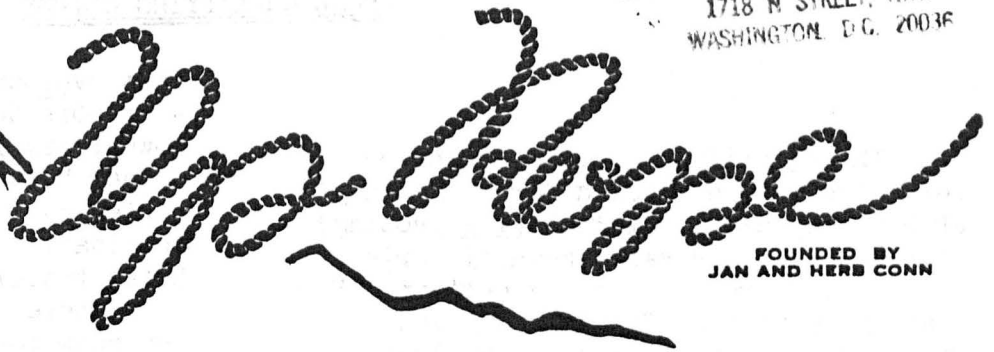


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NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING SECTION

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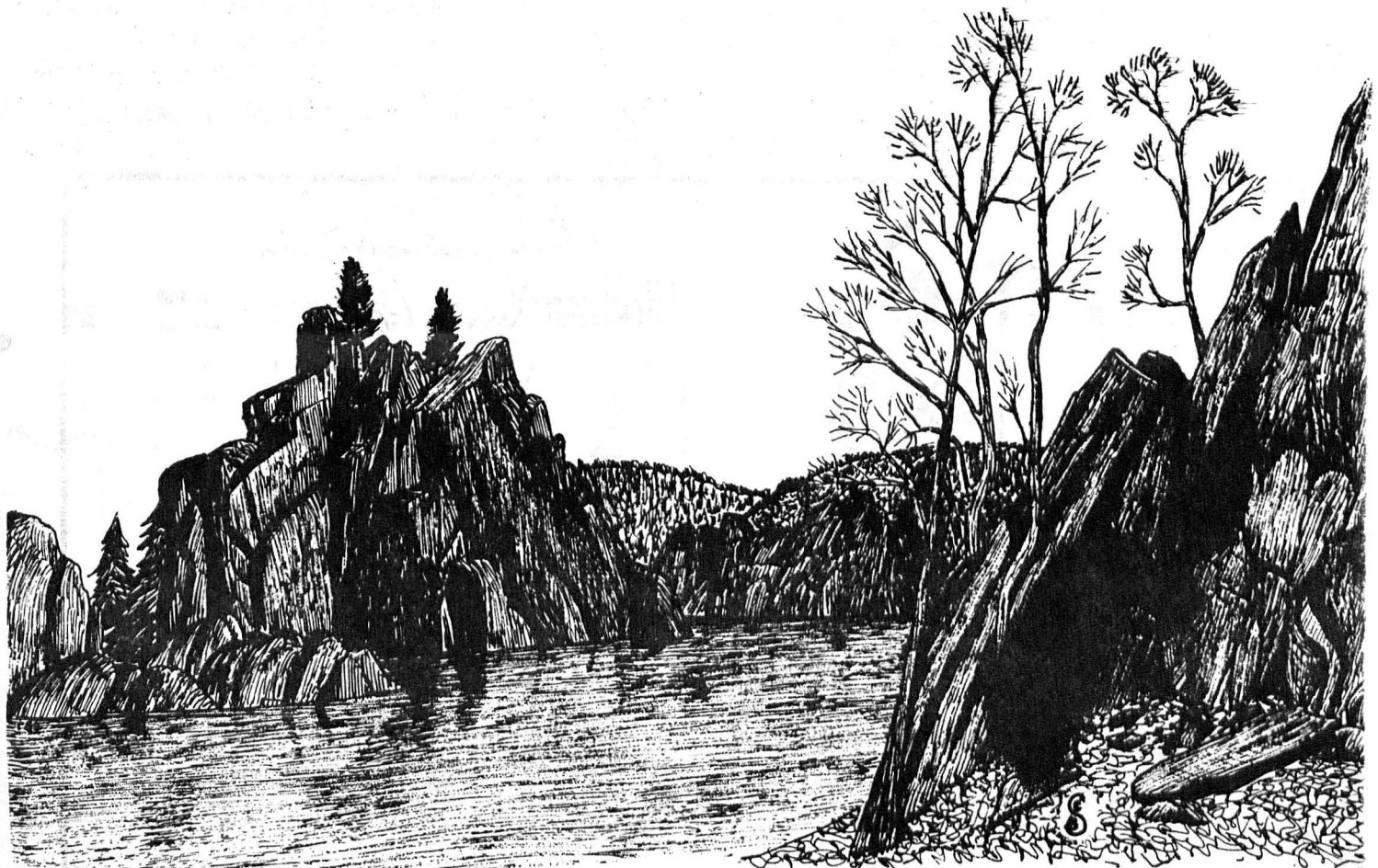
Volume 36, Number 5

