



# The Path Less Traveled

## Early Explorations on Evitts Mountain

Welcome to Park Quest at Rocky Gap State Park! This year's Bonus Quest will take you on a challenging out and back expedition to the top of Evitts Mountain! Be prepared for a steep hike, with some rock hopping down into the gorge! Make sure you stay on the trail blazed (painted) in white to guide you safely to your destination, and be prepared for this hike to take a few hours depending on your fitness level. From the Touch of Nature parking lot, you will want to walk along the paved access road until you reach the trail head on your left marked "Evitts Mountain Homesite Trail". There your adventure begins! Bring a pencil or crayon and follow along on this worksheet to explore the mountain the way our forefathers have for hundreds of years.

## Mountain BINGO

Along your hike, try to find each of these plants and animals commonly found in Mountain Maryland. Early explorers would have also likely observed these same species on Evitts Mountain.

*Get 3 in a row? BINGO! You're an **Adventurer!** Find 6 total? You're an **Explorer!** Find all 9? You're a **Discoverer!***



**Eastern Hemlock**



**Wintergreen**



**Mountain Laurel**



**Any critter that flies**



**White Oak**



**Any critter that crawls**



**Rhododendron**

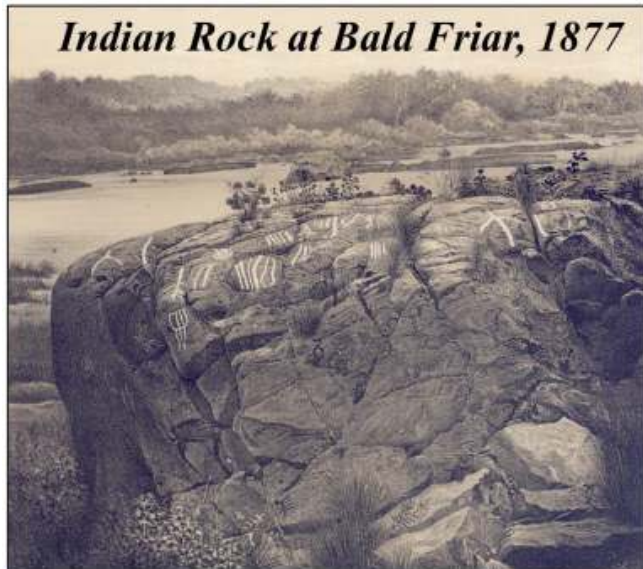


**Red Maple**

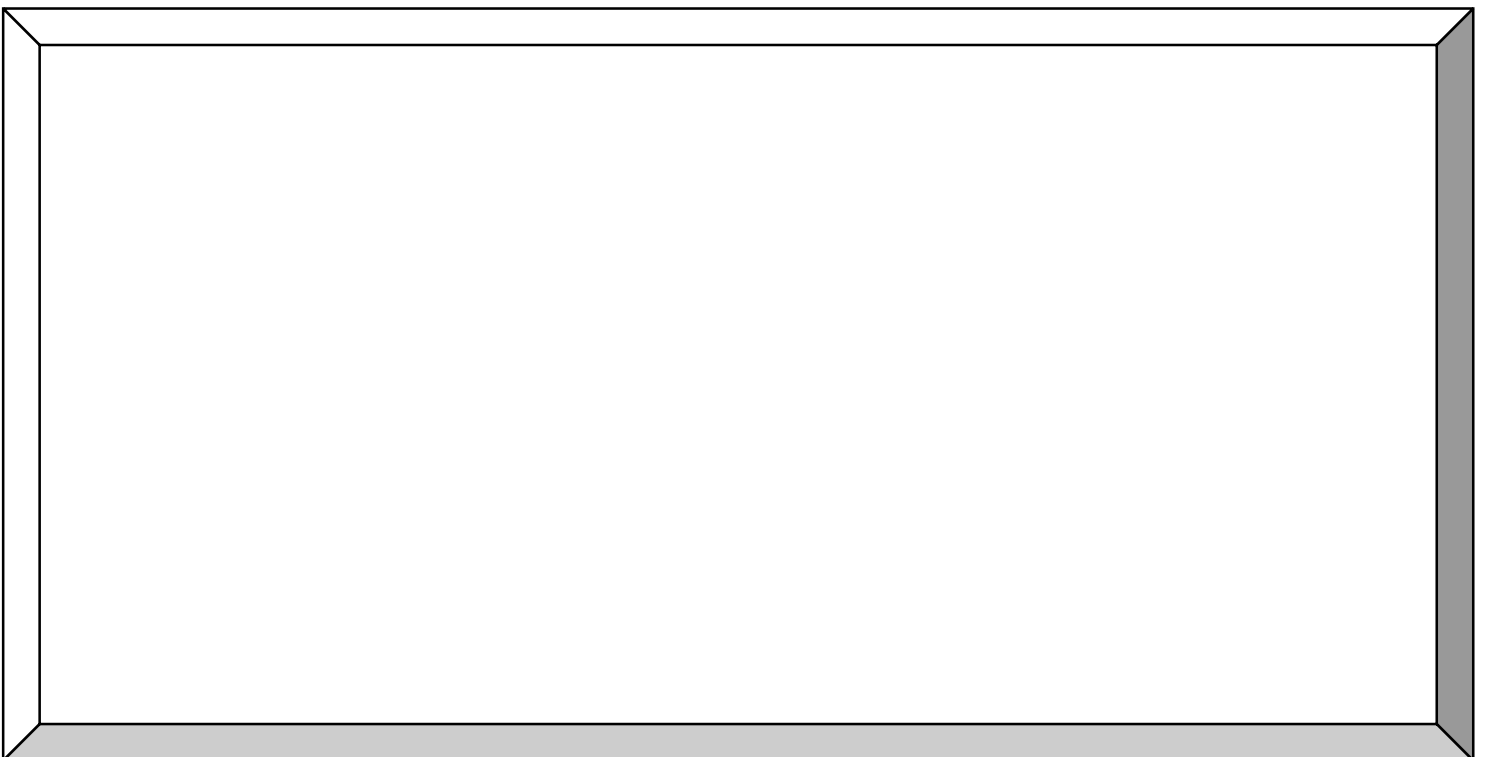


**White Pine**

Along your journey you will scramble down the mountainside until you reach a footbridge crossing a stream. Here, Rocky Gap Run winds its way through a mile-long gorge before flowing into rich Allegany County farmland. Before this land was discovered by European Settlers, American Indians used the gorge during seasonal hunting, fishing and trade expeditions. They would use rock overhangs as shelter and were known to carve pictures into the rock known as petroglyphs. A famous example of petroglyphs in Maryland are the Bald Friar carvings along the Susquehanna River (images below). These drawings are hundreds of years old!



