



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

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AN ENGLISHMAN'S TREK TO THE WILD WEST
(or A Tenderfoot in the American Wilderness)
Bob Robinson

Well it all began a few years ago back in England when a climbing colleague who spent five years in the U.S. in the late 1940's showed slides of a trip he had made in the Wind River Range. The account of his using horses to pack in the gear and food (and the booze), plus the services of a full-time packer to act as a wilderness Man Friday, made this sound very interesting indeed.

When I came here for a three-year tour, the main problem was (and is) how to apportion the annual leave allowance to enable me and my wife to see as much of the U.S. as possible as well as climb, ski, paddle a canoe, rubberneck and so on, just like most visitors to somewhere new. I did plan at least one climbing holiday and eventually settled on the Wind Rivers for 1968 after further consulting with experienced Mountaineering Section members. Strange to relate I had no success with my efforts to persuade or cajole other Section members to join me. I suppose I should have paid more attention to the TV commercials and changed my body lotion. Eventually two out-of-doors men (climbing novices) and an English lady climbing friend decided to come, so we made a party of five.

One of the early decisions was to beg borrow or steal a guidebook. The Adams lent me the abridge version of the Bonney guide; Rich Hall gave me the complete hardcover copy, which contains much of interest to the expedition planner. Grateful as I am for the guide, I must confess that I found the key system in the guide (for enabling me to locate myself) rather tedious and somewhat confusing to follow if I was in a hurry. However, the guide and the topographical maps made route planning feasible. Color slides from Arnold Wexler also made the mountains very familiar.

Another very important decision was that I would use horses for the gear. The climbers would walk as training. I carried only about 30 pounds. Of course, I am really entirely in favor of backpacking in its place, but I did not fancy very much the prospect of two weeks of bad weather in a mountain tent. Joan, a non-climber, fancied it even less. This meant a large tent, by which I mean my rather elegant French frame tent, which weighs about 80 pounds complete. It has the great advantages of head-room, complete weather tightness, and freedom for cooking under cover in non-prostrate positions. It also enables 5 or 6 people to socialise over a hot toddy while the snow storm goes into its second day. Do not despise big tents in the mountains if you can find the Sherpas or willing horses or even impecunious students prepared to carry them.

The heavy tent set the pattern for the gear. After getting tourist information, including a list of packers, from a Wyoming Senator's office, a telephone call established the load-carrying capacity and costs. It rapidly became apparent that two freight horses (pack horses to you) would be marginally adequate, while three would allow luxury, even folding chairs, beer, scotch, bourbon, and gin, an axe, a saw, and extra fuel.

Food was no problem. Modern dehydrated foods weigh so little. Joan quickly found herself planning a relatively luxurious menu without having to pay too much attention to weight. Conversely, the backpackers (in our party and others) seemed to have to plan on the basis of the desired caloric intake per day, which, speaking from experience, can be a bit dull. Some repackaging was done to eliminate unnecessary paper and cardboard cartons, but not all that much. There are several standard works such as the Sierra publication on basic mountaineering which provide data on detailed planning far more effectively than I can here. However, some personal allowances have to be made. The heavy-eating poor converter who gets hungry but never fat has the most to worry about. I believe it is a good plan to make the main meals a communal responsibility but the lunches and mountain foods a personal matter.

