

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

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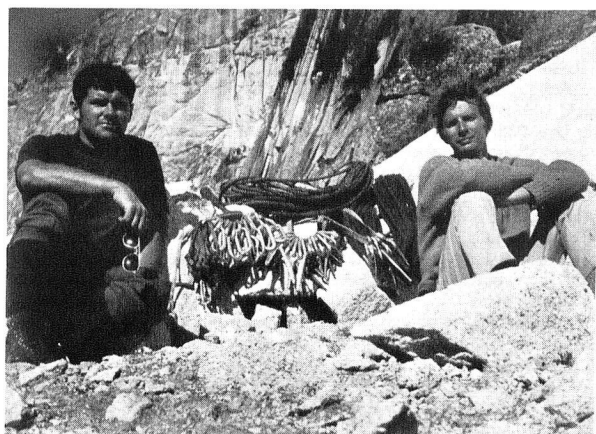
No. 2

Feb. 1970

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MEETING CHANGE

The February meeting will start at 7:30 p.m. as the De Schutter's are having a party for the Section immediately following the meeting.



Tom Evans and Bob Williams with a few of the necessities for Yosemite climbing.

FRENCH ALPS -- AIGUILLE DU PEIGNE

Tom Evans

Mountaineering -- man you can have it -- what a grind! Such thoughts filled a very dulled brain as I climbed upward over scree and boulders in the early morning light. The French Alps were beautiful!

The night before had been spent in the National Pub in Chamonix. Everyone, it seems, stands around getting drunk and screams their particular view, or tells of heroic deeds, at the top of their lungs. A mere six hours later John Porter and I were on our way to the base of the north ridge of the Aiguille du Peigne. The altitude made breathing difficult.

Finally we were on snow and then the ice of the glacier. We were not roped. The steeper the slope got, the more uncomfortable I became on this relatively new ground. After a few hundred feet of snow John found a place to start the rock ridge. The rock was wet but we stayed unroped to save time. I carried a 20-pound pack. The rock was good granite and the climbing was 5.4 in the harder places. After 500 feet we had climbed some nice cracks, slippery slabs and had even done some armwork. The ridge steepened and we roped up. The next few hundred feet called for caution as we did not stop to belay. Finally we caught up with two British climbers who were on a very steep corner blocked by a small overhang. The leader said it was

class VI -- aid. John said it looked like it would go free and suggested that I try it. Water was flowing down the rock. There were a few old pitons in place, the first on the route, which added a new element of security. Starting from the right edge I swung up on a loose flake and reached high to another loose flake. Tiring rapidly, I found a very poor hold for my left boot and managed to wedge my shoulders into a tight slot allowing me to "rest". I then continued 25 feet to a ledge. A hundred feet higher we came to a very small saddle and stopped for lunch.

The two British climbers were moving rather slowly so we decided to traverse right, over to the Chamonix face, and let them continue on the north ridge. John led a long traverse across a steep ice couloir to some rocks beyond. I came across on soft snow and rotten ice. Clouds had started moving in but John said not to worry so I turned my attention to the face above us. John led up a large, steep corner 100 feet to a ledge. I led through up a corner in jam cracks to another harder corner and up to a ledge on small holds. John led up a very difficult overhanging layback to a ledge. I continued on very steep rock to the base of a chimney that John quickly finished off. I led the last pitch up a very tight, ice-choked, slippery chimney for 30 feet then stepped left onto a near vertical wall. Two cracks, three feet apart led diagonally across the face to the left. With my feet in one crack and my hands in the other I was able to layback 30 feet to the base of a narrow squeeze chimney. The chimney turned out to be the most difficult crack that I have ever climbed and I was aided by an old piece of cord hanging down!

Then I was confronted by an absolutely unclimbable, blank wall. The guide book was no help. An improbable aid traverse led down and left, out over a 3,000-foot drop. After some difficulty in communication and rope handling I stepped out of aid, around a corner, then up a groove to the top of the climb.

John came up and we started down as lightning flickered in the distance. We had to rappel and then climb down. We were tied together but didn't have time to belay. The storm moved in and daylight faded. We were racing down the rock in the rain well knowing that one slip would mean certain death.

