

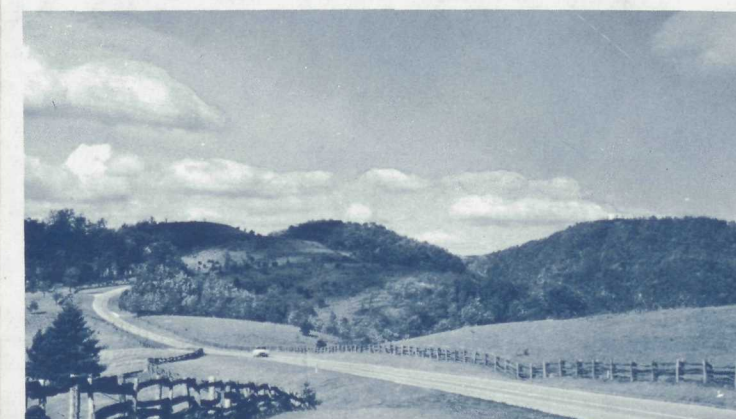
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Blue Ridge Parkway, highroad through Virginia and North Carolina, designed especially for the leisurely tourist, represents a new conception in roads. It is not an express parkway of the type built near big cities, but a quiet way through a distinctive part of the American scene—a road intended for gypsylike travel on the ride-awhile, stop-awhile basis.

You travel the Southern Highlands, a land of forested mountains, exquisite during the flowering spring, cool in the green summer, colorful in the red autumn. The stretches of woodland, the clustered mountains, and the views out to the lowlands are enlivened by the fields and pastures of highland farms, where split-rail fences, weathered cabins, and gray barns compose the "hill culture."

Among the National Parks in the East are Shenandoah, in northern Virginia, and Great Smoky Mountains, in North Carolina and Tennessee. One of the purposes of the parkway is to connect these wilderness areas over a mountainous distance of nearly 500 miles. The parkway, about three-quarters completed, leads through an "elongated tract" which protects a roadside of varied highland character. The roadway slopes are naturalistically planted in many places with rhododendron, azalea, white pine, and other native species. Parking overlooks are convenient balconies. Along the parkway, at intervals, are picnic areas, campgrounds, trailer sites, and hiking trails which lead to exhibits of unspoiled nature and to places that are prominent in folklore.

Grassy Gap (Mile 244).



The Southern Highlands

Blue Ridge Parkway traverses that section of the Appalachian Mountains south of the Mason-Dixon line. These great eastern mountains, reaching from Maine to Georgia, are a broad ribbon of many parallel ranges connected by cross ranges and tumbled mountains and hills. From Shenandoah National Park for a distance of 355 miles, the parkway follows the Blue Ridge Mountains, eastern rampart of the Appalachians. Then, skirting the southern end of the massive Blacks, it weaves through the Craggies, the Pisgahs, and the Balsams to the Great Smokies. It is a region of ancient, rugged mountains and deep, narrow coves and valleys. Superb scenery and an agreeable climate lure the vacation-minded.

The physiography of the Southern Highlands has directly shaped the history of its inhabitants, dictating where the Indian should live and turning the tides of white immigration between its hills. The first pioneers settled in the valleys and became prosperous. Those arriving later took up progressively more isolated homesteads. They cut the trees and allowed the rich topsoil to run away and erosion to get a start. Thus was set in motion a process which made the land progressively less fertile and the settlers ever poorer.

Blue Ridge Parkway "tells" the story of these fiercely independent people, a story still being written on the face of this land where crops hang on the hillsides, split-rail fences zigzag pasture boundaries, and smoke comes from the chimneys of log cabins perched high on steep cove-rover land. They brought their ballads with them and passed them from parent to child by word of mouth. Their musical instruments are the fiddle, the banjo, and the guitar, which are used to accompany not only the songs but the folk dances. The crossroad country stores, which often include the post office, are the hub of community life during the week, while the rural churches become the center on Sunday. The recent consolidation of the public school system has all but eliminated the storied one-room school, but several are still in use along the parkway.

