



## NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE

1916 Sunderland Place N. W. Washington 6, D. C.

FOUNDED BY  
JAN AND HERB CONN

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### NEW ROUTE ON DEVIL'S TOWER !

Aug. 30. TONY SOLER, ART LEMBECK, RAY MOORE  
AND HERBIE CONN HAVE CLIMBED A NEW ROUTE ON THE  
SOUTHEAST FACE, HENCEFORTH TO BE KNOWN AS THE  
SOLER ROUTE. 9½ hr. up, 2½ hr. down, 28 pitons  
used. Full first-hand account will appear soon.

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### SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME

Oct. 7. MCM Day. The Mountain Club of Maryland, under the leadership of Francis Old, plans to join us for some climbing again. Destination has not yet been announced, but save the date so we can have a good turnout.

Weekend à la King, to borrow a phrase from a previous writer. Sterling King has very kindly invited us to spend another weekend sometime this fall at his cabin near Baker, W. Va. Those of us who enjoyed his hospitality before remember a deluxe weekend and a lot of fun. We will be within easy driving distance of such favorite spots as Seneca, Devil's Gardens, etc. Square dancing will be possible if anyone is interested. Some time in late September or in October is suggested, so keep this in mind and give us your suggestions as to date, activities, etc.

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### HOPE FOR POSTERITY

Through the kindness and interest of Charlie Gallant, some of Jan Conn's choice climbing songs and some of Joel Gross' folksongs have been excellently recorded on tape. If enough people would like to have records, we will try to have them made. Drop a card to the editor, if you are interested. Don't delay, as nothing definite can be done until we have an idea of the number we can count on.

### DON'T THROW THEM AWAY !

If any of you who are moving, house-cleaning or living in overflowing apartments have copies of early UP ROPES, either complete sets or singles, to dispose of, please don't throw them away. The Chairman or the Editor will be glad to have them. The club should have a complete file, and some members would like to fill gaps in their own sets. So bring or send them in, or ask us to call for them, if you have any to contribute.

THE JAM BOX

(This is an extract from a letter written by Herbie to Jan in 1943. In view of Tony's recent conquest, it should be of special interest.)

"You may have heard of the Jam Box, but I doubt it. It is one of the climbs (or it may someday be a climb) which Arnold and I found one winter day when all we had to do was look for climbs since we couldn't do any climbing. It is on the overhanging corner toward the river from Jan's Chimney. There is Jan's Chimney, the chimney that used to be full of briars until somebody got busy with the clip-pers, and the Jam Box.

"The Jam Box proper is the first half of the left-hand climb. It brings you out on a platform from which you can go up the briar chimney to the right or attempt the impossible to the left. Or you can get to the platform by means of the chimney in the first place. But that, it seems, is too easy.

"Don H. last week had got higher than anybody ever had, as much as two or three feet off of the platform. So this week he felt qualified to take things easy and merely pass out advice. Leonard was sick, so he could just lie on the ground and laugh. And Nielson was right on the spot with his camera to photograph the most god-awful swings I have ever seen.

"Sterling climbed the first part very nicely and gave the upper part several tries. Then he unroped on the platform and while he rested Bates went up. He too got through the Box proper nicely. It is a peculiar unbalanced place where you just have to worm your way in without any particular holds, and even when you're in you don't expect to stay, because it is on an overhang and empties out into space. After you get up in it, you sit on one side, stretch your feet way across onto an opposing surface (which slopes out and down) and work your head, arms and shoulders up into a real narrow jam-chimney. Then you expend your chest to hold you in, draw your feet in up under you, and grab way up high for a hand-hold. But since you're still too low to reach it, you struggle for a while, all the time expecting to slide out sideways, and finally get the elevation necessary to haul up onto the platform. Bates tried the upper part, fell off, swung out into space way above our heads, and swung back onto the platform. The rope was jammed. Sterling grabbed his belt and held him while Elizabeth went up above and fixed the rope. (We had a belay around a tree with the belayer below.) Then Sterling let go, Bates' feet swished by our faces, he took two turns around a little tree, and collided with the ground, while Nielson cranked the camera and Leonard roared with laughter.

