



FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

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The Mountaineering Committee meets at Howard Johnson's restaurant, Western and Wisconsin Avenues at 8 a.m. for breakfast every Sunday morning, and leaves for the climbing areas at 8:30. Instruction is offered for beginners. Due to poor weather conditions during the next two months, it may be necessary to change our trip schedules, so be sure to meet us at the restaurant or look behind the southeast corner drainpipe for a note telling you where we have gone.

FIRST AID

Harry Senior, a Red Cross instructor will be giving a first aid course starting Sunday January 8 at 4 p.m. Headquarters. It will be given for 5 consecutive Sundays. Please sign up with Bob Adams (Ch. 8-4523) at once, so we will know who plans to attend. A standard Red Cross card will be issued on satisfactory completion of the course. Special attention will be given mountaineering accidents.

COMING EVENTS

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| December 11 | BULL RUN MOUNTAINS, Virginia. If the weather is too cold, we will go to Spitzbergen, Maryland. |
| 18 | CAMP LEWIS, Maryland |
| 25 | Have a nice Christmas at home |
| 31 -- | NEW YEARS weekend. Will climb at Hermitage rocks, staying at Milesburn Cabin, Pa. Call Betty Johnson at Em.2-4789. |
| January 8 | CARDEROCK, Maryland. No Belay practice. FIRST AID |
| 15 | SPITZBERGEN, Maryland FIRST AID |
| 22 | CUPIDS BOWER, Maryland FIRST AID |
| 29 | GREAT FALLS, Maryland FIRST AID |
| February 5 | CARDEROCK No Belay practice with Oscar. FIRST AID |

SAFETY RULES

Recent events make it imperative that we establish a formal procedure for qualified belayers. It seems necessary to insist on the following steps before we permit new climbers to belay without supervision. They must: --

1. Practice both standing and sitting belays under responsible supervision, on at least 4 outings.
2. Make a series of satisfactory catches of Oscar. (The dummy used for belaying. ED.)
3. Convince the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (and others they may consult) that they have the necessary strength, skill, experience, and mental attitude to belay safely under all circumstances.

Beginning Sunday, September 4 it is planned to limit belaying to those who are thoroughly experienced. Until others become qualified, it is urged that these people volunteer to assist in the instruction of newcomers.

All climbers are encouraged to exercise independent judgement as to the competence of a given belayer, and should refrain from tying in when there is any doubt.

On trips where lead climbing is possible, rope leaders will obtain the approval of the trip leader, Chairman, or vice-Chairman on the route to be undertaken, the persons to be included, and their position on the rope. This is more than a safety precaution. It permits the trip leader to avoid traffic jams and to insure that everyone has a chance to climb.

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Chairman, looking forward eagerly to retirement, has asked Arnold Wexler and Bob Mole, to nominate a slate of officers for 1961. It is hoped that names of candidates will appear in the January issue of UP ROPE well in advance of the annual meeting in late January. Anyone wishing to be considered for Chairman or Vice-Chairman, or who wishes to recommend a candidate should see Arnold or Bob with out delay.

Bob Adams

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Bob Adams gave a talk on climbing techniques and showed pictures of his western trip at the meeting of the Potomac Speleological Club on November 28th. We hope that there will be an exchange meeting before too long.

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Ed and Blondie Worrell are the parents of a boy, Glen Carl, born November 4, 1960. Congratulations!

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Chuck Wettling's new telephone number is: Redwood 6-1344. Telephone hours are the same --no calls after 10 p.m.

A JOURNEY TO LOUIS LEE CREEK
and
A COUPLE OF NEARBY POINTS

By Pete Peterson

Our last summer's vacation saw us, as usual, in British Columbia and again as usual, in the Selkirks. Beside the usual Sterling, Donald, and myself there was a new recruit in Polly Prescott.*

We tend to call it another Mica Creek trip. Actually, it had very little to do with Mica Creek. It was a backpacking tour, mostly at timberline, of the headwaters of Potlatch, Mica, Yellow and Louis Lee Creeks. The upper basin of Louis Lee was our main objective. All these are in the northwest corner of the Big Bend of the Columbia River. Our two climbs, of Northeast Peak and Mt. Chapman, were somewhat incidental to our real purpose of getting into the alplands; this is my own opinion. For Don and me, it was our third climb up Fred Laing Ridge, which gives access to the region; it was Sterling's second time; Polly may not have known what she was letting herself in for, as it was her first visit.

From the standpoint of the ridiculous, I suppose the high point of the trip occurred a little before it began. It began when we started up through the timber from Mica Creek at Columbia River on Thursday 21 July. The afternoon before saw Sterling in the crowded office of the forest ranger at Boat Encampment; our summer's climbing in the district depended on his getting a campfire permit. The place was a scene of bustle and activity as the ranger tended to the many details of keeping his fire-fighting crews on the job, - details of food, transportation, lodging, tools, supervision and so on; more than 50 men milled about; the radio crackled intermittently. The forest fire, incidentally was in plain sight of the office. The ranger finally turned to Sterling, who opined, in a small voice, that perhaps it was foolish to ask but what he wanted was a fire-building permit! The ranger made a quick recovery, asked a few probing questions and, after some further discussion, granted the permit. (I herewith recommend Sterling to the attention of the Diplomatic Service). There was a proviso about making fires only at timberline or higher. Needless to say, we were most careful. A line of monumental, stone-lined fireplaces will mark our campsites for many years to come.

