



FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

1718 N Street, N.W. Washington DC 20036

Volume 34, Number 10

October 1979

MS MEMBERS SURVIVE YERUPAJÁ

by Don McIntyre

The Cordillera de Huayuash, less than 20 miles long, contains some of the most spectacularly difficult peaks in Peru. The dominating summit of the range is Yerupajá (21,769'). During the month of July, Leo Slaggie, John Serocki, and myself joined by "New Yorker" Romanas Sedlickas and "Tennessee-boy" Charlie Frye, attempted to scale this mountain.

On the afternoon of June 30, we left Lima in a heavily laden VW minibus. After a long 10-hour drive through the desolate and arid coastal regions, we slowly climbed into the valleys of the Cordillera Negra. The highway, a relatively good dirt and gravel road, finally took one of its many tolls on our bus, which broke down for the final time at Canococha Pass (4020meters). We were forced to camp by the roadside for the night, which caused us all to get altitude sickness after having come from sealevel (Lima) to almost 14,000' on the same day.

The driver repaired the vehicle in the morning, and we dropped down the mountain road to Chiquian. To the southeast the whole Cordillera de Huayuash jutted

abruptly heavenwards, while to the north loomed the peaks of the Cordillera Blanca. We spent the next two days in Chiquian bargaining over the cost of our "bestias" -pack animals- and acclimatizing to the 11,000' altitude. On July 3, with 15 heavily laden donkeys and one horse, we left Chiquian and followed the trail, which wound steeply down to the Rio Chiquian, continued downstream through a fantastic gorge, crossed a crude log and mud bridge, and then alternately climbed and descended beside the Rio Llamac.

We spent the night in an open-air pig market in the small Indian town of Llamac. After a fitful night enlivened by the eerie music of the drunken Indians, we set off for Lake Jahuacocha. The trail was uphill, and after a long eight hours, we camped at the eastern end of the lake at an altitude of 4066 meters. Behind camp lay Solterahanca, a glacial lake surrounded by moraines, and above it rose the steep ice cliffs of Rondoy down which avalanches continually thundered. Adjacent to Rondoy on the south stood the impossible Jirishanca, followed by Yerupajá Chico and then, tower-

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Nelson House

In a meeting on 15 September, Stan Halpin and Charles Nelson tentatively agreed that the Mountaineering Section should continue the agreement we have had for the use of the Nelson House. (In simple terms, we are committed to an average of \$50 per month in labor and materials towards upkeep and refurbishing the house.) Charles will make some minor changes in the language of the current contract and forward it to us for consideration.

Despite reports to the contrary, the lock on the front door works well and does not need replacing. When opening: a) dial the current combination; b) push the two halves of the lock together; c) pull gently. When locking: a) hold lock shut; b) move one or more dials so that the combination no longer shows.

The stove in the main room still needs a few bolts to hold on the front door, but otherwise is fully operational and puts out a good deal of heat.

The road is a mess, but driveable. One car went off the side recently, and we had to get help from neighbors with a 4-wheel pickup -- but this was a problem of driver strategy. Unless your car is unusually low, in wet weather you are better off staying in the ruts rather than trying a balancing act on the "rails" between the ruts. Particularly where the road is narrow. Remember that the people who live up the valley drive in and out all the time in Camaros, Mustangs, VWs, and other street cars with no problems. A truck is not necessary. But if you are reluctant to try the drive up, it is only a one-mile walk.

Stan Halpin

Note: Vivian Mendenhall will lead a Nelson House/Seneca Rocks work trip October 20-21 and is hoping for a good turnout to honor our work commitment. She wants to remind everyone that work trippers generally climb on Sunday because Mr. Nelson would rather we didn't work on the Sabbath.



UPROPE

UPROPE is the monthly newsletter of the Mountaineering Section (MS) of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) of Washington, D.C. Editorial contributions, letters, and comments are welcome and should be addressed to either Lin Murphy, 2314 North Harrison Street, Arlington, Virginia 22205 or Bill De Lano, 1012 Ellison Square, Falls Church, Virginia 22046. Deadline is the 25th of each month. Subscriptions for MS members are included in the dues. The annual subscription for nonmembers is \$4.00. Current PATC members interested in receiving UPROPE may obtain a subscription at no charge. MS membership is restricted to PATC members. New applicants and current members of PATC can join the MS by obtaining sponsorship of a current member of MS. Send subscription and address changes to Secretary, UPROPE, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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MOUNTAINEERING SECTION ACTIVITIES

