



Bell Mountain c.1945 prior to mining



Bell Mtn. 2016 from US 76 Anderson Bridge
after blasting top

HISTORICAL GRAFFITI ON ROCKS

The rocks have 50 years of historical graffiti, some artistry by Young Harris College students and area teenagers leaving their insignia and mark on the mountain. The county has taken the position that this is a part of the mountains colorful history and facing reality of things as they are, it is permissible to paint the rocks; however, painting any other part of the park is subject to criminal prosecution.



ORDINANCE

BELL MOUNTAIN PARK & HISTORICAL SITE

WHEREAS, Hal Herrin's estate, sharing my desire of protecting Bell Mountain from private development, gave the 18 acre summit to Towns County to preserve for all to enjoy its beauty as described in 1883 by Athens, Ga. Newspaper editor J.A. Gant, "... as we reached the summit the greatest sight that the mortal eye ever rested upon met our gaze, it is impossible for the pen to do justice to this scene, for several famous tourists who have visited this mountain pronounce it the **GRANDEST VIEW IN AMERICA.**" And

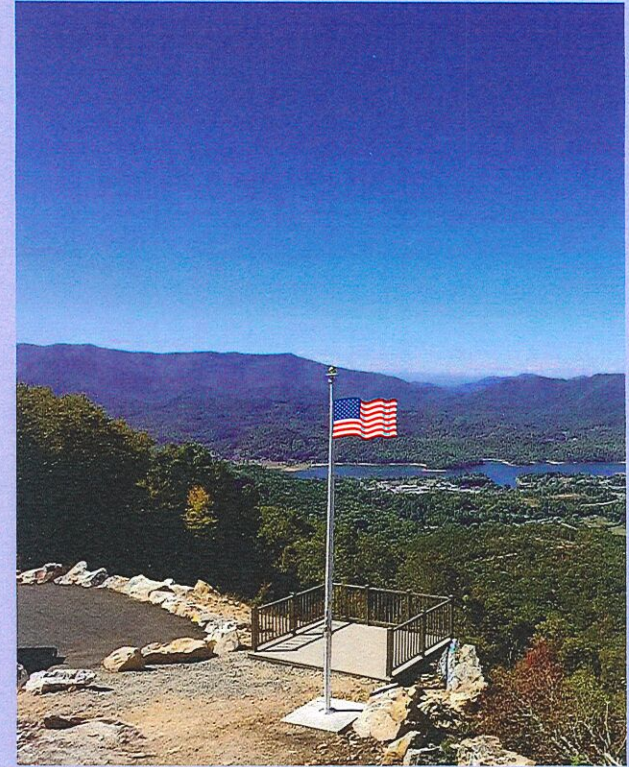
WHEREAS, it was described 124 years later in 2007 by retired Atlanta Journal Constitution reporter, Tom Bennett, as "... the mountain with a pit carved out of the top, a brazen excavation in, **THE MOST SPLENDIDLY STRIKING MOUNTAIN SCENERY UPON THE FACE OF THE GLOBE.**"

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that the summit of Bell Mtn. shall hereafter be protected as **BELL MOUNTAIN COUNTY PARK AND HISTORICAL SITE**, with a "**HAL HERRIN OVERLOOK**" erected from whence citizens and posterity can drink in the beauty of God's Creation with Lake Chatuge glistening in the sunlight far below, the clouds below on a misty morning, or a distant sunset over the boundless Appalachian Mountain ranges of GA, NC, and Tenn.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of Towns County this 4th day of January 2016.

Bill Kendall
Towns County Commissioner

BELL MOUNTAIN COUNTY PARK AND HISTORICAL SITE



Hal Herrin Overlook

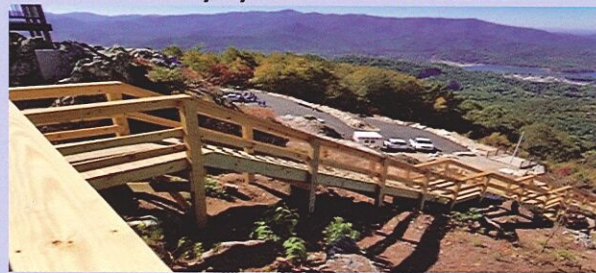
The park hours are 8am to 8pm during the winter Eastern Standard Time and 8am to 11pm during the summer Daylight Savings time giving ample time for nighttime photographs during winter and summer.

