



Up Rope

NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON ROCKCLIMBERS

Editors

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Founders

Jan and Herb Conn
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* There will be a meeting at Mr. and Mrs. Leo *
* Dawson's home, 3610 Horner Pl, S.E., Telephone*
* LU 2059, March 6 at 8:00 P.M. The English *
* speaking version of the French Mountaineering *
* film "Daredevils of the Alps" will be shown. *
* *
* Since the Dawsons live in Congress Heights *
* the following buses will take you there: A 4 *
* Bellevue; A-2 Congress Heights (the 2 with- *
* out diagonal red line); A 8 Fort Drum; A 6 *
* Livingston St. Buses leave 10th and Penna. *
* Ave. about every five minutes. Go out *
* Nichols Avenue, beyond St. Elizabeths Hospit- *
* al to Sterling Street. Cross Avenue, and *
* walk back $\frac{1}{2}$ square or less, 3610 Horner is *
* 2nd house down. *
* *

MOUNTAINEERING WAS SIMPLER THEN-- by Chris Scoredos

My early boyhood was spent in Colorado in the shadow of the Sangre de Cristo Range and it seemed natural to want to climb. Although our climbing equipment was simple we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and were able to reach the summit of many of the mountains in the Range. Our wardrobe consisted of a pair of blue denim pants, a blue denim jacket, wool socks and ordinary work shoes with miner's hob nails. Pitons, karabiners and swiss edging nails were unknown to us and the only piece of climbing equipment we used was the lariat of the cowboy.

Our camping equipment and way of living would please those hardy members who believe camping is not to be enjoyed but endured. Our tents were made from household sheets and waterproofed by being dipped into hot turpentine that contained paraffine. An ordinary bed-tick stuffed with alpine grass covered with a Hudson Bay Blanket made up our sleeping equipment. Our food was always precooked and eaten cold which eliminated the need for cooking utensils.

At 3 A. M. in the morning we started our climb, usually arriving at the base of the cliff at the crack of dawn. This early start enabled us to get to the top in the late morning; leaving the whole afternoon for the return trip. It is difficult to tell at this late date what our reaction would have been to some of the methods employed by climbers of today who carefully peruse all literature as to routes and also study photographs to ascertain which route will "go". We usually studied the mountain and whoever was leading the group decided that a certain route would bring us to the top. If we hadn't arrived by 3 P.M. we turned back. Our return trip was made with all possible speed, a pole serving as a ice axe for glissading on snow.

I have neither the time nor space to trace in minute detail the gradual changes in climbing equipment through the years, but I will try to touch on the more important parts. Probably as most of you will agree the climber and mountaineer is most concerned with his feet. His feet may make or mar his trip, and the use of proper footwear has a material bearing on his safety; for many are the recorded deaths caused by climbers falling during a storm, because they did not have the proper footwear. In all our early climbs only hobnailed shoes were used, later we began to use rubber soled shoes. In order to conserve weight only one pair was taken along; this pair was used by the appointed leader on surfaces that necessitated the use of this type of shoe. On hearing of edging nails we began to use them and later found that by having one shoe nailed with edging nails and one shoe nailed with tricouni's, the purchase on the rocks was much more satisfactory. Since 1944 we have had varying degrees of experience with the Army Bermani shoe. Our objections to this type of footwear is the excessive weight and the roominess of its boxlike toe. Most climbers who are doing a difficult climb like to have a closer contact with the rocks and in addition like to be able to raise their feet higher than is permitted with the Bermani shoe. On snow and ice it is superior to the nailed shoes and it is least effective on surfaces that have wet moss or lichens. My preference still lies with the nailed shoes for all-purpose climbing unless at some future date the Bermani shoe is modified for the climbers' use.

For a good many years we believed or thought the overalls and other clothing worn by the natives were quite satisfactory for outdoors wear. After being benighted on several peaks (it still happens today as most climbers will tell you) we discovered that a series of very light woolen undershirts plus the usual blue denim jacket was more satisfactory. This type of clothing we still use today with the exception that the blue denim jacket is replaced by the light parkas which are sold at most stores selling sportswear.

