

UP ROPE!

NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON ROCK CLIMBERS

Vol. 1, No. 3.

December 13, 1944

Our New Chairman

On the evening of November 30, Elizabeth and Bert Vos opened their home to the invading army of rock climbers, or at least to those who could find their way there through the byways of Mt. Rainier and the season's first snowstorm.

An election was held to determine a new chairman for the coming year. Chris Scoredos, who served so well during 1944 as Rock Climbing Chairman of the Trail Club Council, was unanimously elected to fill this post. Congratulations, Chris! The only discordant voice at the election was that of our former chairman, who violated the ethics of democracy by voting in turn for each and every candidate who was proposed.

Kodachromes belonging to Elizabeth, Sterling Hendricks, and Steve Yurenka and portraying scenes of Bull Run, Harper's Ferry, Echo Cliffs, and Old Rag Mountain were shown at the meeting. The enthusiasm aroused by these pictures resulted in spur-of-the-moment plans for a trip to Little Devil's Stairs on Sunday.

All members present were assessed dues amounting to twenty-five cents per head for the coming year. This is the second such collection made since the founding of the Club four years ago. With these new funds at our disposal we should be headed for a prosperous year.

Other business conducted was voting upon a new list of qualifying climbs. The following climbs were accepted as additions to the former list, which was published in our last issue:

QUALIFYING CLIMES

GROUP A

9. Butterfinger Climb, Sugar Loaf. This climb, toward the trail from the Cave Climb, was made famous by Jean Clark.
10. Donalds' Ducks Traverse, Echo Cliffs, as a lead.
11. Socrates Downfall, Echo Cliffs, from the bottom.
12. Bird's Nest Climb (also known as the Two, Five, or Six Piton Lead), Great Falls, Virginia, as a lead.
13. The East Face, Camp Lewis.
14. Chairman's Chimney, Herzog Island.
15. The Fingertip Balance Climb, Herzog Island.
16. The Face Traverse, Herzog Island, followed by the ascent of Jan's Semi-chimney, all as a lead.
17. Sterling's Crack, Carderock.
18. Spider Walk, Carderock.
19. Leonard's Lunacy, Carderock.
20. Herby's Horror, Carderock.

GROUP B

10. Traverse of southeast corner and ascent of south face of Peak Gambs, Bull Run.
11. Ascent of gunsight gendarme, Seneca Rock, as a lead.
12. Bird's Nest Climb, not as a lead.
13. Vertical Crack facing Juliet's Balcony, downstream from the Balcony, Great Falls, Virginia.
14. The Reverse Chimney, Great Falls, Virginia.
15. Chris' Crack and Stocking Climb, Great Falls, Virginia.
16. Inside Corner of Flatiron Rock, Great Falls, Virginia.

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"handholds" which had to be picked up and laid aside for safety; to Steve, who ate his first persimmon; to Jan, who greatly admired the bittersweet; to all of us who worked hard pumping up Fitz' tire with a pump which let air out faster than it went in.

December 10, 1944

A trip to Harper's Ferry was planned, but did not take place. A Carderock trip included the following personnel:

Don Hubbard	Sterling Hendricks
Dixon Steele	Bill House
Jan Conn	Orrin Bonney
Herb Conn	Phil Von Lubkin
Eleanor Tatge	Bob Stephens &
Honey Lou Kundin	friend

Herb led Dixon, Honey Lou, and Jan on the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse, while Don kibitzed. It was Honey's first rock climb, and proved a Honey of a climb for her. The climb ended short of the Cedar Tree, around which Herby was well wound. At the Beginner's Climb Honey was started off again and had her first rappelling lesson. Two Trail Club girls had come up meanwhile, and one who had rappelled before tried it again. Jan and Eleanor did some scrambling. Sterling and his group came up before lunch and did some climbing in the corner where the Beginner's Crack is located.