Eventually we left Washington at the beginning of August. Enroute to Dubois we visited the Black Hills, Jewel Cave, Mt. Rushmore, the Crazy Horse project and then moved on the the Devils Tower. Here, we met the Park Service and its peculiar (to us) though helpful attitude toward mountaineering and climbers. We had taken the precaution of writing in advance for permission, and this was granted subject to the unreal inspection of our gear. On the day, the qualified ranger was absent but his deputy swallowed my line about my experience and, though eyeing my nuts with suspicion, gave us the OK. It was warmish, about 85°, and my companion found it a bit trying. Necessarily, I proposed to attempt the standard Durrance route - not that it should be underrated. On reflection it seems to me that the hardest move for me, being rather short, is the mantle shelf about half way up the first real, leaning-column pitch. It was easier the second time, for reasons I will explain. On the route my second fainted when I was half way up the main crack. We also had a short heavy storm. I simply jammed myself in place and waited. The exit from this to the platform seemed a squeeze because I accidentally went into the lip part of the crack instead of staying on the wall. A little higher up we came to the traverse where some fearful soul had put in two ring pitons in what seemed to me to be singularly useless places. Soon we were on the summit but found no pencil to record our feat. We improvised with mouse droppings as crayon. The abseil descent was uneventful as we had no hardware problems. The last abseil down the leaning column was an exception. The rope, after my pulling it free, became jammed behind a chock stone about two-thirds of the way up the pitch. About one foot only of the rope was above the chock. I then climbed the pitch again, unroped, to free the rope. The descent was soon over and we walked to the car park to be met by a small gaggle of photographers, some of whom had postponed their departure for an entire day having heard there were climbers on the Tower. The rangers seemed to have publicized the goings on. I suppose climbers are an added attraction, though I had never thought of myself as a public performer. We were the only artists on show that day.

To be concluded in June

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Editorial

As a follow up to our discussions with the National Capital Region, National Park Service, concerning our use of the Potomac Gorge, a meeting was held on Tuesday, April 22, with representatives of the Park Service and the Mountaineering Section. The meeting was attended by Bob Robinson, Lanny Hughey, Tom McCrumm, and Dick Sideman from the Mountaineering Section; Mr. Nash Castro, the Director of the National Capital Region Parks, and Mr. Taylor, the Director of the Potomac Gorge area of the National Capital Region. Mr. Taylor's jurisdiction covers all the climbing areas from Carderock to Great Falls.

Mr. Castro and Mr. Taylor were most responsive to our suggestions, and will do everything they can to help us with our use of the Potomac Gorge as a climbing area.

Below is the correspondence between the Mountaineering Section and the Park Service. In addition to the results noted in their letter, the Park Service has agreed to keep the parking area gate open at Carderock.

Gentlemen:

In reference to our previous discussions with representatives from the National Park Service, we would like to further discuss the following recommendations concerning rock climbing activity within the National Capital Parks Region, with particular emphasis on climbing activity in the Potomac Gorge.

At our December club meeting we discussed many of our suggestions with Mr. Taylor. We all seemed to be in agreement at that time to the fact that the west end of the Carderock Recreation Area was more suitable as a climbing area than as a picnic area. The Carderock area has been utilized as a rock climbing area for over thirty years, and we wish to recommend that it be designated as a special use area by the National Park Service. This would entail the removal of the picnic tables from the area, which is so often swampy and not at all suitable for pleasant picnicking. Since the tables were installed a few years ago, there has been a problem with the picnickers moving the tables to the upper edge of the rocks, thereby endangering both themselves and the rock climbers down below. In addition, since climbing in the Potomac Gorge is a year-round activity, we would like to have the comfort station facilities at the west end of Carderock open year-round as well.

Up Rope

UP ROPE is the Newsletter of the PATC Mountaineering Section, founded by Jan and Herb Conn in 1944. Publication is on the last Wednesday of each calendar month at PATC Headquarters. Deadline for submitted material is the next to last Wednesday of the month preceding an issue. Material for inclusion, comments or questions on editorial policy should be directed to EDITOR, UP ROPE, c/o PATC, 1718 N Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036. Subscription rates are \$1.50 per year. New subscriptions and changes of address should be directed to Business Manager, UP ROPE, etc.

In regards to the National Capital Region's policy toward climbing -- we would like to have rock climbing and related activities recognized as a special interest use of the area and have it noted for the official record that all the cliffs in the Potomac Gorge are climbing areas. Some form of guarantee that the rocks will always remain open to climbing would be desirable. As the whole Potomac Gorge area has been used for over thirty years as a rock climbing area, it is recommended that climbers have recognition from the Park Service and knowledge that the area be similarly freely utilized in the future without restriction.

