



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

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SHADOWS OF THINGS TO COME

Labor Day Weekend - Seneca Rocks, W. Va. Plans are afoot for another gala weekend at our favorite climbing area, where we will join a group from Pittsburgh. Plans are as usual informal. Food will be arranged individually or by cars. We will probably camp at Armentrout's. Come prepared for climbing, camping and swimming. If you are stuck for a ride or riders, contact Peg Keister (OL 2078 or OL 1400, ext. 2011).

Sheets, Linwood and Sharps Caves, Pocahontas County, W. Va. - by Felix Peckham

The 3-day 4th of July weekend and the mid-summer heat decided Ray Moore and Tony Soler in favor of a cave trip, with Sheets as the primary objective. The party included Tom Culverwell, Marion Harvey, Jerry Jankowitz, Gerry Morgan, Bill Youden and the writer. Two cars went all the way to Cass Thursday night. Tom and I, in the third car, ran into Nancy Rogers in the Milk Bar at Front Royal enroute to Franklin, and decided to break the long trip by stopping in Franklin for the night.

After breakfasting with a crowd of other cavers next morning, we joined the others at Sheets, and entered the cave with considerable photographic and climbing gear. There was to be an attempt to photograph as much of the dome pit and waterfall as possible and perhaps explore vertically, by means of expansion bolts, an opening high in the wall of the pit. At the belay loft, Ray, Jerry and I were safetied down the 185 ft. ladder and set up our cameras on the small mountain of breakdown in anticipation of the painting job of illumination to follow. This was done by Tony, who descended slowly, stopping at uniform intervals to flash bulbs at the waterfall. Eleven bulbs were used, then Ray used a few more to illuminate the side walls near the bottom. Everyone used a different exposure, and it is hoped that one of the pictures will turn out well. Shortly thereafter, Ray and Tony studied the wall of the pit below the visible opening with a view to climbing via expansion bolts, but decided against the laborious enterprise. Later on the balance of the party made the trip down the ladder and back to the rear of the cave, and ultimately all arrived back at the belay loft somewhat more tired. Tom, who was the last to make the ascent, had climbed up about 75 ft. when he discovered that the safety rope had accidentally slipped between two of the ladder rungs on the way down, making it necessary for him to untie and retie the safety while hanging onto the ladder. The strain from this experience must have been rather exhausting, as Tom didn't feel quite normal for some time and didn't have much appetite for dinner that night.

The evening meal on the 4th was greatly delayed and largely overshadowed by an extensive and impressive display of fireworks, beginning long before dark and extending to perhaps 10:00 or 10:30 P.M. The more colorful fireworks were set off after dark with camera shutters open to record the effects on color film. Eventually most of the

crowd went to sleep in the hayloft of the ramshackle barn belonging to Mr. Sheets.

After breakfast next day, we drove to Linwood where we entered and explored Linwood Cave located about 200 yd. west of U.S. 219 and about 0.3 m. north of the road junction. This cave consists essentially of a watercourse passage, practically dry and perhaps 900 ft. in length, the majority of which provides head room for walking. The cave is not particularly interesting, having no formations or animal life. Later, we drove south on U.S. 219 to a picnic park located just east of Slatyfork and entered Sharps Cave, which is about 250 yd. north of the road at the head of a draw. The entrance is a restricted vertical drop of 15 to 20 ft., followed by an irregular passage working down into larger rooms with much breakdown. This cave is probably the most extensive wild cave I have ever been in. The main lead encompasses many large rooms, some with unsupported flat ceilings at least 100 ft. across and varying in height from a few feet to perhaps 20 or 30. The quantity of breakdown is enormous, some individual pieces being as much as 50 or more ft. in length and weighing conservatively hundreds of tons. The succession of rooms took us lower and lower until finally we were following the stream bed. This cave was evidently surveyed by a party carrying a paint pot, as attested by numerous arrows, distances from entrance, and other instructions and information. Based on a fairly accurate survey by those inscribing the distances on the walls, we explored the main lead for a distance of about 3600 ft., the last two or three hundred being a difficult crawl through breakdown. One of the branch leads of much shorter length leads to a small waterfall about 6 or 7 ft. in height. The cave is interesting only for its size, there being a total absence of formations. The underground stream flowing in this cave is quite large, necessitating walking in water up to one's knees in places.

After emerging and changing clothes, we drove to Mouth of Seneca to the Armentrout campsite, where we ran into a crowd of weekending rockclimbers and cavers from Pittsburgh and Washington. After a good breakfast Sunday morning, we drove along the North Fork to Champ Rocks where some climbing, photographing and swimming was accomplished prior to heading for home.