"House tried it. He fell out of the lower part once. Then Jackman tried and also fell out. House tried again and made the platform. For a long while he and Sterling and Bates just sat there, all cooped together. (Bates had come up again without a rope by means of the chimney.) Then House made a real try on the upper part and got as high or higher than Don had. But when he fell, he came out faster, too.

"Sterling tried again, and got up pretty high, and something he was hanging on-to broke (at least there was a cloud of dust) and he came flying out. Then I tried it. House had got back on the platform again, and while I rested after getting through the Jam Box, I listened to House and Bates considering the pros and cons of the platform as a place to spend the night.

"On my first attempt on the upper part I didn't even get both feet off the platform. It is a two-way overhang. It is sort of a semi-chimney, between the overhanging wall opposite you, and the narrow rib that you bump your head on when you try to straighten up on the platform. Also, the rear of the chimney comes out at you as it goes up at an alarming angle, so that nothing is right. From below it looks like there are nubbles in the back of the chimney that would make hand-holds, but when you get up there you find that the tops of the nubbles are nearly perpendicular surfaces themselves. You fall over onto the opposite wall, try to get a foot stuck over there too, and wedge your back in against the rib, where it feels anything but secure. On my second try I felt very unhelpful, but I was determined to go until I fell off, since anyone who didn't come off by way of the swing was obviously a sissy. So I gave it everything I had. My foot wasn't stuck on the opposite hold, but miraculously it held, and I got my other foot higher. I reached the best handhold there was, and wormed a little further up, all the time feeling my body inching out of the chimney. My left foot was still down on the



first hold, and I couldn't move it, because it was the only thing holding me in. But finally I got some kind of a pressure hold with my palm that took the place of the foot, and I brought it up. I made another burst of effort and got my feet way up, higher, I think, than anybody's had been. But by now the rib at my back was about given out, and so was I, and there was still not a hold in reach, and I came out. Arnold was belaying me, and he had asked me how I wanted to come down, slow or fast. And I had said fast, right into Leonard's lap. Well, I missed Leonard's lap, but I zoomed to within a foot of the ground and came to an abrupt halt. I hollered for slack, and finally crumpled all the way down. For a while my legs wouldn't stand up under me. One knee buckled when I tried to bend it." \*

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### How Difficult Is a Given Climb? (An attempt at evaluation. By Paul Bradt)

Sometimes one wishes for a scale of difficulty by which to measure climbs. One can safely say that the Carderock Beginner's Climb is easier than the Spider Walk. Or can one? Perhaps that isn't true unless one qualifies the statement to apply to most climbers. Yet if one begins to arrange climbs in order of increasing difficulty, one soon runs into problems. For me, Charlie's Crack is more difficult than the Spider Walk. For Chris it is easier. You might assume that we would place these two climbs in different sequence on our respective lists. But your assumption would be unjustified, because I don't propose to list them according to their difficulty for me.

If someone could count the attempts and the failures on a given climb, I could then define the difficulty of the climb as the number of attempts divided by the number of successes, and get a numerical value for the difficulty of that climb. Such numbers could be arranged in decreasing sequence to form a list as imagined, with the most difficult climbs at the top. True, there might be a few cases of climbs of equal difficulty, but such a tie for position could always be resolved by sufficient experimental climbing attempts.

According to such a scale, a very easy climb, say the blue-blazed climb from the Carderock lunch table to the cliff top, would have a difficulty of nearly one. The Beginner's Climb might have a difficulty of 1.2, Leonard's Lunacy perhaps 5, Herbie's Horror, 50, etc. If a climb hasn't been tried its difficulty is indeterminate.

