

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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PAGE 1

NEVADO DEL HUILA, 1969

Art Wilder

It all started sometime last fall when an acquaintance, Phil Ritterbush, mentioned that he had seen a mountain in Colombia that he would like to climb sometime. Having heard nothing further for several months I called Phil from Touhey's on Inauguration Day, Jan. 13. Phil said yes, he was getting up an expedition to Nevado del Huila (18865 feet) and was leaving in about three weeks with Bob Mason, who is also with the Smithsonian. I made a rare on the spot decision and said that I would like to go along if possible. Thus began a flurry of activity which included trying to learn Spanish, getting shots, passport, tickets, tourist *caros* (visas), buying equipment, and so on. Meanwhile Phil's friend Carlos Lehmann (Director of the "State" Museum of Natural History in Cali and without whose help our trip probably would not have been possible) wrote that bandits (*guerillas*) would not be a problem in the area, and that he had several climbing candidates. This was to be a sort of joint Colombian-American expedition to the "Huila", which had been climbed once back in about 1944.

On arrival in Cali on Saturday, Feb. 8, we met our Colombian climbing partners (ranchers with an urge to do some exploring) and picked up Paul Fehling of the Peace Corps who had previous climbing experience. After some trying hours spent getting our baggage through customs we set off on Tuesday in three vehicles for Huila. It was 175 kilometers to the mountain, partly on the Pan American Highway but mostly on dirt roads that twisted through deep Andean valleys (the Army is building a new road which will make it a much shorter trip). That night we hired eight porters and found that a trail had been cleared to the tree line for us as planned. Next morning we started out from about 9000 feet through cloud forest going through tunnels occasionally in the thick vegetation. That night we camped under rather poor conditions -- rain, clouds of midgets, and on a thickly vegetated mud slope. On Thursday we progressed to a little beyond the end of our cut trail to about 12000 feet and were feeling the altitude. The next day Paul turned back suffering from chest pains and breathing difficulty. Phil and I stayed in camp while the others found a route and moved up to 13000 feet and took some equipment to the glacier terminus. All but two of the porters now left, to return on Thursday. We moved to the snow line on Sunday.

Mountain sickness for me was now serious as I could muster barely enough strength to walk up hill a few steps at a time. On Monday Phil and our Colombian contingent, Guiermo and Francisco, strapped on crampons and with a stove, tent, food and movie cameras, started up the ice. The following was written by Phil:

An end to the three months of good weather usual for December through February and respiratory complaints limited us to one attempt, in which we ascended the west slope of the North Peak. We reached a height from which descent into the amphitheater below the Central, the highest peak, was barred by steep slopes. From a camp at about 17000 feet we followed a spur to its crest just below the summit platform where the attempt was abandoned when one of our party was overcome by exhaustion.

The snow mantle of the Central Peak, third from the north in the group and its highest, is pierced by about five fumaroles which smoke constantly and one emits a loud whistling noise. The mountain is composed of steep ice masses above broad expanses of active glaciers which present route-finding problems. Its general aspect is an extended crest in contrast to the typical conical form usually associated with volcanoes. Believing it likely that other parties will be interested in climbing the Nevado del Huila we are preparing a report to be available also from the Museo Departamental de Historia Natural, Dr. Carlos Lehmann, Director, Apartado Nal. 938, Cali, Colombia.

Following our descent on Thursday we spent several very enjoyable days socializing and sight-seeing before reluctantly (myself at least) returning to Washington.

BELAY LEDGE
(formerly Notices)

Entertainment:

The Section needs positive suggestions for next season. Please communicate with Don Stemper (365-2716) preferably with information on the source of materials.

Route descriptions:

For the record, will all members please mail a description of any new route to the Chairman or to the Secretary for use in a guidebook (to be published sometime in the future). Follow the style of the Shawangunks guidebook.

Belay Ledge, cont. p. 2

P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN

Bob Robinson
356-4584

VICE CHAIRMAN

Lanny Hughey
530-0007

SECRETARY

Tom McCrumm
527-6272

TREASURER

Art Wilder
630-9055

UP ROPE STAFF

EDITOR

Bill Deutermann
363-0757

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Sallie Greenwood
683-5091

BUSINESS MANAGER

Art Wilder
630-9055

Hanging Around



Chuck Sproull leads the Cave at Seneca...