May 1981

GORGE WEEKEND

MS will hold a gorge rediscovery weekend May 9 and 10. The plan is to try the routes that challenged the area's early rockclimbers on Saturday and on Sunday morning and wind up with a pot luck picnic at the Carderock pavilion

about 4pm Sunday. Some of the climbers who put in the routes will be there to show us around. A climbing slide show will cap the evening. We want everyone to come. Call if you want a ride, need coordinating, or would like to help.



Potomac Gorge by Chuck Sproull

THOSE QUALIFYING CLIMBS

The "qualifying climbs" described below are in the Potomac Gorge. January's UP ROPE explained how full (i.e., voting) membership in the early mountaineering section required completing certain qualifying climbs. The February and March issues contain additional route descriptions reprinted from early UP ROPES.

Climb to the Woods

The "Lost Climb" has been found. The team who rediscovered it (see "Ups and Downs" for August 12, 1945) describe it as follows:

Starting from the break in the face of Echo Cliffs just upstream from the Pot-holes, the climbers traverse upstream over moderately easy rock. The traverse should be made low, but the exact route is unimportant as this section of the route merely brings the climbers to the climb. After crossing the 45-degree face of polished white quartz, an outside corner is rounded, and the climbing party assembles on the sloping rock beneath a 6 to 12-

foot overhanging wall. To locate this spot more definitely, it is on the face downstream from the last sharp outside corner between the climbers and the tree-filled gully which marks the downstream termination of the Big Toe and Donalds' Ducks traverse.

There are three points at which it may seem logical to attack the overhang. Farthest downstream is Marian's Lead, a 12-foot off-balance crack and inside corner leading to the slope above. Twenty feet upstream is Paul's Lead, a 6-foot inside corner which, altho lacking in positive holds for the upward pull, yields to a grunt and a precariously balanced pushup over the brink of the overhang. The third point of attack, farthest upstream, has not yet been climbed. Either of the first two routes serve to qualify the climber.

The climb continues upward directly above Marian's Lead in a semi-chimney leading for 15 feet under the final steep face which slopes off into the woods.

Paul Bradt, Marian Churchill, and Fitz Clark made the original ascent in 1939 or 1940. Searching for an easy route to the top as rain and approaching

(continued on page 4)