Improved roads, electric lines, radios, and television have changed the old way of life in the mountains, but centers have been established where the old handicrafts are taught and practiced and where the old arts flourish. Handicraft articles are in great demand and are available at outlets along the parkway.

Places of special interest are marked by this emblem. In them may be located picnic areas and campgrounds, visitor centers, exhibits, trails, food, gas, lodging, and comfort stations. See map narrative for facilities in a particular place.



Catawba rhododendron at Alligator Back (Mile 242.6).

The Flowering Season

In early May, white blossoms of dogwood brighten the leafless forests; the ground is dappled with snow trillium, and golden groundsel is abundant. Another early flower is pink azalea. In mid-May, flame azalea lights the forest, and the blossoms of Fraser magnolia are a creamy white.

Early in June the mountain-laurel bursts forth in pink-white blossoms. Dense thickets of catawba rhododendron overflow with purple, reaching a mid-June peak at Craggy Gardens. American elder is commonly seen, and vipersbugloss fills the fields with minarets of blue. Sundrops grow in yellow rows along rock cuts.

White rhododendron blooms in early July, and the fields are a white cover of fleabane, oxeye-daisy, and yarrow. Black-eyed-susan and yellow coreopsis add a note of color. Clumps of orange butterfly milkweed (butterfly-weed) are conspicuous.

In August, flower color is most pronounced in marshy meadows. Here snapweed is a rich orange, and the rare cardinalflower flares like a torch, often in company with blue lobelia. The rich purple of ironweed covers entire fields, and joe-pye-weed blooms tall and lavender in competition.

September is the time of aster and goldenrods. Their colors herald the autumn color season. Note: The range in elevation (from 649 to 6,050 feet) lengthens the flowering period—a species fading at 2,000 feet may be in bud at 4,000 feet.

Autumn Color

In late September the deep red of blackgum, sourwood, and dogwood are conspicuous in the green forest. Sumac and Virginia-creepers add bright reds to the roadside.

Early in October the birches are solid masses of yellow. Buckeye, beech, and mountain-ash add yellow shades on higher ridges. Yellow-poplar (tuliptree), giant of the forest, turns a rich gold; sassafras, a bright orange. Hickories and oaks have a leathery sheen. No tree adds more brilliance than red maple, "Color King of the Southern Appalachians"—it is everywhere.

By mid-October, autumn color is at its gorgeous best. Two weeks later the leaves have fallen and color has melted away, leaving the dark green of the conifers. In the higher elevations, the parkway winds through magnificent stands of spruce, fir, and hemlock.

What To Do

PICNICKING. Picnic areas provide parking spaces, tables, fireplaces, drinking water, trash cans, and comfort stations. Firewood is sold by the parkway concessioners.

CAMPING. Free campgrounds and trailer areas, modern but without electricity, are provided at Otter Creek, Peaks of Otter, and Rocky Knob in Virginia, and at Doughton Park, Julian Price Memorial Park, and Crabtree Meadows in North Carolina. Here you will find tent platforms, fireplaces, trash cans, table-bench combinations, drinking water, and comfort stations. Bring your own camping supplies. Length of stay is limited to 14 days. Campsites cannot be reserved.

There are also camping areas nearby in George Washington, Jefferson, and Pisgah National Forests.

Note: Water in picnic areas and campgrounds is shut off with the first freeze, generally in late October.

HIKING. Trail systems have been developed in the recreation areas. Ask the park rangers for information.

PHOTOGRAPHY. Here is a challenge for the amateur and an opportunity for the professional. Don't forget color film.

FISHING. Rainbow and brook trout are found in parkway streams. State licenses are required and State laws prevail, except that live or dead bait fish may not be used.

MOTORING. The parkway is for your motoring pleasure. Here are a few tips for the driver:

Maximum speed limit in 45 miles per hour. Take an occasional break from driving. Slow down. If you must get there in a hurry, travel State highways where the speed limit is higher.

The parkway is a winding mountain road requiring all your attention to drive. Do your viewing from overlooks. Signs tell you when you are approaching one. Watch for traffic entering or leaving overlooks.