Baker Rocks

May 24-25

Don Schaefer - Trip Leader

June Lehman

Lubos and Marie Pospisil

Jim Donahue

John and Barbara Kemple

Bob and Kate Adams

Harold Meyer

George Livingstone

Chips Janger

Denis Udall

A pleasant weekend of lead climbing ensued at this seldom-visited area. On Saturday a number of moderate climbs were done on the northwest face of the rocks and a few minor traverses as well. John Kemple did his first lead.

Saturday night the action picked up. In an initial skirmish, the local cows took one look at June Lehman and beat a hasty retreat. But they were not to be denied. About midnight the Adams' awoke and found their tent surrounded by glowing eyes. Even Penny Adams was cowed into silence. The Adams spent the remainder of the night in their car.

On Sunday, more climbs very similar to those of Saturday were made with some attempts starting on the shorter east face. George and Chips worked on a much harder route all day. Denis, who arrived in the afternoon, waltzed up to the highest point attained (with an upper belay) and left George and Chips with dropped jaws.

In keeping with the tradition established by Tom McCrumm in the May, 1969 issue of UP ROPE, the trip leader is pleased to announce a significant breakthrough in the state of the art of rock climbing. While running gazelle-like up the rock near Moore's Madness, the trip leader found himself face to face with a wall that bore a striking resemblance to overhanging glass. Retreat was out of the question, having just cleared a large overhang and finding no place to pound a piton above the overhang. The leader trembled, quaked, and quavered. Then slowly his eyes were drawn to a small object on the overhanging glass wall. It was a snail. A West Virginia finger snail. The snail was travelling up the wall. In a moment of desperation the leader pinched the snail (with his left hand). He pulled down. The snail continued upward. He pulled a little harder. The snail still continued upward. He put his full weight on the snail. And the snail held! Cautiously, with great fear and trepidation, the leader did a one-handed pinch mantle onto the snail (still using the left hand). The move was made and the day was saved.

Then the second, June Lehman, started up the pitch. When she came to the wall, she attempted "the move" but initially came off and pulled off the snail. An analysis of this initial failure brought to light two potential causes. First, June was using her right hand on the snail and the asymmetry of the coils is peculiarly suited to only the left hand. Second, the snail had turned 90° and was now moving sideways, changing the force components. June screwed up her courage, reached down, picked up the fallen snail, and placed it back on the rock (this time with her left hand). A second attempt proved successful and

President's Corner

PARK SERVICE AND CARDEROCK

I wish to thank the Editor for his note on the exchange of letters with the Park Service on climbing in the Potomac Gorge. It may I presume to emphasize what the Editor has said, may I restate that we should be fully cognizant of the fact that climbers have been recognized as independent and responsible and fully capable of establishing and following their own code of ethics and practice so that formal regulations by an outside body are unnecessary. We may be giving a lead to a national scale and it behooves us to respect and live up to our responsibilities. There is, I suggest, an analogy between the Park Service recognition of our position and the Section's recognition of an individual climber's ability. Personally I find it gratifying that the Section makes no attempt to classify by some arbitrary standard any individual climber's ability but at the same time merely by what appears to be a casual and largely informal training program, seems to pass on extremely successfully more than mere rudiments of technique and safety so that a very wide circle enjoys leading safely to their own personal standards.

Belay Ledge, cont.

Routes to climbing areas:

Alternative routes to climbing areas are welcome. Please write them down and send to UP ROPE.

Section Archives:

Presently records, letters, minutes to the meetings, etc. are incomplete. The Chairman and the Secretary would be glad to hear from members who have any relevant papers.

Belay Ledge, concl. p. 4.

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 Headquarter. 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.

two happy climbers rappelled off the climb secure in the knowledge that they had added the finger snail move to the repertoire of rock climbing moves.

Shawangunks
May 30-June 1

Penny Pierce - Trip Leader
Art Wilder
Roger, Corinne and 2 Hammills
Milligans (7)
Sallie Greenwood
Al Weis
Pat Kenny
Lannie Hughey
Bob Lyons
Bob Robinson
Richard Sideman
Quentin Schander
Ed Roach
June Lehman
Joe Donohue (collecting monies)

Meg, Tony, Stephanie Gray
Linnea Stewart
Tom McCrumm
Charles Head
Don, Betsy, Erika Schaefer
Jerry Archibald and 2
Joe Kenny
Else Litjens
Helen Moorefield
Chips Janger
Eric Rosenfeld
Carl Gibson and 2
John and Beth Stannard
Lubos and Marie Pospisil

All of the above were on the lunch menu for the black flies.

