

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTFIT

Sponsorship Into the AMM

Greetings from the Rocky Mountain Outfit (RMO). Since you are reading this, it is assumed you are interested in becoming a member of the RMO party of the American Mountain Men (AMM). This document is intended to provide an introduction to the RMO and describe the requirements for becoming a member.

ABOUT THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTFIT

Historically the Rocky Mountain Outfit was a company of men hired by the American Fur Company (AFC). Starting in 1836 the RMO was given charge by the AFC to deliver goods from St. Louis to the predetermined rendezvous site and return with the furs. It is likely that some men stayed in the mountains to be employed as trappers or camp keepers for the AFC.

We are portraying the average AFC party of men. This would have consisted of company men, hunters, trappers, traders, packers, camp keepers, &c. This does not include free trappers, voyageurs, or long hunters. Please keep in mind that it is not our intent to change an individual's persona. However, dress and equipment must be documented and fit the time period of what we portray.

When we are out on the ground we camp as a single mess. This means our camps are close together around a central fire and cooking, gathering firewood, and other camp responsibilities are shared by all. Certain types of food and gear are typically shared by all in the camp. This helps lighten everyone's load and promotes brotherhood. It does not fit into our camp style to have lots of individual camps scattered about. After all, we are good friends and want to enjoy each others company.

It is always our goal that our camps be period correct so if, at any time, someone makes a sketch (photograph) nothing is out of place. This includes food packaging, modern convenience items such as medication or water filters, &c. Nothing should be plastic and that includes beads.

We are looking for individuals with a superior attitude that are looking to get out on the ground and do things correct. This includes wearing clothing and using gear that is of the time period and can be documented. We do not expect everyone to be perfect, but to strive to do the best of their ability. Research and improving gear is a constant goal. Although there is a list of requirements for membership into the AMM, we do not want people that look at it like a check list of things that only have to be done once. They are all skills that were part of the every day life of a mountaineer and most are things that should be done all of the time. The AMM is about quality, not quantity, and we want folks that will become long term trail partners and brothers.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN MOUNTAIN MEN

The AMM is an association of individuals dedicated to the preservation of the traditions and ways of the Mountain Men; to the actual conservation of our nation's remaining natural wilderness and wildlife; and to the ability of our members to survive alone, under any circumstances, using only what nature has to offer.

The AMM's primary characteristic is, first and foremost, to be a Brotherhood of Men. In this fraternal concept is embedded the desire of all its members to teach, share, and learn the arts and skills of the original American mountain men, but deeper still, is the desire to be upon the trail, on lake or river, in mountains, plains or woods, as brothers, sharing this great experience. The sense of camaraderie and the shared endeavor are more important, always, than individual gain. These are the goals and the founding wisdom of AMM. To keep alive the skills of the freest men our great nation ever birthed; to preserve his abilities and emulate his way of life as historically accurate as possible.

Membership into the AMM is by invitation only.

AMM MEMBERSHIP

Initial membership into the AMM starts off with a probationary period, also known as being a Pilgrim. The purpose of the probationary membership period is so that a man may demonstrate, by word and deed, an interest in the fur trade era, a desire to abide by the association code, and a willingness to participate in association activities. Although many men come to this organization with a great deal of wilderness experience, all must go through this probationary membership period.

It is important to understand that these are the rules and guidelines of the AMM. Everyone must follow them; there are no short cuts. It doesn't matter if you've been doing this for 50 years or if you are the son or friend of an existing member.

The following steps must be taken before you can begin your probationary period:

1. Have a full and authentic set of clothing (leather or cloth pre-1840), a weapon and all necessary possibles. At this point your clothing does not have to be perfect. During the probationary period you will have ample opportunity to fine tune your clothing and accoutrements, get rid of the chrome tan leather, non period-correct moccasins, &c.
2. Must have attended at least three AMM camps under primitive conditions with your sponsors or party. This requirement gives you an opportunity to see if this is what you want to do as well as gives the members of the party a chance to get to know you and ensure compatibility.
3. Demonstrate your ability and intentions to abide by the goals of the AMM.
4. Become sponsored either by a party, two Bossloper, or one man holding Hiveranno degree. If you are sponsored by the RMO party you can choose or will be given a mentor from the party.

Your sponsor(s) will be held responsible for your conduct, education, and activities while you are of probationary status. The probationary period is to last a minimum of one full year, with a maximum of two full years toward completion of regular membership, at which point you will be known as Bossloper.

5. Submit your application along with a letter of introduction. If you are not sponsored by an AMM party, then one of your sponsors is required to submit a letter of recommendation to accompany this application.