Sterling's party had eaten lunch; the rest of us brought our lunch up to the climbing area so that we could continue to watch uninterrupted. Jan and Honey continued to eat lunch all afternoon between climbs. Bill and Orrin made successful traverses across Wexler's Worst. Later in the day Jan led Don and Herb on a piton lead up a crack in the first inside corner upstream from Chris' Goat. After Sterling's party and Bob Stephens, who had come in late in the afternoon, had left, Herb made a most amazing ascent, using one piton for artificial aid, of the bare wall at the left of the Buckets of Blood Cave. Don's party had dinner at the usual Howard Johnson restaurant.

Eleanor Tatge

Latest News

Guinevere Scott is in California where Leo expects to join her soon.

The stork was busy again, this time on Monday, December 4, at the home of the Clark's. Margaret tipped the scales at 7 pounds, one and one-half ounces, and was 20 inches long.

Flash: The Vos' left for California. Double Flash: Had everything; they're still here.

GROUP B

17. The Face Traverse, Herzog Island, followed by the ascent of Jan's Semi-chimney, not as a lead.
18. Jan's Face, Carderock. The climb must be started from the ground at the center of the face.
19. Ascent of downstream edge of face containing Sterling's Crack, Carderock. (Elsie's Edgeface).
20. Wexler's Worst and Stretch, Carderock.
21. Friction Layback, Carderock. (Straight up from Chris' Goat.)
22. Chris-Wex-Don Traverse, Carderock, as a lead. No short-cuts allowed.
23. Ascent of cliff downstream from layback crack shortly after the start of the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse, Carderock. (Arnold's Arduous Ascent.) The climb starts as a layback in a tiny crack on a mossy face, and continues over a small overhang onto the face above.
24. Upper Traverse, Carderock. This climb leads downstream from the cedar tree on the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse and at a higher level.
- 25 & 26. Sterling's Twin Cracks--two vertical cracks intersecting the above traverse.
27. The Big Toe Traverse, Echo Cliffs, as a lead.

Climbs which were proposed, but were temporarily shelved pending further investigation, are listed below. Three tension climbs are included in this "Question mark" list, not so much because more information is wanted regarding the character of the climbs, but rather because it is still debatable in our group whether the field of rock engineering, as opposed to rock climbing, is one which should be encouraged as a true art or discouraged as a blemish upon the fair name of mountaineering.

GROUP A

- Paul's Only, White Oak Canyon.
- The inside corner, Boucher Rock, as a lead.
- The inside corner, Rattle Rock.
- The waterline traverse, Echo Cliffs, with two tension corners.

- Fitz' Fat Man's Climb, Sugarloaf.
- The Layback Crack, Sugarloaf.
- Crack and overhang, Cowhoof Rock, Echo Cliffs, starting in crack a few yards downstream from bottom of Socrates Downfall.
- The Junior Horror, Camp Lewis. Use of the crack to the left of the face is prohibited.
- Eleanor's Face (Tatge's Terrible Tussle), Himes Island.
- The Molehill, Turkey Island.
- The Gryphon Climb, Seneca Rock.
- Leonard's Tension Corner, Herzog Island.
- Pincushion, Carderock, as a tension lead.

UPS AND DOWNS

December 3, 1944

Chris Scoredos	Arnold Wexler
Fitz Clark	Steve Yurenka
Tom Culverwell	Jan Conn
Bill Kemper	Herb Conn
Eleanor Tatge	

Fitz' station wagon took the group to Little Devil's Stairs, Shenandoah National Park. The weather was cold, with a stiff breeze, but plenty of sunshine. In the morning cliffs were climbed on the west side of the stream, in the afternoon on the east side, to keep in the sunshine. Before lunch Arnold, Fitz, and Chris worked on a roped climb which Chris led up a pinnacle and which involved a neat traverse around a nose. The remainder of the group interested themselves in a face climb directly above Chris' lead, belayed from above, which only Herb conquered. A long rappel crispened appetites for lunch.