The MS holds monthly meetings at PATC Headquarters (1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036) to conduct a brief business session and present a slide show, film, or other form of entertainment. Sunday trips to nearby climbing areas and/or weekend trips to more distant areas are sponsored every weekend. Check the schedule on the back page for details on planned trips. Beginning and intermediate training is offered once a month. Anyone is welcome to participate in MS activities, although some restrictions are placed on participation in club trips. The Sunday trips are usually to areas where there is a complete range of top-rope climbs, from easy to difficult. However, we ask that you have some instruction or experience prior to the trip. The weekend trips are usually for lead-climbers only and you are expected to find your own climbing partner. For more information on trips, call James Eakin, 598-6042, Chairman of the Trips Committee, or call the designated trip leader. For information on training, call Rick Todd, 431-2236.

YERUPAJÁ (continued)

ing above all, the corniced summit and west face of Yerupajá.

After five days of acclimatizing and dining on fresh lake trout caught by our donkey driver, we began our carries to camp one. Camp one was located at 15,800' in a boulder pocket adjacent to the glacier. We remained at camp one for two days, then established camp two on the glacier at 16,600'. The course across the glacier took considerable time because of the crevasses and ice falls and because we were doing all our own carries and not using porters. After three days we established camp three at 18,800' on an ice platform (actually a schrund-bridge) just 150' below the sharp crest of the Rassac col. The camp carries took a toll on our energy and stamina and kept our pace to a slow walk.

The summit of Yerupajá now lay only 2,000' above us. We debated the possible routes to the summit, but each had its respective dangers. We attempted to establish a camp near the south peak (20,400'), but the high winds and whiteouts defeated the plan. The high camp might have gone with an ice cave, sleeping bags, and two days of food, but because of hard ice and sickness, no more than two climbers were ever at the col at one time. This affected our marginal safety factor. Additionally, our appetites only gradually adapted to the altitude: the shift from protein-based diets to carbohydrates and starches (freeze-dried food) played havoc with our systems.

Our biggest concern was cornice accidents and avalanches as snow, ice, and rock constantly bombarded us from the summits. After days of double-ax techniques enlivened by occasional lead falls, we decided that it was too dangerous to cross a ridge that involved an 800' tension traverse of 75° blue

ice. This route joined the south and north summits along a narrow corniced ridge that was tortuous and exposed (cornices and 4,000' of vertical ice below). We had witnessed an avalanche hit a French team on this ridge earlier in the trip. For these reasons we abandoned the north summit and settled for the 20,400' south peak.

Although we did not "beat" the mountain, we discovered a lot about ourselves and climbing in Peru. The value of the lessons learned concerning cornices, equipment, and support systems will benefit us in future climbs and hopefully inform other PATC members who desire to experience the excitement of climbing in the Cordillera de Huayhuash.

AVALANCHE REPORTED ON ANNAPURNA

The State Department reported that an avalanche wiped out Camp IV (23,200') killing three members of this year's American Annapurna expedition. Those reported dead are Maynard Cohick, Gil Harder, and Welshman Eric Roberts. They were above the Dutch Rib, following the route taken by last year's AWHE team.

Cohick and Harder were teammates with Sallie Greenwood on the 1978 Sierra Club Pamirs expedition. Cohick, Harder, and Richard Soper reached the summit of Pik Communism, becoming the third American team to do so.

Coming Events

MS SPONSORS ANNAPURNA SHOW

In October 1978 an all-woman expedition led by Arlene Blum made the first American ascent of Annapurna I (26,545'). Annapurna, the world's tenth highest mountain was the first 8,000 meter peak to be climbed. Since the first ascent in 1952, only four expeditions have been

successful in reaching its summit. About thirteen people have died in the effort, including two members of the all-woman team.

Ms. Blum's slide/lecture will be presented on November 19 at the Ohr Kodesh Congregation, 8402 Freyman Dr., Chevy Chase, Md. (just off East-West Highway between Connecticut and 16th). Admission is \$2 at the door.

Publications

THE PEAK EXPERIENCE - Hiking and Climbing for Women

by Carroll Seghers II

This book may be the New Woman's answer to the Girl Scouts. This assumes, of course, that the New Woman of whom you are speaking has lived in a closet for the last 20 years and has had no experience in the out-of-doors. Although Seghers may earnestly be trying to promote mountaineering among women, I believe that he stresses mundane problems such as long fingernails dishpan hands, etc., rather than giving an adequate description of principles and techniques involved in mountaineering. I found the book quite amusing. Perhaps its theme and style are best summarized by Segher himself when he writes: "There is liberation for women of fitness, just in the exercise and independence of an expedition, up the side, hand and foot, of a godward, majestic, phallic beauty. By 'her' presence, she feminizes a masculin terrain that is really Mother's Earth." No further comments.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING FOR BEGINNERS

by Mike Banks

Mike Banks gives a rather brief summary of the basics of mountaineering. The book is interesting, but it is too sketchy to give an adequate introduction to the subject. I believe the reader's time and money would be more wisely spent on Ferber's Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills or other books that give detailed explanations of the techniques and principles of mountaineering.

reviews by Martha Hale

Note: These books were recently received in the PATC library. If you'd like to stay abreast of the latest mountaineering literature developments and share your reactions and comments through UP ROPE, call Olivia Kredel, PATC librarian, or Lin.

