

# TREE ARMY: BASIC TRAINING

A SELF-GUIDED HISTORY CHALLENGE



## GAMBRILL STATE PARK



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# **TREE ARMY: BASIC TRAINING**

## **GAMBRILL STATE PARK**

Welcome to *Tree Army: Basic Training* at Gambrill State Park! This self-guided activity will lead you on a brief journey back in time, to experience the park through the eyes of a “CCC boy” in the 1930’s. Before you begin your challenge, take a few minutes to read the important background information below.

### **A DARK TIME IN AMERICAN HISTORY**

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The early 1930’s was a dark time in American history. With the Great Depression in full swing, millions of hard-working Americans found themselves unemployed and unable to provide for their families. An estimated 12-15 million people were out of work, equaling roughly one in every four workers.

### **THE CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS**

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In an effort to create jobs for some of the millions who were unemployed, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt developed a new program in 1933, called the Civilian Conservation Corps, or the “CCC.” In addition to creating jobs, the purpose of the CCC was to help restore the nation’s struggling natural resources. The CCC recruited young, unemployed men ages 17 to 25 to live and work in camps supervised by the U.S. Army. These young men—nicknamed “CCC boys”—went to work building parks, restoring forests, planting trees, fighting forest fires, and restoring watersheds across America. Between 1933 and 1942, the CCC provided jobs for over three million Americans.

### **THE LOCAL “CCC BOYS”**

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One of the nation’s many CCC camps was located in Frederick County, Maryland, just a few miles from Gambrill State Park. In the spring of 1933, approximately 200 “CCC boys” arrived at the camp, ready for work. For the first seven months, the “boys” lived in army tents, while they worked on constructing a mess hall, barracks, and other buildings for the camp. Once they finished building the camp, the “boys” went to work on a number of projects throughout the area.

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF GAMBRILL STATE PARK**

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A top priority for the local CCC camp was the development of Gambrill State Park. When the “boys” began working at Gambrill in 1933, the park did not exist – there were no roads, no picnic areas, no buildings, and no water supply. By 1940, the “CCC boys” managed to transform the area into a popular recreation destination. They built the roads, parking areas, restrooms, three stone overlooks, three wooden picnic shelters, the Tea Room, the Ranger’s residence, and a portion of the Nature Center building. Without the CCC, Gambrill State Park would not exist as it is today.

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## **YOUR CHALLENGE AT GAMBRILL STATE PARK:**

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Now that you've learned some basic information about the Civilian Conservation Corps, you're ready to begin your challenge at Gambrill State Park! The instructions below will lead you on a journey back in time, to experience the park through the eyes of a "CCC boy." As you explore the work of the CCC throughout the park, search for the answers to complete the puzzle on page six.

1. Begin your hike at the **SOUTH FREDERICK OVERLOOK**. Using the plaques secured to the surrounding rocks, look for the answer to **#5 DOWN** and **#6 ACROSS**.

*The South Frederick Overlook no longer 'overlooks' Frederick due to all of the tree growth. These trees were presumably planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps as a part of their service to Gambrill State Park. This overlook is largely used as a ceremonial site for weddings and memorial services in recent years.*

2. Before you leave the **SOUTH FREDERICK OVERLOOK**, read all of the displays with photographs for the answers to **#7 DOWN** and **#4 ACROSS**.

*The High Knob Nature Center is open periodically throughout the summer with the help of dedicated volunteers. Inside you will find native animal displays and a small museum interpreting the Civilian Conservation Corps history.*

3. The Green Ash trail crosses in front of the South Frederick Overlook. Follow it South to **SHELTER #4**. As you admire the work of the CCC, think about the local materials they used to build these fine structures. Then answer **#8 ACROSS**.

*Shelter #4 is one of the three picnic pavilions that are available for public reservations. Unfortunately in the last few years, this particular shelter has begun to show its age. Following weeks of restructuring the stonework in its foundation, the wooden beams have begun to fall apart. The Maryland Park Service is currently working to repair this shelter back to its original glory with the help of the Maryland Historical Trust.*

4. Continue your hike on the Green Ash Trail towards the Natural Playground. Once at the Natural Playground, follow the steps up to the parking lot where you will see the **TEA ROOM**. The displays with photographs at the top of the driveway hold the answer to **#2 ACROSS**.

*The Tea Room is one of the finest structures built by the CCC. It received its name from the communal teas that were served following its completion. Today the Tea Room is available by reservation for public use. In fact, it is the most popular rental facility in the Maryland Park Service for weddings, family reunions and business meetings!*

5. From the Tea Room, follow the path to the **MIDDLETOWN OVERLOOK**. Before you reach the overlook, you may find the answer to **#1 DOWN** on a plaque secured to a boulder.
6. Continue down the path to the **MIDDLETOWN OVERLOOK**. The answer to **#3 DOWN** is awaiting your discovery on the displays with photographs.