After lunch Chris, Arnold, and Fitz again roped together for brave deeds across the stream. Arnold led a couple pitches, Fitz led in an ice chimney, then Chris led over some loose and shaky rock, safetied by a piton driven in about 1 inch. Chris said, well, it would break his fall anyway. He followed this climb with a delicate vertical lead. The remainder of the party scrambled, ropeless, to the top of the east cliffs, and southward up and down a projecting nose and pinnacle.

The day was memorable because of the many gorgeous icicles; because of the wide prevalence of



Up Rope!

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HOLIDAY ISSUE

Yuletide Greetings

Christmas, New Year's, turkey dinners, plum puddings, Santa Claus, and good cheer--the proximity of these things makes us all feel a bit different at this time of year. Even to the strange breed of people known as rock climbers the season holds its particular charm, whether the climbers be camped upon the bleak snows of the Blue Ridge or the windy Potomac crags, whether they be reveling in the candle lit gloom of Schoolhouse Cave or merely chinning themselves upon the door jamb of their apartment after an extra good meal.

As befits the holiday season, this issue of UP ROPE is intended to be somewhat bigger and better than other numbers edited during more prosaic weeks. To all those who have contributed to this week's issue go our warmest thanks. To each and every one of our readers go our heartiest wishes for a Happy New Year.

We are especially grateful for Tom Culverwell's drawings which lend so much of the holiday atmosphere to this issue.

Snow and Ice

According to the calendar the winter season has officially started. Basing our judgment upon recent samples of weather, we are not inclined to doubt the calendar's word.

Jack Frost is touching the rocks. Soon ice will coat the sheer faces and snow will clog the cracks and chimneys. Some of us feel that rock climbers should hibernate like bears until the arrival of spring. Others of us have expressed the belief that it is only a peculiar brand of stubbornness ("I'm not cold--are you?") which keeps the climbers at their

hobby throughout the winter months.

There is another viewpoint which regards winter climbing as an end in itself. No one disputes that climbing of the frozen Potomac cliffs is training for snow and ice climbing upon high mountains, just as our summer recreation is practice for rock work upon loftier ranges. But why shouldn't we consider the winter variety of climbing enjoyable for its own sake, just as we do the summer climbing?

Our standard of what makes a good climb, however, must ease off in proportion to the rigor of the weather. On those days when we plow through knee deep snow to reach the bottom of the cliffs we are not interested in the severe finger work of Leonard's Lunacy or the friction slabs of the Waterline Traverse at Echo Cliffs. Instead we are concerned with such problems as maintaining balance upon slippery footing, step-cutting, and learning to trust and use the snow for what it is worth. Can you climb the Chockstone Chimney in two feet of snow?

Along somewhat this same line Gus Gambs, in a recent communication, points out the possibilities of the Potomac Gorge for glacier practice. He says:

"During severe winters the shady Virginia cliffs and couloirs retain snow and ice longer than the opposite shore. Between the big pothole and Echo Cliffs there has been at times splendid opportunity for practice. In fact about fifteen or eighteen years ago the river from Great Falls to Cupid's Bower had been converted into a regular glacier caused by successions of jams. Stimmy, the Dawson's and myself roped, tested the resistance of the ice with our ice axes, and armed with smoked glasses and Stimmy's camera we ex-

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plored glacier mills and yawning ice chasms. While so engaged we had to dodge a number of hidden crevasses."

Longs Peak

Speaking of winter climbing we present below an exclusive story of a winter ascent of Longs Peak, Colorado. Tom Hedlund, now in the Naval Training School at Brunswick, Maine, is the author. Those climbers who were at Carde-rock on Sunday, June 25, of this year will remember Tom as the blond young ensign who fell off the Spider Walk and the Horror along with the rest of us.