We would also like to recommend that the National Capital Region, National Park Service, construct a climbing area bulletin board, perhaps to be attached to the comfort station at the west end of the Carderock Recreation Area. This could be best used by the climbers who use the area as a medium of communication for conservation and safety suggestions. For example, it should be the climbers who make recommendations covering safety and good climbing technique within the Potomac Gorge Area. This bulletin board would be cared for by the climbers who are constantly climbing in the area.

We would appreciate your serious consideration of these suggestions.

Thomas A. McCrumm, Secretary
Mountaineering Section,
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

Dear Mr. McCrumm:

Thank you for your letter of April 17, and more particularly for visiting with Superintendent Taylor and me this morning about the climbing activities in the Potomac Gorge.

Needless to say, we are delighted over your interest in the use of this resource. We especially welcome your suggestions and wish to assure you that we shall move the picnic tables to another location to eliminate danger to picnickers and climbers as well.

We certainly understand the need to keep the comfort station facilities open all year round, and as Superintendent Taylor indicated, this will be done.

We recognize the need for the bulletin board you have suggested and Mr. Taylor will follow up in providing it for you.

As you know, we have no regulations on our books now which cover climbing in this Region of the National Park Service. Further, we do not foresee a need for regulations, understanding that you and your fellow climbers will continue to be attentive to the protection of this particular climbing resource. All we ask is that you favor us with your helpful suggestions as they occur to you, remembering that we both share the same interests in providing for good, wholesome recreation activities.

Thank you again for your helpful suggestions, and with all best wishes,

Nash Castro
Regional Director
National Capital Region
National Park Service



Hanging Around

Harpers Ferry
Mar. 23

Dick Sideman - Trip Leader
Lanny Hughey
Chuck Sproull
Bob Adams
Sallie Greenwood
Mary Eldridge

Bob Robinson
Art Wilder
Terry Robinson
Lubos and Marie Pospisil
Don Schaefer
June Lehman

We arrived about noon, and, after registering with the National Park Service, proceeded to climb most of the known routes. The weather was superb -- cool and sunny, with a slight breeze. Everyone, including the trip leader, had a marvelous time.

Little Stoney Man
Mar. 30

Bob Adams - Trip Leader
Chuck Sproull
June Lehman
Bob Robinson
John and Barbara Kemple
Pat Kemy
Ted Lloyd

Art Wilder
Don Schaefer
Al and Sue Goldberg
Kate Adams
Terry Robinson
Lanny Hughey

The Weather Bureau advertised a clear day with temperatures in the 50's, but it turned out to be one of the coldest, windiest days we have seen at Little Stoney Man, with a little sleet and fog thrown in. While climbing we froze our hands; while belaying we just froze. Almost everybody finished one climb -- rather than give up in the face of adversity. A few slow-to-learn types managed two ascents. But Art and Chuck did one climb after another all day. Furthermore, they said they intended to stay all night. When I left they had exhausted everything else and were doing a practice climb. Let's hope for the best.

Great Falls, Md.
Apr. 6

Lanny Hughey - Trip Leader
Bob and Kate Adams
George Livingstone
Rick Yeomans
Gary Holmes
The Ruckers
Andy Schiff
John Beckler
Lubos and Marie Pospisil
Jim and Alice Sheridan
Denis Udall
Sam Black
Bill McCullough
John Nolan
John Nolan III
Ed Roach
Bob Trumble
Tom McCrumm

Art Wilder
Bob and Carla Adams
Arnold Wexler
Terry Robinson
Harold Kramer
George Kramer
The Milligans (8)
Bob Lyon
Richard Sideman
Matt Hale
Bev Johnson
Mary and Cathy Eldridge
Pete Appel
Cindy Wright
Mike and Tony Madden
Nick and Betsy Clinch
Meg and Tony Grey

It was a delightful day - first really warm day we've had, and, as the above list bears witness, the multitudes came forth. I even felt a touch of nostalgia on seeing Meg and Tony Grey.

