

YOU'VE GOT MAIL — A POSTCARD FROM THE SMOKIES!



Check Out Your Smoky Mountain Mail Online. Everybody loves getting a picture postcard—especially when it comes from a spectacularly beautiful location like the Great Smoky Mountains. Now, thanks to the Chamber of Commerce in Swain County, North Carolina, you don't have to wait for your adventurous Uncle Bill to visit this land of majestic mountains and clear, rushing streams. Your epostcards from the Smokies have already been written by residents and visitors of Swain County. Just visit www.PostcardsFromTheSmokies.com, read the cards and smile!

"This 'photo-blog' is a companion web site to www.GreatSmokies.com," explains Chamber Director, Karen Wilmot, "which is packed with valuable information about outdoor activities, lodging and restaurants around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. 'Postcards,' on the other hand, takes a more casual look at the small, hidden treasures that make the Smokies special."

Ghost Towns and Cheap Thrills. When you glance through the colorful array of Smoky Mountain postcards, you're sure to notice an eerie photo of a vine-covered ruin in a deep forest. The building was once an active drying kiln in the bustling lumber town of Proctor, North Carolina. The town is now deserted and cut off from civilization, but you can still take a boat across Fontana Lake and relive the history of this once thriving community.

On a lighter note, you'll see adventurous whitewater enthusiasts challenging the twists and turns of Deep Creek with only an inner tube between them and a dip in the drink. At just \$5 a day to rent a tube (don't worry; they have protective seats!) these aren't just "thrills." They're "cheap thrills"—Smoky Mountain style!

High Drama, Big Bears and the Tree of Shame. Another favorite among the Smoky Mountain postcards depicts the cast of "Lizzie Borden of Fall River," a recent production of the Smoky Mountain Community Theatre of Bryson City. The lively theater troupe provides a nice change of pace from the rigorous outdoor activity that one usually associates with the region.

Scroll down and you'll see a small child playing at the feet of a giant bear. Don't be alarmed; these larger-than-life bears were painted by local tribal artists of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. They now grace the streets and plazas of historic Cherokee, North Carolina.

Perhaps the most odd-ball photo is that of the famed Deal's Gap Dragon "Tree of Shame." The tree is festooned with parts of motorcycles that have fallen victim to the infamous "Dragon," the curvaceous stretch of Highway 29 that lures bikers from all over the world. The tree is a makeshift shrine to those who have faced the beast... and lost.

We Love the Smoky Mountains. Wish You Were Here. Residents and visitors alike take a lot of pride in Swain County, 87% of which is made up of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and national forest lands. "You can see that pride in the way folks preserve and protect our wild areas," say Karen Wilmot. "We're very green-minded here," she adds. "You'll also sense that pride in our Postcards from the Smokies. We love sharing this special place with our visitors."



For more information on touring the Smokies, contact the Swain County Chamber of Commerce, 210 Main Street, P.O. Box 509, Bryson City, NC 28713; chamber@greatsmokies.com; or 800-867-9246.