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**A Playground for the Privileged:
The Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Department of History
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Department of History

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In October of 2014, the internet and Facebook were abuzz with the “discovery” of an abandoned town deep within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park by a hiker with a video camera. This unearthing of a lost civilization made headlines around the country. Unknown to many of the video’s viewers, the so-called abandoned community- Elkmont, Tennessee-is one of the most visited and accessible areas of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This section of vacant buildings and cottages may seem barren and skeletal to many park visitors but it is full of rich history, especially during the 1930s when the national park was coming into fruition. Two elite and competing social clubs emerged in the region as the area became especially popular to the wealthy and upper-class residents of Knoxville, Tennessee. The Appalachian Club and the Wonderland Club not only recreated the section of Elkmont into a retreat for their summer homes, the members of these social clubs found loopholes and persuaded politicians to allow their communities to remain while hundreds of homesteads were forced to leave as the government developed and established the park. Club members also negotiated life-long leases with the National Park Service even after park boundaries were redrawn to include the area of Elkmont, with most of the agreements lasting until 1992. While the histories of Elkmont, the Appalachian Club, and the Wonderland Club are heavily documented in primary sources, no extensive in-depth material has been published that fully examines these topics. Secondary sources typically contain only a few pages on this abandoned area that once thrived in its hey-days. Rather, authors and scholars focus on the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as a whole. It is time for Elkmont to once again be “discovered” and its history and story told, this

time through scholarly research rather than social media, because Elkmont proved that even in national parks the elite and wealthy can still use their money and power to influence decisions in their favor.

Margaret Lynn Brown has included the history of Elkmont and the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs in her 2000 work entitled *The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains*. The monograph provides not only an environmental history of the Great Smoky Mountains but also shows the interconnectedness between the region's natural landscape and the inhabitants who called it home from the time of the Cherokee Indians through the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The most beneficial part of this book is *Chapter 3: Scenery in the Eminent Domain*. It discusses Elkmont, the Appalachian Club, and Wonderland Club in regards to the movement to build a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains.¹

Another up and coming scholar on Elkmont and the Wonderland Club is Mary F. Fanslow, who graduated from East Tennessee State University in 2004. Her article "From Timbering to Tourism: The Wonderland Hotel's Early Years," was published in 2003 in the *Journal of Appalachian Studies* and is a source that has examined the origins of the Wonderland Hotel from its early creation through the height of the hotel's popularity and the effects of the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The article is greatly beneficial because it focuses on "the rationale for the hotel, the nature of its owners and guests, its social amenities,

¹ Margaret Lynn Brown, *The Wild East* (Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, 2000).

and the architecture and interior design of the hotel” while demonstrating that “a heterogeneous class structure existed in its vicinity.”²

Lost Elkmont is a book in the series “The Images of America” that celebrates the histories of America’s neighborhoods, towns, and cities through archival photographs and materials.

David Paulin is an author who has extensively gathered primary sources and interviews with residents who had ties to Elkmont and the region to create the *Lost Elkmont* edition of the series.

Lost Elkmont gives a short history of Elkmont and the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs during the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and summarizes accounts of the happenings in Elkmont both before and during the time of the park’s establishment. This source provides great insight into the histories of the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs and how the birth of the national park helped shape the way of life in Elkmont and the surrounding region, primarily through photographs.³

Dr. Daniel Pierce is one of the most prominent scholars in regards to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the history of the Southern Appalachian region and has written many books on Southern Appalachia. Published in 2000, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* provides a detailed history of the Great Smoky Mountains region and contains relevant information regarding the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs as well as historical and contextual information regarding the development of the Great Smoky Mountains

² Mary F. Fanslow, “From Timbering to Tourism: The Wonderland Hotel’s Early Years,” *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 9, no.2 (Fall 2003): 443-449, accessed March 19, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41446581>.

³ Daniel L. Paulin, *Images of America: Lost Elkmont* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2015).

National Park and the effects it had on pre-park inhabitants. This source examines the Appalachian National Park Association and the push to secure the region for recreational use, eminent domain and the government's acquisition of private land to establish the park, and the main contributors and characters that helped shape and form the land's conservation.⁴

Elkmont and the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs are also briefly mentioned in Michael Ann Williams' 1995 book *Great Smoky Mountains Folklife*, which looks at the lives of the mountain inhabitants instead of just the political processes and the federal government's role in creating the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The most useful section of this source is *Chapter 8: Displacement and Sense of Place in the National Park* which provides great insight into the lives of the people who lived in or around Elkmont during the time the clubs were formed and how the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park affected the lives of the mountaineers.⁵

It is evident in the research done on Elkmont, the Appalachian Club, and the Wonderland Club that a void exists extensively detailing how these social clubs were able to use their wealth and influence to avoid many of the regulations and requirements faced by poorer residents as the Great Smoky Mountains National Park emerged. The histories of the clubs, their relationships with the federal government, the powers that ultimately permitted them to stay within the boundaries of the park, and how residents and their descendants were able to continue living in

⁴ Daniel Pierce, *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000), 143-169.

⁵ Michael Ann Williams, *Great Smoky Mountains Folklife* (Jackson, MS: The University Press of Mississippi, 1995).

the national park by obtaining life-long leases need to be reexamined. Each new decade between the 1940s and the 1980s brought with it an interesting contribution to the story of Elkmont and the privileged who used the area as their personal playground and tried to write their own rules with monetary influence.

During the turn of the nineteenth century the area of Elkmont was home to the Little River Lumber Company and Little River Railroad Company, both owned by Colonel Wilson B. Townsend. After the land had been stripped of its valuable timber, Townsend repurposed the land and increased his profits by leasing areas of his landholdings to wealthy outdoorsmen from Knoxville for recreational use such as hunting and fishing. On February 11, 1910 Townsend and the Little River Lumber Company deeded 50 acres to the sportsmen's Appalachian Club; 65 acres were deeded to what would become the Wonderland Club the following year.⁶ Over the next two decades more than 50 cottages, summer homes, recreational facilities, and clubhouses would be erected in "Club Town" for the enjoyment of the wealthy and elite club members, with a portion of the town deemed "Millionaires Row."⁷ A map of Elkmont in the early 1920s can be seen in Appendix A.⁸

The effort to create a national forest or park in the Southeast began at the turn of the century and was beginning to take root as organizations pressed the federal government to take

⁶ Land Deed from Little River Lumber Company to Appalachian Club, February 11, 1910, Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives (abbreviated as GSMNP Archives in the remainder of this thesis), Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁷ "Appalachian Club Town Map"; "Wonderland Hotel Area Map" GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁸ Map, in Paulin, *Images of America: Lost Elkmont*, 63.

action. The Appalachian National Park Association held a convention on October 25, 1902 in Asheville, North Carolina to discuss the proposed Appalachian National Forest Reserve. In attendance were representatives of the Asheville Board of Trade, the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce and the Newport Board of Trade, and the Directors of the Appalachian National Park Association.⁹ Rutherford P. Hayes, President of The Appalachian National Park Association, said in a speech at the convention, “Federal action is obviously necessary, is fully justified by reason of public necessity, and may be expected to have fortunate results.”¹⁰ By the time of the convention not only were bills passed by Congress to investigate the possibility of a national park in the Smoky Mountains, many other states where a proposed park could be established ceded “to the National Government the right to acquire title to such lands as were desired” for such a project.¹¹ The Weeks Act of 1911, whereby the federal government was authorized to acquire certain lands in order to preserve and conserve their integrity through either purchase or donation, was a tremendous step in the formation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.¹² Yet, there were still hurdles to overcome if the park was to officially be established.

By the 1920s the movement to secure lands in Western North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee for a national park was firmly implanted at both the local and national levels, led by Mr. and Mrs. Willis P. Davis of Knoxville, who had toured western national parks and compared

⁹ The Appalachian National Park Association, *Appalachian Forest Reserve: Proceedings of the Convention Held Oct. 25, 1902 at Asheville, NC*, (Asheville, NC: Asheville Printing Co., 1902), 2.

¹⁰ The Appalachian National Park Association, *Appalachian Forest Reserve*, 5.

¹¹ The Appalachian National Park Association, *Appalachian Forest Reserve*, 13.

