

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

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March 1959

COMING EVENTS

March 8 -- Boucher and Eagle Rock, Virginia

14-15 Harper's Ferry. Two days of hiking, climbing and other activities are planned by the Washington and Baltimore Clubs. Come on out and learn more about this National Monument. Saturday night Art Lembeck will talk about Mountaineering and show slides, and on Sunday the Mountaineering Committee will give a demonstration of various climbing techniques. If you can't make it for the weekend, come up on Sunday. Please let Bob Adams know your plans by Sunday March 8 as reservations must be in by the 10th in order to sleep and eat at Hilltop House.

Sleeping rates: 1.00 a night (unheated rooms; bring own sleeping equipment.)

\$2.00 a night (unheated rooms; bedding supplied)

\$3.00 a night (rooms with heat and bedding)

Meals: Saturday dinner, Sunday breakfast, and Sunday dinner \$5.00. Single meals:

Breakfast \$1.00, dinner \$2.00. Whichever you decide to do, please

bring your own lunches. Registration fee will be 25¢ and transportation is 2.00 for members and \$2.50 for guests. The truck leaves rear of Headquarters at 7:a.m.

March 22 -- Great Falls, Maryland

March 24 -- Meeting Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the home of Chris Scoredos, 6804 32nd street N.W., Wo. 6-2843. Art Lembeck will show slides of Climbing in California -- from practice climbs on up to those in The Sierra. Those of you who were at the last meeting at Sterling Hendricks' home know that Art's talk was cancelled in order to see the movie Mountains Don't Care made by the Mountain Rescue Council of Seattle and photographed by Ira Spring. It was nice to have Ira there to show the picture and answer our many questions.

March 29 -- Bull Run Mountains, Virginia

^{Apr}
~~March~~ 5 -- Carderock, Maryland. Belay practice with Oscar.

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~~March~~ 19 -- Buzzard Rocks, Virginia, Jake Haun, Leader.

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Sunday trips leave Howard Johnsons at Western and Wisconsin promptly at 8:30 a.m. Please plan to be there at 8 a.m. if you wish to eat breakfast with us. If the schedule has been changed, Karl Edler will be notified so call him for this additional information between 8 and 9 a.m. on Sunday morning. Appleton 7-8851

UPS AND DOWNS18 January - Skyline Drive - Virginia - Ice Climbing

Rod Glascock
Jake Haun

Don Hubbard
Betty Johnson

Bob Mole
Chuck Wettling

Ice climbing in the group is always preceeded by many phone calls to round up equipment and this was no exception. Don was the greatest provider for the unequipped, looking rather like a porcupine with three ice axes sticking out of his pack. After breakfast at Hojo's and a two and a half hour drive we found ourselves in the park on a fine cold day with several interesting ice climbs ahead. Don gave step cutting instructions to one rope at a time while the other tackled some vertical and over hung climbs. Rod and Chuck did some good work on these both before and after our lunch of frozen beans and super-cooled herring. The group was interviewed by a ranger who was quite fascinated by the fact that ice climbing went on in his park. Although he said that he had been introduced to climbing in ranger school in the Sierra, Don was unable to talk him into leading an overhung vertical climb. The day ended with more nearly vertical climbs by Chuck, Rod and Jake, while Don and the expedition photographer, Bob Mole hiked to the tunnel.

J. H.

We haven't been seeing much of Chris lately so he sent us a letter! Says Chris "Each Sunday when I am supposed to be with the group but am somewhere else, I meet many climbers." On January 25 while the scheduled trip was on the Virginia side of the Potomac, Chris set up an aerial traverse for 28 persons who had turned out at Carderock. Then on February first when he should have been at Camp Lewis, the day was spent cutting tree branches at Carderock around the area of the Golden Stairs, and rescuing skaters who fell through the ice. We understand that some of the spectators thought Chris was part of the "Tow Path Patrol".

1 February 1959 - Camp Lewis, Maryland

Bill Keasbey
Hal & Kay Blinn
Rod Glasscock
Bob Mole
Jake Haun
Pete Peterson

Chuck Wettling
Don Hubbard
Jane Showacre
Larry Matarrese
Carmen Torrey
Jack Doolan

The Adams Family
Friskey
Ed Worrell
Floyd Brown
Ted Schad

This bright Sunday morning brought Don Hubbard out extra early to beat Betty at Howard Johnsons, but alas, his efforts were for nought, for it was her day off. Your reporter, a latecomer, spent about three hours hiking to find the climbing site and arrived to find a hungry group of spectators trying to talk Chuck down off a climb. Jack Doolan kept mumblingsomething about standing on the part of the shoe that wasn't on the rock in an effort to laugh him off, but the ex-chairman completed the climb and made his first big concession of the day, when he said, "Maybe Kletterschuhe would help". The afternoon saw many tries on the East Face, but only Bobs, Mole and Adams made the grade. Everyone gets credit for the Friction Dome except a couple of cheaters. Several "looked silly and chilly on the Willy Nilly." * It was at the days end that Chuck made his historic concession on the question of where to eat, he said, "Actually the most logical place is Tuoheys." To Tuoheys we went and there were joined by Alan.

