

Reach **higher** ground.



**For More Information:**  
**Jim Davis, Public Relations**  
**Gatlinburg Department of Tourism**  
[jjmd@ci.gatlinburg.tn.us](mailto:jjmd@ci.gatlinburg.tn.us)  
865/436-0509

## **The Park Was My Home To Feature Stories of Long Ago**

GATLINBURG – Residents will gather downtown at the historic Gatlinburg Inn on Saturday, June 6 to reminisce, relate stories and share photographs of the days before the establishment of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Established in 1934, GSMNP was created from more than 6,000 tracts of private and commercial land that was bought with money raised by public and private donations. Once a timber and farm region, it was home to many families who relocated in order for the showplace we now call the Smokies be created.

Special guests will congregate for a discussion, sharing photographs and recounting memories of the time some 75 years ago they and their ancestors lived in communities like Sugarlands, Greenbrier, Smokemont, Laurel Creek and Banner and subsequently moved to make room for the Park.

More than 20 local residents ranging in age up to 100 years old will gather at 10 a.m. for this special day at the Gatlinburg Inn, which was built in 1937. Guests will hear stories of emotion and shared experiences as they reflect on a time long ago.

Admission is free, but reservations are required by calling the Special Events Office at 436-0500.

The Park Was My Home is one of several events planned by the Gatlinburg Department of Tourism as a tribute to the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

On Saturday, July 4, the City of Gatlinburg will recreate the September 2, 1940, Presidential Motorcade of Franklin D. Roosevelt as it traveled through Gatlinburg on its way to Newfound Gap. There, perched high above a throng of onlookers, FDR officially dedicated the Park while standing with one foot in North Carolina and one foot in Tennessee.

The City of Gatlinburg has arranged for Golden Globe-nominated actor and Tennessee native David Keith to portray FDR in the reenactment of the Presidential motorcade through Gatlinburg to dedicate the Smokies.

The mobile reenactment will lead the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual 4th of July Midnight Parade, presented by Land O' Lakes™ Half & Half, at 12:01 a.m. in front of 100,000 patriotic spectators in the early morning hours of Saturday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The motorcade will be reproduced in vintage style with period automobiles and costuming as along with vintage motorcycles to escort the motorcade.

MORE

Also this summer, Gatlinburg's 4th annual presentation of Smoky Mountain Tunes & Tales™ will feature a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary element when it begins in downtown Gatlinburg on June 12 and run through August 8.

Special for the 2009 season, characters will salute the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Great Smoky Mountains National Park as costumed characters Mark Pedro, portraying a 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps member, and Ginger Brown, portraying a local schoolteacher of the 1930s, provide insights into the beginning of the most visited national park in our National Park System. Quiltin' Annie, portrayed by Sabrina Gray, will demonstrate hand quilting techniques as she tells stories about the home economics of our region's past.

Smoky Mountain Tunes & Tales™ is the summer-long street performance event from 5 to 10 p.m. nightly featuring costumed musical performers, storytellers and artisans portraying time periods as far back as 1800.