

Early History of SAYMA

Nelson Fuson

The geographical region which eventually became the location of The Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association of Friends included parts of seven states, Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia.

1954: only 2 organized Monthly Meetings in this area, Celo, NC and Atlanta, GA.

1956: West Knoxville Friends Worship Group organized a loose regional grouping of Friends of the region. One-day regional meetings in 1957 and 1958 were held at the two Evans homes in Crossville.

1958: West Knoxville Friends started a monthly newsletter which was called the Southern Appalachian Friend.

1959: At the 3rd annual gathering and the Evans' in Crossville, 42 adults and 40 children attended, and we organized the Southern Appalachian Association of Friends (SAAF), with Don Newton, clerk, Lu Evans, Recording Clerk, and a Coordinating Committee to be selected.

1960: First two day gathering of SAAF at Cumberland Mountain State Park.

1961-2: Two-day gatherings of SAAF in May of each year, at the Cumberland Campgrounds (of the Methodist Church) near Crossville.

1963-70: 3-day weekend gathering in May at Cumberland Campgrounds. At the 1970 Gathering we decided to become a Yearly Meeting! By this time there were over 220 persons attending the Gathering!

1971-74: SAYMA met each May for 3 days at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, NC

1975: We met at Berea, KY, jointly with the Friends General Conference Gathering over the week of July 4th.

1976: We met at Maryville College, TN.

1977: We met at Bon Clarcken ARP Assembly, Flat Rock, NC.

1978-80: We met at Lutheridge, Arden, NC

1981: We met for business at Crossville, TN, and for our other programs at the FGC gathering again at Berea, KY, July 4th week.

1983-84: We met at the Cumberland Mt. State Park, TN.

1985-87: We met at Southern College, Collegedale, TN.

1988-89: We met at Christmont Assembly, Black Mt., NC

1990-91: We met at Hiwassee College, Madisonville, TN.

The attendance at Yearly Meeting ranged from 150 to 230 persons. The business of the Yearly Meeting takes up about 1/3 of the time, workshops and inspirational programs, 1/3, and recreation, 1/3.

If you wish to know who the officers of the Yearly Meeting have been (we change officers about every year or two) or who the resource persons have been at Yearly Meeting sessions, you can get this information from our files at the Nashville Meetinghouse (see Nelson Fuson, Archivist)

However, since the list of SAYMA publications is, at present, much shorter, I will give them here for your interest:

5/70 Martin Cobin, **The Value System of Friends**

5/71 Dorothy Hutchinson, **From Inward Light to Social Testimony**

5/77 Julia Abrahamson, **Some Quaker Approaches to Community Development**