Beginners usually overstress the importance of climbing aids, by this statement I do not mean to imply that they aren't important, but if you have the proper footwear and proper clothing you are more likely to make the top and enjoy the adventure than if you have the finest rope and hardware made and are improperly dressed. We have used at least eight different fibers for climbing rope and we know that the nylon rope is superior in every way to any of its predecessors. The modern piton is simple in design, made of well-tempered steel, and will give maximum use. They are much superior to the old iron pitons that were made for us by the village blacksmith. In the field of karabiners although there are numerous types it seems to me that many of the newer editions are too heavy, and my preference is still for the small pear-shaped karabiner of either Italian or German origin.

In the early twenties we became acquainted with the wire frame, metal packboard, which has proven a very efficient means of back transportation for over twenty-five years. Today's best packing medium is the army packboard for in addition to its use in packing it can also be used as a sleeping aid. The army's Artic sleeping bag is the best buy in present day sleeping bags. It is quite satisfactory for all types of camping and is only excelled by the expensive models that contain all down.

Our emancipation from foul weather and insects began with the use of the light tents furnished by Abercombie which I still think are the finest lightweight tents available. They are expensive but can be used for years if given proper care, however, the nylon mountaineering tent used by the army is a good buy.

In the early days our dehydrated food were mainly prunes, apples and peaches. These we ate without rehydrating. Today the field is unlimited and the majority of these dehydrated foods are quite satisfactory, especially if care is taken in following the manufacturer's instruction as to rehydration and preparation. Although we have used the least expensive and different types of the more expensive types of cooking utensils, I feel certain that four lard pails that can be abandoned at the last camp are the most satisfactory for mountaineering purposes.

UPS AND DOWNS

February 15

Don Hubbard
Ken Karcher
Arnold Wexler

We drove out to Loudoun Cliffs and examined the probable changes in the rocks due to the new road under construction. The road in Virginia up to the W. Va. state line is completed. No work has begun in W. Va. so these rocks have not yet been molested. It appears that some of the climbs that now start just at road level may be ruined by cuts and others may become restricted because of the danger of rolling rocks down on the road. We met the Trail Club on its TTT at Chimney Rock.

Weverton Rocks were next on the agenda of the day and were highlighted by a piton traverse led first by Don and then by Ken.

The third stop was at Sugarloaf Mt. After a walk to the top and a rappel over the rocks on the way down we hurried home.

Feb. 21, 22, 23--

Don Hubbard
Dolores Alley
Ted and Kay Schad
Arnold Wexler

We spent the weekend at Wolf Gap Shelter. On Saturday night about 5 inches of snow fell. Sunday we hiked along North Mountain, climbed down the north face of the Big Schloss, and met "Pete", Ann Michener and Peter Wright at Sandstone Spring. The round trip covered about 11 miles. Returned to D. C. on Monday. The temperature at night dropped to 18° F and rose to 24° during the day, a fine combination for sound slumber and invigorating walking. A. W.

February 15, Chris climbed at Carderock and on February 22 at Fort Lewis.

February 29

Jane Showacre
John Meenehan
Arnold Wexler
John Reed
Betty Alley
Donald Hubbard
Chris G. Scoredos

Dolores Alley
Billy Alley
Earl R. Mosburg
Andy Kauffman
Pim Karcher
Ken Karcher

Upon arriving at the Maryland side of Great Falls, three rope teams were formed; the respective leaders were Arnold Wexler, Dolores Alley and Donald Hubbard. The first two groups concentrated on traversing while the group lead by Don worked on tension climbing. After lunch Arnold's Balance climb was the scene of great activity and most of the group were successful in making it. The day was completed by practice climbing on the rocks near the Balance climb.

LETTERS

Joe Walsh writes from Philadelphia about some rocks he has been exploring. He writes: "The thaw last week gave my brother David and I a chance to explore the cliffs that I had located in Bucks County about forty miles north of Philadelphia. They are at the highest 100 ft. and run about half mile. The rock isn't too firm but not as bad as some of Canada's skree-piles. I could find at least thirty possible climbs and we did a couple of them yesterday. As we lead them from the bottom I was extremely glad that I had some pitons and karabiners in a ticklish spot which was made more enjoyable by water running down the face from melting snow on the top. But it was fun and it looks as though we have found a spot which will keep us busy for weeks on end. I hope to get together some climbers that I know here and some would-be climbers and really give the rocks a workout. They are about a quarter-mile from Ralph Stoner State Park which is a fine camping spot which will made for good week-end trips."

