



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

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

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

PRICE
5 CENTS PER COPY

Volume IX

15 December 1952

Number 15

COMING EVENTS

Gala New Years Eve Party at the Hermitage, Wednesday evening through Sunday, Dec. 31 to Jan. 4, if you want to stay that long. Anyone interested contact Johnnie Read, 6637 Barnaby Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., (Woodly 6-4268). Group commissary provided by Johnnie, so let him know no later than Tuesday night, Dec. 30, if you plan to come. Unannounced skiers without snow can expect to eat their own grub or go hungry.

UPS AND DOWNS

15, 16, November Minor Rexrode and Simmons' Mingo Caves

Jerry Jankowitz	Tony Soler
Bob Lutz	Bill Wright
Ray Moore	Bill Youden
Gerry Morgan	

On a previous trip (Sheets Cave, etc., July 4), Bill Youden noted a promising lead in Minor Rexrode Cave, just south of Franklin, W. Va., and pestered the rest of us until we finally broke down and planned a return trip. Just to make life interesting, Bob Lutz suggested a side trip to Simon's Mingo, about 15 miles south of Elkins. Most of the group went out from Washington Friday evening and sacked out in Bob's place in Elkins, but Jerry, who tends towards the sadistic side, wanted to leave at midnight and meet the others in Elkins. Jerry, Bill Youden, and Gerry therefore stifled their yawns, and left Washington early Saturday morning. Bill and Gerry drove, through a blinding rainstorm, while Jerry slept in the rear.

After a rendezvous at an Elkins restaurant for breakfast, the group headed for Simon's Mingo, on the way to which Bob's car demonstrated a remarkable ability to wallow through very muddy cow pastures. The cave proved to be quite extensive, having two main passages, and also proved to be rather hazzardous because of the enormous amount of loose, fresh breakdown. The lower passage is supposed to penetrate through the entire 600 foot thickness of the Greenbrier limestone, and is reached via a 50' to 75' vertical dropoff composed of loosely piled rock. (Don't ask me how loosely piled rock can make up a vertical face.) Because of the danger of a rockslide on this face, Ray, Bob and Gerry decided to forego the lower passage, but Tony, the Bills, and Jerry went on down. They followed the passage until stopped by a deep water-filled well, roughly 30 feet across. The return trip was made without incident.

(Continued...)

After sacking out again in Bob's place Saturday night, the group took off for Minor Rexrode's Cave, and arrived there about noon. The leaves were off the trees, making another search for the entrance necessary; in spite of having previously located it on the 4th. This cave is developed along a fault, and has a lower (for a while) and an upper passage running back for quite aways. The upper passage eventually terminates in mud fill. Shortly before the end, however, there is a well running up from the passage, and is the part Bill Youden was interested in. Bill and Jerry went on up the well, leaving the others behind, and followed it until a tricky crossover stopped them. They were of the opinion that it might have eventually reached the surface.

The trip back to Washington was enlivened by a stop at Brown's Restaurant in Luray, Va. for dinner, where Ray enthralled us all with a description of his visit to Luray Caverns.

22, 23 November, Cass Cave

Bill Clark
Arnold Huberman
Huntley Ingalls

Gerry Morgan
Bill Youden
Max (?)

For this trip, the rock climbers teamed up with some NSS spelunkers, including Bill Clark from Texas, currently in the Army. Of the group, Bill Youden, Gerry, and Huntley had previously been in Cass Cave (alternately known as Sheet's Cave and Suicide Cave). Huntley was interested in a possible passage about 30 feet above the cave floor in the rear of the cave.

On the trip out Friday evening, a short stop at Ray Moore's provided us with a sling rope and two expansion bolts, to be used in attaining the passage. The group stayed overnight in Franklin, and reached the cave about noon Saturday, where permission was obtained from the Sheets. An interesting development was learned here - the property is now owned by Brown Beard. A series of heavy rains, with threat of more, promised a good sized waterfall over the 150 foot dropoff, if not completely flooded passages, but the fears proved groundless; aside from getting wet feet, the passages were easily passable. After arrival at the belay loft, most of the group went on down the 180 foot wire ladder, while Gerry and Max remained behind for belay purposes. Because the noise from the waterfall made communication almost impossible, some police whistles had been brought along, and a brief code was agreed upon.

