

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

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HALF DOME, NORTHWEST FACE
Grade VI, 5,8 A-3

Tom Evans

After climbing the south face of the Washington Column Bob Williams and I decided to climb the great northwest face of Half Dome. Food for three days, two gallons of water, 300 feet of rope, 45 pitons, 30 hero loops, 40 snap-links -- just a few of the necessities on Half Dome.

On the afternoon of May 28 we hiked up the eight-mile trail to Half Dome. The weather was perfect -- sunny and warm. After descending 1,000 feet of slabs and snow we left the hauling bag at the base of the climb and went up to "fix" pitches so as to get a rapid start in the morning. I led the first pitch, up some snow to a crack that I nailed until it was possible to jump into the branches of a bay tree. Climbing in the branches, I was able to make rapid progress for 15 feet until the tree ended! The pitch ended on a ledge to the left. Bob came up and nailed a 70-foot crack in fading light. Then down we went to the base of the wall to prepare our bivouac. The mosquitoes were hungry and we spent a poor night.

Up early and hit the jumars -- ready to go on number three. I led straight up to a four-foot slot in a roof that I climbed to some flakes on the left. The flakes looked bad but proved solid and were good climbing, though hauling the bag was awkward. Bob led up broken rock to the base of a very steep headwall and belayed behind a large flake. I took the next lead, moving to the right along a short, curving arch to a ladder of bolts running to a long, steep $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch crack. I had to top rung in my aid slings in order to conserve pitons. The 140-foot pitch ended on a small ledge where hauling again proved to be awkward. Bob followed up and led through on loose rock as the sun finally came over the rim of the dome, then I led through on some mixed climbing, swung right and started to handle a large flake. Very quickly I swung back to the left as it pulled loose! Continuing left, I nailed a mungy, rotten crack over a small roof, up into a narrow groove. Suddenly I was out of rope! The belay ledge was 30 feet above so I looked carefully around for a good crack -- no luck! I pounded and mashed a $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch angle into a bottomed slot in some poor rock. The pin went only half way in so I tied it off. I felt sick realizing that the whole ball game counted on that one pin. It was hot and practically impossible to haul the bag. Half an hour later I was still hauling and very near exhaustion. Bob came up and, seeing my condition, rushed up the last 30 feet. "I'm finished, exhausted; I've had it," I thought as I joined him on the ledge. Bob went ahead to see what we would have to climb tomorrow while I rested and prepared the bivouac. He came back with tales of unprotected, overhanging jams and chimneys and, after a long discussion over supper, we decided to give up on the route and climb up the "Escape Route" in the morning. The bivouac was poor and we slept little.

Early in the morning the full moon came over the top of the dome and bathed the rock with an incredibly soft light. I tried to imprint the visual images on my memory, hoping never

to forget.

Dawn came and we struggled upward, bittered by defeat. I led up some nice free climbing on the first pitch of the escape route. The top appeared only a short distance above. Three pitches later we were still not on top and had run into a blank wall. Bob found a way to the right but still no top. I could'nt help feeling that we should have finished the regular route as the climbing on the escape was just as hard. Finally I led the long last pitch to the top and we were "saved". Not so fast! The way down from here presented problems. We rappelled down steep slabs to the edge of a very unstable looking snowfield. Bob led across and soon completed the 300-foot traverse. I came across with the hauling bag over my left shoulder. "Snow climbing in Yosemite -- how absurd," I thought. After the traverse we climbed up three pitches to the base of a large, wet slab. I led the slab with a modified Australian crawl as I thrashed for my very life! Bob walked up the slab with ease -- maybe the strain was finally telling on me. Soon we were on the tourist trail down from the Dome and after a few hundred feet decided to bivouac. The mosquitoes had lain in waiting and attacked with such ferocity that we decided to push on. Three and a half miles and a half hour later we were at Nevada Falls! We spent a wonderful night, sleeping 50 feet from the edge of the roaring falls. The next day we continued our descent and were soon down in the main valley with all the cars and tourists.

Later we felt pretty low -- "We could have made it, we just got psyched, that's all!" We pushed ourselves hard on Half Dome and it wasn't enough. We weren't tough enough or skilled enough to make it. The great wall cast our attempts aside with little trouble. No, we didn't make it, but we were there, battling it out on one of the great rock walls of the world, and that's what really counts. Half Dome will be there next year they tell us. "Yeah," we answer. "Well, let me tell you something, Jack, we're going to be there too!"

Book Review

ENCYCLOPAEDIC DICTIONARY OF MOUNTAINEERING by
Peter Crew. Stackpole Books, Harrisburg, Pa.
130 pages, illustrated, \$5.95.

