

UP ROPE!

NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON ROCK CLIMBERS

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August 8, 1945

TOWPATH REOPENED

Restrictions Lifted

The section of the C & O towpath between Anglers' Inn and Great Falls, Md., which has been closed to the general public since the beginning of the War has now been officially reopened. The National Park Service states that those in search of recreation may now wander freely in the area between the canal and the river without fear of prosecution or ejection.

A vast rock-climbing area has thus been restored to the Washington climbers. Cupid's Bower, Wide Water, and Bear Island are all easily accessible from the towpath by a short hike beyond Carderock, or cars may be driven as far up river as the Old Anglers' Club at Cropley. From Cropley to Great Falls is only 2 miles, so that Cleft Island and all the cliffs on the Maryland side of the Potomac gorge can once more be visited. With the aid of the Sink Stopper, Echo Cliffs and the Virginia side of the gorge may be reached without the gasoline-consuming drive across Chain Bridge via Langley.

Names like "The Little Handhold That Isn't There" and "Spitsbergen" will return to the Sunday news. Many new climbs will undoubtedly be found, as the exploration of this region was still young when the restrictions were made. It is an area ideally suited to winter climbing, as the rocks face the winter sun. This winter "Ups and Downs" need no longer read, "Carderock--Carde* rock--Carderock." This slight lifting of martial restrictions leads us to bright visions of more extensive traveling--Alaska, Andes, Himalayas, even Old Rag--soon.

Coming Events

Don't forget the PICTURE MEETING at Kathleen Culverwell's this Thursday. The time, 8 P.M., the address 6005 Welborn Drive, Wood Acres, Md., Telephone OL 0215.

The SCHEDULED ROCK CLIMBING TRIP for August has been arranged for August 19. We hope a bright sunny day will bring out more and drier climbers at Carderock than appeared at the last scheduled trip.

The Big Toe Traverse (B-10)

As a lead this is a B climb, but--don't say we didn't warn you! If you like exposure, off-balance rock and totally inadequate footing, if you feel that your big toes need exercise and your life insurance policy needs to be snapped out of its complacency, we promise you'll like it.

Starting at the cedar tree which grows from a shelf of Echo Cliffs 200 feet downstream from the base of Cowhoof Rock, climb down a few feet into the inside corner and traverse downstream around a projecting nose and across a broad alcove. With your second man belaying here, descend 10 feet to the start of the fun.

The climber here is on the brink of the large overhang directly under which the Donalds' Ducks go into their ducks. Footing is provided on horizontal protuberances which become increasingly meager downstream. The last foothold is an indented crack large enough to accommodate only the big toe. A piton here steadies the climbers morale as his fingers probe for "scratch holds" and his foot stretches forward for holds that don't exist. Using exactly

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type of support the weight is shifted a long step sideways onto severely sloping ledges. The angle is still too high for comfort, but if the climber moves swiftly he will pass to more substantial territory before mishap occurs.

Paul Bradt first led this traverse in 1941. He climbed bare-foot in order to make full use of his big toes, and onlookers describe how just as one toe would slip out of the critical hold he replaced it with the other. Chris Scoredos followed Paul across, but Don Jacobs and Don Hubbard both fell into the rope. Charlie Daniels, later in the day, tried unsuccessfully to make the climb in the reverse direction.

Triangle and Coffin Climb (A-9)

Harold Stimson promises you the degree "Doctor of Rock Climbing" if you climb it. And Stimmy, you can be sure, knows what he is talking about. After you've conquered the nearby Bachelor's and Master's degree climbs, if you are still game to try for your Ph.D., take a look at the Coffin.

It's a 28 degree overhang about 35 feet high. It's on the highest and most sharply overhanging section of the rock-walled "table" of Cupid's Bower island, 200 feet from the eastern tip of the island. The triangular and coffin-shaped recesses in the wall identify the route.