Today we practice Leave No Trace outdoor ethics, and can responsibly communicate through modern technology instead of carving or painting our beautiful rocks and trees. In the space below, draw a picture, in the petroglyph style seen above, that best depicts that your family passed through here. Perhaps draw an animal you observed along your hike, a memorable forest scene, or a favorite hobby you enjoy doing together!



Near the top of the mountain you will come across Evitts Homesite. Legend tells of an educated English settler named Jacob Evart who ventured off the beaten path deep into the Maryland wilderness in the early 1700's out of desperation from a failed romance. Seeking solitude, Evart lived the life of a hermit at the top of the mountain which now bears an altered form of his name. He cleared land, cultivated fruit trees and built a rudimentary cabin at the site where you now stand. Though little information is known about him, Jacob Evart is largely thought to be the first white settler in Allegany County.

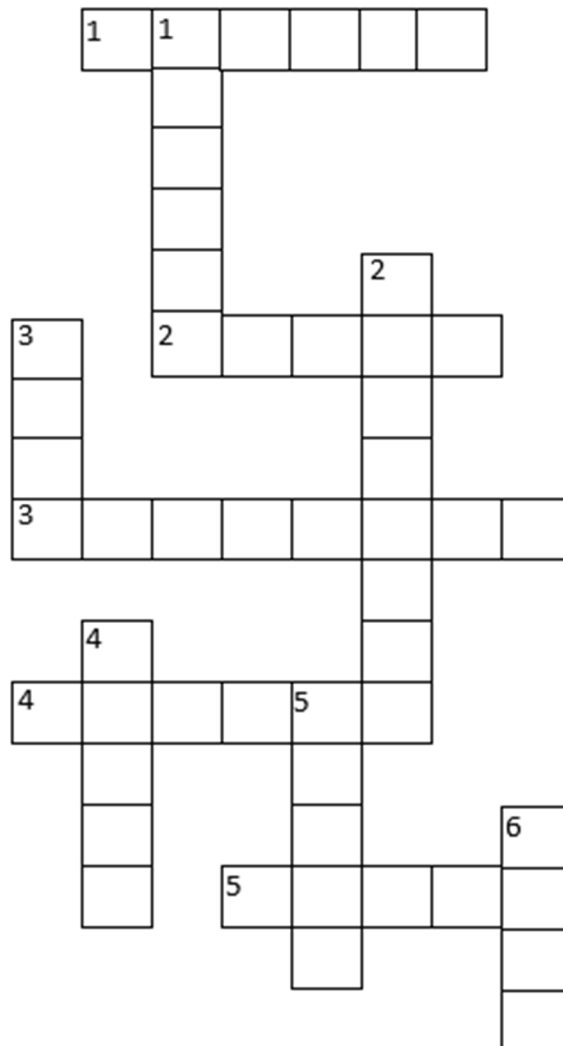
Using the sign on site as a word bank, complete the crossword puzzle below:

Across

- 1.) A word describing someone who lives in isolation
- 2.) The original last name of Jacob
- 3.) The word given to the large hill that you have been climbing
- 4.) Barriers built to mark property
- 5.) A building material found in the surrounding area

Down

- 1.) To run away from something
- 2.) Jacob planted this for food
- 3.) To cultivate the land
- 4.) Large animals found in this area
- 5.) The modernized version of Jacob's last name
- 6.) How Jacob would have gotten water