Peter Crew's book appears to be an enlarged edition of Robin Collomb's British 1957 work (A Dictionary of Mountaineering).

In as much as most of the terms are international in meaning these days most of it will be familiar and useful to the American mountaineer. The Gaelic (Scottish) and Welsh words, one or two of which have been adopted by the U.I.A.A., have

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Dear Editor:

I would like to take space to reply to your Chairman's remarks concerning guidebooks (UP ROPE, Oct., 1969).

a. Guidebooks in my experience do not increase the competition between climbers. The climbers who use the guides are, in general, the average climber, or the climber new to an area. The only time I have observed rampant competition is during preparation of guidebooks by the "new route fraternity" who are, generally, competitive anyway.

b. The production of a guide book indicates new routes and new areas. It seems to me that a majority of the climbers visiting Seneca are unaware of routes other than the Old Maid's, Conns' (east and west) and Skyline. Thus lack of knowledge of other routes deters many new climbers who see nothing further to challenge them having climbed the standard routes.

A.R. Clarke
Salem College

Chairman's response:

I agree with Alan but as regards a., competition does seem to downgrade a climb but it also leads the keener climbers to search elsewhere and thus spread the gospel and as regards b., one hopes a similar stimulation of the imagination of the average climber will also occur.

In as much as climbers who aspire to be leaders should display imagination and initiative I find it difficult to believe that regular visitors to Seneca look no further than the routes that Alan mentions.

Book Review, concluded from page 1

been largely omitted.

The appendices are valuable in themselves and the book as a whole makes very interesting reading, though there are numerous entries which do not fit the U.S. scene. A few of these follow:

Belay and dynamic belay. The author appears to make too little of the fact that the shoulder belay is quite unacceptable, totally so to protect a leader and that the dynamic belay is the universal aim of every American belayer, and that the facts demonstrate its effectiveness.

Swami belt. It is more than a mere waist line and usually

includes leg or seat loops so that, in the event of a fall, the shock is taken at the pelvis, not at the waist.

Despite a few flaws, the dictionary is a valuable and enjoyable reference book.

Bob Robinson

Hanging Around

Neston, England
Oct. 11

Bob Robinson - reporting
Joan Robinson
Bob Mole

Chuck Wetling
Margaret Lee

The occasion - Chuck and Margaret's wedding which was solemnized on October 11 in Margaret's home town of Neston. Bob Mole was best man. Joan and I happened to be able to arrange a visit home at the appropriate time.

Margaret wore a cream ball dress with a satin-leaf head-dress and a small veil. She carried a bouquet of cream roses.

A large number of guests attended the wedding and the delightful reception which followed in a nearby country club.

Chuck and Margaret left for their honeymoon in Scotland in a suitably decorated car, though Margaret fought (almost in an unladylike fashion) to keep the decorators away, having previously hidden the car.

On behalf of the Section I offer Chuck and Margaret our very best wishes for the future.

Shawangunks
Oct. 18 - 19

Sallie Greenwood - Trip Leader
Jim Downs
Jim Aldrich
Chuck Sproull
Mary Eldridge, and girls
Al Weis

Don Schaefer
June Lehman
Pete Gardner
Sallie Jordan
Matt Hale
Jim Wallace

The weekend featured perfect weather, a herd of Boy Scouts at Coxing Camp, and an AMC outing-type gathering at the Überfall.

Numerous climbs were done. Kathy Eldridge did her first continuous climb. Jim Downs, a recent arrival in the D.C. area from California, was introduced to Gunks rock and protected climbing. Ken's Crack (5.7) was top-roped for fun and games at the end of the day on Saturday. Don Schaefer went up it in sneakers. Don also led a climb called Snake. His second a snake sharing space on one of the belay ledges. The snake was wearing a collar with a tag which said, "If found, please return to end of first pitch of Snake. Signed Art Gran."

Cupids Bower
Nov. 2

Bob Robinson - Trip Leader

A very wet day made it odds on that the turn out would

Up Rope

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be poor and when the leader arrived about 9:30 he found only Bob and Kate Adams present, Bob being in the process of rigging a climb.

A little later Alan Talbert arrived.

At 12:00 the leader had to depart and he understands that Bob, Kate, and Alan left soon afterwards. He did, however, visit Touhey's later on and discovered two or three more of the Section who had braved the elements in the afternoon, including Roger Birch and Deanne Ballou. The remnants of the Greenland Gap party, Chuck Sproull, Sallie Jordan, Don Schaefer, Betsy and "Prusika", who had been driven out of West Virginia by inclement weather were also drowning their sorrows. No trainees arrived.