A short initial pitch brings the candidate onto the starting platform at the foot of the overhang directly below the triangle. Moving slightly to the right, he suddenly finds his entire weight hanging from moderately poor handholds, while his feet struggle for elevation in a wide spraddle. One hand then reaches upward to a jam hold in the base of the triangle, which provides the necessary key for admission to the lower of the two recesses. The climber is cautioned against jamming himself into the back of the recess; instead he should keep his weight out, with his hands in the layback crack in the right wall of the triangle. Higher handholds and footholds on the face to the right give elevation, until one hand finally seizes the "thank God" hold on the back wall of the coffin. Chimneying between the sides of the funereal box, the climber will find himself boxed in at its top. But with a right hand-

hold in the crack under the coffin's roof and with his feet as high as possible, his left hand can reach out and over to the top of the cliff. A tree growing at the edge is a tempting convenience for the last pull. We leave it to the scholastic honor of the prospective Ph.D. whether or not he use it.

The first ascent of the Coffin was made in 1936 by Marshall Wood. Degrees have since been handed out not too frequently, the only lady doctorate belonging to Marian Churchill.

The Mystery of the Lost Climb

Their eyes light up with enthusiasm. "What a climb!" they say. But when asked to locate it, they shake their heads in perplexity. Such, at present, is the status of "B-9" on the qualifying list.

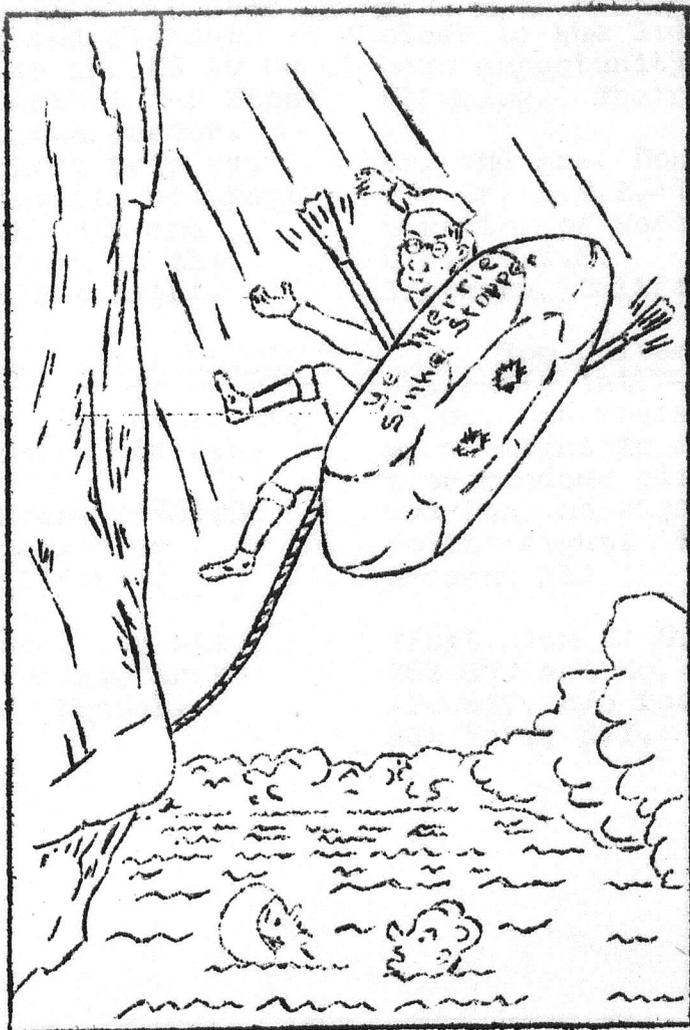
There are clues to the mystery, however, and members of the original climbing party are busily sleuthing. We hope to bring you a full report in an early issue.