UP ROPE

UP ROPE is the monthly newsletter of the Mountaineering Section (MS) of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) of Washington, D.C. Climbing articles, letters, and comments are welcome and should be addressed to Lin Murphy, 2314 N. Harrison Street, Arlington, VA. 22205. Deadline is the 20th of each month. Subscriptions for MS members are included in the dues. The annual subscription price for nonmembers is \$4. Current PATC members interested in receiving UP ROPE may obtain a subscription at no charge. MS members must belong to PATC. Applicants for membership and PATC members can join the MS by obtaining sponsorship from a current MS member. Send subscription and address changes to Mountaineering Section-Secretary, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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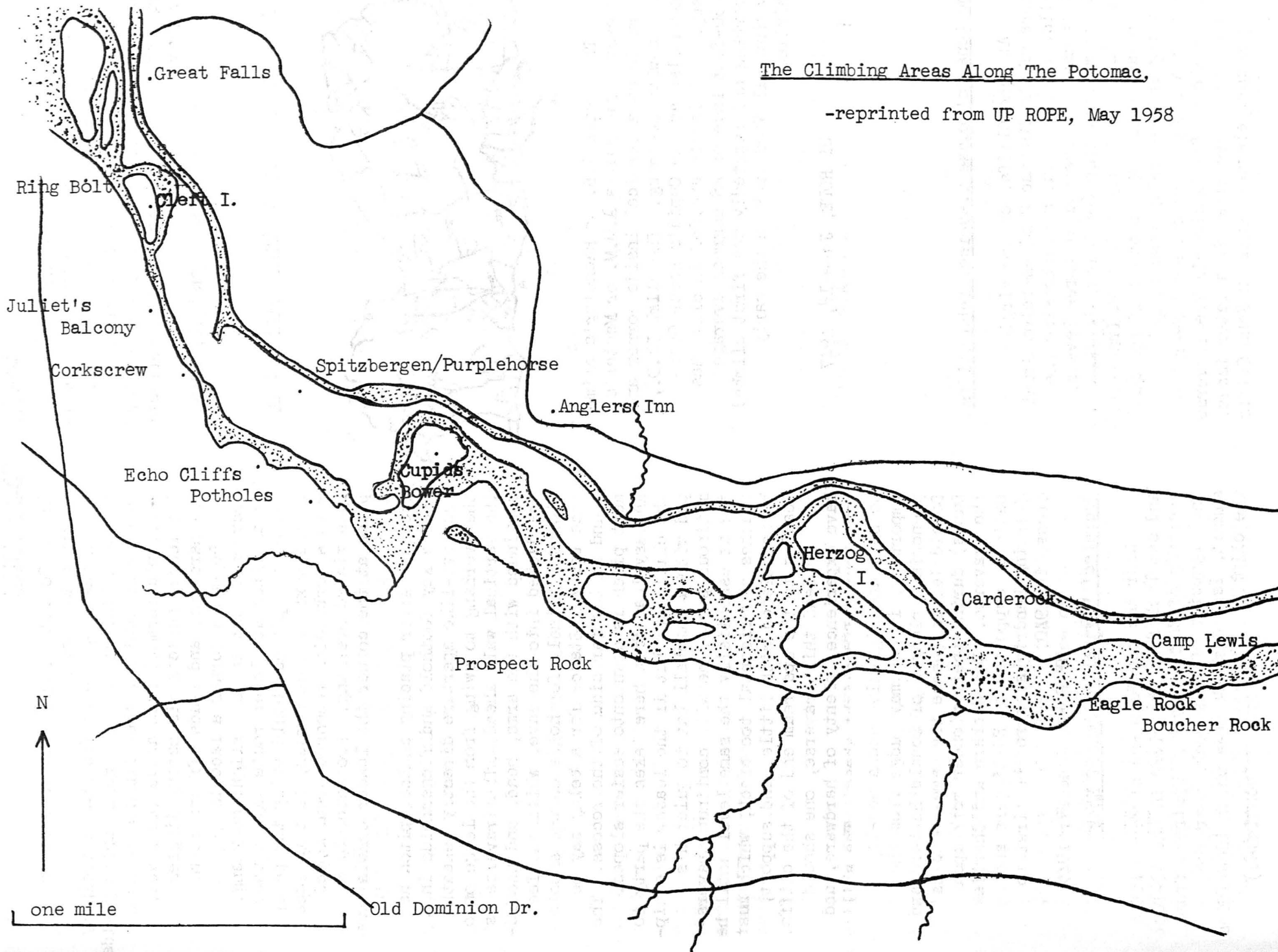
MOUNTAINEERING SECTION ACTIVITIES

The MS holds meetings at PATC headquarters (1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.) the second Wednesday of each month except August. There is a brief business session followed by 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 climber's calendar for scheduled trips.

Beginning and intermediate training are offered once a month. Anyone is welcome to participate in MS activities, although some restrictions may be placed on participation in club trips. The Sunday trips are usually to areas where there is a complete range of top rope climbs. However, we ask that you have some experience or training prior to the trip. The weekend trips are usually for lead climbers only, and you are expected to find your own climbing partner.