A weakness of such a system is that it fails to take into account the different aptitudes of those trying the different climbs. The Old Rag Beginner's Route is not promising in appearance and has been tried only by capable climbers, so its numerical difficulty is near one, while the Carderock Nose looks easy and is climbed by relatively inexperienced climbers, yet enough of them fall off to give the climb a greater difficulty, of about 1.1 or 1.2.

Accordingly, such a numbering system is to be considered only relative to the group of climbers trying it. This brings me around to the excuse for this write-up. The Jam Box has for about 8 or 9 years been a climb of infinite difficulty. On August 19, Tony Soler climbed it, and its difficulty dropped to something like several hundred. This makes it without doubt the most difficult local climb for which a value could be assigned. Moreover, the quality of the climbers that have given it that rating is tops.\* Read the excerpt from Herbie's letter if you doubt it. It has always been that way. So, brother, if you are looking for a difficult climb, we offer you The Jam Box.

\* The illustrious company casually referred to in Herbie's letter included:

Herb Conn, Arnold Wexler, Don Hubbard, Dick Leonard, Einar Nielson, Sterling Hendricks, Bob Bates, Bill House, Elizabeth Vos, and Albert Jackman. Other top-flight climbers who we know have tried the climb are Paul Bradt, Chris and Helen Scoredos, Jan Conn, Art Lembeck, and Ray Moore. No doubt there are still others who should be mentioned here. Ed.

THE HUNGRY HORDE

(Notes on the Aug. 22nd Meeting)

The trials of a rockclimber's bride must be many, but being hostess to 25 or 30 ravenous mountaineers for supper and to over 40 for refreshments later must be the crowning ordeal. If admiration and gratitude are any recompense, Phyllis Gross may feel amply repaid. That spaghetti sauce over which she labored for two days was perfection, and that special Gross salad - oh, bliss, oh rapture! We offer herewith a vote of appreciation to Joel and Phyllis Gross for their hospitality and generosity.

The well-stuffed diners took themselves with difficulty down to the lawn, where the business meeting and Kodachrome program were held. The total nose count reached 57, but we are not sure that this does not include a few neighborly probosces. The chief business of the evening was the election of a new chairman, since the Navy has inconsiderately transferred Art Lembeck to California. The nomination of Paul Bradt met with the wholehearted approval of everyone except P.B. Paul is one of the founders of our group, a first-rate climber, and no one has the interests of the club more at heart. Under the weight of numbers, the many good arguments in favor of this choice, and the eloquence of Ray Moore, Paul bowed to the inevitable and was acclaimed chairman. Art then carried on as program chairman pro tem and introduced the speakers of the evening.

Charles Fort presented a short program of fine slides of local climbing and cave expeditions. The pièce de résistance was Andy Kauffman's talk and Kodachromes of his and Betty's trip to the Adamant Range in 1950, with Alec Faberge, Norman Brewster and David Michael. To a group of city-bound climbers on a hot evening, his pictures were absolutely mouth-watering. Some of the amusing sidelights were shots of Colossal Enterprises' undertakings and of the Ghost of the Adamants.

Paul took the gavel to conclude the business session. One piece of new business came up - the presentation to the club of Betty Blair's legacy - a genuine English tea cozy. This will have to repose in the "museum" until such time as the club acquires a tea pot, since, as Betty points out, it is a little large to cover a PATC cup with a tea bag in it.

The forty-odd survivors returned to the Grosses' apartment to wind up the evening with lemonade and cookies.

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UPS AND DOWNS

Aug. 19, 1951. Carderock, Md.

Breakfast only: Don Hubbard, Betty and Andy Kauffman.