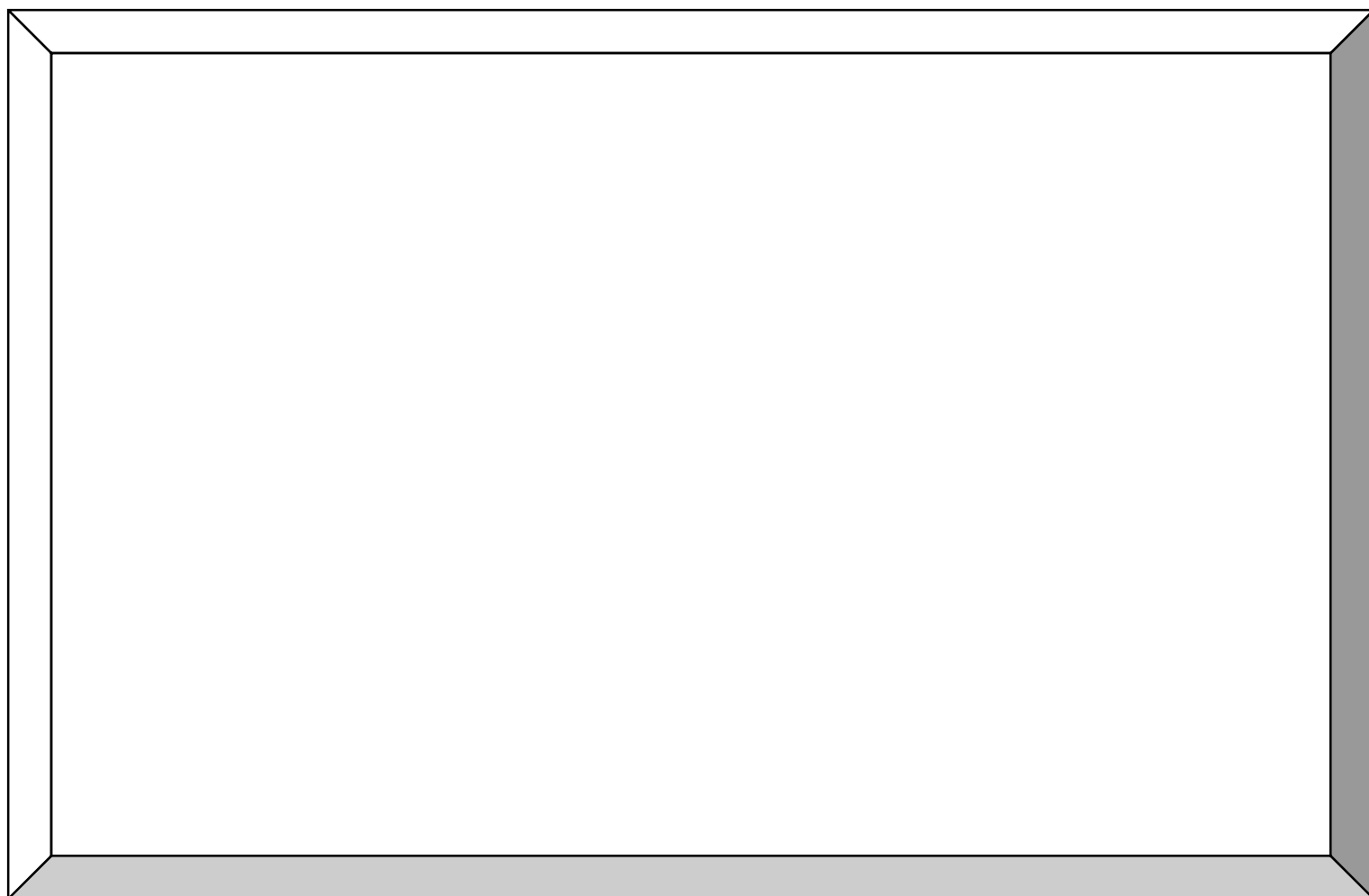


Extend your hike beyond Evitts Homesite and you will eventually reach a clearing in the forest, exposing a spectacular view of the valleys on either side of Evitts Mountain. To stand in this clearing is to actually stand in Pennsylvania, outside of Rocky Gap State Park boundaries. Today, we mark our boundaries with signs and yellow paint on the trees. Historically, surveyors would use different methods. Not far from the clearing is the Maryland and Pennsylvania boundary, otherwise known as the Mason Dixon Line. Can you find the stone Mason Dixon marker? It's not far off the trail, on the left side as you approach Pennsylvania from Maryland.

In colonial America, between 1763 and 1767 (after Jacob Evitt would have already passed away), surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon were tasked with marking the disputed boundary between Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware. The line was initially established across Evitts Mountain between May and June of 1766. The stone you currently see is not the original stone from 1766. It is a replacement stone from when the line was re-surveyed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. That year is also engraved on the stone. Record that year below:

\_\_\_\_\_

Use a pencil or crayon to create a rubbing of the circular survey disk on top of the stone from 1927:



**CONGRATULATIONS!** You have completed your quest! Return to your vehicle using the same trail. The date recorded above will also be the combo for the Park Quest box to receive a stamp for your passport. If you need assistance during your quest, please call the Duty Ranger at **240-357-4404**.