The Climbing Areas Along The Potomac,

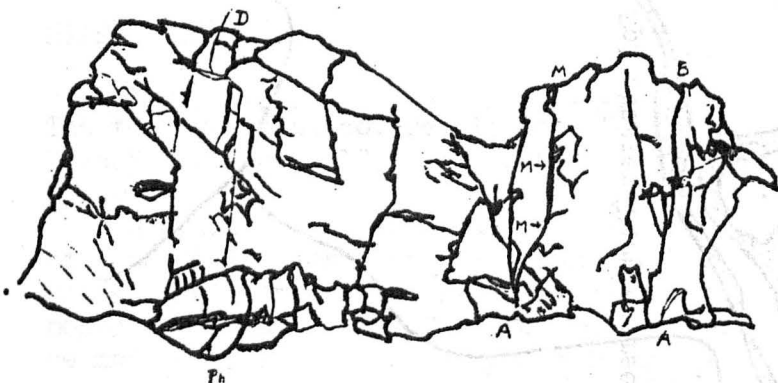
-reprinted from UP ROPE, May 1958



THOSE QUALIFYING CLIMBS

night threatened the continuation of their traverse, Marian succeeded in leading the downstream route over the overhang. Paul, however, distressed by Marian's extended struggles, looked for an easier way and led the alternate route, followed by Fitz.

UP ROPE, August 22, 1945

Stimmie's Academic Climbs, Cupid's Bower

The routes A.B. or Bachelor's climb is easy. The routes A.M.M. or Master's climb is up a vertical inside corner and is somewhat overhung. The climb Ph.D., known also as the Cupid's Bower Overhang, or Triangle and Coffin climb has a 30-foot face of 28 degrees average overhang and reputedly was first climbed by Marshall Wood back in the early thirties.

UP ROPE, June 18, 1947

The Donalds' Ducks Traverse, Echo Cliffs

At Echo Cliffs, on the Virginia shore of the Potomac 2 miles below Great Falls, the main bluffs overlooking the River may be traversed at three levels. At the water's edge (or below, if the River is high) is the Waterline Traverse, an ordeal requiring 2 pitches of tension climbing and generally resulting in a swim or a rubber boat rescue. Near the top of the cliffs is the Big Toe Traverse (B-10), to be described in a later issue. But the most elegant route on Echo Cliffs

is the Donalds' Ducks Traverse, at an intermediate level.

Descending the cliffs in the vicinity of the cabin, at the only point which yields to easy scrambling, the climbers reach a level platform 25 feet above the River. The leader selects his party, jingles his hardware, and leads off upstream.

Beyond a corner a face is traversed just above a slight overhang, or an alternate lower route may be used. One or two pitons should bring the party to the next outside corner, face to face with a forbidding recessed area topped by a wicked overhang. Protected by a piton at the corner the leader crawls along a sloping ledge to the back of the recess. After placing another piton he uses a key foothold and fingerholds in the cave-like aperture directly beneath the overhang to swing from the ledge onto the vertical wall ahead. The traverse is continued with the arms, head, and shoulders ducked into the cave, while the feet flounder blindly for holds on the smooth face below. Stance for a belay may be found at the far side of the recess. The next pitch is down onto easier slopes. An easy lead from here takes the party to the cliff top but if the leader is equipped with a baseball bat to quiet his mutinous party, he will continue traversing at essentially the same level until he reaches a horizontal toe crack, which must be negotiated with little hand support, leading to the upstream end of the cliffs.

To lead this traverse, one should have experience, plenty of hardware, and many hours of daylight ahead. The ability to swim and high-dive seems equally important, if one may judge from the phenomenal plunges of Donald Hubbard and Donald Jacobs (hence the name--Donalds' Ducks) during their pioneer work upon the traverse. Don Hubbard and Charlie Daniels, supported by Ed Siggers and Sterling Hendricks, were the first to cross, in 1940.

UP ROPE, June 27, 1945

Socrates' Downfall, Cowhoof Rock

Near the upstream end of Echo Cliffs and set back from the river is the 50-foot overhang of Cowhoof Rock. Upstream from the highpoint of this rock, near the summit, is a hemlock tree which identifies the climb.

(continued)

THOSE QUALIFYING CLIMBS

The "A" climb begins at the bottom of the cliff in an inside corner directly under the hemlock tree. A chimney maneuver brings the climber into a moderately severe layback crack, which may be climbed for the next 20 feet, or the crack may be deserted by reaching for an elusive handhold on the face to the right and continuing upward on sloping ledges. A breathing spot is reached on a platform under and right of the hemlock tree. Using good handholds the climber traverses left around an outside corner into a cramped alcove beneath an overhang. Although the rock provides little in the way of holds for the pull above the overhang, the climber is warned that it is strictly illegal to use the tree for support. Should his foot push upon the temptingly convenient but uncooperatively swaying branch, he will find, like Socrates, that hemlock has caused his downfall....

