and a large supermarket 2m to the west.

*From Country Road20/West Dover Rd., one can hitch into Pawling, which has markets, restaurants, and a free place to tent.

*At NY22, you can walk half a mile to a deli.

*At Hoyt Rd. there are restaurants and a grocery store if you hitch to nearby Wingdale.

*Just off the Trail at the Bull's Bridge Rd. crossing, there's a very friendly convenience store.

*Kent, CT offers all major hiker services with the exception of inexpensive lodging. Hikers may wish to stay at the very nice Mt. Algo shelter just south of town, then do their town stuff in the morning, and then move on.

Note: You are about to enter the most bug-infested area of the entire Appalachian Trail, so when in Kent, don't forget to pick up maximum strength Deet, or you WILL be hating life in short order.

In terms of time and mileage, it takes most folks 2-3 days to cover Maryland, and 15-17 for Pennsylvania, which for me, also includes a zero day in Delaware Water Gap. (Add days if you plan to take time off over the July 4 holiday). DWG to Kent, i.e. the NY/NJ section takes most folks 10-11 days.