J.H.

* A bit of doggerel composed by D. Hubbard some years ago, I believe. Ed.

15 February - The Purple Horse, Maryland

The Adams Family
 Kay Blinn
 Hal Blinn
 Jack Doolan
 Rod Glascock

Jake Haun
 Don Hubbard
 Betty Johnson
 Art Lembeck
 Jane Showacre

Alan Talbert
 Carmen Torrey
 Chuck Wettling
 Arnold Wexler

This reporter spent the morning upstream from the Purple Horse in the area of the Overhang and the adjacent landward face. (Does anyone have names for these climbs?) The Overhang was mastered by Ed, Bob, Jake, Jack, Chuck, and Hal, who came up on the right.

Much energy and many expletives were expended by those who attempted the landward face. The belayer was treated to a dramatic display of grasping hands and strained faces which momentarily appeared above the brink and then vanished. There were many near misses and two successful efforts (Bob and Chuck). Enthusiasm was dampened when Chuck lowered Jack into the water hazard.

For some time after lunch we were concerned with two short faces near the fire and somewhat protected from the wind. The last climbs of the day were done on the smooth face upstream from the Purple Horse. Several practice climbs were completed as well as a delicate traverse led by Alan, followed by Betty and Jake.

Supper at Tuckeys concluded the day's activities.

February 21-22 -- School House Cave, West Virginia

Bob Adams
 Karl Edler
 Jake Haun
 Don Hubbard

Betty Johnson
 Art Lembeck
 Marcia Newell
 Pete Peterson

Alan Talbert
 Dave Varmette
 Ed Worrell

While neither the old hands nor the we-who-are-led would probably (we hope) admit it, this latest trip to School House Cave was organized so that the know-how of the climbing in Paul Bradt's favorite cave could be imparted to the current crop of climbing leaders and the Ancient Ones could retire to their earned oblivion.

The group originally gathered in the Sleeping Room just above the Entrance Room, some getting in late Friday night, the others making an early morning run from Washington. By noon the gang was ready and the descent into the cave began. The old magic was still there and despite the chill which came for some from the inevitable waiting at belay points with a new party, the Nick O' Time was reached, and the excitement of the Helictite Passage, and Sam's Struggle, explained by Don,* while Art set up a loop ladder for later dropping into the lower passages.

After a first lunch everyone pushed on to the slopes below the Judgement Seat and then the group separated, one party directed by Don and led superbly by Bob Adams, went up the Gargoyles and across the Angel's Roost. Don sent up a spare rope for the rappel off the Judgement Seat, but the bone was in their teeth by then, and all four, Bob, Ed, Alan and Jake, continued on to the Thunderbolt Room before using the rope-down.

While these hours passed, the other rope of Pete, Karl, Dave, Marcia and Betty, led by Art, went down the ladder and slope to the Cascade Pit. All but Marcia and Dave continued on over the Pancakes to the Sand and Dome Rooms.

* Explaining is hardly the word--Don lost his pants in this struggle,--ask him.

On the way back the upper party came bursting through, excited but quite ready to flake out and tell of their triumphs.

With the parth finally reunited at the Nick O'Time Ed had his chance and he did a fine job up the slippery knobs and the Fin to the top of the Mud Slope. By 5 a.m. we were through with a sketchy meal and in the sleeping bags, surviving one feeble effort by sundry songsters to return us to a "normal" non-cavers schedule.

At 1 p.m. a cleverly engineered assault by the climber-cavers, Ike and Mike Nicholson, who arrived with tales of balmy weather outside, broke the sleepers' ranks with loud conversation about prusiking up hundreds of feet while snoozing in a parachute harness and stories of almost impossible climbs available on Champe Rock.* But, their task accomplished, the old guard doddered back to Washington quavering a muddy version of the Return of Jam Crack Joe.