As you are working on completing the steps for probationary membership we request that you subscribe to The Tomahawk & Longrifle (T&LR), the AMM magazine. The cost is \$25 and it is put out quarterly by the AMM. It will give you a look into the organization you're joining. Subscribing to the T&LR will make you an Associate member and shows that you are interested in supporting the organization. To subscribe contact the AMM Chief Clerk:

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Lakeville, MA 02347
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BOSSLOPER REQUIREMENTS

To advance to Bossloper you must complete 10 of the following 15 requirements within your probationary period. Where applicable, multiple requirements may be completed concurrently. Keep a journal with camp dates, who was there, what was done, and any other important information.

1. Must have a full set of hand-cut and -sewn clothing and handmade accoutrements. These must be researched for authenticity of the 1800-1840 period and be of a type which would have been seen on men in, or moving to, the Rocky Mountains. Period weapons, saddles, traps, blankets, and other accoutrements that would normally have required the work of a specialized craftsman need not be handmade, but must be as authentic as can be purchased today. **Required.**
2. Must have spent at least two days and one night in a primitive camp during each season of the year. **Required.**
3. Must have spent an accumulative time of two or more weeks in the wilderness under primitive conditions in the company of no more than one other member. Each stay must be at least three full days and two full nights.
4. Must have spent at least one full week in a primitive encampment in the company of other members at the Territorial AMM Rendezvous (Eastern or Western) or the National (Rocky Mountain) AMM Rendezvous.
5. Must be able to demonstrate the skills needed for primitive survival in the wilderness of his area and must be willing to teach said skills to other members when requested by a Party Boosway or Director of this Association.
6. Must be able to demonstrate trapping ability using steel traps, snares, and traps made from natural materials found in the area. As many states do not allow the use of some, or any, of these traps, the actual taking of game is not required, although it is suggested where possible and legal.
7. Must be able to demonstrate ability to track man or animal under natural wilderness conditions.
8. Must be able to demonstrate the ability to properly pack a horse, canoe, bullboat, or a man for distance travel under possible adverse conditions.
9. Must be able to properly field dress (clean and skin) a game animal under primitive conditions.
10. Must be able to start a fire in wet, as well as dry, weather using flint and steel or fire drill using tinder and wood found under natural conditions.
11. Must be able to show ability to tan or Indian-dress hides.
12. Must have spent at least five days traveling on foot, snowshoe, canoe, and/or horseback. One method or a combination may be used. Bullboat may be used in place of canoe. You are expected to gain as much distance as possible. This trip must be under primitive conditions, taking nothing that would not have been available to the mountain man between 1800-1840. Period weapon with accoutrements and knife must be along.
13. Must be able to cook a meal of meat using only the meat, fire, a knife, and materials found in nature.
14. Must be able to converse using Plains Indians hand talk. The 200 words on page 64 of Tomkin's book "Indian Sign Language", will be used as a basis for conversation. To complete this requirement, you must demonstrate your ability to read the signs for 50 words, as well as to give the signs for 50 words.
15. Must have hunted for and killed at least one game or fur animal with a muzzleloading firearm or primitive bow and must have used the skin and/or meat for food, clothing and/or accoutrements. The hunt must be made from a strictly primitive camp, the hunt accomplished under primitive conditions within the limits of local game laws.

AMM OBJECTIVES

- The specific and primary purpose is to establish and maintain a permanent association for research into and study of the history, traditions, tools, mode of living, etc., of the trappers, explorers, and traders known as the Mountain Men.
- Further purposes are:
 - Establish and maintain a permanent museum and research center to house and make available books, artifacts, films, speakers, etc.
 - To provide a means for the dissemination of information related to our purposes and objectives.
 - To provide a continuous program of living history.
 - To teach the skills and help develop the abilities which were actually needed and used by the original Mountain Men.
 - To help preserve the right of all free men to keep and bear arms.
 - To help preserve our native wilderness and wildlife by teaching and practicing realistic conservation.
 - To help establish brotherhood and trust between our members.
 - To help our members find deep affinity with nature that is a basic and necessary trait of all true Mountain Men.

AMM CODE

- I shall at all times consider a man's private life none of my business unless he wishes to make it so.
- I shall at all times strive to be a self-reliant individual, asking for help only if and when it is necessary.
- I shall at all times consider my word a sacred trust, a bond which is not to be broken.
- I shall at all times respect the personal property of other members, considering thievery an act deserving contempt.
- Before entering any camp or lodge I shall first make my presence known, then enter only if invited.
- I shall at no time fire any firearm in camp or give any other false warning of impending danger.
- During any survival situation, I shall be willing to divide any food and water I have and give any other assistance to people found in need.
- I shall take from nature only what I need or can actually use, practicing good conservation of our native wilderness and wildlife.
- At any association activity I shall follow the rules set forth by the Booshway in charge or leave of my own free will.
- I shall at all times strive to improve myself, my wilderness abilities and my knowledge of nature's law.