A solid centerline marks the parkway. Its purpose is to define the traffic lanes. Passing zones are not indicated, and you may pass another vehicle whenever you have sight distance to do so safely.

Watch for traffic using private road crossings; entering vehicles are required to stop, but occasionally one doesn't. Ask the park rangers for information or assistance.

HORSEBACK RIDING. There are more than 20 miles of horse trails in Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. Horses may be hired at nearby Blowing Rock.

GOLFING, SWIMMING, TENNIS. Facilities for these sports are not available within the boundaries of the Blue Ridge Parkway, but they can be found in nearby mountain resorts.

Interpretive Facilities and Services

This squirrel gun and powder horn symbol marks way-side exhibits and places of scientific or historic interest.

VISITOR CENTERS. Museum exhibits explain the natural and human history of the region. HUMPBACK ROCKS VISITOR CENTER (Mile 5.8) features the pioneer mountain farm. JAMES RIVER VISITOR CENTER (Mile 63.6) features the story of the James River and the Kanawha Canal. PEAKS OF OTTER VISITOR CENTER (Mile 86) features wildlife.

MABRY MILL (Mile 176) features the oldtime mountain industry. In operation are a water-powered mill and a blacksmith shop. Tannery exhibits are displayed in a reconstructed mountain cabin. MUSEUM OF NORTH CAROLINA MINERALS (Mile 331) features the great variety of minerals found in North Carolina. A study collection is available for use by mineralogists. CRAGGY GARDENS VISITOR CENTER (Mile 364.6) emphasizes natural history. Here are found models of the beautiful flowering shrubs native in the area.

SELF-GUIDING TRAILS. Features along self-guiding trails are explained by labels or by numbered stakes and a booklet. The trails are on easy grade and take about 30 minutes.

MOUNTAIN FARM TRAIL (Mile 5.8) leads through a typical pioneer mountain farm, which has been reconstructed with the utmost attention to detail. GREENSTONE TRAIL (Mile 8.8) reveals effects of environment on plants.

TRAIL OF THE TREES (Mile 63.6) leads to overlooks high on the bank of the James River. ELK RUN TRAIL (Mile 86) introduces a forest plant and animal community.

ROCKY KNOB TRAIL (Mile 168) leads to an overlook of Rock Castle Gorge. MABRY MILL TRAIL (Mile 176) features oldtime mountain industry.

Peaks of Otter Visitor Center (Mile 86).



CASCADES TRAIL (Mile 272) leads to a waterfall cascading hundreds of feet to the valley below. FLAT ROCK TRAIL (Mile 308.3) presents magnificent views of Linville Valley and Grandfather Mountain. LINVILLE FALLS TRAIL (Mile 317.5) winds its way to views of Linville Falls and Linville River Gorge. CRAGGY GARDENS TRAIL (Mile 364.6) passes through high mountain heath "gardens." DEVILS COURTHOUSE TRAIL (Mile 422.4) leads to breathtaking view of mountains in four States.

NATURALIST SERVICES. During June, July, and August, guided nature walks and outdoor evening talks are scheduled at Peaks of Otter, Doughton Park, Price Park, and Crabtree Meadows. The talks are on natural or human history and on things to see and do in the parkway. Ask for a "Naturalist Program" at visitor centers and other points of visitor concentration along the parkway.

Craft Demonstrations and Sales

BRINEGAR CABIN (Mile 238.5), in an authentic setting, offers demonstrations of weaving on an old mountain loom. Textile handicraft articles are for sale.

PARKWAY CRAFT CENTER (Mile 294) presents demonstrations of weaving, rug making, gem cutting, and other crafts from time to time by members of the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild. In the Pioneer Museum are displayed weaving, basketry, furniture, kitchen utensils, and tools of the cottage crafts. The guild also has handicraft articles for sale.

NORTHWEST TRADING POST (Mile 258.6) is a country store, displaying and selling native handicrafts and produce of the surrounding region.