A glorious weekend for climbing marred only by a firemen's convention at the campground on Friday. Almost everyone went for a swim after climbing or playing. Then a few (Tom McCrumm, June Lehman and Al Weis) climbed Betty by the light of a full moon. According to all reports it was a unique experience in a very satisfactory way. Saturday several (15-ish) climbers found their way into Mohonk and spent an enjoyable day climbing, hiking, and viewing the incredibly beautiful scenery. Also experienced climbing down the Crevice. Sunday saw most of us scrambling to get packed and get in a climb or two. The most dedicated stayed to climb into the late afternoon.

Cupid's Bower
June 8

Bob Robinson - Trip Leader
George Livingstone
Louise Holland
Sallie Greenwood
Arnold Wexler
Joy Stevenson
*Phil Eddy
Chuck Sproull
**Milligans, Six (at least and
Thais)
Denis Udall
Dave and Joan Templeton
June Lehman
Richard Sideman
*Jim Donoghue
*Sallie Jordan
Lanny Hughey
Merv Olson
Al Goldberg

John Wyman
Quentin Schander
Chips Janger
*Linnea Stewart
*Ann Stewart
Darryl Hart
*Dan Clark
Gary Meyers
Bob and Kate Adams and
Penny
Art Wilder
*Schaefer's, Three
*Donna Johnson
*Frank Ahearne
Ben Tracy
Bill McCullough
the Maddens
Tom McCrumm

Despite the hot sultry weather the trip was very well supported. The leader recorded the above names and apologizes for missing some.

Thanks are due to Art Wilder for collecting and returning the Oscar rig and to Chuck Sproull, Merv Olson, and Bill McCullough for rigging the tree and the victims, also to the many willing helpers who kept Oscar moving. All of those marked thus * fought Oscar, who made at least 60 descents. For the record the old Oscar has again "gone walkabout" or more probably scuba diving without a mask, but being extremely heavily ballasted I suspect he has run out of breath. This time he may not come back. The leader who last saw Oscar in March and covered him well with rocks, spent at least an hour in a fruitless search.

Thanks to Don and Mark Milligan, who produced an ax, we cut a suitable Oscar who, though lighter than the truant was more beautiful and less damaging to the tree.

Apart from Oscar, the rocks seemed fully occupied and even the hardest climbs now fall easily to the tigers, at least with a top rope.

P.S.

Will someone please write down the names of all the climbs for printing in UP ROPE as a permanent record.

The Section ought to consider making an effort to remove the incredibly large amount of litter in the beach area of Cupid's Bower if for no other reason than to make it safe for bare feet. Any volunteers?

Seneca Rocks
June 14-15

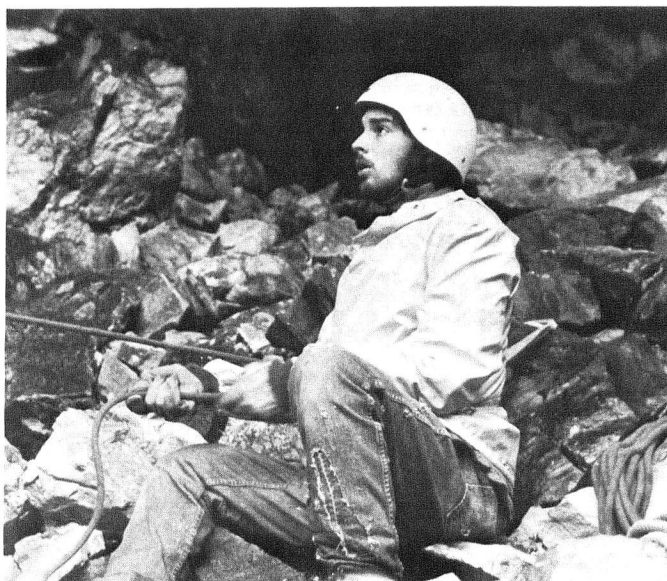
Bob Robinson - Trip Leader

A threatening weather forecast seemed to put off a number of the chicken hearted. There is nothing particularly unpleasant about climbing in a warm thunder shower: the climbs are much more interesting, too. For the ambitious mountaineers, a little bad weather climbing practice at Seneca or the Gunks should be invaluable.