The adventure which he describes occurred on March 21, 1943:

"After a fine Saturday evening at Hewes-Kirkwood Inn spent in renewing acquaintances, I went to sleep in front of the big fireplace lying on four chairs placed in a row. I woke up about two o'clock when the fire died down and I got cold. Since I was going to wear skis and the others had snowshoes, I had decided to leave ahead of them and meet them at Timberline Cabin. I left about 2:30 and it was beautiful. The moon was nearly full and the snow made it almost daylight. To top it all off it was plenty cold. I don't believe I ever worked so hard in all my life as I did getting up to timberline on those skis. Rather than hunt out the trail (I tried that up to the register) I went straight up the telephone line. I had to side-step most of the way, and I thought that I would never make it. All the time I was expecting the others to catch up with me on their snowshoes. As it turned out I had to slow down for them to catch me just below the cabin. They hadn't left Hewes until about two hours after I had.

"The sun hit the East Face of Longs while we were at the cabin, and what a sight that was! We took some pictures and then headed up the telephone line to Boulder Field. There was quite a bit of snow even here. Each of us took a ski pole along and we had a single ice ax and a rope. It was an uneventful but cold trip to the shelter cabins at the Field. Got there about ten A.M. and built a fire under a rock and ate our lunch. At Hewes we had made up

some sandwiches and put them in a bread sack. But now we discovered that we had brought a loaf of bread instead of the sack with the sandwiches. So we ate dry bread. I had a couple of sandwiches, though, that we split. After a long confab we decided to tackle the North Face rather than try the Keyhole. The Face looked pretty bad with a long snowbank just below it and plenty of snow on the Face itself.

"We roped up after reaching the bottom of the snowbank from Boulder Field. The snow was very steep but the footholds were good and we had no trouble getting to the bottom of the Face. Believe it or not, the lower cable was clear of both ice and snow (except under foot) and we made short work of going up it to where the second cable was supposed to be. It would probably have taken a five-foot hole, though, to have found the second cable. We started straight up the ice and snow to where we thought the second cable ended. Here the going was tough. Every foothold had to be chopped in the ice. All the time we kept casting anxious eyes at the sky, but never a cloud appeared all day. The sun was certainly bright, but not very warm even in the middle of the day. After spending two hours on the ice sheet we hit a few bare rocks, but they were exceptionally smooth and had a thin covering of slick snow on them besides. We stuck to the deeper snow as much as possible. Finally we hit the last pitch to the top of the ridge north of the summit. Here we had our real trouble. We couldn't find enough deep snow to give us good footing, and as a result we failed in three attempts to get up to the ridge. It was getting pretty late, but we decided to try one more time. We picked a ravine that had quite a bit of steep snow in it and a small cornice at the top. Well, we made it, or we would have had to quit. Once on the ridge we threw off our rope and raced to the summit. Words can't describe our feeling at the top. It was three forty-five, and after taking pictures, signing the register, and looking at the rest of the state of Colorado, we roped up again and started down.

"We had no trouble getting down, although we backed much of the way. On the Boulder Field side



"--And I resolve to spend next New Year's Eve on Times Square."

of Granite Pass we were met by a bunch from Hewes who had come up to meet us. They were overjoyed to hear that we had made it and marveled at our path up the North Face. You know how it is--from below mountains look much more imposing and difficult than they actually are.

"As we continued down my feet bothered me, although I thought they were just tired. I plowed through the snow rather than try to stand up on skis. I was so tired that at times when I sank in up to my hips I just lay there and dozed. How I longed for a pair of those snowshoes! We got back to Hewes at 8 o'clock. I took off my boots in front of the fire and got quite a surprise. The front half of both feet were blue and hard as a rock. I didn't think much about it, ate, and promptly went to sleep.

"Monday a doctor looked at my feet and said they were about the worst case of freezing he had ever seen. To finish up this tale, I was on crutches for a few days, and

it was a month before I could wear shoes. I had frozen seven of my toes. Rob was in the hospital a week with his toes, and I guess one of his was worse than mine. I believe that all the others had a little trouble with theirs, but not so much.