The group of four went on back to the new lead after first taking flash shots of the waterfall and ladder, but were unable to make the ascent due to a deficiency of expansion bolts. Two of them went back to relieve the belayers, while the Bills stayed down. On their arrival at the top, it was decided to leave because of the late hour, so the return signal was blown on a whistle. The Bills did not appear, and Gerry volunteered to go after them. On the trip back up the ladder, Bill Clark had the interesting experience of finding that his belay rope had passed through the ladder rungs, and had to untie while 100 feet above the cave floor.

After leaving the cave, Huntley, Arnold and Max decided to return to Washington that night. The Bills and Gerry stayed over in Franklin, and spent Sunday hunting for new caves. One new one was found, but it required digging to get in very far, so they finally gave up and returned to Washington.

23 November, Carderock, Md.

George Beadle
Dick Bradley
John Brohm
Alan Buck
Elisabeth Buck
John Buck
Judy Buck
Peter Buck

Susie Buck
Jean Burnstad
Marion Harvey
Shirley Jackson
George Kamm
Andy Kauffman
Betty Kauffman
Peg Koister

Jane Lewis
Ed Murphy
Sven Nissen-Meyer
Johnnie Reed
Chris Scoredos
Jane Showacre
Bob Stevens
Arnold Wexler

Carderock Lake was the scene of activities on this first good day after the back payment of all of October's quota of rain in three days. By leaving the trail and hugging the base of the rocks we were able to reach the lunch spot, now about three feet from the swollen river's edge, where we found an overturned rowboat chained to Oscar's tree. The foot of the Golden Stairs and all climbs downstream from there were underwater.

Although everything was still a bit slick, we soon had plenty of traffic on the Beginner's Crack, Ronnie's Leap and the Nose. Jean, in a valiant attempt to recover her Red Hat, attacked the Spiderwalk, but was repulsed. Others with no more sense also tried it, with equal success. Then Arnold demonstrated that even on a damp day it can be done, incidentally proving that he was the only arachnid in the group.

Wandering toward higher ground, we saw Chris completing the Buckets of Blood Chimney, then came upon Jean, making a valiant attempt to recover her Red Hat, on Sterling's Crack. When she was once more on the ground, hatless, Johnnie and Dick made it in spite of the trickle of water lubricating all the holds. At this point, the Bucks arrived, accompanied by George Beadle, of Cal. Tech. and the Sierra Club. Although Sterling's Crack is hardly a "warm-up", Dr. Beadle had a go at it before abandoning it in favor of one of Sterling's Chimneys. Meanwhile the young Bucks applied their youthful vigor and enthusiasm to the rocks and gave a good account of themselves. Alan, age 5, and Susie, age 9, both made the Beginner's Crack, while Judy, age 7, showed some of the adults how to do Ronnie's Leap. Peter (11) spent his time practicing rappelling, in which he became quite proficient.

Meanwhile, Jean, in a valiant attempt, etc., worked on the Swayback Layback. Peg still has the Hat.

After lunch, attention centered on Jan's Face. John Brohm, Dick, Peg, Marion, and George Beadle all made the R route from center bottom, while Jean, John Buck, and Jane Lewis made the route from the rock at the right.

Reversing the usual order of things, we wound up with belay practice for beginners at the Nose, Johnnie coaching and Peg juring. What daylight remained was spent on an aerial traverse across the Billy Goat Trail, which featured a very steep upgrade and afforded much amusement for onlookers if not for participants.

P.K.

30 November, Carderock, Md.

Dick Bradley
Susie Broome
Don Hubbard
Shirley Jackson

George Kamm
Peg Koister
Gerry Morgan
Johnnie Reed

Chris Scoredos
Eric Scoredos
Bob Stevens
Arnold Wexler

As someone remarked on this blustery day, the climbs were wet at the bottom, had snow on top, and were cold in the middle. A lack of enthusiasm for climbing was quite noticeable, so Don came to the rescue and rigged a line for prussik practice. A few tired of watching this strenuous exertion and wandered off in search of further amusement. This was supplied by Johnnie, who did the Swayback Layback after one or two false starts. Additional diversion was supplied in the meantime by George, who had brought along a Geiger counter, and used it to demonstrate that Carderock has negligible radioactivity.

