

FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

1718 N St N W Washington, D. C. 20036

Vol. 35

No. 4

Apr. 1970

Page 1

ORDEAL

on the

Finsterwald

Norm Wallach

Hermann Eusterfork and I had been climbing the north face of the Finsterwald when the accident occurred. Hermann, out on a long lead without protection, made a damn good try at passing a terrible, brooding overhang about 75 feet above me. I was giving a token belay, standing in stirrups hanging from one of Dolt's incredible Cobras. Suddenly, I heard Hermann shrieking in terror. Looking up, I saw his hands scrabbling frantically at the rock. Then, with horrified fascination, I watched his body curve out from the rock in a long, graceful arc. Next moment, I felt the shock as his weight came on the rope. With a loud ping, the Cobra came away from its flake. Our two bodies, joined by the silken cord like a spider and his prey, hurtled through space in that terrible comradeship of the doomed. I saw the peaks, the valley of the Feca River, the sun, with remarkable clarity as they spun in and out of my range of vision. A terrible jarring impact was followed by darkness.

The black fog cleared slowly and I became conscious of a terrible pain in my back, right side, and head. The rope cut deeply into my flesh, although the severed end told me that there could be no tension there.

"Hermann!", I called out weakly, but there was no reply. To the best of my knowledge, I was alone, miraculously spared, but lying unable to move on a tiny ledge 3,000 feet above the valley.

I first formed the idea of climbing the Finsterwald in October of 1967. I had come over from Chamonix with Hermann Eusterfork, my perennial climbing companion, to the beautiful Feca River Valley. Our objective that day was the Bräderhorn, that majestic spike rising over the town of Feca which, due to its similarity to the famous Mountain of Zermatt, was known popularly as the Fecal Matterhorn. We paused for lunch on the supraorbital ridge, overlooking the Lacunae and the beautiful islands of Langerhans, when the mists cleared suddenly to the North to reveal the Finsterwald in all its stark glory.

"Hermann!" I exclaimed.

"I see it!" came his answer, and as we looked into each

others eyes we realized that our destiny was to climb that pillar of rock together.

We scouted the peak that fall, returning in the Spring and Summer of '68 to choose a route. Three weeks of waiting for the good weather that never came, then back to Paris for me and the Jungfrau weather station for Hermann.

Finally, in late October of '69, the weather we needed came in, and we met again in Feca. I was exhausted after my long flight in. My exhaustion was quickly relieved by sight of the Finsterwald in full sun.

Next morning Hermann and I started up the valley toward our mountain. Three hours of walking brought us to the ice fall of the glacier, which we quickly overcame, then 2 hours on the ice glacier and we crossed the bergschrund. It was now 7 am. We roped hastily, then, after a silent handshake, Hermann took the first lead up a sloping flake to an overhanging buttress where we tied in. I followed, then nailed the overhang and found myself in a "duck soup" gully. After Hermann came up, then the two of us scrambled up the gully for about 300 feet when we again encountered Class V rock. Hermann again led, and I caught my breath as he danced out on a thin ledge, then did a 30-foot hand traverse ending in a retable to another ledge. With damp hands, I followed his "aerobatics" but it was only with dudicial tension on the rope that I could manage the retable. The next few hundred feet were brutal, then slab work with no piton cracks and precious little to stop on for driving pins. This brought us out onto sloping slabs, easy climbing, with 5.9 bands every few hundred feet.

By evening, we had reached a small ledge where we were able to tie in and set up a reasonably comfortable bivouac. The route ahead was very thin, no ledges for about 200 feet after which the route was blocked by a dark shadow marking overhanging rock.

"What do you think?" My heart seemed to block my throat -- I knew Hermann, always the daring climber, would find the way if way there were.