The superbulges--three received considerable attention throughout the day. I finally managed all three before the day's end.

The day's biggest surprise was the news that Bobby and Carla Adams had just gotten married in March.

Bull Run Mountain
Apr. 13

June Lehman - Trip Leader
Don and Betsy Schaefer and
Erika
Tony and Mike Madden
Don and May Milligan,
Pat, Mark, Luke and
Libby

Bob and Kate Adams
Hal Kramer
Ricky Wrigley
Bill Thomas, Jeff and Billy
Sallie Greenwood
Sue Jordan
Denis Udall

Cathy Eldridge
Art Wilder
Tom McCrumm
Phil Eddy
Joe and Martha Lippman,
Kennedy and Fred

Lubos and Marie Pospisil
Bill McCullough
Chuck Sproull
Bob Kambiac
Rickell James
Carl Gibson and family

On a balmy day that brought to mind the new song, "Spring Will Hang You Up the Most," jaunty climbers muscled up formidable overhangs, cautious climbers found their own versions of the vertical, non-climbers scrambled, inspected turkey vulture nests or basked in the sun, babies and dogs slept.

Hal Kramer, the Maddens, and the Bill Thomas party doubled their pleasure by camping overnight under the stars. Tony Madden writes that Bill Thomas delighted everyone with a most learned and professional lecture on astronomy on Saturday night. Bill had binoculars, special maps of the heavenly bodies, and some other equipment, and gave a most interesting description of how to tell time by the stars, how to determine your position anywhere on earth from the stars, and we even saw four shooting stars.

Shawangunks
Apr. 19 - 20

Tom McCrumm - Trip Leader
Sallie Greenwood
June Lehman
Matt Hale
Bev Johnson
John Standard

Bob Waldrop
Denis Udall
Don Schaefer
Roger Hammill
Terry Robinson

April showers may bring May flowers -- but they are certainly not conducive to pleasant climbing weekends at the Gunks. Yes, again we were struck a foul blow by the weather, but we are all learning to be very resourceful when it comes to finding things to do when we cannot climb. Rain was with us from Friday night in Washington until late Saturday night. In place of climbing in the rain on Saturday a group of us visited the Brotherhood Winery about 30 miles south of New Paltz. After a fine tour of the winery and many samplings of their wares we couldn't have cared less about the rain! The remainder of the afternoon was spent bouldering along the Carriage Road in the Trapps.

The one major calamity of the weekend occurred Saturday when we decided to eat dinner at the Log Cabin, a Ukrainian restaurant on route 55-44 on the Ellenville side of the mountain. Our evening was a contest to determine which was the worst -- the food or the service, both of which were atrocious. Be advised never to eat there.

Sunday morning shone in early with bright sunlight and cold blue skies. No time was wasted getting ready to spend a long day climbing before having to drive back to D.C. Tigers all, we climbed 5.6, 5.7, 5.8 climbs exclusively. Your fearless Trip Leader discovered a new climbing move while leading over a rather horrendous 5.7 ceiling -- the Mud Jam. Due to the abundance of rain on Saturday I found the only thing to do was to jam my hand into a ball of mud and hope that it would hold long enough to move my feet -- it did, but I don't recommend the move.

It was a real shame to have to leave after a few climbs in such glorious weather, but we are all looking forward to Memorial Day in the Shawangunks.

NOTICES

Wedding:

Bobby Adams and Carla Romano, of Baltimore, on Mar. 5.

Engaged:

Margaret Lee and Chuck Wettling.

Address changes:

Capt. Joseph A. Nolte
HHC 1st Bn. 7th Cav.
1st Cav. Div. (AM)
APO 96490

Chuck Wettling
1931 NE 19th St.
Gresham, Oreg. 97030

Two sleeping bags were found at Bull Run Mountain.
Contact June Lehman for details.