We climbed down 500 feet then up, right, on slippery rock to a saddle. From the saddle we took off at top speed for the Peigne Colouir. The rain and clouds had set in for good as we made rapid progress 500 feet down the colouir. I rappelled over the lip of a small overhang and realized that it was night. The rappel ended on a snow patch! I yelled to John to take care as the snow was quite unstable. I searched for a place to bivouac while John finished the rappel. Crash!

French Alps, concluded on Page 4

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Chairman's Corner

"The times, they are a-changing"

At this point in time we find ourselves deep in the midst of a society which is more concerned with change than with the status quo. Evidence of progress made within the Mountaineering Section over the past few years has shown that our group too is concerned with change.

The effects of over-population, environmental pollution, and government control upon "our" mountain and wilderness areas is rapidly pushing us to the point where we will have to fight for our much-loved "freedom of the hills." President Nixon has pledged a battle for our environment for the Seventies. And, in a broad scope, we too must pledge ourselves as individuals and as a club concerned with the mountains to save these areas. We have the future of mountaineering in our hands.

Our Mountaineering Section has made great steps forward in 1969. We were able to reach an even higher level of communication with the National Park Service, resulting in the improvement of Carderock as a rock climbing area. This relationship with the Park Service is of utmost importance for our club and may very well hold the key to better relationships between all climbers and the National Park Service, which regulates some of the best mountaineering areas of the United States.

The Seneca Guidebook, first conceived in 1966, is about to become a reality. This will be the Section's first publication, and will show and promote our interest in climbing. As Chairman I want to express much thanks to all those who have worked on (and still are) the guidebook; especially to Bob Robinson who took on a major portion of the work himself.

Our last chairman, Bob Robinson, made a very important statement which concerns the future of our club. "...More climbers give the sport a greater influence." This past year has seen our club widening its activities, which, in turn, has influenced more people. Our climbers spent vacations spread across the country, into Alaska, and many overseas. Prospects for this year are looking toward South America as well. We seem to have a larger nucleus of active climbers than ever before, and it is important that we work to keep and even expand this nucleus. Upon brief examination of many of the exchange publications of other mountaineering clubs around the country, I think UP ROPE ranks among the best. The value of UP ROPE as a medium of communication among both climbers and non-climbers cannot be overlooked. The UP ROPE staff continues to do an outstanding job for which we should all be thankful. But we must not lose the influence of our publication, which could happen if we do not continue to support it with articles, trip reports, and photographs.

In addition to our improved relations with the National Park Service, and the work on the Seneca Guidebook, this past

year witnessed many other improvements. We now have winter use of a cabin in the Shawangunks, and hopefully, the same can be found in the Seneca area. Insurance was investigated, other guidebooks were started, Royal Robbins and Yvon Chouinard gave lectures, equipment sales were investigated, and most of all, we had the enjoyment of sharing in climbing and experiences with our friends.

This year will see the finished Seneca Guidebook, and perhaps one for Greenland Gap as well, as we develop that new area. I plan to continue the Executive Council meetings that Bob started last year as they seem to eliminate minute matters which take up so much time in the monthly meetings.

I am proud to be your Chairman for this year and I ask for your continued support.

Tom McCrumm

"...we should make every effort to win recruits for sports which bring man into closest touch with unspoiled nature. The mountains and sea are great avenues of adventure precisely because the mountaineer and the seaman have to study something of greater value than the habits of the internal combustion engine."

Sir Arnold Lunn

Belay Ledge

Party following February 11 Meeting:

The de Schutters, who are being re-assigned to the Congo, would like Section members to stop by their home at 1218 28th St. N.W. (Georgetown) following the meeting for a party.

Ranch for Climbers in the Tetons:

Nick Clinch reported to the Section that the American Alpine Club has leased the Double Diamond Ranch as a hostel for climbers. The ranch is near Taggart Lake, has nine cabins of assorted sizes and a main lodge. The ranch will be open to all people involved in registered climbing. A modest fee will be charged for nights spent at the ranch — doesn't include time in the high country. The Alpine Club needs some \$200,000.00 as an endowment for the ranch. Contributions should be sent to The American Alpine Club 113 E. 90th St., New York, N.Y. 10028. The Climber's Ranch fund is being kept separate from other Alpine Club funds.