Continued on page 4

P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN

Tom McCrumm
527-6272

VICE CHAIRMAN

Don Schaefer
521-5326

SECRETARY

Linnea Stewart
593-8097

TREASURER

Art Wilder
439-9043

UP ROPE STAFF

CO-EDITORS

Bill Deutermann
363-0757

Sallie Greenwood
683-5091

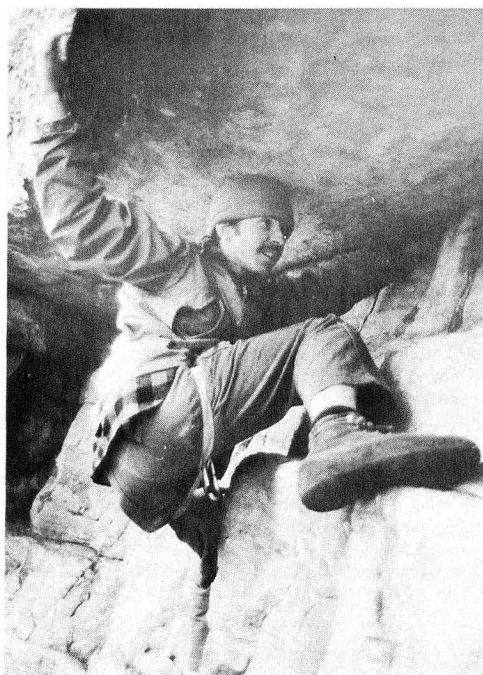
BUSINESS MANAGER

Art Wilder
439-9043

Editorial

Members who were not present for the February business meeting will be pleased to learn that the Section voted to make a substantial contribution to the American Alpine Club's Operational Fund for the Teton Climbers Ranch. As Arnold Wexler pointed out at the meeting, this country does not have climbers' facilities to match those of Europe and Canada. The AAC's effort to establish such facilities in the Tetons is a good beginning and a meaningful contribution to the sport in our country. One of the Section's objectives is to further the sport of climbing: the AAC's project represents a genuine opportunity for us to work for that objective.

The Section's donation is not a large sum in absolute figures, but it represents one fourth of our group's treasury and this symbolizes our wholehearted support for the project. The successful operation of the Ranch, however, will require approximately \$200,000.00. This is not a one shot proposition. Members who have climbed in the Tetons or who hope to climb in the Tetons or who hope that others may have the opportunity to climb in the Tetons should dig into their pockets for a personal contribution. Any amount will be appreciated and will help to make possible the establishment of climbers' facilities in the Grand Tetons -- American climbing's Mecca.



"Atlas" Schaefer's at it again. Overhang at Greenland Gap.

Conservation

(The Editors would like to publish items on Conservation as it affects the climbing community. All donations gratefully received.)

NATIONAL FORESTS IN DANGER

H.R. 12025 has been introduced into the House of Representatives and it proposes that timber cutting in National Forests be increased by about 50%. Introduced originally as the "Timber Supply Act of 1969," its title was changed to the "National Forest Timber Conservation and Management Act of 1969" to disguise its purpose. It was drafted about a year ago when lumber was scarce and prices were sky high. Since then the prices have come down and we're even exporting a surplus. Even if costs weren't up and supply was not low, this bill would still undermine the "multiple use" concept of our National Forests. This could effect us directly as many of our climbing areas are in National Forests. How would you like to see heavy lumbering across the road at Seneca?

The bill has been retracted from a House vote twice because of mounting opposition. It could be voted on at any time though. Write to your representative today.

THREATENED SPECIES:
The Golden Eagle Pass

The Golden Eagle Passport, which allowed one entrance into practically every federally supported campground, recreation area, and park for a \$7.00 annual fee, is in danger of dying. Legislation passed in 1968 repealed authority for the passport effective March 31, 1970. Several bills have been introduced in Congress to extend the program but none have yet been acted on.

EARTH DAY, April 22, 1970. Contact Environmental Inc. at 737-6650 for a resume of what's happening and where.

Mike Hill

Hanging Around

Little Stony Man
Dec. 14

Bob Robinson - Trip Leader
Els Litjens
Fred ? (Antarctic man)

Bill Thomas
Pete Gardner

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.

The day was very cold and a strong wind met us on the summit, in fact so strong that it proved impossible to throw a top rope over the edge. Bill and Els had camped at Big Meadows and arrived whilst Pete Gardner and your reporter were hiking along the snow-covered Appalachian Trail en-route for Big Stony Man.

Climbing attempts were abandoned at midday and the party set off for D.C.

Seneca Rock
Jan. 17-18

Bob Robinson - Trip Leader Joan Robinson
Pete Glassen

Saturday was dank and unpromising with a forecast of rain and snow to look forward to. Bob and Pete traversed the west face at lunch ledge level to check guide book data. The snow was about 2 feet deep. (Has anyone ever repeated the Pine Tree Traverse?) They retreated when the snow came in late afternoon and adjourned to the bar. After dinner at the 4 U the prospect had become so foul that we retreated to D.C. arriving at 1:00 am. There were two others climbing Triple S by aid but they retreated for lack of bongs.