¹² U.S. Congress, “The Weeks Act,” Public No. 435, H.R. 11798, March 1, 1911.

them to the breathtaking scenery of the Great Smokies. Mr. Davis was a well-known wealthy businessman from Knoxville who managed the Knoxville Iron Company and was a board member of both the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce and Knoxville Automobile Club; his local status also helped influence the park's creation.¹³ Mrs. Davis was highly involved in local Knoxville women's organizations including the League of Women Voters and the Knoxville Garden Club; she also became the first woman to represent Knox County in the Tennessee State Legislature, where she had direct influence on the creation of a national park in the Smokies.¹⁴ Colonel David C. Chapman, an Appalachian Club member and landholder, also contributed his time and effort into the park movement. Chapman served on the Board of the Knoxville Automobile Club and Knoxville Chamber of Commerce and was a prominent local businessman in the Knoxville Community who presided over the Chapman Drug Company.¹⁵ During the park movement he would advance to become the chief public spokesman for the Smoky Mountains Conservation Association, an organization that highly promoted the establishment of a national park in the Smoky Mountains region.¹⁶ Both the Davis' and Chapman were the forefront proprietors for the park whose influences and plight had enormous impacts on the park movement, photographs can be seen in Appendix B.¹⁷

¹³ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 61.

¹⁴ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 61-62.

¹⁵ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 65.

¹⁶ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 65.

¹⁷ Images, "Mr. and Mrs. Willis P. Davis" and "Colonel David Chapman," <http://www.smliv.com/downloads/500/download/parkfirstfamily.jpg?cb=8dabb199f7c56ca013515566fc019c1e> and <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/learn/historyculture/images/Chapman.jpg>.

Unlike western national parks, however, to create a park in the Southeast required the purchase or donations of private property; it was more complicated than just the ceding of lands by states that were involved. Colonel Townsend, of the Little River Lumber Company and Little River Railroad Company, offered to sell the first tract of land, near Elkmont. Austin Peay, the newly elected governor of Tennessee and landholder/member of the Wonderland Club, joined Tennessee legislators, led by Mrs. Davis, on a tour of the Smokies in the early 1920s. The group of legislators were wined and dined at Elkmont, where further information regarding the proposed park and pending bills to purchase the Little River Lumber Company tract were discussed.¹⁸ Ultimately, the bill proposing the purchase of the first tract of land by the state failed. A new bill requiring that the City of Knoxville to pay one-third of the purchase price, over \$97,000, passed on April 10, 1925.¹⁹ Nearly two years later, on March 22, 1927, the Little River Lumber Company's land tract of 76,507 acres was purchased for \$182,371.73. This was the first major step in the making the Great Smoky Mountains National Park a reality by establishing a public market for private property.²⁰

The purchase of the Little River Lumber Company land tract by the State of Tennessee for the proposed national park brought into question how, and for how much, private lands could be acquired. Basing their argument on the Weeks Act of 1911, which stated that lands would be considered for purchase only if they were available at an affordable (or cheap) price, a

¹⁸ Brown, *The Wild East*, 89.

¹⁹ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 92.

²⁰ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 114.

commission of six members, including Colonel Chapman, was created to condemn property in Eastern Tennessee where prices were deemed too high.²¹ Whereas landowners asserted that land in the region typically sold for \$40-\$50 an acre, the most the Park Commissions were willing to pay was \$20-\$30 per acre for cleared land, including land with homesteads, and only \$6-\$12 per acre for woodland.²² Under the “National Parks Act” of 1928, the Tennessee state government was given the power of eminent domain to acquire land titles within the proposed park boundaries for public purposes that could then be transferred to the federal level.²³ J.F.W., a prominent scholar on eminent domain at the time, further explained when he stated,

...a state may condemn land in order to turn it over to the United States when the purpose for which the federal government wants it is one which will be of great benefit to the state also....the theory of the state's interest is employed to uphold an act authorizing the condemnation of private lands by a state in order to turn them over to the general government for a public purpose.²⁴

No doubt, the creation of a national park in Eastern Tennessee and Western North Carolina would greatly benefit both states with increased tourism dollars. Eminent domain meant that a state could close their pocketbook in certain cases by justifiably taking private lands rather than purchasing them because, after all, it would be a benefit to the state to include such lands in a new national park, an idea that would be backed by the federal government.²⁵ Yet, the summer homes and cottages of The Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs would be excluded from eminent

²¹ U.S. Congress, “The Weeks Act,” Public No. 435, H.R. 11798, March 1, 1911.

²² Brown, *The Wild East*, 97.

²³ J.F.W., “Eminent Domain. Power of State to Condemn Land for Purpose of the United States,” *Virginia Law Review* 18, no.1 (Nov., 1931): 90.

²⁴ J.F.W., “Eminent Domain”: 91-94.

²⁵ J.F.W., “Eminent Domain,” 90.

domain, unlike many poorer private property owners who called the park home.²⁶ The initial park boundaries where Elkmont was exempt are seen in Appendix C.²⁷ The reason for the exclusion of Elkmont was that eminent domain could not be used on improved property unless “all reasonable efforts to purchase the land” had been exhausted.²⁸

The Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs which resulted from the leased and deeded lands from Colonel Townsend to wealthy Knoxville sports and outdoorsmen in the early 1900s quickly became resort towns for the elite by the 1930s. What started out as merely men-only hunting and fishing excursions on the weekends quickly came to include the wives and families of members, who would often gather and entertain themselves in clubhouses built for such purposes, as seen in the photograph in Appendix D.²⁹ “Summer cottages” sprang up, as well as hotels such as the Wonderland Hotel, which actually rented rooms to non-member guests of the public. What also resulted by the formation of the two clubs was a rivalry between the two; many Wonderland Club members were rejected prospects of the well-to-do Appalachian Club. The rivalry ran so deep that competing club members refused to acknowledge each other on the one and only train that traveled in and out of Elkmont, the “Elkmont Express,” driven by the Little River Railroad Company. At the helms of these two clubs were the “father of the park” Colonel Chapman on the Appalachian Club side and Tennessee’s Governor Peay, along with Knoxville attorney James B. Wright, on the side of the Wonderland Club. Wright always rejected the notion of a National Park in the Smokies but instead preferred a National Forest so that those who remained on the land would still be able to hunt and fish- both provisions that would be

²⁶ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 120.

²⁷ Map, “Proposed Great Smoky Mountains National Park,” June 22, 1927, National Archives, Record Group No. 48, in possession of Daniel Pierce.

²⁸ *An Act to Provide for the Acquisition of Parks and Recreational Facilities in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina*, 25 February 1927 (Asheville, N.C.: Jarrett’s Press, 1927), 10, in Brown, *The Wild East*, 94.

²⁹ Image, “Members of the Appalachian Club Community, 1912,” in Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 114.

prohibited if the area were to become a national park. Wright was a self-acclaimed champion of the poor farmers whose livelihoods would ultimately be destroyed by the creation of a national park due to their inability to be self-reliant if their access to the land was prohibited.³⁰ However, both elite clubs had political and judicial pull due to the wealth and political positions of some of their members such as Colonel Chapman, Peay, and Wright. This political clout would help influence future legislation regarding the park and its public/private “Club Town” in future decades.

The late 1920s and early 1930s ushered in an era of expedited land buying by Tennessee and North Carolina with a \$5 million pledge by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. that went towards the estimated cost of \$10 million for the purchase of lands from private owners in the proposed park boundaries.³¹ However, most landholders were offered prices in which their property values were highly underestimated and undervalued. Life-long leases were offered in exchange for half of the appraised value of property to all landowners residing within the park boundaries, with the agreement that once the leaseholder perished the land and deed would be transferred first to the state and then to the federal government for the national park.³² It was under such agreements between the National Park Service and members of The Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs that leases were provided “for and during the natural life of the last living of the present members.”³³ These leases would eventually be permitted to be passed down to children and heirs, and also those who sublet Club Town properties. Another advantage that the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs held during the development of the park was the agreement reached by state legislators that some land could be excluded, including all major hotels because eminent domain

³⁰ Brown, *The Wild East*, 87.

³¹ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 124-125.

³² Brown, *The Wild East*, 99.

