



## 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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### COMING EVENTS

March 6-7 Breathing Cave, Bath Co., Virginia (map reference: Williamsville quadrangle, U.S. Geol. Survey, 1/62,500). Stay at N.S.S. cabin near Williamsville. Meet at the cave at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday.

To reach the cave drive west on U.S. 250 from Staunton to McDowell. Turn left on Va. Highway 269 and go roughly 10 miles south. Turn right near Mt. Zion Church (road junction 1797 located  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches to the left and  $7/8$  inch below the northeast corner of the map) on to a secondary (dirt) road. Proceed about  $4\frac{1}{4}$  miles to road junction 2162 located  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches left and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches below the northeast corner of the map. Turn right on tertiary road (through a gate) and drive about  $3/4$  of a mile to top of the first hill. Cave is located in the sink hole about 500 feet southeast of the road and 1000 feet south of spot elevation 2459.

Those unable to leave until Saturday afternoon can meet the group at the cabin for Saturday night. We may visit Marshall Cave on Sunday.

The cabin is equipped with cooking and eating utensils, but sleeping bags and air mattresses are needed. Cabin fee 50¢ per person per night. Contact Ted Schad (LU 1-0299) before Wednesday night if you are going.

March 14 - Belay practice with Oscar.

March 21 - Climbing at Thurmont.

March 28 - Virginia side of Great Falls.

April 4 - Little Devil's Stairs. Possibly an overnight trip at Range View Shelter.

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Note for potential leaders:  $KE = \frac{1}{2}mv^2$  .....

FEARLESS EXPLORERS PENETRATE WEST VIRGINIA WILDS

Advanced headquarters, Mouth of Seneca, W. Va. (By the Dissociated Press)

Operation Overshoe, the Mountaineering Committee expedition to the virgin wilds of West Virginia, jumped off at 1700 hours, 19 February. (Picking ourselves up sheepishly we tried it again a little more slowly and carefully, and this time made it safely into the front seat of the car.) The expedition's advanced base was set up at Camp Armentrout, where vast quantities of survival equipment and scientific instruments, including a gross of pitchforks and one manure spreader for use by the publicity department, were unpacked and readied for use. (The manure spreader was borrowed from you know where, the ammunition for same was donated free of charge by the local manufacturer.) The expedition flag (crossed fountain pens rampant on a field of printer's ink) was unfurled at dawn the following morning.

In view of the unfavorable prognosis of Expedition Meteorologist Christian (who, stumbling in under the tarp and emptying the water out of his pockets, announced that it was raining) the decision was reached that the first day's exploration would penetrate the unknown depths of Schoolhouse Cave. Working their way cautiously along tortuous passages the explorers were eventually stopped by a yawning chasm from which emanated strange and unintelligible sounds --- "UP ROOOOOOOOFEE!!! dammit --- SLAAAAAACK!!!!" Peering cautiously down into the Stygian depths they witnessed a breath-taking scene; an unknown savage tribe was holding mystic ceremonies in the vast depths of the cavern and the cries were parts of the weird incantations that they uttered as they performed strange acrobatics on the walls of the great room. Descending a few feet over the edge, UP ROPE'S correspondent attempted to interview one of the natives, but he immediately disappeared down a crude rope of unknown fiber muttering in his own tongue some magic curse which to the ears of one untrained in aboriginal dialects sounded something like "Goddamn thismud."

Forced to return to the surface by complete exhaustion and lack of food, the explorers were soon revived by special medication prescribed by Expedition Physician Reed --- hamburgers and coffee.

Improved weather conditions on the following day permitted the party to begin the hazardous ascent of Seneca Rocks, a jagged peak whose conquest has never (to our knowledge) been reported in Time, Life, Look or the Ladies Home Journal. Edging their way over treacherous ledges high on the east face, members of the advanced climbing party at last reached the South Peak, only to find that here, too, they had been preceded by the aborigines. The highest pinnacle was marked by a mop handle of venerable vintage and a heavy brass container bearing strange heiroglyphics:

PITTSBURGH CLIMBERS

Expedition Ethnologist Keister, knowing something of the customs of this savage tribe, postulates that it was some sort of container used to transport alcoholic beverages before the development of the bottle. Inside the cannister an ancient scroll was discovered bearing long lists of native names, probably victims of heathen sacrificial rites who were hurled from the peak as an offering to the gods. Some of these victims must have been amazingly durable, since their names appear two or three times on the list. Probably the most erivible record is that of one Sayre

Rodman, whose name appears no less than four times. Tradition has it that every time he was thrown from the cliff his unusually large feet acted like the fins of a bomb, causing him to land on his head, thus preventing serious damage. In later years he apparently became quite a tribal hero, as his figure can be identified in many contemporary pictographs by the peculiarly flattened head.