Greenland Gap
Nov. 8 - 11

Tom McCrumm - reporting
Don Schaefer
Terry Robinson

Sallie Greenwood
Chuck Sproull
Roger Birch

Amazing as it may seem, I made it to Seneca - but not to climb. I guess I'll have to leave that for another day, for after I saw on Saturday what Greenland Gap had to offer, I would much prefer going there.

Greenland Gap consists of two bands of cliffs, each about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in length, on each side of the gap itself. The rock is very solid sandstone, formed very much like the Shawangunks with definite horizontal stratification, and many inside corners and vertical cracks. Overall, the cliffs may be a bit lower than the Gunks, but make up for it by the increased steepness. Much of Greenland Gap has a very steep and smooth or overhanging top.

Because of the rain on Saturday, the afternoon was spent drinking beer and doing a tension travers of the rafters in the Seneca Pavilion. Sunday found some climbers at Seneca while Don, Roger, Sallie and I went to Greenland Gap to put up some new routes. Don and Roger started on a steep section of rock on the prominent Yellow Buttress, while Sallie and I did a prominent inside corner a short way to the left. We found the base of the climb covered by a 15-inch layer of bird dung, hence the name "Feces" of our climb. I managed a 6-foot leader fall while attempting a more difficult variation on the top pitch. Meanwhile Don and Roger found the going somewhat slower on steep rock, and rappelled off due to the late hour. Climbing on virgin rock really takes time due to having to be extra careful and having to clean the climbs.

Monday morning again found us at the Gap. The day before Sallie and I had discovered a perfect descent route from the top of the cliffs via a cave which is formed by a huge pinnacle of rock leaning against the main cliff face. Monday we four decided to do two parallel routes up the face of the Cave Pinnacle, as we named it. Both were 5.5's, Don's and mine followed a prominent crack to the summit while Terry and Chuck's went over some overhangs and up a small nose of rock to the summit. We worked on a lower variation of Terry and Chuck's climb without success. We think it will probably go 5.9. Our climbs were named Licked Lisa and Pipejob, respectively. While on the summit of the Cave Pinnacle we decided to build a huge cairn to mark the descent route. For those who climb there in the future, the cairn is at the very apex of the cliff and should be easy to spot -- hopefully there will be a register there before too long. To descend, climb carefully down to the right, while facing out from the cliff, for about 50 vertical feet, then turn left and walk down through the cave behind the pinnacle.

Monday night we spent at Dolly Sods and awoke to a 35-degree windy, foggy morning. After hiking around the tundra-like summit of Dolly Sods we descended again to Greenland Gap and spent the rest of the day clearing brush and making trails to the cliffs. We developed a nice lunch ledge at the base of Cave Pinnacle and spent the afternoon eating lunch around a fire and doing boulder problems on the large boulders there. There are some really fine and tricky boulder problems about 15 feet high which should improve after we attack the lichen with wire brushes.

We have the opportunity to open up and develop a complete-

ly new and good climbing area close to Washington. To eliminate the problems we have been having this year with the Seneca Guidebook, I have already started a notebook on climbs and improvements at the Greenland Gap area. At the present date there are only 12 climbs that have been put in there, with the potential for hundreds more. Anyone who has any questions or information on Greenland Gap I would appreciate it if they would contact me.

Annapolis Rocks
Nov. 16

Tom McCrumm - Trip Leader
Sallie Greenwood
Bill Thomas
Roger Birch
Sallie Jordan
Don and Betsy Schaefer

4 Goldbergs
Janet Gladfelter
Art Wilder
Deanna Ballou
Chuck Sproull
Bob Robinson

Arriving at the parking area on Route 40, we were met by an irate Roger Birch, who had driven all the way to Hagerstown in search of the rocks. "Where are the bloody crag?"

A pleasant walk in cold but beautiful weather brought us to the cliffs to find everyone else climbing to stay warm. Unfortunately "the Roof" was iced up so we were able to avoid facing the possibility of penduleming out into the cold air. Most of the day was spent doing some boulder problems and short, top-rope climbs, staying in the sun and out of the wind. Our two "Brits", Roger and Bob, dug out their jam nuts and did two lead climbs.

After lunch we all decided that it was approaching Touhey-time, and back to D.C. we headed.

BELAY LEDGE

Election:

Elections will be held at the next Section meeting, Dec. 10. The Nominations Committee has made the following recommendations:

Chairman - Tom McCrumm

Vice Chairman - Don Schaefer

Address changes and new UP ROPE subscribers:

Jim Downs	Apt. 202 2011 Randolph Road Silver Spring, Md.
Lawrence Laine	B9-241 Riverside Park Apartments Woodbine St. Hopewell, Va. 23860
Herb Kincey	373 $\frac{1}{2}$ E. Garcia Santa Fe, N. Mex. 87501

Greenland Gap climbers:

Please write up route descriptions of climbs and any other information about the area and send to Tom McCrumm, 1230 N. Quinn St., Arlington, Va. 22209.