Ups and Downs

July 29, 1945

Chris Scoredos	Helen Scoredos
Donald Hubbard	Jan Conn
Sterling Hendricks	Eleanor Tatge
Arnold Wexler	Herb Conn

The scheduled trip for July was held on Herzog Island in the rain with the smallest turnout of members ever to attend a scheduled trip. The climbing started off with the setting up of a piton lead on the Hornet's Nest Climb by Don and Arnold, and some intricate vertical face climbing nearby by Sterling, Jan, and Herb. Chris and Helen arrived later in the morning after Chris had swum the Potomac to get the Sink Stopper which was parked on the Herzog shore by the early crossers. In the afternoon Chris tried climbing down Chairman's Chimney. Jan, in order to recover Don's hardware, led the Hornet's Nest Climb, but her party broke down when caught on the face by the hardest shower of the day, which lubricated the holds and the climbers and stiffened the climbing rope to a cable-like consistency.



"HE CARRIES IT WITH HIM FOR JUST SUCH AN EMERGENCY!"

Due to the rain the homeward trip was started rather early. Don, Jan, and Herb rode to the Georgetown Feeder in the Sink Stopper.

August 5, 1945
Chris

Chris Scoredos climbed alone at Camp Lewis and at Carderock. He spent the day experimenting with various types of self belays. These included one-man sliding belays through various piton and carabiner arrangements, and the belay considered by Chris the most successful, that of tying the rope to a tree at the top of the cliff and retying around the climber's waist as he progresses. (We advise this technique for the Spider Walk, which Chris apparently considers too easy to bother with a belay.)

Don Hubbard
Arnold Wexler
Herb Conn
Jan Conn

Eleanor Tatge
Sterling Hendricks
Chuck Haworth

Don, Arnold, Herb, Jan, and Eleanor went up to Echo Cliffs directly. They were joined about noon by Sterling and Chuck, who rowboated up from Cupid's Bower.

Don, Jan, and Herb spent the whole morning trying to cross the Big Toe Traverse at a higher level with only one tangible result--that Herb's new piton hammer was tested by pounding in 5 useless pitons. After many unsuccessful attempts they admitted they were licked, and climbed down to cross by the conventional route.

Arnold rowed across the river in the Sink Stopper to meet Sterling and Chuck, who had already warmed up on the Triangle and Coffin Climb at Cupid's Bower, which Sterling climbed in fine style. The three, on the Maryland side, climbed first on an 80 degree overhang, then tried out a tension lead which would have been successful except for lack of suitable places for pitons, which led to a lesson in the inexorable force toward the center of the earth exerted by gravity insufficiently opposed.

After lunch, while Jan, Herb, and Don took the SS up the river for a little "sketching," Arnold, who had made the climb first thing in the morning, lay on his back watching Sterling, Chuck, and Eleanor struggle on Socrates' Downfall, which Sterling finally made as an

"A minus" climb. As soon as the Conn-Hubbard expedition returned, Sterling and Chuck were rowed across the Potomac to contact their row-boat, and Don, Jan, and Eleanor started downstream in the SS to be met by Arnold and Herb at Car Stop 25, near the Georgetown Feeder. The SS made its longest trip ever in fine style, giving its occupants quite a thrill as the dam and feeder were encountered in the blackness of a moonless night.

News Notes

Sam Moore has gone overseas. He leaves the following address:

Capt. Samuel V. Moore O-463896
APO 14480, c/o Postmaster
San Francisco, California

Sam has been stationed for the past few months at Walker Army Airfield, Victoria, Kansas.

Eleanor Jacobs has joined Don at Inyokern, California. They are living in the desert, but quite close to the Sierras, and hope to have opportunity soon for some climbing. Their address is:

Mr. and Mrs. Donald H. Jacobs
c/o Dr. L.T.E. Thompson
Director of Research & Development
U.S.N.O.T.S.
Inyokern, California

Tom Culverwell writes some extremely interesting letters from China. He speaks about seeing a great mountain across a lake, with a tremendous cliff, of which, Paul and Don, he says, would have panted at the sight. Tom's address at present is:

T/Sgt. Tom S. Culverwell, 33198192
OSS Hq. and Hq. Det.
APO 627, c/o Postmaster
New York, N.Y.