Art Lembeck

* This time the impossible climbs consisted of looking one over and retrieving the carabiners left in from last summer from another according to Chuck. The only other climbing was done on Seneca by Marcia and Alan. On Saturday Chuck took the Adams Family minus Bob through Star Chapel Cave near Monterey, Virginia

HELL HOLE DESCENT

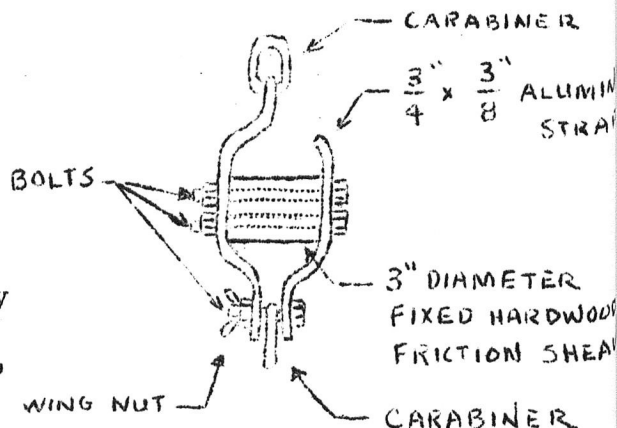
Ike Nicholson

Mike Nicholson

Betty Johnson

Jake Haun

I had talked to local people at some length about the Hell Hole and its history and legends. The awe in which they held the pit filled me with eagerness as I walked toward its mouth with the others on Monday afternoon (2/23/59). We were armed with 200 feet of new $\frac{3}{4}$ " hemp rope, a parachute harness and an ingenious piece of descending equipment known as a Nicholi Device. Since the rope was new we tested it in 50 foot sections by stopping it to a tree and loading it to the extent of a 3 manpower pull. Mike took a turn around a sturdy tree and lowered Ike and Betty to the breakdown pile which formed the floor of the main room. Then he and I descended by means of his device, snapping the parachute harness into the bottom carabiner shown and leading the fixed rope through the upper carabiner and once around the wooden friction sheave. Descent is easily controllable by braking the rope running into the bottom. A prusik safety is used, running between the harness and a point on the rope above the device. Proper length of the prusik safety is fairly important, for as I can attest, it is rather troublesome to find oneself hanging from a prusik knot that is 18 inches out of reach.



NICHOLI DEVICE

As I descended the first 60 feet through the smallest of 4 shafts at the top I had to feed the rope into the Nicholi Device - which I was watching very carefully. I searched my mind for the old Navy rule of thumb for the minimum safe diameter for a sheave with respect to its rope diameter, but as I passed the 60 foot down point, two things took my mind off theoretical worries.

The rope began to run and I had to brake rather than feed and I dropped out of the shaft into a fantastically impressive room. It presented an even more

awesome spectacle when one gazed up at the shafts of sunlight from the floor.

We didn't explore any of the passages for 3 of us had never done that much prusik climbing before and wanted to begin the return trip. It was late in the afternoon and the rope on which we descended looked like 160 feet of unreassuring "kite string" dangling from a chandelier in the ceiling.

The Nicholson boys brought out their prusik slings and Ike led out using a sling for each foot and an upper one attached to the parachute harness. Betty followed using the same three sling arrangement. I followed and Mike brought up the rear, both of us using a harness sling and only one foot sling, to reduce knot work. Mike preferred to use both feet in the sling at once, but I was able to take higher steps with less fatigue using one foot in the sling at a time and switching feet periodically.

The three first timers on this prusik climb, Ike, Betty, and Jake did the ascent in 38, 48, and 28 minutes respectively. Mike turned in 13 minutes, bettering his previous time of 15 minutes and crowding Huntley Ingalls' record of 12 minutes. Betty and I were in complete agreement with the Nicholsons on the revolutionary advantages of the parachute harness - but 160 feet is still a hell of a lot of prusiking for beginners.

Jake Haun

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IN STOCK AT PATC HEADQUARTERS

Bedayn carabiners, many sizes; Holubar, Gerry and Cassin Pitons: Gerry etrier steps and Self Cutting Shields and new dural hangers for expansion bolts. There is also a supply of dehydrated fruits, vegetables, and meat for that minimum pack load. There are also copies of BELAYING THE LEADER, for sale. The Club is open Monday through Friday from 7 to 10 p.m.

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Jake Haun is taking Bob Adams' place as Business Manager for UP ROPE. Please send checks payable to him at Club Headquarters, 1916 Sunderland Place, Wash. 6 D.C..

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Purnie Bishop, the new Program Chairman for the PATC announces the following programs to be presented in the second floor lounge at Headquarters every Wednesday on which no other Club function is scheduled.

March 11 -- Brazil

March 25 -- Club Activities in Caving with Emphasis on Schoolhouse Cave.

April 8 -- First Aid

April 15 -- Rock Climbing

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