Parkway Season

Although the parkway is open all year, the best time for a visit is from May through October. During winter and early spring, it may be necessary to close sections of the road for short periods because of ice or snow. The high sections west of Asheville and between Miles 355 and 375 are closed from the first icing-over, usually mid-November, until April 15. Campgrounds, picnic areas, and other visitor accommodations are available from May through October.

During the travel season, the mean temperature varies from 52° to 71°, with an average maximum of 80° and an average minimum of 43°. Summer precipitation often occurs as thundershowers, but in spring or autumn it is not uncommon to have periods of fog and "rainy spells" which may last for several days or longer.

Because of its length, the whole parkway seldom experiences the same weather at the same time.



Gas station and coffee shop, Doughton Park.

Accommodations and Services

(Season: May 1 to November 1 unless otherwise noted.)

LODGING. Bluffs Lodge in Doughton Park (Mile 241). A 24-room lodge located near Bluffs Coffee Shop. For reservations write to Bluffs Lodge, National Park Concessions, Inc., P.O. Laurel Springs, N.C. Rocky Knob Cabins (Mile 174). Overnight and house-keeping accommodations. For reservations write to Rocky Knob Cabins, National Park Concessions, Inc., Meadows of Dan, Va. Season: May 29 to Labor Day.

FOOD SERVICE. Whetstone Ridge (Mile 29). Restaurant and craft shop. Otter Creek (Mile 60.8). Restaurant and craft shop. Peaks of Otter (Mile 86). Sandwich shop in bus station. Mabry Mill (Mile 176). Lunch and craft shop. Doughton Park (Mile 241). Bluffs Coffee Shop. Cherry Hill (Mile 256.9). Restaurant. Crabtree Meadows (Mile 339). Sandwiches, drinks.

SERVICE STATIONS. Whetstone Ridge (Mile 29). Otter Creek (Mile 60.8). Peaks of Otter (Mile 86). Rocky Knob (Mile 169). Doughton Park (Mile 241). Cherry Hill (Mile 256.9). Crabtree Meadows (Mile 339).

BUS SERVICE. Peaks of Otter (Mile 86). From bus station up Sharp Top.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.

COVER: Parkway near Iron Mine Hollow (Mile 96.7).

Help Us Protect the Parkway

This is your parkway. We ask you to assist us in protecting it.

Leave the shrubs and wildflowers for others to enjoy. Drive carefully. Speed limit is 45 miles per hour. If you have an accident, report it to a park ranger. Vehicles being used commercially are not allowed on the parkway.

Please do not throw trash from your car. Use the receptacles at parking and picnic areas. Please, no swimming in parkway lakes and ponds.

FIRE is the archenemy of the parkway. Use the fireplaces in campgrounds and picnic areas. Burning matches and tobacco start fires, too, so dispose of them safely. Protect the wildlife. Watch for animals as you drive and try to avoid hitting them with your car. The parkway is a sanctuary for wildlife, and hunting is prohibited.

Keep dogs and cats on leash or otherwise under restrictive control at all times. Deliberate infraction of parkway regulations may bring penalty of fine or imprisonment or both.

Administration Blue Ridge Parkway is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is P.O. Box 1710, Roanoke, Va., is in immediate charge.

Mission 66 Mission 66 is the National Park Service's 10-year program of conservation, development, and improvement. It is scheduled for completion in 1966, the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service.