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Leader</u>
May 3-4	Old Rag	Bill Deutermann (363-0757)
May 10-11	Greenland Gap	Art Wilder (630-9055)
May 14	PATC Headquarters Meeting, 8:00 PM	
May 17-18	Caudy's Castle	Bob Adams (292-1340)
May 21	PATC Headquarters Swap Night, 8:00 PM	
May 24-25	Baker Rocks	Don Schaefer (521-5326)
May 30-June 1	Shawangunks	Penny Pierce (667-2219)
June 8	Cupid's Bower Training	Bob Robinson (356-4584)
June 11	PATC Headquarters Meeting, 8:00 PM	

Trip Leaders are reminded of their responsibility to arrange for a report and, if a leader is unable to make his assigned trip, to appoint a substitute leader.

Old Rag Mountain, Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 west through Gainesville and U.S. 211 west to Sperryville. Turn left on U.S. 522 south for one mile. Then right on Va. 231 and south about 8 miles. Right on state road 670 to Nethers. Enter parking lot about two miles past Nethers. The long way up is up the fire road straight ahead and the short but steep way is up the blue-blazed trail to the left.

Greenland Gap, W. Va.

Drive west on U.S. 50 to New Creek, W. Va. (60 miles past Winchester). Pick up W. Va. route 93 south and follow it for 15 miles to Scheer. Watch for a dirt road and a bridge over a creek just to the left of Rte. 93. Turn left on the dirt road and drive .3 miles to a fork. Turn right and drive .3 miles into the Gap. Park in any one of several turnouts. Climbs are on the left side of the road.

Caudy's Castle, W. Va.

From the Beltway take either Va. Route 7 or U.S. 29-211 to U.S. 50 to Winchester. Take U.S. 522 north about 15 miles and go west on Va. route 127 (changes to W. Va. 45) to Blommery. Five miles further there will be a sign to Caudy's Castle on the right. Turn left on a dirt road. One and a half miles on the dirt road to the parking lot.

Baker Rocks, W. Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 to Gainesville and bear right onto Va. route 55 to Moorefield, W. Va. Turn left onto U.S. 220 for seven miles to Harper's Central Dairy on the right. Take a left just past the dairy into a lane. Open gate beside the quonset hut. Follow lane to rocks (after closing gate).

Shawangunks, N.Y.

From the Beltway take the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (or U.S. 1 in heavy traffic) to the Baltimore Parkway. West on I 83 and north to the Pennsylvania Turnpike just before Harrisburg. East on the Turnpike to Pa. 283 north (10¢ toll). East on U.S. 22 and I 78 to Pa. 512 north. Get on Pa. 115 north to Wind Gap and onto U.S. 209. Follow U.S. 209 past Ellenville, N.Y. and turn right onto N.Y. 55 and U.S. 44 east. Go approximately 8 miles and turn left onto Trapps Road and camp in one mile at the Coxing Camp. The rocks are two miles up N.Y. 55.

On the trip back, follow U.S. 22 directly to I 83 (don't use Pa. 283 and the Turnpike). Also, be sure to use the bypass section of U.S. 209 around Stroudsburg (this is easily missed on the return trip).

Cupids Bower, Md.

From the Beltway take the Great Falls - Carderock exit in Maryland. When the Parkway ends turn left onto MacArthur Boulevard to the Old Anglers Inn. Park in the dirt lot on the left and cross the canal. Walk right (upstream) toward Widewater. Take the blue-blazed trail left near Widewater to the river. Cross the river to the island. Cupid's Bower is near the foot of the island nearest D.C.

The following person has been nominated for membership in the PATC Mountaineering Section.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sponsors</u>
Carol Hackett	Pete Hackett June Lehman

Nominees should be present at the next scheduled meeting so that their applications can be voted on.

Swap Night - May 21:

Don't forget. Trade frayed slings for broken carabiners.

Up Rope

1718 N St N W

Washington, D. C. 20036