Incidentally, Bob and Dick Sideman returned to Seneca for the weekend of January 24-25 intending to snowshoe the Spruce Knob ridge. However, road conditions defeated us. The drifts on the road up from Riverton were too deep and the surface of the road from Whites run a continuous sheet of water-lubricated ice. The car coped with the uphill (chains) but the downhill gave us an hour of terror, after taking nearly an hour to turn around. The road was almost too slippery for walking. The main danger was that it would slide sideways over the edge at 2 mph, wheels locked. We intend to try again in March.

Camp Lewis
Jan. 25

Mike Hill - Trip Leader Sallie Jordan
Don Schaefer Bill Thomas
Bob and Kate Adams Robin Craft
Leo Frank Tom McCrumm
Roger Birch Sallie Greenwood
Chuck Sproull George Kramer

The combination of comparatively warm weather and long, boring breaks from college brought out a good size crowd for this annual mid-winter trip. We started off on the relatively easy Pony Express with everyone at least momentarily using the forbidden left wall. After skinning our fingertips on Thin Corner, we tried in vain to follow Bob's ascent of Ferocious Overhang. After lunch, Don showed us the Schaefer-McCrumm variation of the East Face Climb. Following several slow-moving ascents of the Junior Horror and ungraceful attempts on the Jam Crack, we finished off the day with boulder problems before heading to Roy's boozier.

Carderock
Feb. 1

Tom McCrumm - S.A. Trip Leader Rick Banning
Roger Hammill All the Schaefer's
Bob and Kate Adams Ed Goodman and Friends
Leo Frank Arnold Wexler
Dave and Joan Templeton Sallie Greenwood
Susan Anderson Nick Kelly and Wife
Roger Birch All the Goldbergs
Tom Evans Most of the Milligans
Bob Lyons Helen Moorefield
Harold Kramer Joe Ney
Chips Janger Chuck Sproull
Sallie Jordan Bob Croft
Andre de Schutter Terry Robinson
Linnea Stewart Maren Stewart
Margaret Nelson Bill Thomas
Janet Gladfelter

Many people, much mud, and lots of climbing sums up the day. Warm weather seems to have brought out the fair weather climbers and cavers. Many of the climbs on the Easter Egg face were done and many attempts were made on the Jam Box.

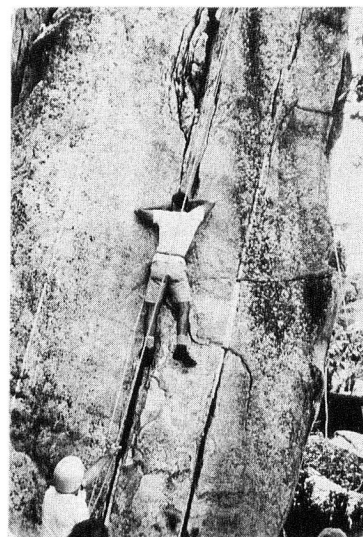
Bull Run Mountain
Mar. 1

Mike Hill - Trip Leader
Bob and Kate Adams
Maren Stewart
Don Schaefer
Hal Kramer
Bill Thomas and kids
Roger Birch
Luboc and Maria Poposil

Nellie Widmayer
Linnea Stewart
Chuck Sproull
Art Wilder
Robin Craft
Tom McCrumm
Larry Laine
Peter Gardner

With partly cloudy skies and a high of about 40°, it was a little cooler than we would have liked but the strenuous climbing there kept us warm enough. The morning was spent, predictably enough, in the Snicker Sneer area. Mike worked at cutting the briers out while Roger kept telling him it was useless. A hedge trimmer is really needed to make any headway.

After a windy and chilly lunch, we split up to tackle the Hand Traverse and Two Inches More areas. Five exhausted heroes toiled up Two Inches More, while others took turns falling off of The Baby's Ass. The slack time was taken up with the Navy-Marine Corpse (whoops, typographical error!) verbal slander contest and by egging Roger about soloing an unclimbed layback. With daylight staying longer now, we didn't leave until 6:00.