³³ United States Department of the Interior, “Lease agreement,” 47 Stat. 37, 16 USC, 1946 ed., sec. 403 (e), February 4, 1932, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

could not be used on “improved property” unless the land was seen as essential and efforts to purchase the land were made.³⁴ In a letter to the Director of the National Park Services from Superintendent J.R. Eakin dated July 31, 1934, Eakin confirmed that “...Wonderland and Appalachian Clubs are permitted to entertain paying guests, and are, in fact, hotels.”³⁵ Therefore, because both clubs contained and owned hotels (whether for the general public or for members and their guests), and because they didn't necessarily rely on the land for survival and instead used their landholdings for enjoyment, they were legally and socially not obligated to partake in the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and could be exempt. With the new rules put into place by the national park, many poor farmers would not be able to survive under such prohibitions against hunting, fishing, and farming. Those who were wealthy and enjoyed the area for recreational purposes only, such as the two social clubs, would be able to continue to use the land and their summer cottages remained virtually unaffected. In all, an estimated 5,665 people had to leave their homes to create the Great Smoky Mountains National Park while over 100 Club members were allowed to stay.³⁶

By 1940 nearly all the land and lots in Club Town were deeded to the federal government under the lifetime lease agreement.³⁷ However, by 1942 the remaining lands that were not deeded for park purposes by owners were under contest because property owners demanded that for an agreement to be reached the state and federal government had to agree to never close a road that was vital to Club Town members because it was necessary to travel in and out of the resort town. The road was also used for park management. While measures were taken to subdue

³⁴United States Department of the Interior, “ Lease agreement,” 47 Stat. 37, 16 USC, 1946 ed., sec. 403 (e), February 4, 1932, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

³⁵ United States Department of the Interior, “Letter from Superintendent J.R. Eakin to The Director of the National Park Services,” July 31, 1934, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

³⁶ Brown, *The Wild East*, 98-99.

³⁷ United States Department of the Interior, “Memorandum to the Superintendent,” January 16, 1940, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

the growing outcry of the community within the park, the Department of the Interior (the rule-maker of the National Park Service) ultimately stated that if “it is not possible to work out satisfactory arrangements...it will be necessary to resort to condemnation.”³⁸ In essence, Assistant Attorney John O. Morrell offered two courses of action to the Superintendent of the park: either negotiate with the Clubs to purchase the final lands or condemn the property and file a right-of-taking.³⁹ Opposing Morrell’s threats, Judge George C. Taylor from the United States District Court office in Knoxville, Tennessee wrote to J.G. McKenzie, an Attorney for the Department of Justice in Dayton, Tennessee, where he stated that he “saw no reason why [he] should sign orders authorizing the institution of condemnation proceedings, particularly where the land being acquired [was] wild mountain land and not essential to any project related in even a remote degree to the war effort.”⁴⁰ Judge Taylor argued that the public might view the federal government’s acquisition of land as frivolous spending in a time when the country was supposed to be tightening its purse-strings during WWII. Another setback in deeding the federal government all lands within Elkmont during the 1940s was the fact that only two of the five required Board of Directors of the New Appalachian Club needed to sign off on the deeds were available- two were in service for the war effort and one had died the previous year.⁴¹ This meant that without the correct representation, no further agreements between the Clubs and the federal government could take place. Ultimately, new board members were appointed so negotiations could continue.

³⁸ United States Department of the Interior, “Memorandum to the Superintendent,” April 17 1941, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

³⁹ United States Department of the Interior, “Memorandum to the Superintendent,” October 8, 1942, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁴⁰ United States District Court, “Letter to J. G. McKenzie from Judge George C. Taylor,” November 30, 1942, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁴¹ “Letter to Major J. R. Eakin,” August 26, 1943. GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

The 1950s ushered in new developments in the continuation of Club Town within the national park boundaries. Both the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs relied on a hydroelectric plant, which was built prior to the formation of the park and located adjacent to Club Town on the Little River, for their electricity needs. However, due to the fluctuation of the river and the rising demand for electricity with the introduction of electric refrigerators, stoves, and heaters, as well as an increase in the demand for lighting, the hydroelectric plant soon became overwhelmed and suffered a complete system failure.⁴² In order to curb this problem, members of the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs proposed to allow the Sevier County Electric System to extend power lines from Park Headquarters to the remote area of Elkmont. The National Park Service agreed to this proposal because they were interested in bringing commercial power to the ranger station at Elkmont. The Sevier County Electric System, however, was not on board to supply electricity to a small and dwindling population as more and more of the lifetime leases were expiring due to the deaths of Club members. In order to satisfy the Sevier County Electric System and guarantee a stable customer base, the Secretary of the Interior approved a measure that allowed Club Town members to trade their life-time leases for 20-year leases, which could either be passed down to the next of kin or forfeited to the respective Club in the event of a leaseholder's death.⁴³ The new compromise between the federal government and the members of Club Town on January 26, 1950 stated,

WHEREAS, a number of such life leases have terminated due to the deaths occurring from time to time of such lessees, thereby decreasing the Club membership to a point where the furnishing of utility and other services is becoming increasingly expensive and burdensome; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the New Appalachian Club to maintain its membership at such a figure as to make it feasible to furnish utility and other services to its members and

⁴² John Ogden Morrell, *A History of The Cottages in the Vicinity of the Forest Town of Elkmont, Namely: The Appalachian Club and Wonderland Club*. TN: Publisher not identified, 1976, pg. 8. GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁴³ Morrell, *A History of the Vicinity*, pg. 9. GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

life lessees, upon their deaths occurring from time to time, may be occupied by other and new Club members; and

WHEREAS, it would be in the interest of the United States of America to have the existing life leases cease and terminate at a definite time; and

WHEREAS, there is no present administrative objective to the continued occupancy for a definite and fixed period of all of the parcels of land now occupied by life lessees and Club members, and of the lands used by the said Club....

No extension or renewal of this agreement shall be made at the expiration of the 20-year period herein mentioned, it being the intention of the Secretary to devote the leased land exclusively to the park purposes thereafter.⁴⁴

The agreement between the Secretary of the Interior and the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs for 20-year leases would not only guarantee that members and relatives of the two Clubs could continue to live within park boundaries, it also guaranteed the Sevier County Electric System anticipated revenue. Ultimately, the 20-year leases would expire on December 31, 1971.⁴⁵

As the deadline for the expiration of the 20-year leases approached, a new effort to renew the agreement between the federal government and the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs emerged. Realizing that the two clubs had a common goal of preserving their right to stay on federal land, the Elkmont Preservation Committee was created as a joint entity to “negotiate a new agreement with the Department of the Interior.”⁴⁶ An agreement was reached and the 20-year leases were once again renewed in 1972, this time set to expire December 31, 1992. Under the new stipulations of the agreement, the National Park Service held itself accountable for “interpreting the mountain culture of the Great Smoky Mountains through such means (among others) as living history exhibits.”⁴⁷ The Wonderland Hotel was deemed by the National Park Service as “an important example of one aspect of ‘Turn of the Century’ mountain culture [that

⁴⁴ Secretary of the Interior, “Agreement Between the Department of the Interior and the New Appalachian Club,” June 26, 1950. GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁴⁵ Morrell, *A History of the Vicinity*, pg. 9. GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁴⁶ Williams, *Great Smoky Mountains Folklife*, 163.

⁴⁷ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

was] most worthy of preservation and interpretation to the visiting public by means of its [continued] use and operation.”⁴⁸ The Wonderland Hotel opened for business on June 15, 1912 and served as an elite resort and clubhouse for the members of the Wonderland Club.⁴⁹ The importance of explicitly including the hotel in the agreement was to open the rustic lodging to the public for rental, therefore promoting the interpretation of the mountain resort hotel’s history, but also to raise funds to pacify the Sevier County Electric System, which once again wanted a guaranteed customer base in the Elkmont area where “[the] operation of the Wonderland Hotel [was] becoming increasingly expensive and burdensome.”⁵⁰ A breakdown of the Elkmont Preservation Committee can be seen in Appendix D.⁵¹

The renewed lease agreement of 1972 also included other requirements to be met by the Elkmont Preservation Committee. The Department of the Interior and the National Park Service had no objection to continued occupancy as long as certain conditions were upheld. Included in these conditions was an agreement by the Elkmont Preservation Committee (hence, the two Clubs) to spend no less than \$150,000 within one year on “capital improvements on the existing buildings and utilities at Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs,” including the Wonderland Hotel.⁵² Another stipulation of the renewed leases was to produce the maximum reasonable income by subletting private cabins or rooms in the Wonderland Hotel to members of the Clubs

⁴⁸ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁴⁹ Mary F. Fanslow, “From Timbering to Tourism: The Wonderland Hotel’s Early Years,” *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 9, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 437, accessed March 19, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41446581>.