Membership Nomination:

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

Name	Sponsors
Roger Birch	Chuck Sproull Don Schaefer

The nominee should be present at the next scheduled business meeting so that the application can be voted on.

Sling Material for Sale:

Tom McCrumm (527-6272) has 1 inch tubular, 4,000 pound test sling material for sale at 10¢ a foot.

Down parka. Sierra Designs Sierra Jacket with down hood. Color blue, size medium. Brand new but some snaps on the zipper overflap don't match up properly. \$35.00. Call Tom McCrumm 527-6272.

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.

Hanging Around

Sugarloaf Mountain
Dec. 7

Don Schaefer - Trip Leader
Sallie Jordan

Betsy Schaefer
Moses Ives Jordan

Due to the snow and lack of publicity only hard and informed climbers were present. We departed from Schaefer's in a virtual blizzard. Upon arriving at Sugarloaf, we quickly climbed the beginner's crack (Moses showing especially good paw-jamming form). Since 2 inches of snow had accumulated by the time we finished the climb, we adjoined to the Smithsonian Institution where we almost rappelled down the giant pendulum. As the snow was still falling, we retired to the Trip Leader's for beer and chocolate cookies.

Greenland Gap
Dec. 20

Roger Birch - S.A. Trip Leader Chuck Sproull

After an early start, myself at least, CBS being, as usual, one hour plus late, and a breakfast stop in Winchester we arrived at the Gap around 11 am to be greeted by freezing temperatures and falling snow.

Seeming ages of indecision later (shall we climb, shall we walk on the Sods sort of thing) we found ourselves at the foot of the prominent scoop on the eastern end of the crag. Fortified by liberal helpings of Chuck's gorp and rather warmed by the effort of arriving at our present position, the thought of climbing did not seem as horrifying as it had, and a short while later say us at the base of the scoop proper with a rather pleasant seventy feet of climbing behind us. The obvious line up the scoop, to my eyes at least, lay by way of a shallow groove which split the face. This gave rather pleasant but a loose climbing up to an overhang which I was able to turn on the left to arrive at a pleasant tree (big) resting on a pleasant (also big) ledge. CBS followed in splendid style even allowing for the cold and put in his own radiator on the pitch, right at the overhang which I believe he called Fish. A fine last pitch on excellent rock saw us in the snow on the summit, the sun had disappeared and night's icy fingers chased us down to the car, literally at a run. A rather boozy couple of hours in the local hostelry saw us on the road to D.C. In all, a day to remember, I believe Chuck would agree.

Bull Run Mountain
Dec. 21

Mike Hill - Trip Leader
Bob Adams
Art Wilder

Al Goldberg
Terry Robinson
Terry (?) female

It was a cold, sunny day; just right if one keeps decently active. I hiked up the ridge trail from Rte. 55 because it's much nicer, but Bob, Al, Art, and the two Terry's used the "back way" from Antioch. We were very energetic, doing eight climbs in the Snicker Snee area alone. The climbing there is mostly short stuff with one or two difficult moves per climb and always calling for a good pair of arms. After a late lunch and Art's attempts at bouldering impossibly smooth walls, we attacked Charlie's Crack and the Bull Run Overhang but our blown arms proved disastrous. After numerous "Touhey-time" calls, Al finally got us to pack up and race the rapidly approaching night back to the cars.

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Dear Editor,

Seasons Greetings! We're finally getting settled in the northwest. Today we bought a house with enough room to accommodate travel weary climbers from the east. We hope we'll see some next summer.

On the way out here I spent an enjoyable weekend in Colorado with the Griffins -- one day climbing and one day ski touring.

Early in the summer our second daughter, Wendy, was born. She has helped keep us busy ever since.