It seems difficult to drive through Front Royal without stopping at the Milk Bar for a snack of some kind, and on arriving there, we spotted the other two cars which had raced ahead, and stopped to join them. We hope everyone arrived safely in Washington, but cannot vouch for Ray, Tony and Marion. The rest wound up at Tom's home, where Estelle provided lemonade and Tom showed us some of his art masterpieces in the basement.

July 27. Great Falls, Virginia

Rupe Amann	Ann Green	Alice Marshall	Blondie Neuhaus
Jean Burnstad	Bonnie Green	Louise Marshall	Johnnie Reed
Mary Ann Dawson	Bill Hooker	Tommy Marshall	Hans Scheltema
Dorothy Gray	Peg Keister	Don McLeod	

Uncle Don's Spraddle Route was served as an appetizer to this climb-hungry group. Peg, Johnnie and Blondie accomplished the stretch with ease, supposedly proving that it was possible for short, medium and tall people, respectively. However, "we can't all, and some of us don't," and climbers came off the Spraddle like smoke clouds off a rapeller's jeans in spite of the very convincing demonstration.

Johnnie led the main course of the day, the Ringbolt Climb, accompanied by Bill, Hans and Rupe. The Jam Crack and/or Layback (according to taste or technique) off in the corner provided a tempting dessert -- for those who made it. An after dinner snack was to be the Flatiron, but too many vegetables on the rocks plus a baking sun overhead brought forth a more favored suggestion -- Potomac Cocktails. A modified water traverse was set up from the beach to a rock island (promptly christened "Piton Point") midway between the banks of the river, and soon the island seemed to be composed of rock climbers rather than rocks. At this point Chris Scoredos and Company appeared on the opposite bank, and Chris dropped in for a chat.

-MAD-

August 3 -- Cupid's Bower

Marvin Abraham	Ann Green	Louise Marshall	Chris Scoredos
Susie Broome	Susie Green	Tommy Marshall	Eric Scoredos
Jean Burnstad	Bill Hooker	Wade Marshall	Helen Scoredos
Mary Ann Dawson	Ken Karcher	Gerry Morgan	John Scoredos
Doc Edlin	Pim Karcher	Ray Moore	Chuck Shaw
John Fortna	Peg Keister	Blondie Neuhaus	Oliver Westfall
Jane Foster	Bill Kemper	Johnnie Reed	Marion Wormald
Roger Foster, Sr.	Don McLeod	Iris Sawyer	Jim Willard
Roger Foster, Jr.	Alice Marshall	Hans Scheltema	

Taking advantage of the low water level, we decided on the too-seldom visited Cupid's Bower. Having parked at Angler's Inn and left notes and maps for late comers, we started along the tow path. A halt was made at the first rock outcrop to send a couple of ropes over the easy lead there, and incidentally to give some of the tardy members a chance to catch up. In spite of this, we lost a number of people on the trek to the island. Not believing in the sound old-fashioned idea of starting at the bottom, various ambitious souls went right to work on the Ph. D. (or Coffin) Climb. This, of course, provided high entertainment for the rest of us who lolled in the poison ivy below. Ray, and later Chris, made the climb, but the real thrill was provided by Tommy, who did a neat job despite his shorter stature. Some one was heard to remark, "See what I mean about getting old? He wasn't even breathing hard." When we had exhausted the possibilities -- and the climbers -- on this monster, the classes returned to the Bachelor's and Master's Climbs, with considerably more success. Before long, however, most of us joined the small Greens and Scoredosed on the sandy beach and in the cool water. Finally, we adjourned to Johnnie's house for a bountiful supper and a movie show provided by Bill Kemper.

August 8-9-10. Rock Spring Shelter and Little Stony Man Mountain.

Jim Broome	Mary Ann Dawson	Shirley Jackson	Gerry Morgan
Susie Broome	Marge Dutton	Peg Keister	Blondie Neuhaus
Bob Butler	Bill Hooker	Bill Kemper	Johnnie Reed

Driving along, searching for the parking area, late comers to the party were startled by the sudden apparition of something suggesting a Martian Monster. The creature peered at us through the heavy mist and muttered, "Where have you been?" and we recognized it as Gerry Morgan d la caving clothes. Arriving cold and damp at the cabin, we found a welcome rumoun-and-coffee feast awaiting us. Famous last words for the evening came from the direction of Johnnie's bunk, "I'll get that mouse if it's the last thing I do."