At Blue Ridge Parkway, principal accomplishments under the program include 72 new miles of parkway and 33 major bridges; grading is in progress on 36 additional miles. Campgrounds, visitor centers, amphitheatres, trails, interpretive exhibits, and employee residences have been built.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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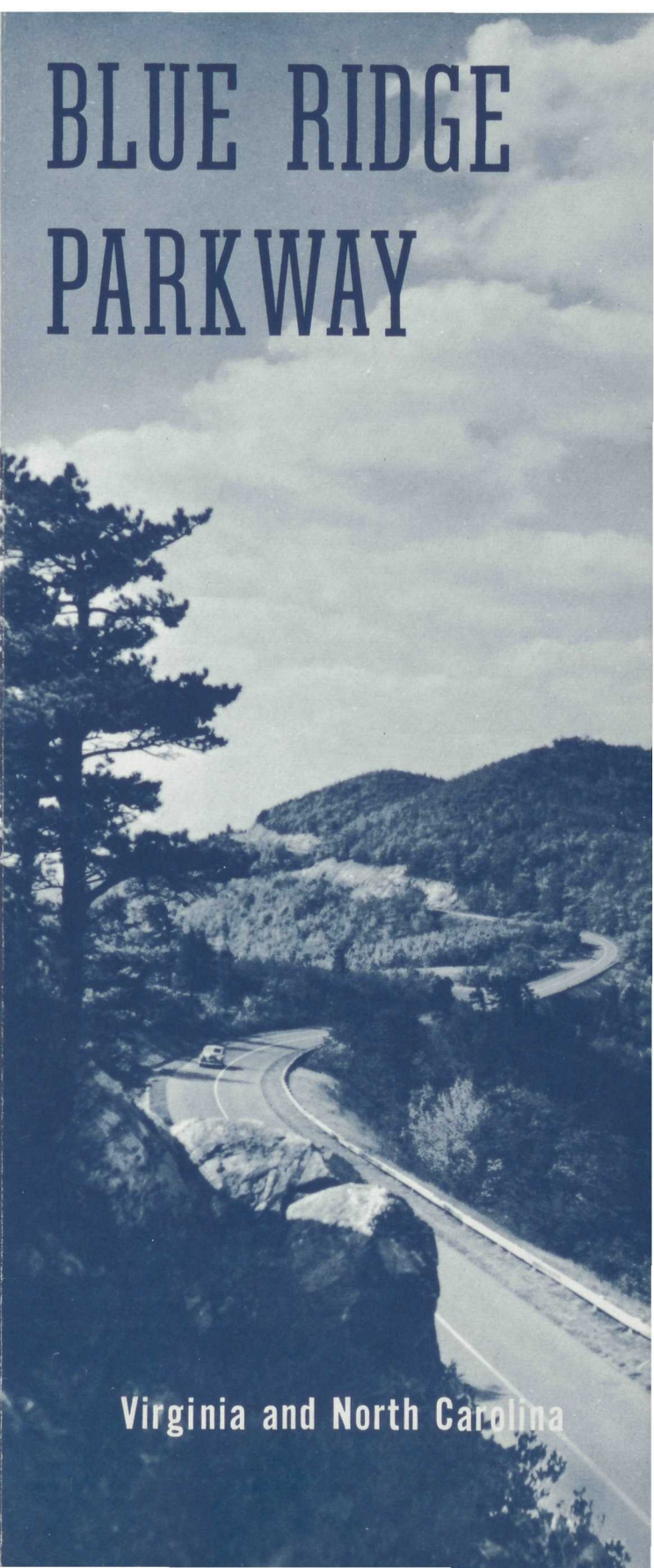
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BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Virginia and North Carolina



The Great Smoky Mountains from Mile High Overlook.

Looking Glass Rock (Mile 417).

Craggy Pinnacle (Mile 364.6).

Museum of North Carolina Minerals (Mile 331).

Highland Meadows, Doughton Park.

Fox Hunters Paradise (Mile 218.6).

Mabry Mill (Mile 176.1).

The Peaks of Otter (Mile 92.6).

Silver Peak Overlook (Mile 44.9).

The Mountain Farm Cabin (Mile 5.8).

At the southern end of the Blue Ridge Parkway lies Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The park is renowned for its splendid forests and for the rich variety of its plant-life. Park headquarters are located 2 miles south of Gatlinburg, Tenn.

You will be interested in visiting the Cherokee Indians on the Cherokee Reservation immediately south of the park. Living in modern homes and attending modern schools, they have preserved many of the ceremonies, sports and crafts of their ancestors.

In the following descriptions of places of interest along the parkway, mileages are given as points of reference. You will notice the mileposts. Mile 0 is at the northern end, at Rockfish Gap.