Joe's address is 5338 N. Camac Street, Philadelphia, Pa. if anyone is interested in contacting him for a trip to these rocks.

ROCKCLIMBING AND MOUNTAINEERING ELSEWHERE

by Ted Schad

Upon my return home from a six-week detail to Boise, Idaho, I found that the exchanges were literally snowing us under. To say nothing of the last three UP ROPE's, which, of course, I read first.

TRAIL & TIMBERLINE (Colorado Mountain Club) January and February issues indicate that the CmC's primary interest at this time of year is in skiing. And who would wonder at that, with the snowcapped Rocky Mountains right in their backyard, so to speak.

In the January issue, however, Hugh Hetherington writes in interesting fashion on "Climbing Near Veedawoo Glen". The Glen lies in the Sherman mountains, between Cheyenne and Laramie, Wyoming, and contains a number of two to three hundred foot towers of a very hard, extremely coarse, pre-Cambrian formation, the Sherman granite. According to Dr. Hetherington "The area is a paradise for rock climbers. These Tors afford rock climbs of every degree of difficulty....." From the picture the area looks like it would be well worth a visit.

A news note elsewhere in this issue indicates that an Outing Club has recently been formed at the University of Wyoming, in Laramie.

The February T & T contains a short, humorous--technical account of a climb of the Grand Teton, via the Exum Route.

The Club also announces the Winter (Ski) Outing, to be held at Steamboat Springs, Colorado, February 28-March 7, 1948. It's to be a De Luxe affair, they'll stay at a hotel.

* * *

MAZAMA (the Mazamas, Portland, Oregon) shows a full schedule of Trail Trips for January and February, but no rock climbing. The summer climbing schedule, listing some 20 weekend climbs of 14 of the major peaks of the Pacific Northwest, is announced, along with the 1948 Mazama Annual Outing, which is to be held July 24--August 8, inclusive, at Park Creek Pass in the Chelan Range of Northern Washington. This outing promises good rock climbing, with some snow and glacier work. The area is inaccessible by car, being reached by boat up scenic Lake Chelan.

* * *

THE MOUNTAINEER (The Mountaineers, Inc., Seattle). The January and February Bulletins, as usual, are crammed with announcements of the months activities, which range from clubroom programs to Ski Mountaineering trips. The Ski Mountaineering Course, held annually, is in full swing. The course consists of a series of evening lectures and demonstrations, with weekend field trips, culminating in late Spring ascents of Glacier Peak (10,500) over the Memorial Day weekend, and Little Tahoma (11,500), on the side of Mount Rainier, over the Fourth of July.

The annual climbing course is to start in March, under the sponsorship of the newly formed Mountaineering Development Group. The Mountaineers is one of the larger (except for the Sierra Club) mountaineering organizations in the West, having over 1600 members, and offers a very fine two year course of instruction in all phases of mountaineering. The course has been used in training climbers and leaders for over ten years. The Development Group will place the accent on leadership training in the future.

* * *

THE MUGELNOOS (Sierra Club, Pasadena) for January 15 lists ascents of Popocatepetl (18,300') and Ixtacihuatl (17,100'), in Mexico, in late 1947, an unsuccessful attempt on the southeast face of Mt. Russell on December 27, 1947, and sporadic climbing at Mt. Pacifico. Most of the activity is in skiing, in spite of the paucity of snow this year. The group is holding its second series of instruction in Emergency First Aid at the meeting.

* * *

THE YODELER (Sierra Club, San Francisco) celebrates its tenth year of publication. Most interesting trip reported was a hike along the beach at at the foot of a cliff on the same day as an extraordinary high tide--each wave sending the hikers frantically scrambling up the side of the cliff in a vain attempt to avoid wet feet. The February 2 issue reports on a rock climbing session at Cragmont and a hike up Mount Diablo.