⁵⁰ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁵¹ “Elkmont Preservation Committee Organization Chart, By-Laws of Wonderland Club, Inc.,” Revised March 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁵² The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

or the public-another way for funds to be raised that could either be recycled into the preservation of the area or satisfy the Sevier County Electric System.⁵³ However, an amendment was made to the 1972 leases on June 2, 1980. Under the revised version, “all references to ‘historic scene’ and the importance of operating the Wonderland Hotel to interpret ‘Turn of the Century’ culture are deleted...no historical significance is attached to this area. Continued operation of the hotel shall not be required as a condition to said agreement or as an obligation of [the Elkmont Preservation Committee].”⁵⁴ A photograph of the Wonderland Club Hotel can be seen in Appendix F.⁵⁵ Also, under the revised agreement, “all buildings and structures will be vacated by the leaseholders within 60 days after the termination of the leases” and “within two years after they are vacated, all structures and buildings will be removed by the National Park Service.”⁵⁶ The National Park Service was starting to impose stricter guidelines in terms of the continued residency of Elkmont members within the park and was starting to plan the expulsion of the community, or so it seemed.

The mid-to late 1980s entailed another attempt by the Elkmont Preservation Committee to propose a 20-year lease renewal to the federal government even though, as in 1950, the renewed 1972 and revised 1980 leases specifically stated, “It is expressly provided and understood that this Agreement and the interest provided for in this Agreement will not be

⁵³ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁵⁴ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on June 2, 1980,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁵⁵ Image, “The Wonderland Club Hotel,” in Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 112.

⁵⁶ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

renewed or extended upon termination of this Agreement.”⁵⁷ In a confidential letter dated June 28, 1988 from Joseph P. Congleton, a member of the Board of the Elkmont Preservation Committee, to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope, Congleton conveyed that the Committee wished to present a consideration for lease renewals.⁵⁸ He wrote,

...the Elkmont Preservation Committee would propose to donate the sum of \$770,000 in cash this year to the National Park Service for the purpose of supporting the design and construction of the proposed Oconaluftee Visitor Center...we realize that the...project will require more than a \$770,000 first-step money to become a reality. If a commitment to extend our lease can be reached, we are prepared to utilize our special relationships with Tennessee’s senators and its congressional delegation to assist in obtaining additional funding.⁵⁹

Unknown to members of the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs, or to the public for that matter, this confidential letter would unearth a controversy that would ultimately be the Club’s’ demise.

In a letter from Paul Threlkeld, President of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club Park, to Superintendent Pope dated September 12, 1988, Threlkeld questioned the “donation” that was being proposed by the Elkmont Preservation Committee in exchange for lease renewals. Threlkeld stated that a renewal of leases, “whether in exchange for money or not, could exact a devastating loss to the credibility and professional honor of the [National Park Service]...by an expose of unethical conduct or the attempted implicit bribery of a federal agency.”⁶⁰ In a response dated September 30, 1988, Pope confirmed,

⁵⁷ The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service, “Agreement on July 17, 1972,” GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁵⁸ Hunton and Williams, First Tennessee Bank Building, “Letter from Joseph P. Congleton to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope,” June 28, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁵⁹ Hunton and Williams, First Tennessee Bank Building, “Letter from Joseph P. Congleton to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope,” June 28, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁶⁰ Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, “Letter from Chairman Paul Threlkeld, President of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope,” September 12, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Representatives of the Elkmont Preservation Committee have submitted a proposal to the National Park Service outlining conditions under which they solicit an extension of their lease. Basically they propose a lump sum donation of \$770,000 to support the design and construction of the proposed Oconaluftee Visitor Center in consideration for a twenty-year extension of their lease.⁶¹

Once word got around that an “offer” was made to the federal government by the Elkmont Preservation Committee in proposal for lease extensions, various environmental organizations and news outlets released accusations of bribery on the part of the Elkmont elite. *The Knoxville Journal* printed an article on October 1, 1988 where former Park Commission members Leroy Fox and Dr. Don Robinson argued that it was implicitly unfair to to adhere to one group’s wishes simply because they had money to contribute.⁶² Ed Soler, the Chairman of the Sierra Club, wrote to Superintendent Pope on November 15, 1988 where he stated, “Although the intent of the EPC in offering \$700,000 for an extension of the leases is not clear, the offer has all the aspects of attempted bribery.”⁶³ The pressure from the public and environmental groups such as the Sierra Club finally forced the federal government to respond. On November 17, 1988 the Office of the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior wrote to Neil F. Murphy, the Chairman of the Tennessee Great Smoky Mountain Park Commission, stating that the National Park Service rejected the proposal for lease renewals by the Elkmont Preservation Committee and that there were no circumstances under which an extension, or even the consideration of an extension, would be made.⁶⁴

⁶¹ United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, “Letter from Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope to Paul Threlkeld, President of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club,” September 30, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁶² Donna Mobley Mohon, “Park Site Step Closer to Becoming Wilderness,” *The Knoxville Journal*, October 1, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁶³ Sierra Club, “Letter from Chairman Ed Soler to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope,” November 15, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁶⁴ United States Department of the Interior, “Letter from the Office of the Secretary to Neil F. Murphy,” November 17, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Even with the rejection of the proposed 1992 lease renewals and the abandonment of the \$770,000 donation by the Elkmont Preservation Committee, public uproar continued to gain momentum as citizens and organizations alike claimed that the entire Elkmont ordeal was made possible because of special-privilege.⁶⁵ In an editorial on October 3, 1988 in *The Daily Times*, an unknown contributor wrote, “Uncle Sam can’t afford to do any additional favors for the favored few at Elkmont.”⁶⁶ A letter from the conservationist group The Izaak Walton League of America reiterated the popular resentment for the Elkmont elite. It stated, “Surely, when Congress established the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 1934, they did not intend for a few private individuals to have special privileges on park lands indefinitely.”⁶⁷ Even Randall Pope, the Park Superintendent, released a briefing on the issue in 1989 which stated,

The property on which the hotel and cabins are located is in the heart of the park, which was purchased for park purposes, and would be the subject of extensive public criticism if any lease extension or land exchange was considered. Even under present circumstances, the issue is viewed by those knowledgeable of the situation as favoritism for a privileged few at the expense of the general public. Public comments received overwhelmingly opposed continued use of federally-owned lands for this purpose.⁶⁸

The wealth of the Appalachian and Wonderland Club members no longer had as much value to the National Park Service once accusations of bribery were brought to light.

On December 31, 1992 all 20-year leases expired, with the exception of four that were negotiated to end in 2001. Under the 1982 park General Management Plan for Elkmont, all structures in the Elkmont summer communities would either be demolished or removed to allow the area to revert back to nature and wilderness. However, before all the buildings and cottages

⁶⁵ Pierce, *The Great Smokies*, 168.

