



NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON ROCKCLIMBERS

Editors

Founders

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ARTHUR LEMBECK'S CROSSOVER, CARDEROCK, MD.

By Paul Bradt

Back in 1940, before the war-time elimination of government Saturday vacations, the gang had their weekly climbs on Saturday afternoons. This arrangement avoided conflict with Sunday Trail Club trips. Also such Saturday trips were often spontaneously extended to include Sunday or plans were arranged for the following day in a way impossible with the present system.

June 22 was one such Saturday. Arthur and I were primed for one of those delightful trips with which the Mountain Club of Maryland varies their hiking schedule,—the 27 mile walk along the Appalachian Trail across Maryland. As evening approached I was impatient for Art to leave Carderock so we could get to Pen Mar before midnight, but he kept doggedly trying to complete the traverse from A to L. Finally, on about the ninth try, he got across and all went well.

The starting point is on a very satisfactory shelf under an overhang. No one can say just where this shelf vanishes but there certainly isn't the least hint of one when the vertical break is reached. Beyond this break a fingertip roughness is reached with the right hand. The left hand is shifted so that its palm presses rightward against the side of the break and the right hand extended to other small holds to make room for the left hand on those vacated. A wide forward swing with the legs should put the left foot on some small quartz knobs that form part of a curved trace up the cliff. This footing lightens the strain on the fingers and the hands are advanced toward the stance in notch L.

(If there is an easier way, please tell me. Mary Neilan did it the first time; Herb Conn and Chris do it from either end; Don Hubbard piton leads 5 man teams across it. Please tell me!)

As an added flourish the climber may continue from L to belay point P by using an initial foothold well to the left of the notch and just on the lip of the overhang. W represents the water of the Potomac just a little way upstream from the main Carderock cliffs.

* * *

ARNOLD REELECTED CHAIRMAN!

The January 24 meeting at the home of Alvin Peterson, in spite of the wintery weather, was well attended. About thirty-five members showed up, some on skis, and at a brief business meeting Arnold was unanimously reelected chairman.

Unfortunately the French film, "Dare Devil's of the Alps" didn't arrive in time for this meeting although Arnold hopes to obtain it for a showing later on in the year. Members who attended the meeting reported that the slides on rock climbing, caving and other outdoor activities shown by John Meenehan were very enjoyable.

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SLIDES ON COAST RANGE OF B.C. SHOWN

A very interesting meeting was held at Tom and Stell Culverwell's on February 3. At this meeting Mr. William Putnam showed slides and described the 1947 Harvard Expedition to the Coast Range of British Columbia.

Mr. Putnam's slides of this beautiful country were well received. In spite of the numerous ascents made by the group we were assured there were several peaks as yet unclimbed. The climbing was done on the peaks east of Mt. Waddington. Perhaps the most striking feature of the region was the number of peaks within climbing distance from their high camp. Accompanying Mr. Putnam to the meeting was his handsome Malamute dog "Skag-Wag."

UPS AND DOWNS

January 18, 1948

John Meenehan
Horace Wester

John Reed
Donald Hubbard

Pim Karcher
Jane Showacre

Ken Karcher
Chris Scoredos

A fasttrip by way of the C & O Canal on ice skates and again we were climbing on the rocks at Carderock. After a few climbs near the Spider Walk the gang moved to the vicinity of the Jam Box. Here the outstanding event was the free rapelling from the upper reaches of the Jam Box.

January 25, 1948

Donald Hubbard
Chris Scoredos

Harold Stimson
Miss Lee

The day was fine--a perfect day for our task. Don and I drove to Great Falls, Md. Our first duty was to get the car off the ice. This completed, we began our hike through eight inches of virgin snow. The trip by way of the towpath to Cupid's Bower was uneventful. Here we practiced rapelling from a tricky shelf. While enjoying our lunch we were joined by Harold Stimson and Miss Lee. Following a lively meeting, Don and I began our hike upstream along the Potomac. The scenery was superb. If one could ignore the trees, the scene would bear admirable comparison to a trip above timberline in any part of the west. The characteristics of each climb was etched in the fallen snow. It pointed clearly for those who read why this climb was easy and the other hard.

January 24-25

Pim Karcher
Ken Karcher
Arnold Wexler

After the meeting at Alvin Peterson's home we picked up our sleeping bags and some grub and were on our way to the Blue Ridge. At four A.M. sleeping bags were tossed on the snow on Little Stoney Man. The next morning, a ranger offered the information that the temperature had dropped to -10° F in Luray and that, from past experience, it was usually 10 to 15° colder on the mountains. This low temperature came as a complete surprise, for in the double army bag, it had been very warm and comfortable. We snow-shoed on Sunday, then drove through the northern section of the Park. Animal tracks in the snow were numerous. Snow birds, cardinals, a raven and a red-tail hawk were seen. A.W.