The Great Craggy, Pisgah, Balsam, and Plott Balsam mountain ranges lack the orderly arrangement characterizing the Appalachians as a whole. At Richland Balsam the parkway reaches its highest elevation—6,050 feet.

- Mile Special Features**
- 413.2 Poundingmill Parking Overlook. Far to the southeast are the Blue Ridge Mountains. Looking Glass Rock is a prominent landmark.
 - 422.4 Devils Courthouse Parking Overlook. 15-minute trail to the "courthouse." Magnificent 360° prospect.
 - 451.2 Waterrock Knob Parking Overlook. On a clear day, a 4-State view (North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and South Carolina) includes a superb panorama of the Great Smokies. Docks Gap. Parkway goes through Cherokee Indian Reservation for next 11 miles.
 - 458.2 Heintoga Ridge spur road. Mile High Overlook, 1.3 miles; picnic area and Balsam Mountain Campground in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, 7.3 miles.
 - 469 Terminus of Blue Ridge Parkway at U.S. 441.

The mountains reach their greatest height at Mount Mitchell in the Black Mountain Range, between Buck Creek Gap and Asheville. At Black Mountain Gap the parkway leaves the Blue Ridge. About 9 miles farther, near Craggy Pinnacle, it begins to descend toward Asheville.

- Mile Special Features**
- 355.4 Black Mountain Gap. N.C. 128 to Mount Mitchell State Park. Between Mile 355 and 370, the parkway is in and out of Asheville watershed. Regulations prohibit stopping here or contaminating the watershed. Stand of virgin red spruce (Mile 355 to 360).
 - 363.4 Craggy Gardens. Craggy Dome Overlook; trail to Craggy Pinnacle (Mile 364.1). Pinnacle Gap Overlook, visitor center and exhibits, comfort station, self-guiding trail, and the heart of the purple rhododendron "gardens" (peak bloom in mid-June) (Mile 364.6). Road to picnic area, comfort station, trails (Mile 367.6).

The parkway traverses western North Carolina's resort area. It winds in and out of Pisgah National Forest between Grandfather Mountain and Great Smoky Mountains. Grandfather Mountain (elev. 5,939) is appropriately named; its rocks are among the oldest known.

- Mile Special Features**
- 292.7 to 298 Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. Horse and carriage trails; fishing. Parkway Craft Center. Julian Price Memorial Park. Camping area, trails, fishing.
 - 308.3 Flat Rock. Self-guiding trail to superb view.
 - 317.5 Linville Falls, donated by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Reached via U.S. 221 and N.C. 105—1.6 miles. Trails to overlooks of falls and gorge. Comfort station.
 - 320.7 Chestoa. View from vertical cliff of Humpback Mountain.
 - 331 Museum of North Carolina Minerals.
 - 339.5 Crabtree Meadows. Camping and trailer areas; comfort stations; gas station; trail to 60-foot Crabtree Falls (Mile 339.5). Picnic area (Mile 340.3).

High, rolling bluegrass pastures terminate in precipitous bluffs. Purple rhododendron blooms spectacularly in early June.

- Mile Special Features**
- 238.5 to 244.7 Doughton Park. Weaving demonstrated on old mountain loom at Brinegar Cabin (Mile 238.5). Camping area (Mile 239.3). Trailer area (Mile 239.4). Coffee shop, gas station, picnic area, Bluffs Lodge, Wildcat Rocks (Mile 241.1). Trails, fishing.
 - 257 Cherry Hill Restaurant, gas station.
 - 258.6 Northwest Trading Post—a country store.
 - 264.4 The Lump Parking Overlook. Sweeping view of forested foothills.
 - 272 Cascades Parking Overlook. Comfort station. Self-guiding trail to cascades tumbling several hundred feet.
 - 289.6 Raven Rocks Parking Overlook. The white building seen high on the mountainside several miles away is the Parkway Craft Center in Moses H. Cone Memorial Park.