However, as to the details, the leader was offered transport by Merv Olson and the remainder of the party consisted of Lubos and Marie Pospisil, Chuck Sproull, Art Wilder, Don Schaefer, Bob Lyon, and Helen Moorefield. Alan Clark was also there with a Peace Corps friend up from Southern Appalachia.

As to the routes the trip leader and Merv explored the Cave west-Les Gourmets region of the cliff quite extensively on both days. Chuck's party climbed Les Gourmets on Saturday and retreated at mid afternoon in anticipation of a storm which in fact did not reach the Rocks though it drenched the village. On Sunday this party returned to Greenland Gap for a gentle exploratory investigation but did not put up any more routes. The epic of the week end was the Lyon-Moorefield 3 (or was it 5) hour ascent of Ecstasy Junior. Tot's alleges he climbed it three times up and twice down at least. But who wouldn't with someone like Helen to rescue. Lubbs and Marie did several easier routes on the west face.

If I may recap on the weather for the benefit of those who stayed home and got wet, Seneca gave us fog till 10:00 AM Saturday and light rain from 5:00 PM through 9:00 AM Sunday, but good sunny weather for the rest of the day. We had the best of it.



and Mark Carpenter belays.

(pictures by Art Wilder)

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Leader</u>
July 4-6	Shawangunks	Tom McCrumm (527-6272)
July 9	PATC Headquarters Meeting, 8:00 PM	Film: "Up Rope" climbs at Echo Cliffs
July 13	Edes Fort	Mary Eldridge (652-1958)
July 20	Little Stony Man	Art Wilder (630-9055)
July 27	Echo Cliffs lead climbing	Don Schaefer (521-5326)
Aug. 3	Carderock	June Lehman (JA2-0105)
Aug. 6	NO MEETING	
Aug. 10	Caudy's Castle	Sallie Greenwood (683-5091)

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.

Shawangunks, N.Y.

From the Beltway take the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (or U.S. 1 or U.S. 29 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 2 miles up N.Y. 55.

On the return trip, 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).

Edes Fort, W. Va.

From the Beltway take I 70S to Frederick and continue on I 70 and U.S. 40 past Hagerstown and on to Hancock, Md. Get on Business U.S. 40 through Hancock and at the far end of town turn left on U.S. 522 south. At Berkeley Springs, W. Va. turn

right on W. Va. 9. Go 4 miles to Great Cacapon, W. Va. and turn left in town at the sign to Rocky Ford. Go to within 100 yards of the ford (or bridge) and turn left on a dirt road. Go one mile past the cabins to a dead end and parking lot.

Little Stony Man, Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 west to Gainsville, go straight onto U.S. 211 through Warrenton to Shenandoah National Park. Get on Skyline Drive heading south and park at the Little Stony Man parking lot. Hike .8 mile up the trail.

Echo Cliffs, Va.

Contact the Trip Leader, Don Schaefer, for directions.

Carderock, Md.

From the Washington Beltway, take the last exit in Maryland before the Cabin John Bridge, or from Virginia, the first exit after the Bridge toward Great Falls and Carderock (note signs). Go 1 mile to Carderock sign, bear right, go left over overpass, under canal in tunnel, and right to last parking lot. The rocks are beyond the Bulletin Board.

Caudy's Castle, W. Va.

From the Beltway take either Va. 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. 127 (changes to W. Va. 45) to Blommery. Five miles further find sign marked "Caudy's Castle" on right and turn left on dirt road 1½ miles to parking lot.

Belay Ledge, concluded

Firearms:

A motion was made and passed at the May meeting regarding firearms on Section trips. Firearms are not to be used by members or their guests while on club trips.

Equipment:

Don Schaefer (521-5326) is polling the membership for equipment desires. He is hoping for group rates for the Section.

Climbing publications:

The following exchange publications are available in the library at PATC Headquarters:

American Alpine Club "News"
Baltimore Grotto "News"
Chicago Mountaineering Club "Newsletter"
"D.C. Speleograph"
Idaho Alpine Club "News"
Mountain Club of Maryland "Bulletin"
"The Mountaineer" (Seattle, Wash.)
"The Mugelnoos" Ski Mountaineers and Rock Climbing
Section of Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter
"Potomac Caver"
"Social Climber" (Pittsburgh, Pa.)
"Summit"

Up Rope

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