February 1

Donald Hubbard	Chris Scoredos	Ken Karcher
John Meenehan	Horace Wester	Pim Karcher
Francis Bittinger	John Reed & Three friends	

There was too much snow on the Canal for our usual effortless travel on ice skates. Even though the snow forced us to hike again, on reaching the rocks our reward was great. The center of the part of the Potomac River that separates Carderock from Herzog Island was the perfect ice mirror and skating on it was the thrill of a lifetime. Soon we changed our practice and the climber was tied at one end of the rope and in this manner while lying on his back he was dragged rapidly by four skaters. The idea was for him to turn onto his belly and by using the ice ax bring himself to a dead stop. The next events occurred on an ice gully on the Potomac side of Herzog Island. Here under the able and careful supervision of Donald, the group practiced ice climbing and rappelling. In spite of the snow, Chris couldn't resist an attempt on Chairman's Chimney which was unsuccessful. On the way home, the group met John Reed and friends who were climbing at Carderock.

February 8

John Meenehan	Donald Hubbard	Arnold Wexler
Ken Karcher	Chris Scoredos	Herbert Ley
Pim archer	John Reed	Anita Curtis
	Nancy Rogers	

The early morning was devoted to climbs, rappels and instruction at Carderock. The group then crossed the ice to Herzog Island. Again under Donald's instruction practice on the ice gully continued. Following lunch the group crossed the Potomac on the ice to Scott Island. Here we played on an outcrop of ice and then began to circle the island on the ice. Following a mobile snow battle the trip around the island was completed. Back at our starting point, ice climbing was continued.

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Question most frequently asked: Is a person susceptible to poisoning during the winter months? The answer is yes!

* * *

Herb Conn writes Arnold that Janny has a new song, inspired by Irvin Davis of the Boston Climbers. Tune "Dark Town Strutters Ball."

I'll be down to get you with a blotter,
honey,

A nut-pick and a spare canteen,

Cause where you're trying to lead

There ain't a foothold, handhold to be seen.

That old "thank God" is high above you

And I don't want to follow when you make the lunge.

Though it's not the thing to do,

I'm going to cut that rope in two,

And I'll meet you at the bottom with a sponge.

LETTERS AND NEWS

Mr. Albert H. Jackman sends his regards to the rockclimbers. His address is 18 Kenilworth Road, Shrewsbury, Mass.

* * *

Jan and Herb Conn write from Franconia, New Hampshire that they are working at a ski resort run by an Austrian baron. Being among skiers hasn't made them forget rockclimbing for they say they hope to have some time to try some ascents on the White Mountains using snowshoes or skis.

To those climbers who have visited Devil's tower they have this to say: "This summer we learned from the National Monument Superintendent at Devil's Tower of a David Loomis of Ames, Iowa, who had written in for permission to climb the Tower. As we were passing through Ames several days later, we hunted up the address given us. Somewhat hesitantly we approached the house, but our doubts were immediately dispelled by a warm greeting which we received from the roof, where Dave in true climbing fashion was making some repairs. We were invited for dinner, found we had mutual friends and had climbed some of the same places. * * * Even better—that weekend we were shown their favorite practice area at Devil's Lake, Wisconsin and they laughed heartily as we fell off all of their best climbs."

"Incidentally Dave and his companion, Art Gilkey, made a successful ascent of Devil's Tower in early September—the fifth party, I think, to reach the top of the Tower without using ladders or parachutes."

"It appears that, wherever one travels, if one can find a fellow rock climber a warm welcome awaits him. How about someone compiling a Rock Climbers' Directory of the U. S.? (How about it Jan? Editors note.)

* * *

Jan and Herb also protest the authorship of "Return of Jam Crack Joe" in the December 13th Issue, claiming the authorship is still anonymous, despite considerable sleuthing by Don Hubbard.

* * *

Sally Chamberlin who expects to return in April writes from Switzerland: "The weatherman wasn't so good to us over here this year as he was last for the vacation. I went up to Saanen with an old school chum to do some skiing (in the Bernese Oberland) and for 6 out of the 12 days it rained, several days were snowy, and a couple were sunny. In all but rainy weather we were out on the slopes, though, and even if we both are more or less intermediate skiers, I'm sure that in some places we whizzed down as fast as the experts, not always intentionally, either. Switzerland is a skier's paradise. There are ski-tows up all the best mountains for the rich and lazy and those who want to spend more time coming down than going up. I guess we belonged in the lazy class because my friend Peg didn't have sealskins to put on her skis so we could climb up. It was a slight strain on the pocketbook but we certainly enjoyed coming down."

* * *

The February 1948 issue of the National Geographic Magazine has an article by Maynard M. Miller entitled "First American Ascent of Mt. St. Elias". The article includes some very fine kodachromes and black and white pictures of the trip including some of our local climbers Betty and Andy Kauffman. Incidentally, Betty's friends will be glad to know that she is rapidly recovering from her recent illness.