(Continued...)

UP ROPE, published semi-monthly by the Mountaineering Committee of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1916 Sunderland Pl., Washington 6, D.C.

UP ROPE STAFF

Editor: Gerry Morgan
 Business Manager: Jean Burnstad
 Heading Designer: Tom Culverwell
 Compositor: S. Jackson
 Reporters: Peg Keister
 Frank Sauber
 Printers: Lowell & Ellen Bennett
 Crew: S. Jackson Peg Jackson
 Jim Willard
 Harry Jenkins

Subscription: \$1.00 for 20 issues.

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Miss Jean Burnstad
 204 E. Capitol St.
 Washington 3, D. C.

Please make checks payable to Jean Burnstad.

In view of the strenuous activity, it was decided at this point to stop for sustenance, and a brief conference while eating brought a unanimous vote to return to Washington and work on Up Rope (Vol. 9, #14). On the way back to the cars, Alice Louise and Tommy Marshall were met by the canal, but they continued on to the rocks. The rest continued on to Susie's for writing, eating and typing.

6. 7. December, Rock Springs, Shelter

Susie Broome

Shirley Jackson

Peg Keister

Johnnie Reed

Frank Sauber

Peg, Susie, Shirley, and Frank left Washington early Saturday afternoon and headed for the hills. In the tunnel at Thornton Gap we met the brains of the Johns Hopkins Geology Department lurking there in the dark, waiting for a rock to outcrop. Johnnie, one of the prefrontal lobes, left his friends and joined us.

Dinner was in the best Broome-Jackson tradition and left us without a single hunger pang among us. Dishwashing was a hilariously hectic affair with enough dirty pots to equip two cabins. So that's what happened to the stuff that was salvaged from the ruins of Meadow Springs.

While Frank snored peacefully in Susie's lap, Johnnie and Peg took turns reading stories about the critturs who live near Pooch Corners, which is a warm place in the sun out of the wind. Later, so we hear, there was a friendly sort of donnybrook that wound up with the victorious ladies sitting on the vanquished and thoroughly exhausted Johnnie.

Sunday morning was well advanced before anyone showed signs of wanting to do something about it. We returned to the cars and drove to Greent Rock. With Peg belaying, Johnnie and Frank warmed up a little pitch. Then it was off to a group of cliffs Johnnie had discovered just north of the northern entrance to Skyland. We named the place Pooch Corners, since it was a warm place in the sun out of the wind. Johnnie worked his way up an interesting crack which was given the name of Tiger's Tenacious Tussle. Frank wound up taking a Jam Box-type swing from a ledge on another climb when his handholds, footholds, and nerve all came to an end in a dead heat.

Dinner at the Coffee Shop in Warrenton brought to a close a most enjoyable weekend.

F.S.

New subscribers and address changes:

Christian, John; H.Q. Co., HQ Bn. 9829 T.S.U., T.E.C.R., Ft. Belvoir, Va.

Hillmann, Donna; 308 Livingston Terrace, S.E., Washington 20, D. C.

Jankowitz, S.; 336 Hart St., Brooklyn 6, N.Y.

Munir, Arshad; 2822 Guilford Ave., Baltimore 18, Md.

Scordos, Mr. and Mrs. Chris G.; 3620 Fessenden St., NW, Washington, D.C.

Sutherland, James B.; 250 Fulton St., P.O. Box 666, Camarillo, Calif.

Wester, Horace; 5622 Valley Road, Falls Church, Va.

Whittenberg, Jonathan (Dr.); 35 W. 10th St., New York, or Dept. of Biochemistry,

Western Reserve Medical School, Cleveland, Ohio

Wright, J. William; 4335 Van Ness St., NW, Washington, D. C.

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