Although battered by heavy winds the victorious climbers stayed on the peak long enough to place a bronze tablet bearing the great seal of the expedition:



This tablet had been salvaged from a certain nameless cave in Kentucky where it apparently had been abandoned with some other equipment by a recent party of explorers. Only one serious accident occurred during the hazardous descent of the sheer western face of the peak --- one correspondent became so engrossed in deciding how he would word the newspaper dispatch reporting the expedition's accomplishments that he tripped over a rotten stump and suffered a badly split infinitive.

During the evening the base camp was visited by a large number of natives of the tribe that had been observed earlier in the cave. Their skin and clothing had an unusual reddish brown hue as if they had been rolling in mud for many days. They spoke an exotic dialect, referring frequently to places apparently associated with their tribal mythology --- the Nick of Time, the Angel's Roost, and the Hodag Ledge. They were convinced by friendly advances that the expedition members meant them no harm, and they squatted around the fire chanting their weird savage melodies (and we use the term very loosely). One particularly belligerent individual announced that his name was Samuel Hall and that for some reason he looked upon us with considerable disfavor --- his exact words cannot be quoted for publication. The Anglicized form of the name is probably the work of one of the early missionaries who are believed to have penetrated this remote part of the country during the early years of the present century --- they were never seen again after they departed from Front Royal and headed west.

The next morning (Monday, 20 February) camp was broken, surplus supplies and equipment abandoned, and after a few hours spent in further exploration above and below ground, the expedition began the long and tortuous journey across the wild mountain passes back to civilization. The leader of the party, when interviewed at Duff's Diner in Front Royal, pronounced the expedition a great scientific success and was quoted as saying, "Veni, vidi, --- oh, hell, how does the rest of it go?"

**Editor's Note:** Any similarity between this account and accounts of another recent expedition which shall here be nameless may or may not be purely coincidental. If the shoe fits, wear it. For our readers who don't go for the Evening Star style of reporting, we offer a summary in plain English in UPS AND DOWNS.

UPS AND DOWNSFeb. 7, 1954 - Rogers (Belmont) Cave

Bob Struble  
Doug Barclay  
Jack Barclay

Craig Magnusen  
Fred Cobb  
George Gould

Ben Bennett  
John Meenehan  
Ted Schad

Frightened by such a bright sunny day, like the groundhog, half of the group left the Hot Shoppe looking for the nearest hole in the ground, which proved to be Rogers Cave, near the entrance to the Skyline Drive just outside of Front Royal.

The water level in the cave was the lowest we have seen it, and the mud slopes the driest, so it was necessary for Ted to take the neophytes up a dead end side passage to properly indoctrinate them in the science of mud crawling. The lake at the rear was at the lowest level yet reported, and several members of the party crossed over to explore the mud passages at the far side. It is believed that a record was set, in that only one camera was seen in the cave. Several new ladders have been placed in the entrance chimney to the cave, rendering entrance to and exit from the cave very easy. And a subdivision has cropped up on the slopes below the cave entrance. The inevitable march of civilization. T.S.

Feb. 7, 1954 - Great Falls, Virginia

The editor has been opening his mail with bated breath waiting for a trip report from M. Louise Neuhaus. (A letter opener was also used.)

Feb. 14, 1954. Carderock, Md.

Moir Armstrong  
Adelia (Dee) Bauer  
John Christian  
Ellen Davis  
Marion Harvey  
Bill Hemphill  
Jan Hemphill  
Huntley Ingalls

Shirley Jackson  
Ken Karcher  
Pim Karcher  
Peg Keister  
Bill Kemper  
Tomnie Marshall  
John Meenehan  
Blondie Neuhaus

Everett Merritt  
Brett Merritt  
Felix Pockham  
Earl Reed  
Johnnie Reed  
Ted Schad  
Chris Seoredos  
Eric Seoredos

Jane Showacre  
Barbara Thompson  
Bruce Thompson  
" " Jr.  
Arnold Wexler  
Eddie Willmann  
Ed Worrell

The first hint of spring after a long wintery spell brought out people in droves and Carderock buzzed with activity. The previously uninitiated were put to work on Oscar and the foot-pounds mounted at a great rate, though a large number of hypothetical leaders and belayers went west. Meanwhile the graduates were off making statistics for the next summary of classified climbs. John Christian, Ed, Tommie and Arnold displayed their arachnoid techniques; John C. and Huntley Crossed Over on Arthur's Traverse; Tommie, Ed, John C. and John R. all made Elsie's Edge-face. Arnold, Johnnie and Marion used their two-rope lead technique on both of Sterling's Twin Cracks, and Tommie and Bill Kemper then climbed one of them with an upper belay retrieving pitons. The less experienced got introduced to climbing on the Beginner's Crack and adjacent climbs.