Hanging Around

WILDCAT POINT - August 19

A seven-member exploratory trip visited the area to determine its rock climbing potential. Judgment: this rail roadcut is smoke-blackened and unesthetic; its short climbs aren't worth the drive. The trip removed to Rock State Park.

Bill De Lano

WOLF ROCK - July 29

About 20 climbers showed up for the trip in spite of the early morning rain. A rock climbing permit is now required. Permits are issued on a first come, first served basis for up to 20 climbers at a time at the Catoctin National Park Visitors' Center. Later in the afternoon the weather cleared, and many of the climbs dried off. About 8 - 10 climbs were rigged at all levels of difficulty.

Greg Christopulos

GUNKS - Labor Day Weekend

Parker tells me not much happened Saturday morning. Margaret, Sallie, and I missed whatever there was, arriving late from a Bloomsburg breakfast during which we helped reduce the pile of tomatoes on the Wettling's front porch. We rendezvoused with Meriby Sweet, AWHE Tetons Climb coordinator, and monopolized -- the four of us -- Shockley's Ceiling for the rest of the day. Sunday night MS climbers and friends tried out the Cosmos Restaurant, where we could drink all the wine and beer we could get the waitress

to bring. A downpour as we ran from restaurant to parking lot. About seven of the nearly wet took refuge in the large pipe sculpture/playground on main street. Monday morning it cleared for more good climbing. Routes climbed include Something Interesting, CCK, Limelight, Overhanging layback, Hyjeck's Horror, Moonlight, Arrow, Dry Martini, Rusty Trifle, Retribution, Sente, Never Never Land, Turdland, and AntsLine. Climbers were Ian Cruickshank, Margaret Wettling, Sallie Greenwood, Stan Halpin, Rick Todd, Martha Hale, Herando Vera, Parker Hill, James Eakin, Greg Christopulos, Bill Hieronymous, Gary Roan and Chip, Beth Waldo and John, Art Powell, Tom McCrumm, and Ben Sands.

Lin Murphy

CAVING TRIP - September 22

Do you ever wonder why people would spend hours slithering through gooey mud and darkness? Well on September 22, anyone who was rock-climbing in W.Va. would have been in similar conditions. Seven of us - Harold Goldstein, Janet Young, Ryan Pierson, Paul Guthrie, Rick Todd, Dave Noel, and Vivian Mendenhall - drove out from Washington Friday night through sheets of rain and banks of fog. We settled into Alpine Shores(?) campground near Elkins about 2am and slept soundly, despite a train which spent a long time coupling and uncoupling itself with gargantuan bangs a few yards away.

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CAVING TRIP (continued)

Saturday began with a discourse from Harold on how to nurture the flame of a carbide lamp and how to store the used carbide so that it would be unlikely to explode. At 12:30 we entered Bowden Cave. We edged past a disused iron gate and entered rooms where we could walk upright, sometimes linked by lower passages where we had to stoop double or crawl over boulders covered with slimy red mud. We checked frequently to see whether anyone had vanished. We soon came to the Big Room, stretching into darkness beyond the soft glow of our lamps. A small but vigorous river flowed along the edge of this room. Its sound was magnified in the narrow space into the bass roar of a great waterfall.

The next room was the Break-down Room - a towering chamber with a talus floor. Small stalactites hung from the ceiling, coated in the ubiquitous red mud. We mantled onto an overhanging ledge to gain access to the Shower Room (we needed it!). Back in the larger room, we had our first break for lunch and to recarb (note "in" jargon).

We returned to the river and for the next 400' waded knee deep in swift 50° water. However, the two-foot wide passage provided steady handholds, and the extravagantly fluted walls kept our minds off the chill. Midway along the river passage, we made a false turn into a room whose only exit was a dead-end crawlway through the ceiling. Here we encountered several teenagers who had no hard hats and one flashlight - good equipment if you want to contemplate the terrors of caving.