Paul Bradt	Joel Gross	Ray Moore	Helen Scoredos
John Brehm	Phyllis Gross	Earl Mosburg	Eric Scoredos
Susie Broome	Marion Harvey	Louise Neuhaus	Johnny Scoredos
Charles Fort	John Hubbell	Howard Norseth	Tony Soler
Ann Green	Walt Kane	Ken Pratt	Stan Thomas
Bonnie Green	Peg Keister	Frank Sauber	Arnold Wexler
Jim Griffin	Art Lembeck	Chris Scoredos	Anne Williams

Sneaking away from the fledglings trying their wings on the Beginner's Crack and Barnacle Face, Tony provided an excellent show for the rest of the climbers. First man to succeed on the Jam Box, the toughest climb in the area, he earned the dubious (and unused) privilege of resting for the balance of the day. For details, see Herb's account above, or persuade Tony to repeat the climb.

Several 3-man teams climbed the Golden Stairs. One middle man, looking a second time before launching himself on that long precarious step, was heard to utter a terrible "aaeh!" Whether praying to an ancient Irish deity or invoking wrath upon the spirit which moved him from his bed this Sunday morning has not been revealed. P.S. He made it.

Good watching for its audience and good exercise for its climbers was a combination climb starting with Chris' Goat and ending with Leonard's Lunacy (led by indefatigable Tony). Strugglers on the Friction Layback were also outnumbered by their audience.

Budding climber Johnny and Veteran Chris are the originators of a new technique - the three-corner belay. It's requirements? One rock face, one baby in



Three-corner pants, one father with hand large enough to serve as seat for said baby while baby utilizes available handholds.

Miscellaneous remarks overheard near the Spider Walk: "Climbing - I hope", "Slack!"; "Aw, let someone else entertain himself"; "Let's make Tony do it without hands"; "Oh, let him do it without feet"; "Next!".

This was Art's last climbing day with us. The best of everything to you, Art - and here's to higher, if not better, climbs in California. M.L.N.

#### Aug. 26, 1951. Old Rag Mountain

Paul Bradt	Dick Goldman	Earl Mosburg	Johnny Scoredos
John Brehm	Sally Goldman	Ken Pratt	Arnold Wexler
Ann Green	Marian Jackson	Chris Scoredos	Jim Willard
Bonnie Green	Jerry Jankowitz	Eric Scoredos	Priscilla Woodworth
Susie Green	Peg Keister	Helen Scoredos	

A splendid day lured the climbers toward the Blue Ridge. Four carfuls headed for Old Rag, with our new chairman, Paul, in charge. Three of the cars drove in to the leanto from Nethers, and their occupants climbed the Saddle Trail and immediately attacked the summit rocks. The fourth carful arrived at the foot of the Ridge Trail, and, believing themselves to be first, waited hopefully for an hour before climbing said trail. They paused on the way up to look over a sheer rock face, and to dig out the upper spring, which contained a half inch of water and several thousand albino flatworms, before joining the rest on top in time for a climb or two.

Earl led Arnold and Jerry on the Hollywood Climb, while, on the same face, Paul picked out an easier route for Ken and Priscilla. Marian took Helen and Jean on the first part of the Hollywood, but because of congested traffic, finished by a different route. Paul and John Brehm alternated leading on a crack around the corner to the west, which led up to just below the chimney at the top of the Hollywood Climb, which they finished.

Arnold shepherded a group of unsuspecting beginners down to the foot of the cliffs to look at the "Beginner's Route". Faced with this terrifying cliff, they gulped, turned pale, and either beat a hasty retreat or joined a couple of parties headed for "easy scrambles". Having organized a rope consisting of Paul, Chris, Dick and Jean to tackle the Beginner's Route, Arnold led Peg and Jim up an easy route, arriving on top in time to watch the other four on that noble struggle. Meanwhile, Earl, Jerry and Ken initiated a route up a crack to the left of the inside corner, which is about 200 ft. to the right of the Beginner's Route. Earl suggests calling this Earl's Error, since he felt that his protection on the first pitch had not been quite adequate, although the route was not of great difficulty.