In spite of everything else I did manage to get in some climbing this summer. In early June I was on an unsuccessful attempt of a west-east traverse of Mt. Rainier. On our way up we passed a party coming down, which I didn't know until we got down included Bob Norris, I wasn't in visual contact during the passing. We retreated partly for what I guess was Bob's reason -- soft snow. The other part of the reason was a sneaky electrical storm at 11,500 feet. During the rest of the summer, I did manage to get up a number of other peaks. One (Goode) has a summit of 1,500-2,000 feet resembling Seneca Rock but tops out at 9,300 feet. It's not far from here but requires 3 days and leaving transportation with about 8,000 feet to the top. We were only the 38th party since the mid-1930's -- not quite Art's British Columbia firsts, but interesting because of its proximity to Seattle. Next summer we're going to try Rainier again -- same route. Mountaineering here is really great. There are mountains with 5,000 feet of relief which can be climbed in a long day from Seattle. The views are really spectacular -- when the weather's good.

Climbing more or less ceases during the winter, except for ski touring. There are no practice climbing areas convenient to the city during winter; they're across the mountains. Anyway, most of the people with whom I've been climbing turn to skiing -- me too. This year I'll miss a few weeks as I dislocated my shoulder skiing last weekend.

I hope to be in D.C. in late April and will bring some slides.

Glenn Cannon
Seattle

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

Date	Place	Leader
Feb. 1	Carderock and Herzog Island	Lanny Hughey (530-0007)
Feb. 8	Purple Horse	Art Wilder (439-9043)
Feb. 11	Meeting, PATC Headquarters, 7:30 p.m.	Slides by Art Maki
Feb. 15	Whiteoak Canyon hike	Don Schaefer (521-5326)
Feb. 21-22	Mount Washington	Tom McCrumm (527-6272)
Mar. 1	Bull Run Mountain	Mike Hill (336-1471)
Mar. 8	Sugarloaf	Bob Adams (292-1340)
Mar. 11	Meeting, PATC Headquarters, 8:00 p.m.	

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.

Sunday meetings will no longer leave from Howard Johnson's on Wisconsin Avenue. From now on climbers should meet at Hot Shoppe at Wisconsin and East-West Highway in Chevy Chase. Same time -- 8:30--- different channel.

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.

Purple Horse, Md

Follow Cupids Bower directions as far as parking lot across from Old Angler's Inn. Cross the canal at the dirt bridge and walk right (north) to Widewater (a very wide place on the canal). Cross the cement foot bridge and turn left on a trail. Follow trail to the river and to the rocks.

Bull Run Mountain, Va.

From the Beltway take I 66 to Gainsville 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.

Sugarloaf Mountain, Md.

From the Beltway take I-70 S north. Get off on Maryland Rte. 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 halfway to the summit.

Touhey's is Dead, Long Live Roy's Place:

"Progress" has struck to the Washington-area climbers' core. Touhey's is no more. No more draft beer like Touhey's draft beer. No more chili. No more 21-shrimp shrimp baskets for \$1.10. And Peg and Sis have moved on. Arrgh. However, Roy's Place in Rockville may be a replacement. Directions will be published next month.

French Alps, concluded

The snow at the bottom of the rappel broke loose and a large, dark mass roared by me out into the void. I screamed for John, as I stood horrified at the thought that he was gone. No, he hadn't fallen, only the snow and some rock had gone over.

John joined me on the ledge. We put on our rain gear and sat on our ropes to wait out the long night. Lightning was crashing on the peak all around us and the sound was absolutely deafening. Avalanches were roaring off the peaks nearby. The rain was torrential and we were soon soaked through. It was cold so we huddled together back to back on our small ledge with our knees to our chests as there was no room to stretch out.

I was really scared -- lightning was landing all around us. We did not sleep as this wild scene continued until 2 a.m. The lightning stopped but the rain continued. Without a doubt the worst night of my life. By 4:30 we were up and moving about setting up the rappel. At 5:00 we started down and after descending a thousand feet were on safe ground. The sun came up at 5:30 and the sky cleared completely. We walked down to the tram and were back in Chamonix by 6:30 a.m.

My British friends found it quite amusing that we had been caught in the storm. "Good experience," they said. The weather was bad from then on and I soon left Chamonix. I left with a new respect for the Alps and those tough mountaineers who climb there.

Up Rope

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