Dead chestnut trees, still standing like ghosts, give mute testimony to the fate of a once magnificent and valuable forest. Until they were killed by the blight, the use of their bark, fruit, and wood served as an important basis of the mountain economy. Entering North Carolina, you will find the mountain country higher and more sparsely settled; and the views, framed by finger ridges, sweep toward the Piedmont.

- Mile Special Features**
- 188.8 Groundhog Mountain Overlook. Examples of chestnut rail fences—snake, post and rail, and buck.
 - 217.5 Cumberland Knob. Picnic area; trails; comfort station.
 - 218.6 Fox Hunters Paradise. 10-minute trail to Paradise, where oldtime hunters listened to their hounds.

For 140 miles south from Adney Gap, the parkway generally follows the crest of the Blue Ridge, traversing a region of highland farms. The Blue Ridge here is a high, rolling plateau which breaks in sharp escarpment to the east and the Piedmont.

- Mile Special Features**
- 144 Devils Backbone Parking Overlook. Fine view over valley farms.
 - 154.5 Smart View. Picnic area; trails; comfort stations.
 - 166 to 174 Rocky Knob. Camp and trailer area (Mile 167). Self-guiding trail from Saddle Parking Overlook (Mile 168). Gas station; picnic area; comfort stations; trails (Mile 169). Housekeeping cabins (Mile 174).
 - 176.1 Mabry Mill. Visitor center; self-guiding trail features old-time mountain industry; water-powered mill and blacksmith shop in operation; lunch and craft shop; comfort station.

The high valley sheltered by the twin Peaks of Otter has long been known as a mountain retreat. Sharp Top (elev. 3,870) is the more conspicuous peak, and from it was taken the Virginia stone for the Washington Monument. Parkway headquarters are in Roanoke.

- Mile Special Features**
- 79.7 Onion Mountain Parking Overlook. Short loop trail through rhododendron and mountain-laurel. Fine bloom in early June.
 - 84 to 87 Peaks of Otter. Visitor center; self-guiding trail; gas station; bus trips to Sharp Top; sandwich shop; picnic, camping, and trailer areas; comfort stations.
 - 100.9 Quarry Parking Overlook. Quarrying for limestone is not uncommon in this section. The quarry seen from the overlook is a typical operation.
 - 129.6 Roanoke Valley Parking Overlook. This wide and lovely valley is a splendid location for the city of Roanoke, Va.

The parkway parallels Otter Creek from Mile 56.6 to the James River. Southward, it climbs 3,300 feet in 13 miles from its lowest elevation at the river to its highest point in Virginia at Apple Orchard Mountain (elev. 3,950).

- Mile Special Features**
- 19 20-Minute Cliff Overlook. Note "hanging" fields on mountainsides.
 - 29 Whetstone Ridge. Gas station and restaurant.
 - 34.4 Yankee Horse logging railroad exhibit. Waterfall.
 - 58 Otter Creek. Camping area, gas station, and restaurant (Mile 60.8). Otter Lake, fishing (Mile 63.1). Visitor center and self-guiding trail (Mile 63.6).
 - 71 Petit Gap. U.S. Forest Service road to Cave Mountain Lake (7 miles). Swimming, picnicking, camping.
 - 74.7 Thunder Ridge Parking Area. 8-minute loop trail to superb view of Arnolds Valley.

Skyline Drive, which traverses the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Shenandoah National Park, connects with the Blue Ridge Parkway at Rockfish Gap.

- Mile Special Features**
- 5 Humpback Rocks. Visitor center and comfort station, reconstructed mountain homestead (Mile 5.8). Picnic area, comfort station (Mile 8.4). Self-guiding trail from Greenstone Parking Overlook (Mile 8.8). Stone fences are remnants of "hog-walls" built in early 1800's to control wanderings of half-wild hogs that foraged for acorns and chestnuts.
 - 10.7 Ravens Roost Parking Overlook. Torrey Mountain and Shenandoah Valley to the west.
 - 16 Va. 814 to Sherando Lake (4.5 miles), a U.S. Forest Service recreation area. Swimming, picnicking, camping.