By the time these climbs were completed, the small fry and their keepers had started back down the mountain, so we hastened to join them at the leanto. Chris, with a load of eight, including all the juniors, headed directly for home. The rest of us wound up as usual in Warrenton for the traditional steaks.

#### Sept. 2, 1951. Carderock, Md.

Paul Bradt	Ann Green	Bill Kemper	Mel Schwartz
Art Bross	Bonnie Green	Ted Mead	Jane Showacre
Jan Conn	Susie Green	Earl Mosburg	Bob Stevens
Berniece Doyle	Don Hubbard	Mary Neilan	Red Watson
Sidney Doyle	Andy Kauffman	Jim Neilon	Bill Wright
(Charles Fort)	Betty Kauffman	Blondie Neuhaus	Chuck Zumlia
John Fortna	Peg Keister	Lloyd Richards	

The small group starting from the Hot Shoppe was greatly augmented during the course of the day. For variety, Charles and Don swapped places, Charles joining us for breakfast only, Don being tricked (he said) into climbing with us for a change.

The early arrivals immediately started lessons in knots, climbing and belaying for beginners. Don took the Green Family in hand for some preliminary scrambling, Paul took Lloyd and Jim Wright on a similar excursion, and Peg led Sidney and Ted up the Beginner's Climb. Jane arrived meanwhile, climbed the Crack, and took over Peg's crew on the nearby face.

Shortly, Jan and her friend Red, arrived, Earl appeared and was later joined

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by his parents, and Bill Kemper showed up with 5 young enthusiasts from Dahlgren. Peg helped Bill indoctrinate the latter, then warmed them up on the Beginner's Climb and the Barnacle Face, and further warmed them with rappel lessons.

Paul meanwhile took Sidney and Lloyd off for a quick trip across about half of the Chris-Wex-Don Traverse, while Don led Ann and Blondie up the Golden Stairs. Jane and Ted formed a second rope on this climb. Peg and Jan persuaded each other to climb a variation of Ronnie's Leap, keeping to the outer edge to avoid the wet and mossy crack.

By this time, tummies were clamoring. Lunch was enlivened by Ted's Outing Club songs and Jan's "Gory, gory, etc.". Just before we finished, Betty and Andy, Mary Neilan and Bob Stevens appeared. The day began to take on all the earmarks of Old Home Week.

Greetings and lunch over, a group went upstream to the Jackknife. Belayed by Jan, Paul demonstrated neatly, then took over the rope while various people took turns falling off. A sudden shower gave some of us a welcome excuse for abandoning the nasty thing unclimbed. Everyone then headed for the Jam Box, which was sure to be dry. Much energy was expended here, with little visible upward progress. Paul and Earl both got through the Box proper to the platform. Paul went a little way on the upper section. Earl got higher, in a most uncomfortable-looking semi-chimney position about a third of the way up, before taking the grand swing.

Thoroughly exhausted either from struggling or just watching, everyone packed up and started back. Bill's group and Peg, Blondie, Ted and the Doyles stopped off for a cooling dip in the Glen Echo pool, a ride on the roller coaster, and dinner in the usual Georgetown hangout.

P.S. We are thoroughly accustomed to abraded knees and elbows, but we are curious about a certain skinned nose tip. Five-point suspension, Blondie?

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INSIDE CORNER

New Name: On July 27, Lois Barnes became Mrs. Neil James Paterson. The Patersons are at home at Apt. 331 - 1305 North Ode St., Westmoreland Terrace, Arlington, Va.

New Address: The Scoredoses - 3742 - 12th St., N.E., Apt. 1.

New Subscribers: Kenneth Pratt, 725 - 20th St., N.W. ME 0148  
Jim Willard, 4823 Park Ave., Washington 16, D.C.

New Low: Jan Conn's brief visit here recently brought to light the awful truth: the hollowed-out rock which forms the beginning of Herbie's and Jan's new cabin is named "Connecave".