

September 11, 2023

Introduction

On September 6, 2023, the OHA—the AMC Huts alumni association, whose members are called Old Hutmen and Old Hutwomen—inducted Betsy Byrd as an Honorary OH. The event took place at the lovely home and grounds of Larry and Yvonne Jenkins (both OH), Randolph, NH, in view of Mount Madison’s bold massif and its looming, knuckled ridge.

Joel White (OH) helped organize things from the start, with enthusiasm.

Twenty-plus OH and other pals of Betsy attended, including daughter Kathryn and son Jarrod. The assembled offered compliments, gratuitous quips, even a poem, all expressing—often hilariously, sometimes irreverently, always respectfully—their gratitude for having Betsy as a friend and mountain colleague.

Rev. John Weatherly (OH), former U.S. Army chaplain in Iraq, gave a comely invocation about mountains and friends.

AMC Archivist Becky Fullerton participated and got a condensed dose of informal Hut history, a natural outcome of garrulous OH telling tales—no exaggerations of course.

The OHA commissioned artist Sally Dinsmore Baldwin (OH) to produce a print for Betsy. The product was a serene and beautiful rendering of Tuckerman Ravine in winter. One hopes the OHA will continue gifting to honorees Sally’s splendid and so thoughtfully informed art.

Betsy received a framed award celebrating her decades of secretarial service to Huts Managers and other AMC execs—see photo by Doug Teschner (OH)—plus a commemorative booklet signed by attendees. This Word doc updates it with corrections and additions. Any errors are mine. Both versions include thirty-five congratulatory notes from well-wishers unable to attend.

The jpeg photo of Betsy’s award is fuzzy and has odd colorations. The actual document, however, now in her possession, is sharp and clear—as is Betsy at age eighty-seven.

The OHA has no corporate seal. So the award’s red-beribboned gold sticker bears my personal *Ex-Libris* embossment instead. Any port in a storm. Hey, OHA, get your own damn seal.

Thanks to everyone near and far who helped make a day of sweet remembrance for a great woman.

Read on.

Ken Olson
Privileged Emcee



BETSY BYRD: HONORARY OH

*For her decades' dedication supporting the Hut System, her prowess as lead secretary to successive Huts Managers and other AMC executives, her sparkling office welcome to hutboys of the all-male era who, each on seeing her, wanted to cry woo-woo! yet reserved himself, we the grateful OHA Steering Committee, on behalf of hut alums worldwide, do hereby bestow on **BETSY BYRD** the permanent, irreversible title—meaning she can't get rid of it—of **HONORARY OH**, Cum Laud, with Krummbolz Clusters.*

*And may all of us remember, Betsy, that though the nation has had its Madams Secretary of State, of Commerce, of Treasury, of Education, etc., the White Mountains are blessed with but one **MADAM SECRETARY OF HUTS**. 'Tis you, and you are beloved.*

*Given this day, Wednesday, September 6, 2023
Randolph, New Hampshire*

Stroker

Lawrence "Stroker" Rogovin
Chair, OHA

Phoebe Howe

Phoebe Howe
Vice Chair, OHA

Ken Olson

W. Kent Olson
Awards Chair, OHA





June 22, 2023

Mrs. Betsy Byrd

Dear Betsy:

As Ken Olson recently informed you, the OHA Steering Committee, at its June 13 meeting, conferred on you the title of Honorary OH. I'm writing this for the record as well as to add my personal congratulations—you rightfully join exceptional company and make the whole Huts alumni group shine even more.

Honorary OH status singles out people who worked for, and made outstanding contributions to the Appalachian Mountain Club Hut System. Our other designation, Special Member, refers to equally esteemed individuals who didn't work for the System.

We hereby acknowledge and deeply appreciate your decades-long dedication to the Huts, to all the Huts Managers you served and to the special men and women who have staffed the System in all capacities. You are beloved by multiple generations of grateful croos. Many fondly recall receiving employment letters you typed—in green ink no less—with the good news of their Hut assignments for the upcoming season. They remember visiting the Admin office, which you led with sparkle, just as Huts, Trails, Research, Planning and Pinkham executives were grateful for your professional proficiency, and how you imbued the office staff with the spirit of *can-do*.

We'd like to honor you in person if you can make the OH Fallfest reunion at AMC Highland Center, in Crawford Notch, November 4, 2023. Many of your friends will be attending and would love to see you. However, we understand if this arrangement can't work for you, and the OHA would be happy to present the award when you are in residence in Gorham, or even by mail to California.

Ken will be back in touch with you in a couple of weeks, at which time you can let us know your preferences.

Meanwhile, a big thanks from your OH peers for all you've done to make the AMC Huts a more excellent public service institution.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stroker". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Stroker
Chair, OH Association

cc: OHA Steering Committee
Ken Olson



Induction of Betsy Byrd as Honorary OH, home of Larry and Yvonne Jenkins (both OH), Randolph, NH, September 6, 2023. Seated L-R: Sally Dinsmore Baldwin (OH), Betsy Byrd (Hon. OH). Standing L-R: Ken Olson (Hon. OH), Tom Deans (Hon. OH), Joel White (OH), Reuben Rajala (OTC). Mount Madison, out of picture, made its big bold appearance to show its approval. Photo courtesy of Douglass Teschner (OH).



Tuckerman Ravine print commissioned by the OHA, presented to Betsy Byrd by the artist, Sally Dinsmore Baldwin (OH), September 6, 2023. A plate will be affixed to the frame, reading: Betsy Byrd, Honorary OH, "Madam Secretary of Huts."