Exploration of this region began early in 1941. Arthur Lembeck, leading a party of girls followed the upper(B) route until he reached the off-balance pitch beside the hemlock tree. Art finished the climb by shinnying up the tree, but his followers fell into the rope. Don Hubbard first completed the climb without use of "vegetable holds." Art and Charlie Daniels pioneered the route from the bottom later in the same year...

UP ROPE, July 11, 1945

The Big Toe Traverse, Echo Cliffs

...If you like exposure, off-balance rock and totally inadequate footing, if you feel that your big toes need exercise and your life insurance policy needs to be snapped out of its complacency, we promise you'll like it.

Starting at the cedar tree which grows from a shelf of Echo Cliffs 200 feet downstream from the base of Cowhoof Rock, climb down a few feet into the inside corner and traverse downstream around a projecting nose and across a broad alcove. With your second man belaying here, descend 10 feet to the start of the fun.

The climber here is on the brink of the large overhang directly under which

the Donalds' Ducks go into their ducks. Footing is provided on horizontal protuberances which become increasingly meager downstream. The last foothold is an indented crack large enough to accommodate only the big toe. A piton here steadies the climbers morale as his fingers probe for "scratch holds" and his foot stretches forward for holds that don't exist. Using exactly the right type of support the weight is shifted a long step sideways onto severely sloping ledges. The angle is still too high for comfort, but if the climber moves swiftly he will pass to more substantial territory before mishap occurs.

Paul Bradt first led this traverse in 1941. He climbed barefoot in order to make full use of his big toes, and onlookers describe how just as one toe would slip out of the critical hold he replaced it with the other. Chris Scoredos followed Paul across, but Don Jacobs and Don Hubbard both fell into the rope. Charlie Daniels, later in the day, tried unsuccessfully to make the climb in the reverse direction.

UP ROPE, August 8, 1945

Triangle and Coffin Climb, Cupid's Bower

Harold Stimson promises you the degree "Doctor of Rock Climbing" if you climb it. And Stimmy, you can be sure, knows what he is talking about. After you've conquered the nearby Bachelor's and Master's degree climbs, if you are still game to try for your Ph. D., take a look at Coffin.

It's a 28-degree overhang about 35 feet high. It's on the highest and most sharply overhanging section of the rock-walled "table" of Cupid's Bower Island, 200 feet from the eastern tip of the island. The triangular and coffin-shaped recesses in the wall identify the route.

A short initial pitch brings the candidate onto the starting platform at the foot of the overhang directly below the triangle. Moving slightly to the right, he suddenly finds his entire weight hanging from moderately poor handholds, while his feet struggle for elevation in a wide spraddle. One hand then reaches upward to a jam hold in the base of the triangle, which provides the necessary

(continued)

THOSE QUALIFYING CLIMBS

key for admission to the lower of the two recesses. The climber is cautioned against jamming himself into the back of the recess; instead he should keep his weight out, with his hands in the lay-back crack in the right wall of the triangle. Higher handholds and footholds on the face to the right give elevation, until one hand finally seizes the "thank God" hold on the back wall of the coffin. Chimneying between the sides of the funeral box, the climber will find himself boxed in at its top. But with a right handhold in the crack under the coffin's

roof and with his feet as high as possible, his left hand can reach out and over to the top of the cliff. A tree growing at its edge is a tempting convenience for the last pull. We leave it to the scholastic honor of the prospective Ph. D. whether or not he use it.

The first ascent of the Coffin was made in 1936 by Marshall Wood. Degrees have since been handed out not too frequently, the only lady doctorate belonging to Marian Churchill.

UP ROPE, August 8, 1945

Meeting Report April 8, 1981

The meeting was called to order by chairman Martha Hale at 8:03 p.m. The next Section and executive committee meetings were announced for May 13 and 6, respectively. Beginners seeking training were directed to see Stan Halpin, who now has two new ropes for that purpose.

Vivian Mendenhall reported on repairs to the front porch of Nelson House which were carried out the weekend before. A Petersburg lumber company delivered supplies to the house. The old porch was dismantled, dirt excavated, stone foundations prepared, beams and flooring laid. Only the balustrade remains to be finished. A trip is planned for April 25 and 26.

The MIT Outing Club used the Nelson House and sent us a check along with a letter offering use of their two New Hampshire cabins.