⁶⁶ *The Daily Times*, October 3, 1988, Maryville, Tennessee, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁶⁷ The Izaak Walton League of America, “Letter from Dr. Gary E. McKenna, President, to Randall R. Pope, Park Superintendent,” June 17, 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

⁶⁸ Randall R. Pope, “Great Smoky Mountains National Park Briefing Statement,” February 10, 1989, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

could be demolished, 49 out of 74 structures were successfully included in the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.⁶⁹ By the end of the twentieth century, nearly a century after elite Knoxvilleians entered the Elkmont region for the first time, a number of studies were conducted and proposals were submitted to decide what the next course of action should be in regards to the former Club Town. One proposal, which called for the preservation of the Appalachian Clubhouse and 18 other buildings, was finally accepted. This would come to be known as the Elkmont Historic District and in 2006 it was placed on the “11 Most Endangered Places” list by the National Trust for Historical Preservation.⁷⁰ The Wonderland Hotel closed its doors, was damaged by fire in 1995, collapsed in 2005, and was finally demolished in 2006.⁷¹ The last decade has seen the Appalachian Clubhouse and one cabin fully rehabilitated and refurbished. The 17 others that were deemed to be of historical significance continue to await restoration and funds to become available for the project.⁷² A map of what structures remained in 1993 can be seen in Appendix A.⁷³

The idea that just because a hiker finds abandoned buildings in the Great Smoky Mountains National park does not infer that the area was “abandoned” or a “lost civilization.” Rather, the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was one of the biggest feats in the Eastern United States during the early twentieth century and atypical of such projects on the western front of the nation, the first park project in the southeast had to overcome the obstacle of privately owned land and buildings. The government had to purchase or condemn lands that

⁶⁹ Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 123.

⁷⁰ Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 126.

⁷¹ Fanslow, “From Timbering to Tourism,” 444.

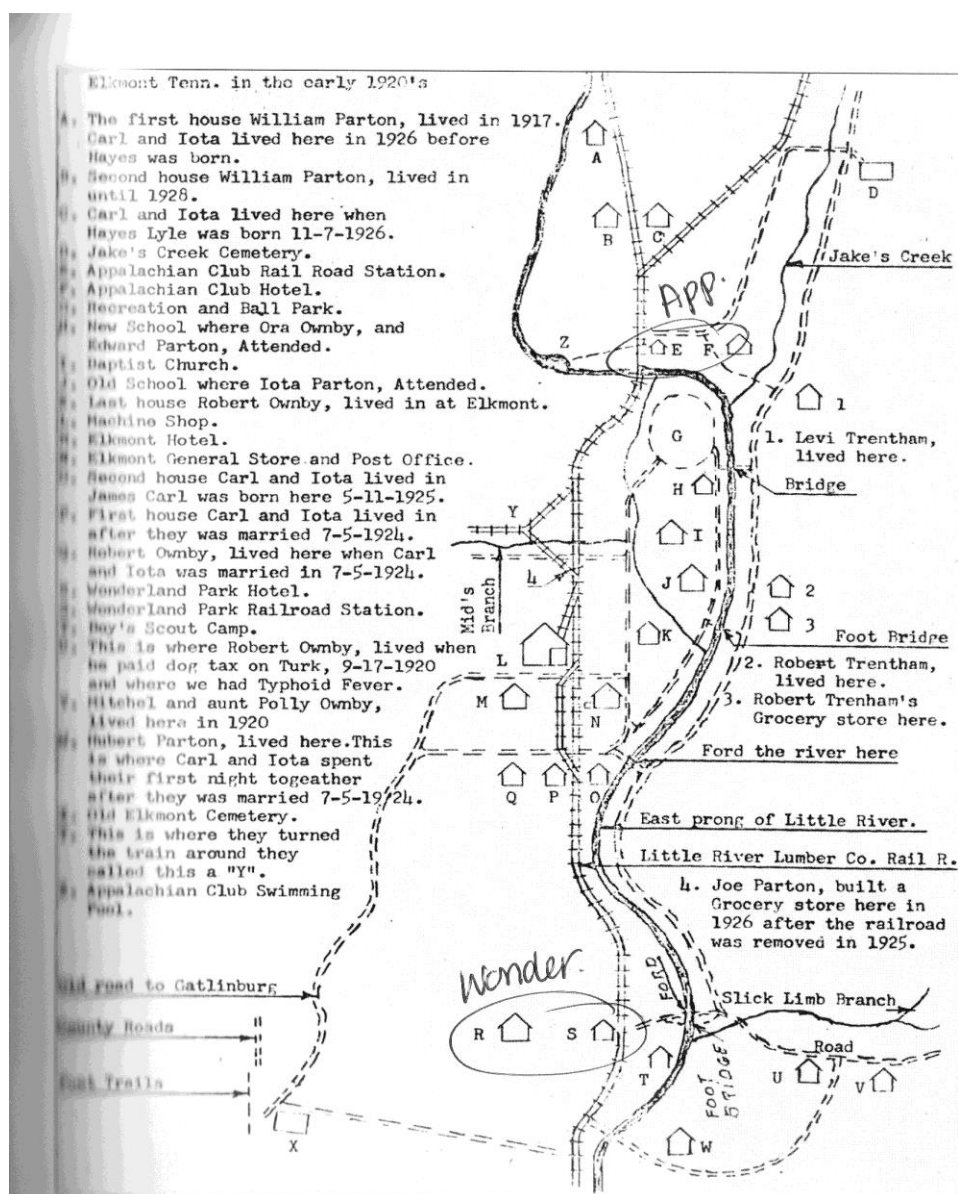
⁷² Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 127.

⁷³ Maps-“Wonderland Club Town” and “Appalachian Club Town,” Thomason and Associated Preservation Planners, “The History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community, Sevier County, Tennessee, Great Smoky Mountains National Park,” Nashville, Tennessee. March 20, 1993, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

were to be included in the newly formed national park. Deep in the woods along the Little River Valley, Elkmont was a community that tailored to wealthy and elite residents of nearby Knoxville during the time periods of the early 1900s, through the development of the park in the late 1930s, and subsequent battles for lease renewals that occurred throughout the mid-late twentieth century. Elkmont, the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs, and the decision of the federal government to allow life-long leases to the residents of this area rather than forcing them from their land by use of eminent domain, created a controversy that lasted for decades and brought into question whether or not the wealthy residents and their “summer cottages” and “clubs” received special treatment and privileges. Ultimately, however, the wealth of these residents backfired in attempted bribery and left Elkmont to be reclaimed by nature and rediscovered by hikers and scholars alike.

APPENDIX A.

Map of Elkmont including the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs- 1920s



The Elkmont Community in the 1920s-This map shows the Elkmont Community, including the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs during the early 1900s.

Source: Map, in Paulin, *Images of America: Lost Elkmont*, 63.