Fred Laing Ridge and the "Lake Region".

Easiest access into the country east of Mica Creek is by way of Fred Laing Ridge. This ridge borders the main stem of Mica Creek on the north. The first day, spent climbing the forested slopes of the ridge, is a real stinker; your pack is at its heaviest (60 pounds); you are at your softest (x-pounds); it is an all-day scramble upward through cedar and spruce forests with the usual assortment of bush, devil's club and blowdowns; from an altitude of 1800 feet at the Columbia River, you have to climb 6,000 feet to make timberline. This year we happened to pick a route up an

* Sterling Hendricks and Don Hubbard - other expedition members. (ED.)

especially dry shoulder, finding water only four or five times during the warm day. A few intermittent caribou trails were gratefully used.

After the first rough day spent in gaining the alplands, the second days' walk proved most pleasant; it was also a short day. We camped not far from Cornice Mountain, which is the eastern terminus of Fred Laing Ridge. Along the ridge one has a choice of staying on the crest line or of keeping a little way down on the south slope, -much of the latter through open fields. There are some breaks in either course but they are not too hard to circumvent. Both courses have their enjoyments. We have tried both.

In the col at the west end of Cornice Mountain we descended northward into a high snow basin. Here are the headwaters of both Potlash Creek and the northerly arm of Mica Creek. There is a great ice-rib, about 50 feet high, within the basin and this is the precise division between the two watersheds. The snow basin is rimmed on the south by Cornice Mountain, on the east and north by Scimitar Ridge. Another ridge more or less fences in the west side. Mt. Bastille marks the south tip of Scimitar Ridge and was a wonderful vantage point when Don and I climbed it in 1959.

In 1959, in a colder season, we named Cornice Mountain from its outstanding snow cornices; this year they were nearly non-existent. In 1959, the snow basin held only two or three small ponds; this year our four-hour traverse across the basin took us past acres of blue, snow-girt small lakes. "The Lake Region" is an evanescent name for the place; it was at least appropriate for the last two weeks in July of 1960. Scimitar Ridge and Mt. Bastille are names we coined last year.

At the end of a twelve hour day we were camped at timberline above Yellow Creek, which lies in the next valley to the east and flows north. Our day had taken us across the snow basin with its lakes, through Scimitar Ridge in the second* col north of Bastille, across a high snowfield draining north and finally along a long, easy moraine crest down to Yellow Creek. There were snow flurries and a little rain. The next morning there was a thin line of fresh snow on the slopes not far above camp. We loafed in camp that rainy, misty Sunday; it was a day for woolen underwear. Here also we left a food cache for the return journey.

* Note: Avoid the first col north of Mt. Bastille; it gets one into cliff-bands on the east slope.

Louis Lee Basin, Northeast Peak and Mt. Chapman

The fifth day was clear and sunny. The rain had cleared the air and gave us a respite from the smoke haze that obscured the distances. After wading Yellow Creek where it meanders through the valley floor we headed into Anemone Pass and the Louis Lee Creek watershed.

Above timberline in the watershed of Louis Lee Creek lies one of the finer of the summer alplands I have seen. Northeast Peak

and Mt. Chapman are its dominating peaks. Anemone Pass is like a natural gateway into this valley from Yellow Creek on the west.

By the end of the fifth day we had made a timberline traverse around the north end of Louis Lee valley and got a camp positioned for an ascent of Northeast Peak. We called this Stonehenge Camp. Its chief feature was a large and odd capstone sitting on the rocky ridge above the camp; this profiled either a great potlatch mask of a face looking east, a crouched bullfrog looking west, or perhaps both.

Stonehenge Camp was close under the S.W. arete of Northeast Peak and this was the route of our climb on the sixth day. The arete led into the saddle between Northeast and its outlier peak; from here it was a moderate snow and rock scramble to the summit. Northeast was first climbed by a survey party many years ago; we found an old photographic plate, its emulsion quite weathered away, at the summit cairn. Alex Fabergé and Bob Schluter climbed it in 1953. We were the third party. It took us from 6 to 12:30 to reach the top and 2 to 5:30 to return to camp. Some long glissades shortened the way home.

Acquiring the skill of glissading, it seems to me, is much like learning to open raw oysters. You go along for two or three seasons without doing it very well; it is not exactly a part of your repertoire. Then comes a time when you find yourself coasting along in a relaxed way and it becomes fun. It took me about that many seasons to learn to open oysters fast enough to keep from starving to death between oysters; all at once I became adept at it.