May 10's big event -- our Picnic-- is on schedule. Beer donations were solicited. Lin Murphy will receive the cash for Pete Grant.

Stan Halpin once more offered his van for sale.

After the break, Arnold Wexler presented his excellent slide show of his month-long trip through China during the summer of 1980.

Ian Cruickshank's new address is Box 27 Star Route 68
Greenhill Road
South Chatham, NH 09037
(603) 694-3003

Coming Events

Alps to Alaska Slide Show

Pete Metcalf will present a slide-lecture on Wednesday May 6, at 8pm, PATC headquarters. His climbs include the Bonatti Pillar, Walker Spur, Mt. Hunter, and more.

Arlene Blum Film & Slide Show

The Blue Ridge Section of the American Alpine Club is sponsoring a two-part show by Arlene Blum on May 7 at the GW Marvin Center Ballroom, 800 21st St. NW, near Foggy Bottom Metro. She will screen the film of the first American ascent of Annapurna in 1978 and present a slide-lecture on her expedition to India's Gangotri Glacier. Admission is \$2.50 - 8pm.

Publications

Southern Rocks, A Climber's Guide, Chris Hall. East Woods Press Books, 820 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28203. 143pp. \$7.95.

Here is a brand new guide to rock-climbing in Alabama, Georgia, the Carolinas and Tennessee. Southern Rocks fulfills a real need well, updating and improving Buddy Price's Carolina Climber's Guide, which has been out of print for a couple years. The professionally printed pocket-size guide contains cliff diagrams, photos, route descriptions, as well as approach march information. Chris Hall teaches climbing and is president of the Southeastern Climbers Association

Hanging Around

ANNAPOLIS ROCKS, MARYLAND, March 29

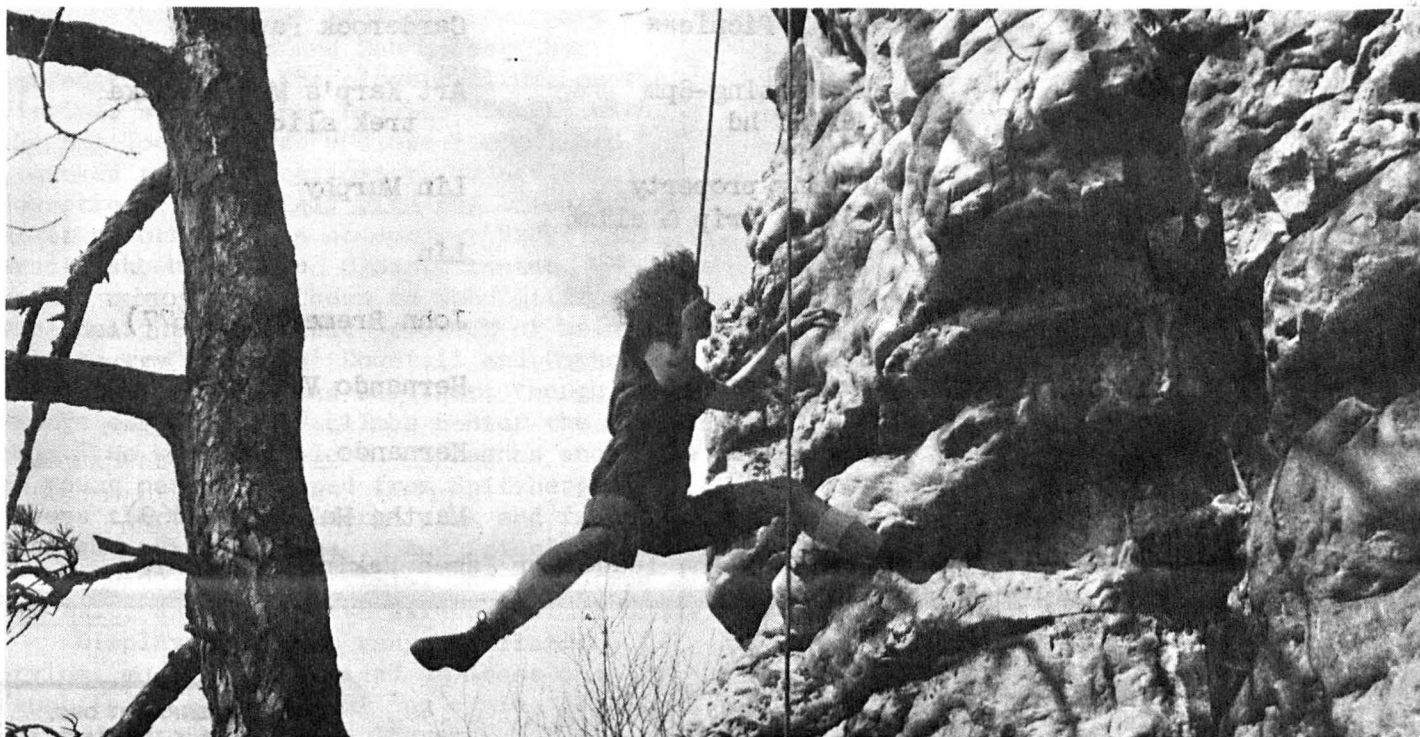
We had yet another warm, sunny Sunday for a Section trip. This was the first outing for my new car. Yep, the old Volvo's been traded in.

