



Contact: Sandi Byrd
Public Relations
865/448-9732, x23
Sandi@gsmmit.org
www.gsmmit.org

New Book Captures Walker Valley History

A new book just released by the Great Smoky Mountains Association tells the history of Walker Valley, now home to the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (GSMIT) within Great Smoky Mountains National Park near Townsend, Tennessee.

Written by Jeremy Lloyd, a teacher and naturalist for GSMIT for ten years, [A Home in Walker Valley: The Story of Tremont](#) chronicles one of the most fascinating histories of any Smoky Mountain locale. The first half of the book records the life of “Big” Will Walker, his numerous wives and his 27 children. A true Mountain man, Walker could kill a bear, build a cabin, plough a field, drive cattle, carve a millstone and charm a hive of bees. It’s a story that’s too rich and rowdy to be fiction.

The book also tells of the logging boom, a railroad, and the sprawling “company town” that sprang up in Walker Valley (the area now known as Tremont) practically overnight. Men and their families flocked to the area to work in the lumber camp, one of the most dangerous jobs in the world. The impacts are gargantuan, transforming a farm economy to an industrial one and reducing the Great Forest to mud flows and burned slash.

Ironically, the devastation caused by logging brings a call for conservation and is followed by a Girl Scout camp, the national park, and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and finally Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. The story of Walker Valley is a microcosm of southern Appalachia and as described in the book’s introduction “in many ways echoes the bigger story of the Great Smokies, and the even bigger story of how humans view nature and interact with their environment.”

Author Jeremy Lloyd knows this valley well, and lives within shouting distance of Will Walker’s home site. Lloyd began working at GSMIT in 1996 and has written for a number of national publications. He directs Tremont’s summer camps, Elderhostel programs, college consortiums and family camps. Other books by Lloyd include [Great Smoky Mountains National Park Guide & Journal](#).

This new book includes over 30 historic photos and 52 pages. It sells for \$5.95 and can be purchased through Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont or Great Smoky Mountains Association.

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont provides in-depth experiences through educational programs that celebrate ecological and cultural diversity, foster stewardship and nurture appreciation of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Great Smoky Mountains Association is a nonprofit organization authorized by Congress to support the Great Smoky Mountains National Park’s educational, scientific and historical programs.

###

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont

9275 Tremont Road, Townsend, TN 37882 • (865) 448-6709 • www.gsmmit.org