*Local community members of all ages have flocked to the Middletown Overlook for the spectacular mountain sunsets for years.*

**BY NOW YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR CROSSWORD PUZZLE!  
IT IS TIME TO FIGURE OUT THE ANSWER TO THE RIDDLE, WHICH  
WILL SUBSTITUTE THE GAMBRILL STATE PARK PARK QUEST  
2020 STAMP. TO FIND THE ANSWER TO THE RIDDLE,  
UNSCRAMBLE THE LETTERS IN THE GRAY BOXES OF THE  
CROSSWORD PUZZLE.**

More than 2 billion trees were planted by the  
Civilian Conservation Corps between 1933 and 1942.  
As a result, the CCC was given the following nickname:

**ROOSEVELT'S** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONGRATULATIONS!**  
**YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED**  
**TREE ARMY: BASIC TRAINING**  
**AT GAMBRILL STATE PARK.**  
**CCC CROSSWORD PUZZLE**  
GAMBRILL STATE PARK

**THERE IS SOMEONE WE WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO...**

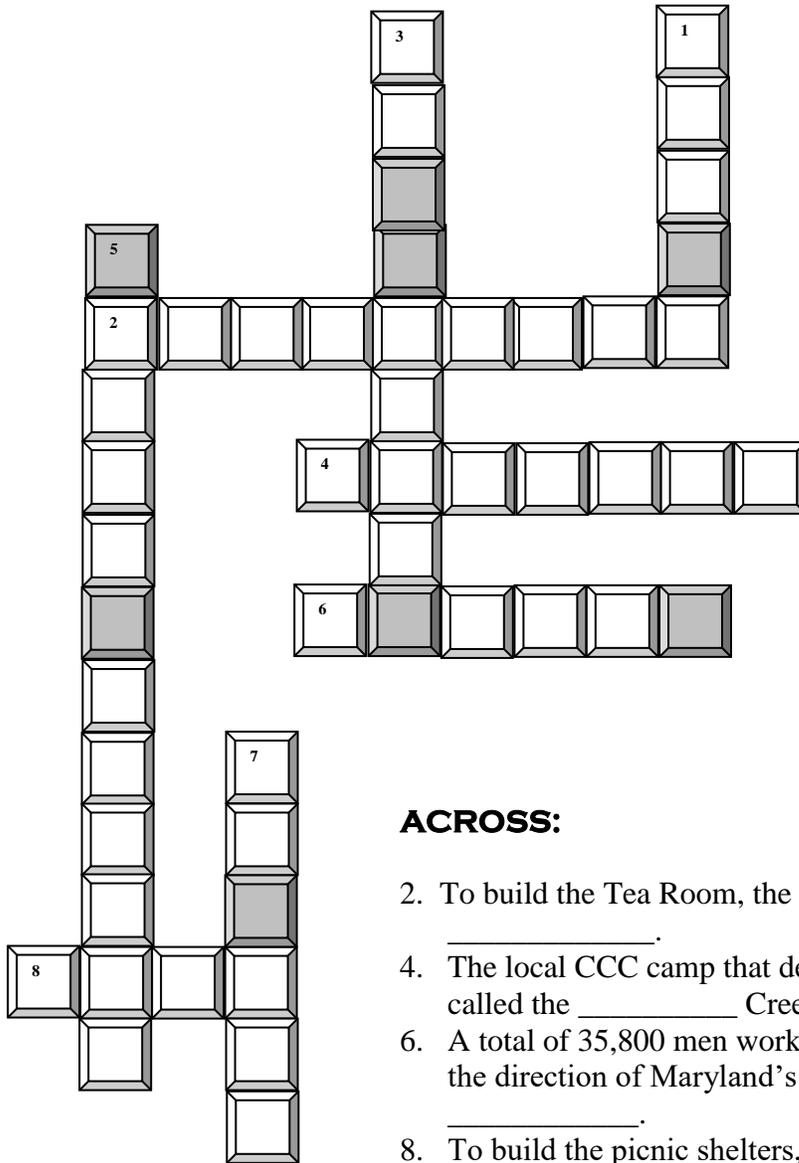
You may have seen him in passing towards the beginning of your Quest. Follow these directions to meet this local celebrity! From the Middletown Overlook, follow the Black Locust Trail north toward the Nature Center. At the intersection with the Green Ash Trail, follow the Green Ash Trail back into the High Knob area towards the 'CCC Monument.'



Iron Mike with the original 'CCC Boys' from the local chapter on the day of dedication.

**MEET IRON MIKE.**

Iron Mike is one of many CCC monuments throughout the country, but the only one in Maryland. Dedicated on November 5, 2011, he has greeted Gambrill State Park visitors with the work of those he commemorates ever since. Before you leave the park, be sure to take a picture with your family and our favorite 'Tree Army' member!



**ACROSS:**

2. To build the Tea Room, the CCC boys used stone shaped by \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The local CCC camp that developed Gambrill State Park was called the \_\_\_\_\_ Creek Camp.
6. A total of 35,800 men worked for the CCC in Maryland, under the direction of Maryland’s first state forester, Fred W. \_\_\_\_\_.
8. To build the picnic shelters, the “CCC boys” used \_\_\_\_\_ they cut from nearby trees.

**DOWN:**

1. Gambrill State Park was named in honor of \_\_\_\_\_ Gambrill—the first person to call attention to the beauty of the area.
3. The Civilian Conservation Corps used local \_\_\_\_\_ stone to build many park facilities.
5. Between 1933 and 1942, the Civilian Conservation Corps provided jobs for over \_\_\_\_\_ young men across America. (two words)
7. The High Knob Nature Center building was originally built by the CCC to serve as a Forest \_\_\_\_\_ Office.