Signs of the times at Annapolis: We had to use the pull-out to park as the lot was full. Hikers filtered out of the woods while we assembled: a Boy Scout troop clumped back and forth across U.S. 40 a couple of times in search of the elusive Appalachian Trail; another strode out, radio blaring, and another walked along in syncopation to his bungee-strapped sleeping bag. Logging operations plus an increased number of hikers have changed what was once a grass-grown path to a rutted road.

For once we didn't rig Faint's Roof: early-season egoes couldn't take the failure. We did flail enthusiastically at Pine Tree Crack and at the face to its right. A couple of reasonable climbs were rigged too.

All in all we tuckered ourselves out, cleaned up some trash, doused a smoldering camp fire, (The woods are explosively dry.) and trailed back home, nodding to hikers and scowling righteous indignation at the motor bikers on the AT. Jeff Grove and Diane Yokel stayed on to work on the Crack while Al Rosen and Mike Adams and a friend, all from Annapolis, Don Barnett, Lin Murphy, and Gianni Battimelli went home.

Sallie Greenwood



Diane Yokel's Peter Pan start to Pine Tree Crack - photo by Charlie Dorian

BULL RUN MOUNTAIN, April 12

Disregarding the adverse weather forecasts, fifteen optimistic climbers took advantage of our written permission to climb the cliffs on High Point Mountain in the Bull Run Mountains. A relatively new route was repeated. "Airplane", named for its location and its airy disposition, was climbed by John Stannard (his second ascent) and James Eakin, each in his own style. John Bremer led "Charlie's Crack."

The other climbers found sufficient challenge and rebuke in the other top-roped routes.

Whenever we visit Bull Run, we always encounter unusual opportunities to socialize with the different people who make their way to the top of this "closed" area. This time we met some of the local land owners. Each had his own opinion on who owned what. Three trail bikes roared up the Ridge Trail while one four-wheel-drive vehicle attempted to follow the

(continued)

Hanging Around (continued)

Circuit Hike. On the hike out, we learned two new dance steps: the Beer Can Stomp and the Trash Bag Shuffle.

Hopefully Reason can be returned to the Bull Run Mountains and its natural characteristics preserved from human development and abuse. In the meantime, we try to do more than our part to encourage others to respect the land. In return

we ask only that others encourage us to continue these efforts and to let us continue to climb on these most challenging cliffs. The Battle rages on.

Climbers: Rich Alexander, Denise Alford, Bob Berger, John Bremer, Ed Cummings, Charlie Dorian, James Eakin, Sallie Greenwood, Jeff Grove, Bruce Hall, Bill Heironymous, Lin Murphy, Joe Ney, and John Stannard.

Jeff Brown

Climber's Calendar

May 3	Sugarloaf	Greg Christopulos(524-4061)
6	Pete Metcalf's slides	see page 6
7	Annapurna film	see page 6
9	Potomac Gorge	Lin Murphy(533-8512)
10	**MS Picnic**	Carderock Pavilion
13	MS meeting-8pm PATC hd	Art Karp's Minya Konka trek slides
16, 17	Vining property work trip & climb	Lin Murphy
17	Old Rag	Lin
23, 24, 25	Shawangunks, NY	John Bremer(654-3677)
30, 31	Hermitage, PA	Hernando Vera(299-2347)
31	Hermitage	Hernando
June 6,7	Seneca Rocks, WVA	Martha Hale(762-4769)

For information on trips call the leader or James Eakin(598-6047).

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