**APPENDIX A CONTINUED.
Wonderland Club Town Map-1993**

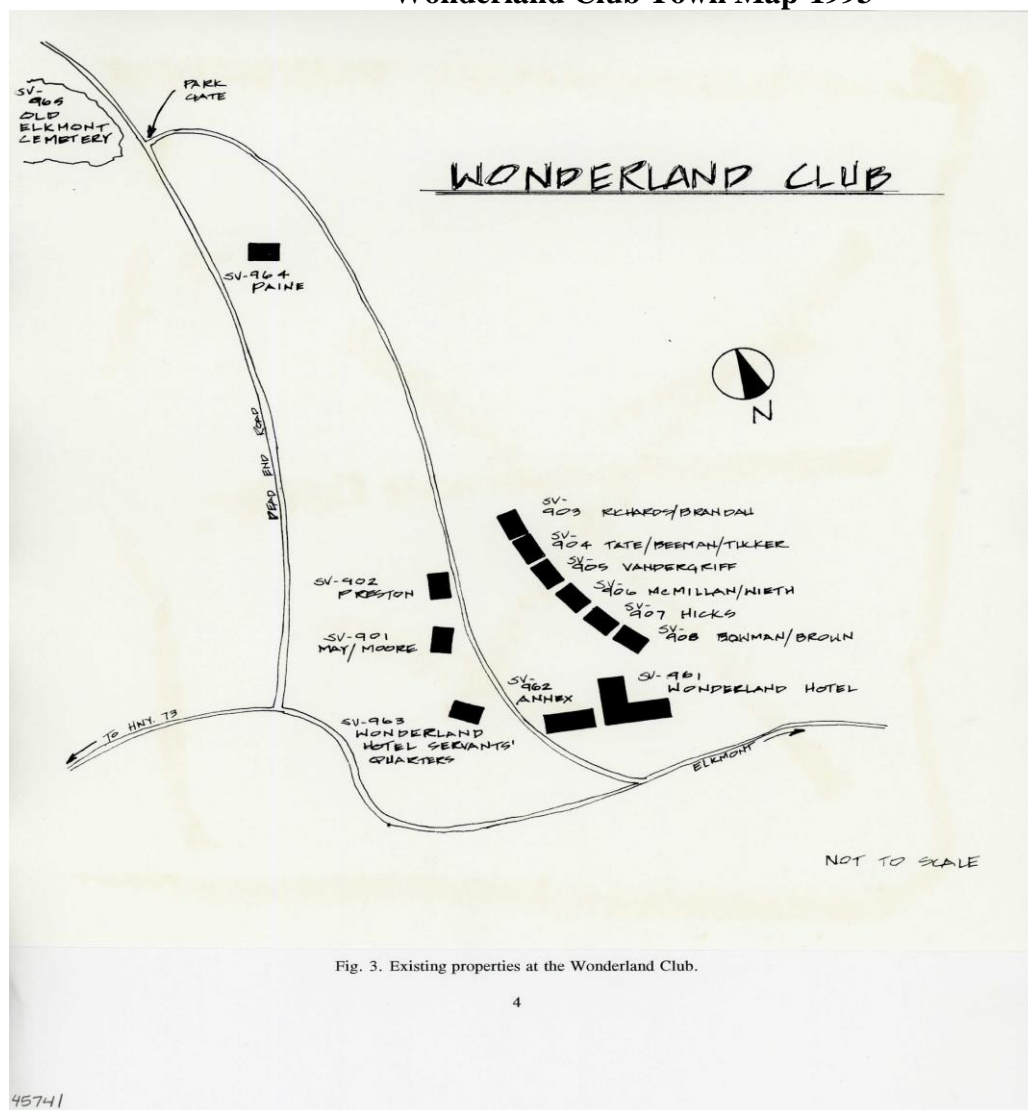


Fig. 3. Existing properties at the Wonderland Club.

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Wonderland Club Town- The Wonderland Club was established in the 1920s for recreational use by prominent businessmen and outdoorsmen from Knoxville. This map shows what remained in 1993.

Source: Thomason and Associated Preservation Planners, "The History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community, Sevier County, Tennessee, Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Nashville, Tennessee. March 20, 1993, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

APPENDIX A CONTINUED.
Appalachian Club Town Map-1993

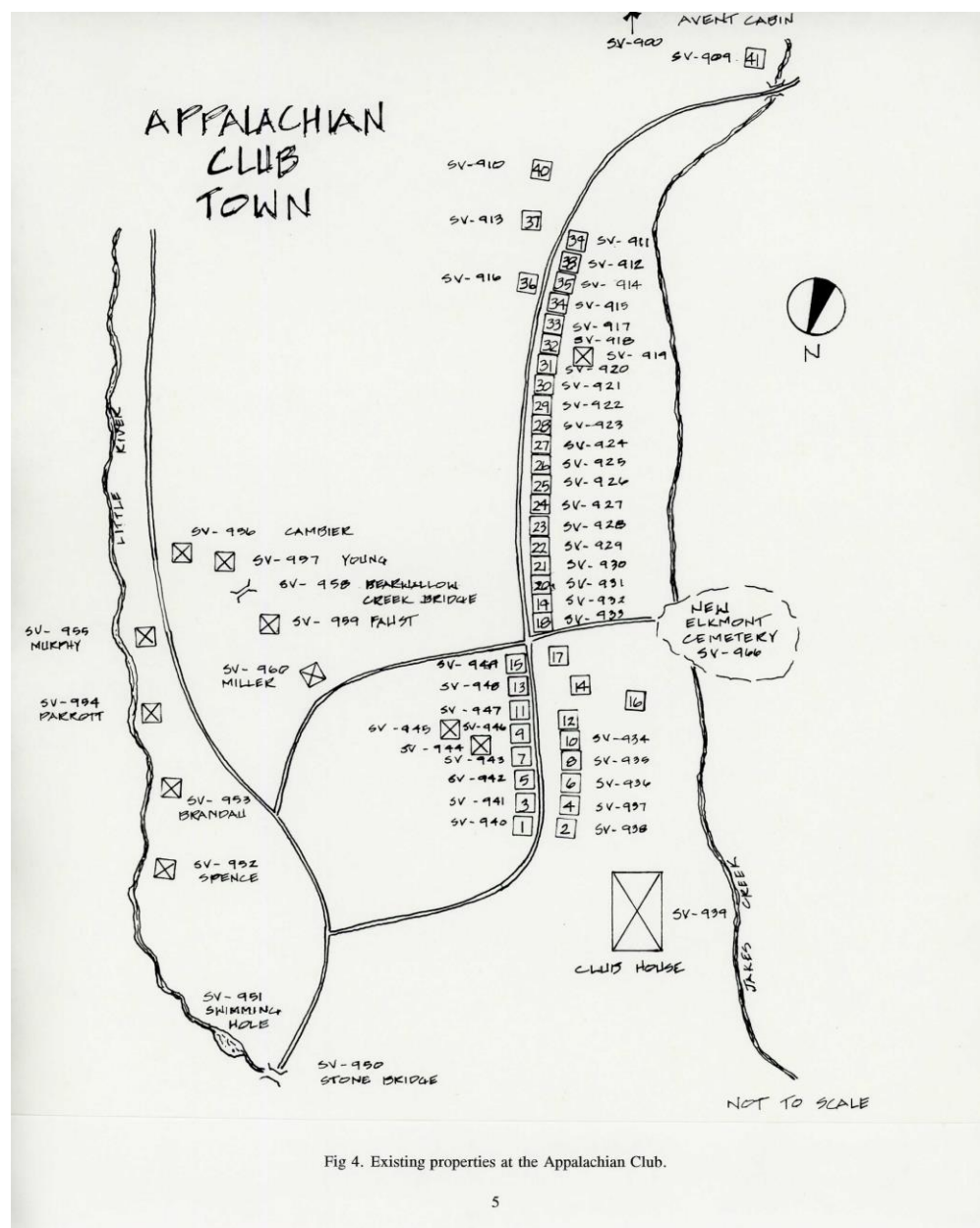


Fig 4. Existing properties at the Appalachian Club.

Appalachian Club Town- The Appalachian Club was also created in the 1920s as a summer resort for the wealthy. This map shows what remained in 1993.

Source: Thomason and Associated Preservation Planners, "The History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community, Sevier County, Tennessee, Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Nashville, Tennessee. March 20, 1993, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

APPENDIX B.
Mr. and Mrs. Willis P. Davis/Colonel David Chapman



Mr. and Mrs. Willis P. Davis- Both were activists in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park movement.

Source:

<http://www.smliv.com/downloads/500/download/parkfirstfamily.jpg?cb=8dabb199f7c56ca013515566fc019c1e>