Equipment:

The PATC is preparing a new edition of the equipment bulletin "Lightweight Equipment for Hiking, Camping and Mountaineering". Since the Equipment Committee members do not claim to be experts on all types of mountaineering and backpacking equipment, opinions (especially complaints) about your equipment are welcome. If you wish to talk to the Equipment Committee about tents, sleeping bags, packs, food and cooking gear, clothing or technical climbing equipment phone 638-5306 (PATC Headquarters) and a member of the Equipment Committee will get in touch with you.

Ledge Rats Mountaineering Club of Baltimore:

Bill Robinson is the acting leader of this new climbing group. Section members have been invited to join them for their trips, especially a proposed trip next summer to Colorado's Maroon Bells August 1 - 15. Write Bill at 3012 Abell Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21218 for further information.

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

Date	Place	Leader
Dec. 7	Sugarloaf Mountain	Don Schaefer (521-5326)
Dec. 10	Meeting, PATC Headquarters, 8:00 pm	British Columbia's Caribos. slide show by Art Wilder
Dec. 14	Little Stony Man	Bob Robinson (356-4584)
Dec. 21	Bull Run Mountain or Greenland Gap	Terry Robinson (768-6485)
Dec. 28	Carderock	S. Claus c/o Don Milligan (360-5014)
Jan. 4	Great Falls, Md.	Art Wilder (439-9043)
Jan. 11	Cupids Bower	Terry Robinson (768-6485)
Jan. 14	Meeting, PATC Headquarters, 8:00 pm	
Jan. 18	Seneca Rock	Bob Robinson (356-4584)

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.

Sugarloaf Mountain, Md.

From the Beltway take I 70S north. Get off on Md. 109 to Comus. Turn right in Comus and go 2 miles to a four-way intersection. Go straight on narrow cement road (note sign to The Stronghold, a house on Sugarloaf) 100 yards and turn right. Go to the top and walk 100 yards up the summit trail. The rocks are on the right and halfway to the summit.

Little Stony Man, Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 west to Gainesville, go straight onto U.S. 211 to Warrenton. Taking the bypass around Warrenton and turning right at the far end of "bypass business district", continue on U.S. 211 to Thornton Gap. Turn south onto Skyline Drive (admission \$1.00 per car) and go 7.6 miles to the Little Stony Man parking lot. Hike .6 miles on the Appalachian Trail to the cliffs (don't turn left where the sign says .1 miles to

Little Stony Man).

Bull Run Mountain, Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 to Gainesville and bear right on Va. 55 west. 1 mile past Haymarket turn right (note blank billboard). Turn left at T-intersection at Antioch (4.5 miles from Haymarket). Parking place is on left $\frac{1}{2}$ mile past county line where a steep dirt jeep road goes left. Follow jeep road until an old rusty steam shovel appears on left. Climb bank on right and get on faintly white-blazed trail. Trail follows edge of quarry a while and then turns right into woods and up to mountain crest. Climbing area is at second good view.

Greenland Gap, W. Va.

From Washington drive west on U.S. 50 to New Creek, W. Va. (60 miles west of Winchester). Continue three miles past New Creek and follow W. Va. 93 south for 15 miles to Scheer. Watch for a dirt road and a bridge over the creek just to the left of Rt. 93. Turn left on dirt road and drive 1 mile east to the Gap. Park at turn out and scramble up talus slope on left.

Carderock, Md.

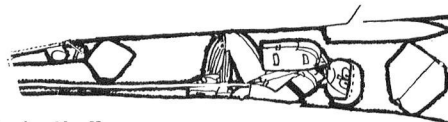
From the beltway take the last exit in Maryland before the Cabin John Bridge (or first after bridge if coming from Virginia) toward Great Falls and Carderock (note signs). Go 1 mile to Carderock sign, bear right, go left over overpass, under canal in tunnel, and right to last parking lot. The rocks are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

Great Falls, Md.

Follow beltway directions to Carderock (above) except drive past Carderock exit and turn left onto MacArthur Boulevard when the Parkway ends. Go approximately 4 miles to the Great Falls parking lot. Walk left (downriver).

Cupid's Bower, 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. 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.



Seneca Rock, W. Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 to Gainesville and bear right onto Va. 55 to Moorefield, W. Va. Turn left onto U.S. 220 to Petersburg and right onto W. Va. 4 and 28. Mouth of Seneca is 22 miles from Petersburg on W. Va. 4 and 28.

Up Rope

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