Park Directions: from Hiawassee Town Square take US 76 East 1.3 miles, turn left onto Shake Rag Road, go 1.5 miles to Bell Mountain Road, turn Right and go 1 mile to Bell Mountain Park Summit

Bell Mountain County Park and Historical Site
900 Bell Mtn Park Road
Hiawassee, GA 30546

HISTORY OF BELL MOUNTAIN

The 18 acre summit of Bell Mountain originally belonged to the Cherokee Indians. With the Indian Removal Act by congress in the 1830's the Cherokee Nation was forced to leave on the Trail of Tears to reservations in present day Oklahoma. The property was drawn in the 1832 land lottery by William Taylor of Marion County, Georgia. It remained in private ownership changing hands several times over the next 183 years until it was deeded in 2015 to Towns County by the Hal Herrin Estate.



115 steps to top observation deck constructed by Towns County's detainee crew

TOWNS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY DESIGNATED "KEEPERS OF THE MOUNTAIN"

In accepting on behalf of Towns County to develop it into a county park, Commissioner Kendall expressed appreciation to the Hal Herrin family stating it is miraculous that this unique property has escaped during 183 years of private ownership from being developed into private housing with our citizens forever being shut out from experiencing its veritable panoramic beauty, and therefore, passed an ordinance designating to Towns County Historical Society authority to preserve and protect it for our citizens and future generations.



Parking at the Hal Herrin Overlook, allows access to the scenic view to handicapped and elderly visitors with additional parking 300 ft below.

TOP OF BELL BLASTED-MINING THE MOUNTAIN

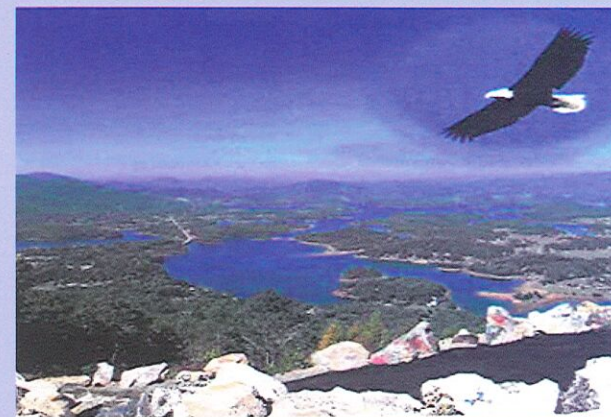
About 1960 a group from Murphy, NC organized the Hiawassee Stone Co. Inc., for the purpose of mining Quartzite. Under Grover C. Mauney's direction, the top of Bell Mountain was blasted and the white quartzite was hauled to Murphy N.C. railhead. The cost of extraction and transportation caused the venture to fail and the company dissolved.

CHEROKEES ONCE OWNED BELL MOUNTAIN

Towns County's historian Jerry Taylor stated, "Its name, Bell, is a mystery, but one thing we're certain of is that it was Bell in the days when the Cherokee Indians inhabited the area, for it is so documented in old records. What's a better start to the New Year than for Towns County to begin 2016 with a county meeting like this to preserve our most recognizable landmark in the Hiawassee Valley, the summit of Bell Mountain?"

From the days when our ancestors arrived here, it has been a destination point from the picnics on Sunday afternoon to sightseeing and bands of youth making merry."

EAGLES NEST ON BELL



Eagles nest on the cliffs of the east rim of Bell Mtn. which faces Eagle Mountain to the Northeast. The eagles are often seen flying over the Bell Summit.

PARAGLIDING OFF BELL

The wind currents that can keep paragliders aloft for hours make Bell Mountain a popular destination for The Southern Para Pilots and other paragliders who came from many areas to launch off the summit and enjoy the lofty scenery of the Appalachian Mountain ranges and Lake Chatuge.