"Moral--Don't climb Longs Peak with only an hour's sleep the night before."

These glowing narratives may well make us yearn for blizzards, sub-zero weather, and snow up to the neck. Yet it is sad to relate that Washington winters are not always so. In the past the weatherman has been known to disappoint the rock climbers with Sunday after Sunday of cloudless skies, warm sunshine, and bare dry rocks. If this is again to be our fate, let us try to be philosophical and make the best of it.

Ups and Downs

The following people were at Great Falls on December 17, 1944:

Chris Scoredos	Dixon Steele
Don Hubbard	Bob Stephens
Fitz Clark	Eleanor Tatge
Bert Vos	Jan Conn
Herb Conn	Arnold Wexler
Elizabeth Aughey Vos	

The trip started with a whoosh when Don and Eleanor inflated the merrie "Sink Stopper" and went for a boat ride through the rapids below the falls. The shore was icy, the river was high, and the current was strong. The two soaked and chilled survivors considered the trip a howling success. The rest of the party hiked to the pond beside the Indigestion Climb and found it covered with ice. Here the skaters were kept busy for the next two hours. Chris was allowed the privilege of first trying the ice. It held. The spectators, when it seemed that none of the ice skaters was to get a ducking, wandered off to watch for Don and Arnold, determined to see someone get wet.

Some climbs were found in the neighborhood of the boiler plate across from the fish ladder. It was suggested that ice skates would be desirable for negotiating some parts of these climbs, but the experiment was not tried. Later the area was abandoned for the cliffs downstream which were in the sun.

Arnold belayed Chris in unsuccessful attempts upon the Stocking Climb. Upon one occasion Chris, after falling, attempted to climb the rope to save himself from a bath in the river. As he climbed hand over hand, Arnold, out of earshot, continued to let out rope. How Chris remained dry is one of the major mysteries of the occasion.

Eleanor, Dixon, and the Conns climbed the chimney portion of Chris' Crack, with exploratory ventures upon the face upstream. After lunch and more skating (although the zone of soundness of the ice was rapidly shrinking under the afternoon sun) there was a general assault upon the Indigestion climb, which was ascended by Arnold, Chris, Fitz, Jan, and Herb. Fitz then led the way back to the Stocking Climb. A set-up using four ropes, and a piton and carabiner provided complete safety for climbers, belayers, and spectators, and allowed the belayer to observe the action. Fitz, after giving in to tradition by removing his right

shoe, conquered the climb in magnificent style. Herb followed, also minus one shoe. Chris, refusing to climb unshod, still did not succeed, but blamed it on his height rather than his shoe. The day was finished off by the Reverse Chimney, which was climbed by Arnold and Jan.

On December 24, 1944, the personnel included:

Chris Scoredos	Dixon Steele
Don Hubbard	Sterling Hendricks
Connie Faick	Bill House
Eleanor Tatge	Phil Von Lubken

The day started at the skating pond in the canal at Carderock with the arrival of Don, Dixon, Eleanor, and Connie. Dixon's skates are in Nebraska, so Don skated a while, then lent his. Connie had fire on his mind first, and collected a vast supply of wood before he skated. The ice was good over a broader area than at any time last winter, and sufficiently smooth for all practical purposes. Chris Scoredos came up shortly and joined the skaters.

After lunch the group, except Connie, went to the Carderock cliffs for climbing. Sterling, Bill, and Phil showed up shortly. A wide variety of climbing was done. Chris and Eleanor practiced in nails, which neither had done at Carderock before. Sterling's Pushup, a newly discovered exercise for the ambitious rock climber was demonstrated. The Spider Walk, the Three Chimney Climb, Sterling's Crack, and Jan's Face were among the climbs worked upon. Two voting climbs were made by non-voters: The center of Jan's Face, Group B, was climbed by Eleanor, and Sterling's Crack, Group A, was climbed by Dixon. E.T. and H.C.