On the way down from Northeast Peak Polly was suddenly introduced to a curious phenomenon; for lack of a better name, I will call it "snow-lock". As with vapor-lock in the fuel system of your car, you are unexpectedly immobile. Apparently, the snow a foot or so below the surface, under the right conditions, exists in a mushy condition but is supercooled. That is, the water held between the crystals is below its freezing temperature but remains in the liquid phase. Such a supercooled state can be set up in the laboratory. The disturbance of the mountaineer's step is enough to suddenly freeze the water. In one moment your foot becomes encased in what feels like a cement boot; you cannot flex your ankle enough to pull your foot out; you must sit down and patiently dig away a space behind your heel to get free. A memento of our trip is a slide which shows Don manfully digging away with his ice-axe to free Polly's encapsulated foot. This happened to me three times on a descent of Mt. Columbia. In that year, like this last one, it happened on a mid-afternoon descent of a snow slope facing the sun.

Early the next morning the three of us started up the glacier on Chapman by the well-known Donnerly Light. There was heavy frost on the rocks. The smoke haze was back again. By keeping close to the true left side of the glacier we avoided the crevassed area. By sunup we were on the upper neve, among the swirled patterns of lines that looked like contour plowing on the snow. A little later we crossed from the Louis Lee side over into the glacier on the Bigmouth Creek watershed. By noon we had crossed a few snow tongues, threaded another crevassed area, worked up several rock pitches and reached the crest of Mt. Chapman. The rock pitches were unpleasant because of the rotten, crumbly rock. Our route from camp had made

a 180 - degree upward spiral halfway around the mountain, from about 7,000 feet to 10,150 feet. We were the second party to climb Mt. Chapman; Faberge and Schluter made the first ascent in 1953; we essentially followed their route. From the top we studied geography; there was quite a lot of it in sight despite the smoke of the forest fires.

At the summit we were greeted by six or eight seagulls. Their wings flashed white as they wheeled past in flight formation, -almost at eye level. The return to camp was marked by another highlight; as we rounded a high, grassy shoulder we came suddenly on a mountain goat with her two young ones. They seemed not to be particularly afraid. They made an unhurried retreat which took them within fifty feet of us. There was a sense of lightness and freedom conveyed by these two sights, -the gulls in their winged flight and the goat family in its leisurely departure. For me they were the high spots of the summer's journey; I would rather not rationalize this statement further.

In the late afternoon we had a little trouble finding a downward path through the glacier above camp. Now, from above, the glacier was not spread out in panoramic view as it had been on the upward climb. We made several dead-end leads, but finally roped down some ice ledges that brought us out. It was a long enough days' work and we reached camp a little ahead of sundown.

The way out was a retrace of our course into the country. We returned to the highway at Mica Creek and the Columbia River in a rainstorm on the afternoon of 2 August. This was the thirteenth day. We had started with an estimated 10-day food supply; a little cheese and sugar were about all that remained by the end of the thirteenth day. Crow-flight type of measurements on the map indicate about a 45 to 50 mile walk. We had been in some mighty fine mountain country.

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The route we had used into the Louis Lee and Chapman region was first worked out in two earlier journeys, - by Alex Faberge and Richard Wilson in 1951 and by Faberge and Robert Schluter in 1953. Their explorations outlined the Fred Laing Ridge approach, Anemone Pass (which they named) as the Key to the Louis Lee basin, and the route we used to climb Mt. Chapman. Palmer and Chapman had been in the country in 1915, -entering via Mica Creek, I believe.

Through journeys like this one, and into less accessible regions, we come upon spots where we feel no man has trod before us. I am not thinking now of peaks and first ascents. It is a notable experience and good to know that such places can still be found; you also realize that your very presence has reduced their number. Yet there is always reason to question if you really were first. Even in some of the wildest and remotest of places can be found signs that men have passed this way. The sign may be a trappers' overgrown blaze, a crumbling tin can, a surveyor's crude tripod of poles and rocks on a peak, or a name on a map. There is a shadowy band of prospectors, mountaineers, surveyors, trappers, miners and other men with curiosity who have travelled in the uttermost parts of the land. Most have been lost to all remembered or written history. If our credentials are good enough we may some day be included with them.

The Sierra Club has just published (November 1, 1960) a new book, A CLIMBER'S GUIDE TO GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, by Gordon Edwards. It contains information on the climbing routes, peaks, and general climbing areas. There are photographs by Ansel Adams, Bob and Ira Spring and others. It is available through the Sierra Club for \$3.75

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NEW CLIMBING AREA

BLACK ROCKS, Maryland October 16

After our scheduled climbing on Wolf Rock at Thurmont was prohibited by the Park ranger, a few inquisitive souls investigated the climbing on Black Rocks. The area is about an hour's hike from the road. The rock is firm and is horizontally bedded. The cliffs are approximately 50 feet high. Mary Vincett pioneered a route and it was then climbed by Joe Nolte, Chuck W., Alan Mole, and Bob Mole. Mary named the climb "The Ranger's Rebuke". There appears to be enough easy practise climbing here to warrant including the area in our one day trip schedule

Chuck Wettling

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