



History of the Formation of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter



The following article is from the historic records of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter.

The development of the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter stemmed directly from the formation of the Boston Chapter.

The formation of the Boston Chapter was initiated by the members of the Club living in the Boston area in conjunction with the Club's membership Committee. In the process of forming the Boston Chapter, it was not known at the onset whether the geographic area should include all or only a portion of eastern Massachusetts. The Southeastern Massachusetts area became a focal point for further consideration. In the process of discussing this question with Club members who resided in the latter area, it came to light that there was a significant feeling that a chapter or chapters should cover all Boston and Southeastern Massachusetts areas, that is, those parts of Massachusetts not already included in chapter areas. It was also noted that the formation of a chapter or chapters would have an enormous impact on the Club. All persons involved were concerned with the potential impact of the new chapter(s) on the Club and other chapters already existent.

In August 1974, a questionnaire was sent to all members residing in eastern Massachusetts areas not already covered by a chapter requesting a statement of interest in the formation of a chapter in the area. A notice was printed in the Bulletin (now called AMC Outdoors) informing members of this upcoming questionnaire. This poll proved useful in determining that not one chapter but two chapters might be preferable. Four-out-seven expressed preference for the formation of two chapters, one centering around greater Boston and the second in Southeastern Massachusetts. Two-out-seven expressed preference to have one large eastern Massachusetts chapter and one-out-seven felt no new chapter(s) should be formed.

From this poll, it was evident that a second poll to only those members residing in Southeastern Massachusetts should be made. In January 1975, D. Bruce Langmuir, Chairman of the recently formed Boston Chapter of the AMC, sent a questionnaire to the 720 members in the Southeastern Massachusetts area comprising the counties of Plymouth, Bristol, Barnstable, Nantucket, and Duke. He asked for a response to such questions as: "Do you favor a Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter?"; "Will you serve as an officer or on a committee?" and "Suggestion?"

A sufficient number of members responded to prompt Bruce to organize an Ad Hoc Start-up Committee. He did this by personally telephoning to a number of responders to ask their assistance.

On October 8, Charlie Culler, Paul Brodeur, Sam Raymond, D. Arthur Robinson, Lee Rogers, and Howard Shearer met at Jim Fox's home in Halifax to discuss organization procedures.

Bruce Langmuir and Doug Prescott, Chairman, Club Member

ship Committee, also attended. Bruce and Doug outlined some suggestions for the formation of a chapter. They alerted the committee to its responsibilities and how to establish a list of priorities. Without their assistance it is doubtful whether sufficient progress could have been made in a little over three months to have assured an election of officers in January, 1976.

Culler was elected coordinator and Fox secretary for the Ad Hoc Committee.

During the next three months, seven more meetings were held either in Halifax or North Falmouth, and gradually other AMC members joined the committee to assist in the decision making process. These include Susan Anderson, Bob Bentley, Bill Brown, Ed Kelly and Russell Ottey.

Sam Raymond and Paul Brodeur edited two informative newsletters to keep area members aware of the progress being made in their behalf. Gradually the slate of initial officers and committee members was prepared after dozens of telephone calls to potential candidates, a list of possible chapter names was suggested, and plans were finalized for an initial chapter meeting with an election of officers and the signing of a petition to the AMC Council.

During this gestation period, the period, the officers of the Council (now called Club Board of Directors) at 5 Joy Street received copies of all minutes of meetings of the organization committee.

Bruce Langmuir, by now the Chairman of the new Boston Chapter, continue to act as mentor and, while the committee occasionally hit some some whitewater, he was always there to help. Doug Prescott was also of much assistance and prompt in responding to call for information vital to progress.

On January 21, 1976, an organization meeting was held at the East Bridgewater Congregational Church to which all Southeastern Massachusetts Members and others interested in forming a chapter were invited. There were 152 members present.

Members of the AMC were asked to sign a petition requesting the authority to establish a Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter. The importance of the occasion was highlighted by the presence of Bruce Langmuir and Robert Wagner, Vice-President of Chapters.

Several members of the organizational committee gave reports and there was an extended question and answer period. The name "Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter" was finally selected by voice vote from a list containing such possibilities as "Sachem Chapter", and "Pilgrim Chapter", and Massasoit Chapter". The AMC members then voted for a initial slate of officers for a one year period.

The Chapter formation petition was presented to the AMC Council (now AMC Board of Directors) where it was warmly received and approved in February 1976.