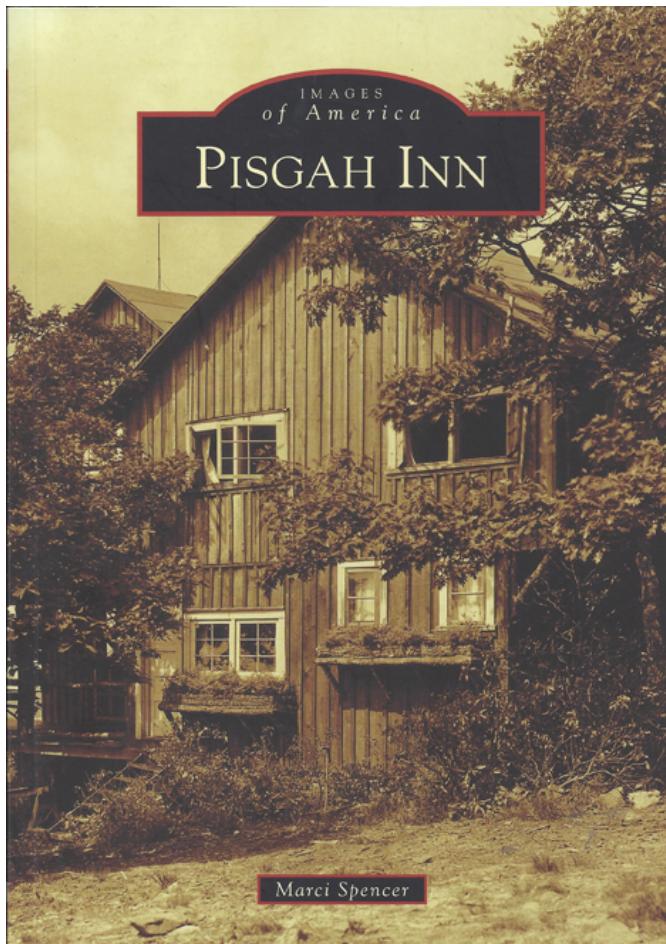


Pisgah Inn by Marci Spencer

Reviewed by Danny Bernstein



The Pisgah Inn on the Blue Ridge Parkway (Milepost 408) in Pisgah National Forest has been around for a long time. Hikers and nature lovers pass it on their way to a hike or to climb Mount Pisgah and view it as a landmark. The Mountains-to-Sea Trail goes right past the Inn as it traverses the state.

Now we have a new book by Marci Spencer, a Carolina Mountain Club member, which explains the history of the Inn. It starts with George Vanderbilt buying land in Western North Carolina to build his chateau, Biltmore House and Estate, in the late 1880s.

Pisgah Inn, published by [Arcadia Press](#), is part of the Images of America series. Spencer is well-known for several recent books that have been meticulously researched and written – think “Pisgah National Forest”, “Nantahala National Forest” and others. This book is another feather in Spencer’s cap.

If you came to the 2015 CMC annual meeting, you’ll remember that Marci was our guest speaker. She presented a program about Pisgah National Forest.

A Few Fun Facts

The Pisgah Inn that we are so familiar with is the second inn. The original Inn was built in 1919 way before the Blue Ridge Parkway was built. Somehow visitors found their way up the mountain.

Some bright guys working for Pisgah National Forest thought it would be great to create a Gameland Preserve. They brought bison and elk up the mountain and fenced them in. By the 1930s, the animals had either died, escaped or were killed by locals.

Carolina Mountain Club cleared the site of Buck Spring Lodge, a little way from the Inn. The club put in a new exhibit sign explaining the history of the lodge, Vanderbilt’s hunting place. A

photo on Pg. 46 shows Walt Weber of CMC next to George Cecil, grandson of George Vanderbilt at the dedication ceremony.

The Book



Pisgah Inn, the book, puts the inn in context with Pisgah National Forest, George Vanderbilt and the Biltmore Estate. The photos have been well-researched and documented. Spencer must have great contacts with many archives by now.

It's not easy to market new books now.

Ordinarily Spencer would be doing the circuit of bookstores and hiking clubs. I am trying to help outdoor authors by highlighting their books. You can find this gem at [Malaprop's Bookstore](#) in Asheville and other independent bookstores, on the Arcadia Publishing website, and numerous other online retailers.