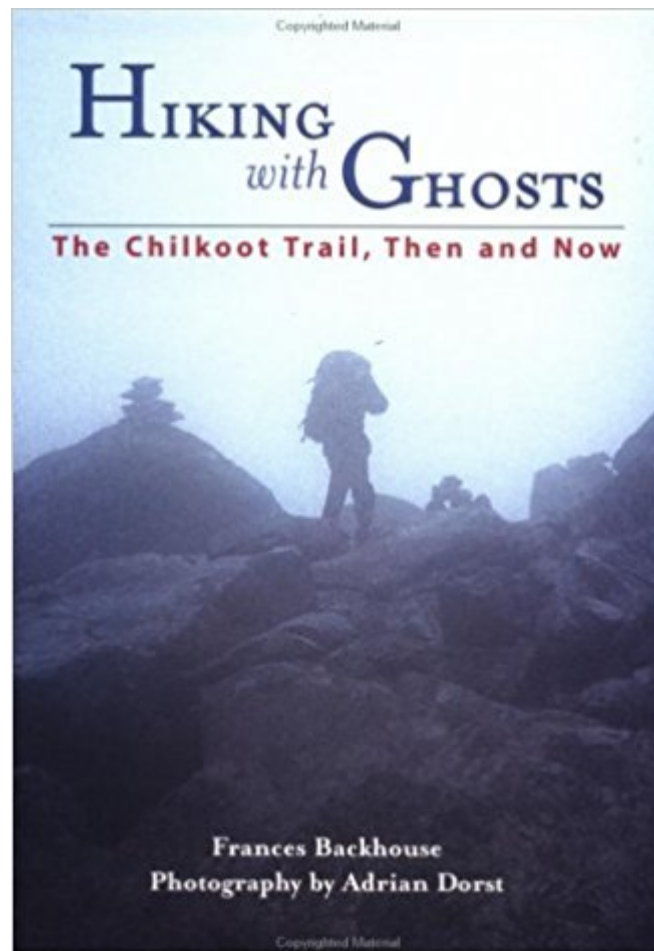




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Hiking With Ghosts: The Chilkooot Trail, Then And Now (Raincoast Journeys)



Synopsis

Book by Backhouse, Frances

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Book by Backhouse, Frances

I learned about this book while I was hiking the Chilkoot Trail in July 2014. The author made the hike in 1998 so the information is a little dated; many improvements have been made to the Trail and camping areas since then. I enjoyed the descriptions and history of the different terrain, plant communities, and the Klondike stampeders as well as the historic and 1998 photos. I also liked comparing the list of goods that the stampeders were required to have with my gear and ultralight pack. Well written and easy to read with many photos.

I am bit surprised to learn that this book is out of print currently. Maybe that explained why I didn't find this book until now when it was published back in 1999. As far as I can tell, this is probably the best book written on the modern Chilkoot Pass Trail. I should know that much since I read most of them already. The author's description of the trail proves to be pretty accurate and she relates the old Chilkoot Pass Trail Gold Rush history of 1898 and tied them to the modern trail which I thought to be very neat idea and the book proves to be very informative. Author's long trip through this trail gave a nice view of the modern trail and how it relates to the history. Usually, most people hiked this

trail in four to five days to get the most out of it. She took a week so she got a lot to write about. I enjoyed her narrative which proves to be very insightful and enjoyable to read. However, I was bit surprised by what author failed to point out in her book. She didn't mentioned that Golden North Hotel was the only hotel in Skagway that goes back to the Gold Rush era. I wonder if she stay there since I did when I hiked the trail two weeks prior to her hike. The hotel is no longer in business as of this review. She didn't mentioned the old 1950s sawmill which marked the half way point between the trail head and Finnigan's Point. Many hikers thought that structure was a leftover from the Gold Rush era. They were disappointed to learned that it was not. She also didn't make any mention of Stone Crib which ties with the Gold Rush era tramway system over the pass. I also thought she pondered too much on the plant life while ignoring the trail. But this reviewer have hiked through the Chilkoot seven times already so maybe I am being picky. As a guide, this book would be an very good reference material for anyone thinking about doing the hike. It would be nicer if you can get your hands on it.

We just completed the trail (a five star recommendation on it's own) and find the book and the reality are in lock step. A perfect read prior to taking the trek.

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