The next morning, in spite of the now impenetrable fog and the steady, drizzling rain, an enthusiastic group set out for Little Stony Man. Once on top, the view and the cliffs were nowhere to be seen; but Johnnie said he reckoned as how this was approximately where they ought to be, so he started climbing. Several curious characters including Bill Hooker, Gerry and the author followed and spent a delightful time wading in the puddles on the trip upward and skidding on the vegetation on the rappel down. After lunch, as we were about to abandon the soggy cliffs, we beheld someone or something working his or its way down the cliff through the fog. When it loomed closer through the pea soup, we recognized Bill Kemper, who completed our party.

Dark Hollow's magnificent four-tiered falls and Johnnie's geology lectures were the Saturday matinee double feature. That evening, with the chanting concerto of the downpour providing background music, Bill Kemper, Peg, and Johnnie read bedtime stories, as, one by one, their audience chimed in with a chorus of snores. Evidently the sun god misinterpreted the noises emitting from our cabin as a plea for mercy, for he responded by presenting us with a fine clear Sunday. Little Stony Man, a visible, beautiful, though slightly damp L.S.M., attracted us once more. This time huge (?) droves of people (?) skooted (?) up the Chimney in rapid (?) succession, and the day was pronounced a climbing success. (The question marks are the editor's.)

Late in the afternoon and not without some reluctance, we left Johnnie and Bob, their pockets and packs already bulging with specimens, and set off toward Washington and civilization once more. Great huge thanks to Head Chef Susie and Assistant First Class Shirley, who kept us well-fed (and thus happy) throughout the trip. *MAD-

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August 17 - Great Falls, Maryland.

Helen Baker	Mary Ann Dawson	Alice Marshall	Tom Morris
Jim Bullard	Eric Harth	Louise Marshall	Johnnie Reed
Tony Bullard	Bill Hooker	Tommy Marshall	Ann Remington
Jean Burnstad	Jerry Jankowitz	Wade Marshall	Frank Sauber
Bob Butler	Peg Keister	Gerry Morgan	Bob Stevens
Two young men accompanying Bob Stevens			Arnold Wexler

'Tis said the Hot Shoppe was observed to be vibrating this Sunday morning, but this phenomenon is readily explainable. With the return of our Eminent Expeditionists, viz. Arnold, Don, Frank, Jim and Jerry, came the inevitable tale swapping, thus creating a terrific positive pressure from within. The remaining forces were supplied by the flapping ears of the listeners and the tremulous sighs of those who didn't make it to the mountains this year. Leaving the Hot Shoppe just in time to save it from collapse, Great Falls, Md., became the objective. The climbs were enlivened by swarms of stinging insects which favored crucial handholds as nesting places.

The Red Overhang took its usual toll, Johnnie brightening it with generous splashes of RBC's on the downfall and losing his bandaid on the subsequent try. However, he, Eric, Jim, Jerry and Gerry made it after several attempts. An unidentified face (which all those who should know claim has a name they couldn't recall at the moment) was ascended purposefully by some and descended in great haste by others. It became the principal attraction of the day, with rock box seats at a premium.

Jim's green feathered mountaineering hat, complete with tiny ice axe, was the envy of many, and the cliffs rang with "Do you want an American or Bavarian belay?" Arnold, a spectator for the day, or so he said, ventured from his pallet to waltz up the U.F. in typical Wexler style. (Ed. Speaking of hats, Jean is now hatless and Peg is sporting a red job, all because of this climb.) Jerry set forth seeking difficult and impossible things, but later settled for the face, which was rapidly assuming the reputation of being such.

Swimming and a water traverse to "Piton Point" (from the opposite bank this time climaxed the afternoon. Then Host Johnnie, assisted by his maid (Jean) and cook (MAD) feted us with a barbecue supper. Later when several wavering voices attempted to carry a few tunes, people started leaving looking as though they had some place to go or would find one on the way.

We hear from Walt Kane, that there is a folk dance group at Los Alamos, into which he is trying to infuse a little life, and also that there are a few mountains out there. He made an attempt on one recently, but somewhere short of the ten thousand foot summit he got a taste of the effects of altitude. With typical Kane determination, he is going back and lick the thing soon.

SPECIAL BULLETIN !!! Hot off the wire !!! Donald Paul Lembeck, wt. 9 lb. 2 oz.,

made his appearance on August 21. Like a good beginner, he arrived with proper upper belay; but there is some question about the accuracy of the report that he was carrying a piton hammer and carabiners. With such a name, however, he can't help but carry on the traditions of the PATC Mountaineering Committee.