Our next stop was the Pendant Room with small formations rippling along the ceiling. Although the cave contains no crystals, our lamps often picked up patches of glittering white on the rock, which turned out to be simply clusters of clear water droplets.

At several points we saw animals: two tiny sleeping bats, probably Pipistrelles, a long-legged white cave cricket, and a poor toad, which probably had been washed in by the river and did not have long to live. I wondered where such animals obtain nutrition in this place without plants. A book on caves informs me that permanent residents depend on material brought in by regular or accidental visitors.

More crawling brought us to the Second Biggest Room (this cave is full of imaginative names). From here we took another side passage, but we had to hitch along along on our stomachs, which allowed us to complete our coatings of mud. Before returning to the main passage, we sat for a while with our lights out to appreciate the utter darkness.

We progressed further up the river by stemming over and crawling in it, and finally reached a point where several people, including me, declared themselves totally pooped.

(continued on next page)

CAVING TRIP (continued)

The trip back to the entrance took far less time, even with increasingly frequent stops to shake, poke, and feed our lamps. By the time we reached the Biggest Room we were far past caring about competent behavior on the slippery mud, and enjoyed various impromptu ballet moves on it. At last we crawled past the gate again and beheld the poignantly fresh green of the leaves in the drizzly twilight. It was 7pm.

Rick and Harold started gearing up to return immediately and do a passage known as Agony, a 400' belly crawl, part of it in water. Somehow they lost interest after listening to the rest of us planning hot showers, beer, and a luxurious dinner.

We all returned to the campground in Elkins to fulfill these dreams. Outside the 1863 Tavern, Ryan and I were voted "most respectable" and were assigned to talk the restaurant into a table for seven. But this posh restaurant was surprisingly willing for us to mix with their clientele. They even put us near the entrance. And the food was excellent and inexpensive.

We slept very well that night in spite of some incident that I never fully understood, in which bikers rode through Paul's tent, and spent Sunday in a leisurely manner in the Gendarme and the Seneca Rocks Visitors' Center. Thanks are due to Harold for shepherding us through the cave and to Rick for leading the trip.

P.S. Mouth of Seneca is no more: it is now called Seneca Rocks. A local explained that nonresidents couldn't spell the old name.

Vivian Mendenhall

OLD UP ROPES DRAW MS HISTORY

Bert and Elizabeth Vos, early MS members, sent in a stack of old UP ROPES for 1949 through 1952. The old accounts show that during this period MS members frequented Bull Run, the Hermitage, Carderock, and both sides of Great Falls. They also made a lot of caving trips.

Mrs Vos said that the climbing areas along the Potomac were virtually deserted back then and attributed the caving enthusiasm, in part, to Dr. Stimson, who surveyed numerous caves in the area. She explained that the gas shortage following WWII helped keep local climbers on rocks close to home.

In two April 1950 issues one finds a discussion about the climbing club's affiliation with PATC: Paul Bradt advocating continued association and Herb Conn arguing for separation.

These old UP ROPES will be passed on to PATC Archivist Dave Bates who will use them to complete the Archives copy. We'll try to set up a special file in the PATC library with those remaining.

Thanks, Bert and Elizabeth.

Meeting Report

September 12

There was a big turnout-- a lot of visitors came to see the film, "Free Climb: The Northwest Face of Half Dome."

We had a long discussion about the entertainment schedule for the rest of the year. October will be the MS Wind River climbing trip. November will be a film called "Go For It"--unless we can get Lou Reichardt to talk about the American K2 expedition. Also in November, MS will sponsor Arlene Blum's slide/lecture on the Annapurna climb. We pondered our limited

entertainment budget and decided to invite both of these climbers, even though it means asking an admission price of \$2 for Arlene's show.

Stan reported that our license to use Nelson House expired in February and that a work committment from MS members would be necessary for its renewal. The few people commenting felt we should keep the Nelson House arrangement.

Parker Hill (931-7487) has become the Trips Committee coordinator

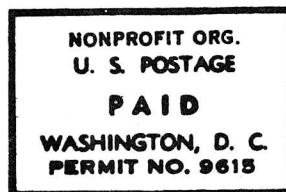
Climber's Calendar

October 6, 7, and 8	Gunks	Sallie Greenwood(533-8412)
October 10	MS meeting 8pm PATC Hd	Wind River Climbing Trip
October 14	Bull Run Mt.	Don McIntyre(536-6122)
October 20, 21	Nelson House work trip	Vivian Mendenhall(490-7131)

For information about trips, call the leader or Parker Hill(931-7487).

Up Rope

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



DATED MATTER

October 1979