



Distinguished Service Award

Benton MacKaye Trail Association

Presented Posthumously to Dr. Edwin Dale on

November 4, 2023

Dr. Edwin Dale was the second President of the Benton MacKaye Trail Association and the only one, thus far, to serve four consecutive terms (he actually served more than four terms because he took over mid-year when his predecessor could not complete his term).

During those years, he ...

- ◆ managed the membership list, which was typed on a typewriter and copied onto sheets of labels for the monthly newsletter.
- ◆ wrote, printed, and mailed the newsletter.
- ◆ created the first maps of the Benton MacKaye Trail, hand drawn with great detail, and published in those newsletters.
- ◆ led many of the monthly work trips, providing instruction, tools, and transportation.
- ◆ worked with the United States Forest Service at the local and regional offices to fashion our first written agreements, now called MOUs.
- ◆ acquired our tools, brought them to and from work trips, and sharpened them each month or paid someone to do so.
- ◆ planned and supervised the first of many week-long work trips.
- ◆ spearheaded our first long-term planning conference.
- ◆ maintained a section of the BMT, the last one being our very first section, between Springer Mountain and Big Stamp Gap.
- ◆ found good people and developed their skills to gradually take over various tasks within the organization.

Under Edwin's leadership, the organization grew in number of members, financial stability, conservation endeavors, number of miles of trail, relationships with our Federal Partners, skills taught to members, newsletter quality and distribution, publicity, availability of trail maps, and much more. After retiring as a professor and researcher at Emory University, Edwin began volunteering and then working for the United States Forest Service. Being more aware of the inside workings of this organization, our partners, gave Edwin more insight into how the Benton MacKaye Trail Association could further its goals and objectives.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that without the dedication of Dr. Edwin Dale the BMT and BMTA would not exist today. His influence remains significant for the trail, the organization, and the people whose lives he touched, and it is appropriate that we recognize his accomplishments today by awarding him BMTA's Distinguished Service Award.