New Officers

Our Chairman announces the appointment of two more officers for 1945. Elizabeth Vos is the new treasurer, and Jan Conn the new secretary

Maddox Rock

Gus Gambs furnishes the following information for the benefit of Washington rock climbers:



The Stork: "Piton? — Oh, that's French for 'safety-pin.' And Brother, when I got through they're sure going to need 'em!"

"I read your list of Qualifying Climbs with great interest; however, it strikes me that two worthy rock formations on the Virginia side have been overlooked.

"I have in mind Maddox and/or Prospect Rock; they are located half a mile west of the mouth of Bullneck Run. The forbidding wall of Maddox Rock has at least one good qualifying climb. There is a lot of traversing to be found for Chris and his Rope Gang. Then,

there is a moist Semi-Cave for piton work etc. A few years ago I introduced Paul, Sterling, and Donald to the main formation, about one third of a mile farther west, Prospect Rock. This one offers you the greatest variety of climbing on which all your available hardware may be used to good advantage. And after you have exhausted all the experience at your command there will still be some problems left for further visits.

"I shall be too glad to meet four or five climbers two miles east of Langley on top of the hill of the Chain Bridge-Leesburg (Great Falls) Road (a little ways west of Fort Marcy). Whenever ready drop me a postal or give me a ring, fixing day and hour to meet you at the designated place. Of course, at the end of the day I return you to the pick-up spot (I think it is called the Noyes Estate).

Sincerely,
Gustave A. Gambs
Route 1
McLean, Va.

Phone: Falls Church 801J1, any day between 6 and 8 P.M.

And the News

Capt. Sam Moore, U.S. Air Force, arrived in Washington Dec. 18 for a short Christmas leave. He expects to remain until the 29th. Friends are happy to see him and are busily planning trips to take advantage of his presence. Sam has been in Service School at Robins Field, Georgia. The state of Georgia, he reports, is the coldest place he has found yet, and he tells of hiking in the snow in the Georgia mountains shortly before returning to Washington.

It is just learned that Sam and Tom Culverwell are back from a canoe trip amidst the ice floes of the Potomac.

A son, Edward G. III, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Edward G. Siggers on December 16. This new Ed weighed in at 8 pounds, 5 ounces. Congratulations to the Siggers!

Word is received that the mountaineering library belonging to Arthur Lembeck has been moved to the Culverwell's home at 6005 Welborn Drive, Wood Acres, Md. (Tel. OLiver 0215) Arthur's collection is a first-rate assortment of books and periodicals dealing with mountain craft. The Culverwells request that all interested persons feel free to drop in, examine, and borrow these books.

Be it Resolved:

Folks everywhere are greeting the New Year with long lists of good intentions for 1945. It is proverbial that New Year's resolutions are always broken. However, let it not be said that we did not even list our resolutions.

The following is a proposed list for rock climbers:

1. We pledge ourselves to the NAN-PAT Club (No All Night Parties After Thursday Club).
2. The sliding belay is a good thing but let's not let it slide too far.
3. We resolve never to trust a piton that can be moved by breathing upon it.
4. For Chris: I resolve to climb during 1945 every climb which I said "will go" including the Jam Box.
5. For Sterling: I resolve never to belay more than three climbers at once when I am doing a climb myself.
6. For Don: I'll never sic a beginner on anything harder than Charlie's Crack if he doesn't have a belay.
7. Arnold resolves to fall off the Spider Walk once just to see what it feels like.
8. For Fitz: I will keep off of all vertical faces with my station wagon--without a belay from above.
9. Chris also resolves not to skate on ice less than 1/4 inch thick unless equipped with a diving helmet and food for the muskrats.
10. For Tom: I resolve to turn out cartoons by the bushel for UP ROPE.