Those of us who later gathered at Giovanni's for supper had the pleasure of meeting Paul Petzoldt of Teton and K-2 fame and Mike Brewer, one of last summer's Teton guides.

P.K.

February 19-22Seneca Rocks

Moira Armstrong  
Ellen Davis  
John Christian

Bill Hemphill  
Jan Hemphill

Peg Keister  
Johnnie Reed

Saturday, Feb.20---rain and fog. Party went in to Schoolhouse to see Joel's and Paul's teams off to the back of the cave. Hope to have complete reports from them later.

Sunday, Feb.21---cloudy and mild. John Christian led Bill Hemphill and Ellen Davis up the Chimney on the Skyline Traverse and to the South Peak via the Old Lady's Route. Johnnie Reed led Peg Keister, Moira Armstrong and Jan Hemphill up the Old Lady's Route and down the Old Man's Route.

Monday, Feb.22---clear and very windy. John C. led Bill and Ed Worrell into the Gunsight, over the gendarme and up a new chimney on the west face of the North Peak---he says it is a very pleasant climb and promises to write up a description. Johnnie R. led Peg and Frank Sauber from the Gunsight to the South Peak and down over the Cockscomb. Rest of the group went off to investigate a new cave south of Mouth of Seneca. They report that it is small and not spectacular.

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Dr. Donald Hubbard, known as "Lunkhead" to some of his younger associates, has been awarded the Silver Meritorious Award of the Department of Commerce for his contributions to the understanding of the basic properties of glass and for meritorious authorship.

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The California-Himalayan Expedition which is to make an attempt of Makalu this spring is now en route. Most of the party is going by MATS via Tokyo and Calcutta. This will be the first attempt on the 27,790 foot peak located 12 air miles south of Everest. The expedition is financed partly by contributions from members of the Sierra Club and partly by the National Science Foundation and the Office of Naval Research.

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UP ROPE, published every now and then by the Mountaineering Committee of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1916 Sunderland Place, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. Editor John C. Reed Jr, 6637 Barnaby Street, N.W., Washington 15, D.C. Subscription: \$1.00 for 20 issues. Please send new subscriptions and renewals and address changes to Margaret L. Keister, 4607 Rosedale Ave, Bethesda 14, Md. Make checks payable to Margaret L. Keister.

## ODDS AND ENDS

The movie committee met at Ted Schad's on Feb. 16 to begin preparation of the commentary for our safety movie. Filming is now complete and editing is in progress. Several people agreed to try their hand at writing a rough draft of the commentary to be considered at the next meeting. Any ideas or volunteers for writing would be very much appreciated.

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The Trail Club now has in stock drills, bits, sleeves and expansion bolts. They also have a new style bolt which requires no sleeve --- however, the hole must be drilled to a depth of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. These bolts are reported to develop 2325 pounds in direct pull, according to the directions from Garry Mountaineering Equipment. The old type is reported to develop 2375 pounds. One disadvantage of the new type is that they require a wrench to tighten them up. Also, they have three parts instead of two. The stock of pitons is good, except that no channels are available. The supply of carabiners is low, but more have been ordered.

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The long search for a good, cheap place to eat in Front Royal is at last ended. We strongly recommend Duff's Diner, located on the left hand side of U.S. 55 (as you go away from Washington) about eight or ten blocks beyond the sharp right turn at the intersection with Virginia State 12.

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The latest issue of The Yodeler (the Sierra Club) announces the formation of a River Touring section of the Sierra Club. Is the day coming when the PATC will organize a similar group?

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The Explorer (Explorers' Club of Pittsburgh) announces that Ivan Jirak, founder and former president of the club, is now in Boulder, Colorado, on a teaching fellowship. Ed Coll, former vice-president, has moved to Hollywood. Ben Nelson, who visited us last fall, is now activities chairman.

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Recommended reading: Tom Culverwell's article in the last issue of the PATC Bulletin recounting a trip by Tony Soler and Ray Moore down Washington's own river of no return. We recognize a kindred spirit.