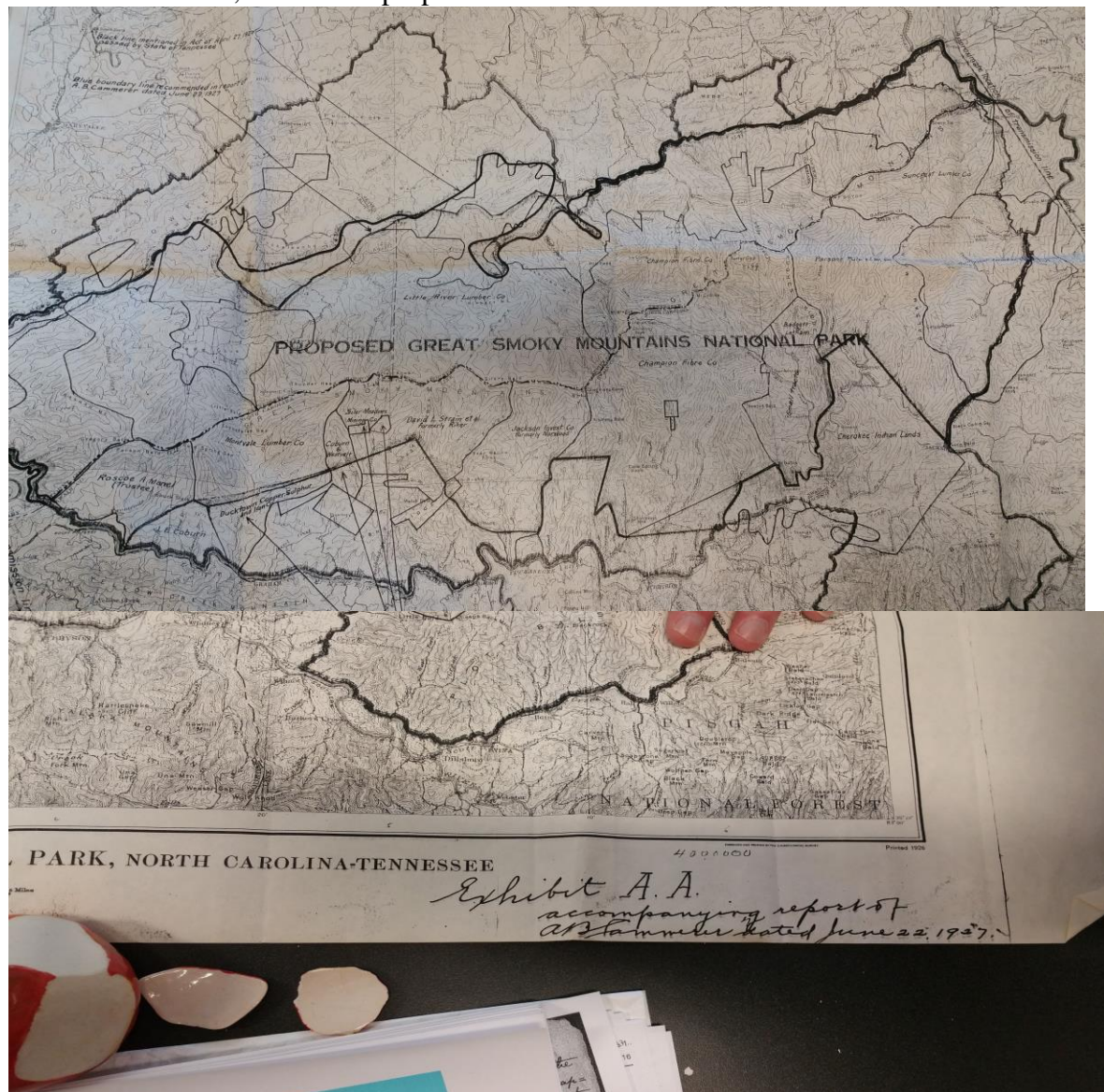


Colonel David Chapman- One of the main proponents of the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Source: <https://www.nps.gov/grsm/learn/historyculture/images/Chapman.jpg>

APPENDIX C.
Map of Proposed Park-Excluding the Elkmont Area-June 22, 1927

Map of Proposed Great Smoky Mountains National Park June 22, 1927-This is one of the first maps of the area proposed for the National Park. In the mid-top center is a small loop where Elkmont is located, it was first proposed to be excluded from the Park.



Source: Map, "Proposed Great Smoky Mountains National Park," June 22, 1927, National Archives, Record Group No. 48, in possession of Daniel Pierce.

APPENDIX D.
Members of The Appalachian Club-1912

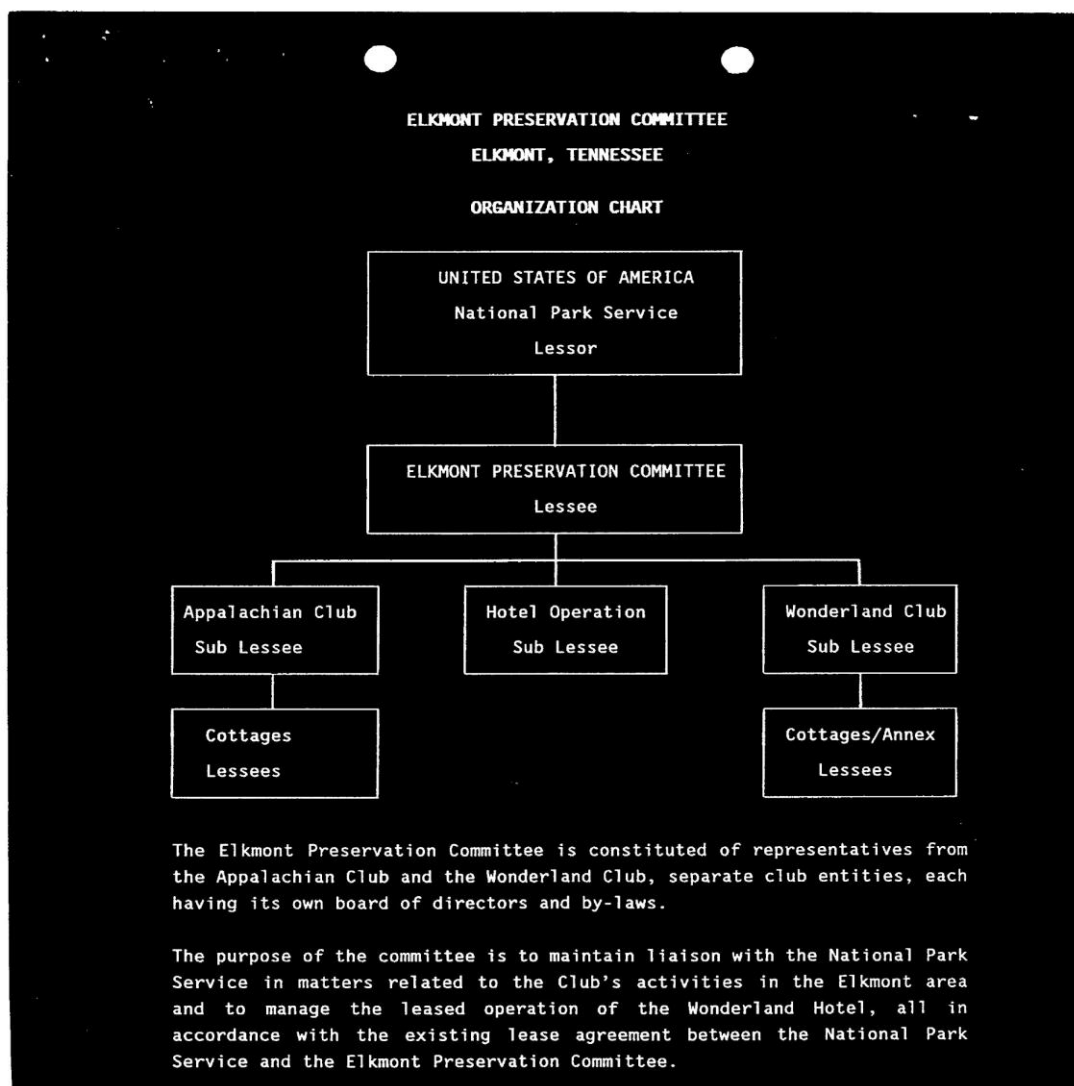


Club Members- Taken in 1912, this photograph shows members of the prestige Appalachian Club attending the opening of the Wonderland Park Hotel, which would soon be home to the rival Wonderland Club.

Source: Image, "Members of The Appalachian Club Community, 1912," in Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 114.

APPENDIX E.

Flow Chart of the Elkmont Preservation Committee-Revised March 1988



The Elkmont Preservation Committee Flow Chart- This chart was created in 1988 to show the relationships between the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs in regards to the Elkmont Preservation Committee and the National Park Service.

Source: "Elkmont Preservation Committee Organization Chart, By-Laws of Wonderland Club, Inc.," Revised March 1988, GSMNP Archives, Sugarlands Visitor Center, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

APPENDIX F. The Wonderland Club Hotel.



The Wonderland Club Hotel- This image shows The Wonderland Club Hotel, which was used throughout the Great Smoky Mountains National Park history by both the public and club members.

Source: Image, "The Wonderland Club Hotel," in Paulin, *Lost Elkmont*, 112.

Bibliography Primary Sources

Appalachian National Park Association. *Appalachian Forest Reserve: Proceedings of the Convention Held Oct. 25, 1902 at Asheville, NC*. Asheville: Asheville Printing

Co.,1902. 48 p. Accessed January 15, 2016.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/gdc/scd0001/2001/20010905001ap/20010905001ap.pdf>

This document includes a summary of federal legislation initiatives and the park movement's history as recounted by Dr. C. P. Ambler, a prominent citizen of Asheville, North Carolina during the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park Archives. Sugarland Visitor Center, near Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

The majority of primary sources on Elkmont, the Appalachian Club, and the Wonderland Club are held in the archives of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park with over 200 folders on these topics alone. Materials include maps, photographs, oral histories, land deeds, project plans, brochures, and legislative materials, to name a few. Archivist Michael O'Day was an important resource while sorting through all of these primary documents.