Don Milligan investigates Charlie's Crack at Bull Run

Sugar Loaf
Mar. 8

Bob Adams - Trip Leader
Al Goldberg
Mike Hill
Luboc and Maria Poposil
Dianna Ballou
Bill Thomas and Friend
Sallie Greenwood

Kate Adams
Harold and George Kramer
Nellie Widmayer
Roger Birch
Frank and Grey Thompson
Sallie Jordan and Moses
Cal Jones

This was a beautiful day, clear and sunny, a bit too cool for Spring, but definitely not Winter. We were joined by Bill Williams and his climbers from Baltimore, known I believe as the Ledge Rats. We soon had ropes on the well-known routes, and business was brisk all day.

It was inevitable that someone should rig the Rhythmic Roof. Fortunately this climb is not as bad as it looks from the ground, or as bad as it feels when you stretch out full length under the ceiling. Several people negotiated the Roof successfully, including Mike Hill, who went up twice. But we missed Mary Eldridge, who did this on her first day out.

To the author's knowledge, only three of at least 14 recognized routes at Sugar Loaf are named, and one of these, the Pine Tree, is hard to recognize now that eager hands have pulled out that pathetic little tree. Perhaps we need another committee...

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

Date	Place	Leader
Apr. 4-5	Shawangunks	Sallie Greenwood (683-5091)
Apr. 8	Meeting, PATC Headquarters, 8:00 pm	Slide show by Glenn Cannon
Apr. 11-12	Seneca Rock	Roger Birch (527-6272)
Apr. 18-19	Baker Rocks	Don Schaefer (521-5326)
Apr. 26	Old Rag	Terry Robinson (768-6485)
May 2-3	Greenland Gap, Maysville Gap, and Kline Gap	Linnea Stewart (593-8097)
May 9-10	Caudy's Castle	Mike Hill (336-1471)
May 13	Meeting, PATC Headquarters, 8:00 pm	
May 17-18	Seneca Rock	Joe Nolte

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 before Harrisburg. East on the Turnpike to Pa. 283 north (15¢ toll). East on U.S. 22 and I-78 to Pa. 512 north. Get on Pa. 115 n 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 by pass section of U.S. 209 around Stroudsburg.

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.

Baker Rocks, W. Va.

From the beltway take I-66 to Gainesville and bear right onto Rte. 55 to Moorefield, W. Va. Turn left onto U.S. 220 for 7 miles to Harper's Central Dairy on right. Take left just past the dairy into lane, open gate beside quonset hut. Follow lane to rocks. Watch for cows.

Old Rag, Va.

From the beltway take I-66 W through Gainesville and U.S. 211 west to Sperryville. Turn left on U.S. 552 south for 1 mile. Then right on Rte. 231 south for about 8 miles. Right on Rte. 670 to Nethers. The long way up is up the fire road straight ahead and the short but easy way is up the blue-blazed trail to the left.

Caudy's Castle, W. Va.

From the beltway take either Rte. 7 or U.S. 29-211 to U.S. 50 to Winchester. Take Rte. 522 north about 15 miles and go west on Va. Rte. 127 (changes to W. Va. Rte. 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.

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. Rte. 93 south for 15 miles to Scheer. Watch for a dirt road and a bridge over the creek just to the left of Rte. 93. Turn left on dirt road and drive one mile east to the Gap. Park at turn out and scramble up talus slope on left.

ORDEAL ON THE FINSTERWALD (from page 1)

"I think it'll go." I was afraid of that! "Look there," Hermann pointed up and left where, in the center of that smooth face, a dark shadow showed as a thin crack. "If I can get up to that crack, I can set up a belay ther and bring you along. Then you take over the belay and I'll tackle the overhang above."

The night passed slowly, but not slowly enough. In the cold morning light that face looked worse than ever but Hermann was determined. I set up a bomb proof belay, and soon Hermann was off, working his way toward that crack on ultra-thin holds. Finally, I watched him tie in and give me his thumbs up grin.

I won't go into the details of that pitch. Suffice to say that it was bad. But my real shock came when, arriving at the "crack," I found it to be only a flake to which Hermann had anchored himself with a beat on and a Cobra. My better judgement said "turn back" but it was too late, there could be no retreat. I took the "belay" and watched the valley below, not daring to breathe much less look in Hermann's direction. Then, suddenly, came that awful shriek...

Continued on page 5

R. R. R.

1718 N St N W
Washington, D. C. 20036

NONPROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE

PAID

WASHINGTON, D. C.
PERMIT NO. 9615