-----The Appalachian Club, Inc., The Wonderland Club, The Elkmont Preservation Committee, and The United States of America National Park Service.

“Agreement on July 17, 1972.”

“Agreement on June 2, 1980.”

-----Appalachian Club Town Map

-----*The Daily Times*. Maryville, Tennessee. October 3, 1988.

-----“Elkmont Preservation Committee Organization Chart, By-Laws of Wonderland Club, Inc.” Revised March 1988.

-----Hunton and Williams, First Tennessee Bank Building. “Letter from Joseph P. Congleton to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope.” June 28, 1988.

-----The Izaak Walton League of America. “Letter from Dr. Gary E. McKenna, President, to Randall R. Pope, Park Superintendent.” June 17, 1988.

-----Land Deed from Little River Lumber Company to Appalachian Club. February 11, 1910.

-----“Letter to Major J. R. Eakin.” August 26, 1943.

-----Mohon, Donna Mobley. “Park Site Step Closer to Becoming Wilderness,” *The Knoxville Journal*, October 1, 1988,

-----Randall R. Pope. “Great Smoky Mountains National Park Briefing Statement.” February 10, 1989

- Secretary of the Interior. "Agreement Between the Department of the Interior and the New Appalachian Club." June 26, 1950.
- Sierra Club. "Letter from Chairman Ed Soler to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope." November 15, 1988.
- Smoky Mountains Hiking Club. "Letter from Chairman Paul Threlkeld, President of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, to Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope." September 12, 1988.
- Thomason and Associated Preservation Planners. "The History and Architecture of the Elkmont Community, Sevier County, Tennessee, Great Smoky Mountains National Park." Nashville, Tennessee. March 20, 1993.
- United States Department of the Interior.
 - "Lease agreement," 47 Stat. 37, 16 USC, 1946 ed., sec. 403 (e). February 4, 1932.
 - "Letter from Park Superintendent J.R. Eakin to The Director of the National Park Services." July 31, 1934.
 - "Letter from Park Superintendent Randall R. Pope to Paul Threlkeld, President of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club." September 30, 1988.
 - "Letter from the Office of the Secretary to Neil F. Murphy," November 17, 1988
 - "Memorandum to the Superintendent." January 16, 1940.
 - "Memorandum to the Superintendent." April 17 1942.
 - "Memorandum to the Superintendent." October 8, 1942.
- United States District Court. "Letter to J. G. McKenzie from Judge George C. Taylor." November 30, 1942.
- Wonderland Hotel Area Map

Images. "Mr. and Mrs. Willis P. Davis."

<http://www.smliv.com/downloads/500/download/parkfirstfamily.jpg?cb=8dabb199f7c56ca013515566fc019c1e>

----- "Colonel David Chapman."

<https://www.nps.gov/grsm/learn/historyculture/images/Chapman.jpg>

These photographs are used Appendix B.

J.F.W. "Eminent Domain: Power of State to Condemn Land for Purpose of the United

States.” *Virginia Law Review*, 18, no. 1 (November 1931): 90-94. Accessed January 15, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1066391>

This article raises the question of whether or not a state can condemn private land for the use of the federal government, even if it for public recreational use. While this article may or may not directly involve Elkmont or the GSMNP, it will provide a legal view on eminent domain.

Map. “Proposed Great Smoky Mountains National Park.” June 22, 1927. National Archives, Record Group No. 48. In possession of Daniel Pierce.

This map shows the initial park boundaries, which excluded Elkmont.

U.S. Congress. “The Weeks Act,” Public No. 435, H.R. 11798, March 1, 1911.

This is an act of Congress that allowed the federal government to acquire private lands for public purposes.

Secondary Sources

Brown, Margaret Lynn. *The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains*. Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, 2000.

Margaret Lynn Brown is a Professor of History at Brevard College. This source provides not only an environmental history of the Great Smoky Mountains but also shows the interconnectedness between the region’s natural landscape and the inhabitants who have called it home from the time of the Cherokee Indians through the creation of the Great

Smoky Mountains National Park which forced some semi-subsistence farmers off their land. The most beneficial part of this book is Chapter 3: *Scenery in the Eminent Domain*. It discusses both the Appalachian Club and Wonderland Club and the movement to build a national park in the Great Smoky Mountains. Brown highlights the establishment of the park and the resulting romanticism that the government portrayed of Southern Appalachian life to bring in tourism dollars.

Fanslow, Mary F. "From Timbering To Tourism: The Wonderland Hotel's Early Years." *Journal*

of Appalachian Studies 9, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 433-449. Accessed March 19, 2015.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41446581>.

Mary F. Fanslow graduated from East Tennessee University in 2004. Both sources examine the origins of the Wonderland Hotel from its early creation through the height of the hotel's popularity and the effects of the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Great Smoky Mountain National Park. *Elkmont Historic District Final Environmental Impact Statement and General Management Plan Amendment*. Gatlinburg, TN: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 2009.

This document provides the details of what the government's plans are for the Elkmont site and how they plan to preserve the area.

Morrell, John O. *A History of the Cottages in the Vicinity of the Former Town of Elkmont, the Appalachian Club, and the Wonderland Club*. TN: Publisher not identified, 1976.

This is a 21 page pamphlet written in 1976 by John O. Morrell on the history of structures and cabins within the former town of Elkmont. It contains an array of Appendices of primary source material relevant to the Appalachian and Wonderland Club Leases.

Paulin, David. *Images of America: Lost Elkmont*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2015.

This source is a part of the series “The Images of America” that celebrates the histories of America’s neighborhoods, towns, and cities through archival photographs and materials. The book is a source of extensively gathered primary sources from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park archives, the University of Tennessee Library’s Special Collections, the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection in Knoxville, Tennessee, private collections, and interviews with residents who had ties to Elkmont and the region to create the *Lost Elkmont* edition of the series. It gives a short history of Elmont and the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs during the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Pierce, Daniel S. *The Great Smokies: From Natural Habitat to National Park*. Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2000.

Daniel Pierce is one of the most prominent scholars in regards to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the history of the Southern Appalachian region. This source provides relevant information regarding the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs as well as historical and contextual information regarding the development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and its creation.

Williams, Michael Ann. *Great Smoky Mountains Folklife*. Jackson, MS: The University Press of Mississippi, 1995.

This book contains information on Elkmont and the Wonderland and Appalachian Clubs but instead of looking at political processes and the federal government it looks at the lives and folklore of the inhabitants of the region. This source will provide great insight into the lives of the people who lived in or around Elkmont during the time the clubs were formed and how they affected the lives of the mountaineers.

April 15, 2016

Tracey Rizzo, PhD, History Department Chair
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Dear Dr. Rizzo,

Here is the final draft of my Thesis. I have made adjustments based on peer comments and advice from you in the following ways:

- I worked on the conclusion to include how the bribe backfired and brought the community to an end.
- I worked on basic editing throughout the paper based on peer comments.
- I included references to Appendices in the sentences.
- I tried to make my argument clearer and to stand out more.

Dr. Pierce suggested that I take out information regarding the formation of the park but I feel like the information I provided was contextual and relevant to my paper, to give the reader a little background information on how the acquisition of land was different from parks in the west.

Thank you for a great semester and I look forward to hearing if I passed!!

My Best,

Melany Lynn Gartz

Abstract

This thesis examines the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and how members of two social clubs, the Appalachian and Wonderland Clubs, were able to overcome the federal government's use of eminent domain and remain living inside park boundaries from the early 1990s until 1992. It looks at why life-long leases were exchanged for 20-year leases that were renewed twice and questions whether or not the elite statuses of members had influence in the federal government's decisions to allow the clubs to stay. An attempted bribery by the two clubs is discussed, as well as what eventually happened to the residents and their homes at Elkmont.