

FOUNDED BY  
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

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### HANGING AROUND

#### Caudey's Castle, June 9, 1985

Sunshine occasionally peeking through the clouds greeted the early birds at 8 am on a parking lot near Appalachian Outfitters in Oakton. Only three of us had ever been to Caudey's before so it was the thought of a first visit to a climbing area that helped erase the sleep out of our eyes....well, there may have been a couple of exceptions....and brought the signed-up climbers to the meeting place on time. By 9 we were at Winchester, stopping for breakfast at HoJo's and a half-hour later we found ourselves heading toward the West Virginia border. A 20 minute drive to the trail head, followed by another 20 minutes of hiking brought us to the West side cliffs at Caudey's Castle. On this side the cliffs range from 50 to 90 feet in height, well suited for top-roping. Bill, Kathy, Tim and Tom set up anchors and ropes on the two chimneys, while Helen, Paul, Rob and I headed around and down to the other (East) face to do some lead climbing.

There are three crack systems on the East face, the middle one of which had caught my eye on a previous visit. Rumors of its difficulty ranged from 5.6 to 5.8 so we really didn't know what to expect; however, after arriving on the spot, the moss-covered rock turned out to be quite damp--well, wet to be exact--and we readied ourselves for a lot of "schlipping and schliding" until we were above the tree tops where the sun had dried the wall. Not only that, but the humidity under the tree canopy was so high we all worked up a sweat going down hill to the bottom of the climb! Neither Helen nor I bothered to bring our chalk bags on this climb....the white powder would only turn to paste.

Rob volunteered to lead. After carefully working his way up the first 60 slimy feet to the sunshine above the trees he happily reported that the rock was dry and of good quality but that the breeze we had expected was nowhere to be found. Oh well, if one climbs around this part of the country, it's best to get used to heat and humidity 'cause that's what we usually get for the four months from June to September. Annywaaayy, Rob continued on another 90 feet or so to a belay stance taking nearly all of the 165-foot rope. After making an attempt, Paul decided that the rock was just too slippery for his taste and turned the seconding over to Helen. I had the luxury of going last--luxury because Helen cleaned the pitch and I had no chores to do but to climb. Second pitch went over an airy bulge but otherwise without incident. Turned out to be a very enjoyable climb!

In the meanwhile, back on the West side, climbers were giving their ropes and the rock a workout trying several variations getting their arms a good pumping on the vertical

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UP ROPE is published monthly, except during August, by and for members of the Mountaineering Section of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of Washington, D.C., Editorial contributions are welcome and should be sent to Editor, Up Rope, Mountaineering Section, PATC, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 before the 20th of each month.

Caudey's Castle (cont.) vertical wall. Rob and I looked at the tin crack around the corner as a candidate for our next adventure, but decided that it looked too hard (maybe 5.9 or .10)...maybe next time. After a couple of top-roped climbs, we headed back around the other side to find something interesting in to lead. We (Rob, Paul and I) did a little two-pitcher on mostly virgin territory to finish off the day.

Participants: Helen Grant, Paul Torelli, Rob Milne, Tim Powers, Tom Isaacson, Kathy Rebibo, Bill ? and I. Pete Grant

P.S.: During this summer, the Section is trying to make climbing trips to places we have never climbed or at least not recently. Caudey's Castle is one place that hadn't been visited for a while and, turned out to be a very pleasant rock formation worthy of many future excursions. I call it a miniature Seneca Rocks. A number of other strange destination names appear on the climber's calendar. I would like to invite everyone to join the Mountaineering Section in this "year of exploration" and make plans to come along on as many of these trips as possible to help us make (or remake) our mark in all the climbable cliffs in our vicinity. I have visited every one of the "new" places which I am leading and assure you that they all have some special attribute or quality to make them worth trying out. Some areas are a bit farther than our usual climbing spots, but all of them require little or no hiking from the parking area. At Chimney Rocks, for example we can park 100 feet from the base of the cliffs!

Chimney Rocks, June 23

"Where in the h--- is Chimney Rock?" was the most often asked question about this June exploration trip to an area the club hasn't visited in recent history. The answer was found first-hand by these eight brave soldiers: Tim Powers, Mitch Auerbach, Claire Witt, John Christian, Selma Hamel, Mike Timms, and Helen and Pete Grant. The rest of you can find out by reading on.

Eight am start from the parking lot next to AO in Oakton. Heading west on I-66 and then US-211/29 quickly brought the group to McDonald's in Warrenton for some initial nourishment and then, the race began. John Christian in his Saab Turbo was leading the pack, followed by me driving the Audi 5000 Turbo, with Mike bringing up the rear in his VW Rabbit. Traffic was fairly light so we drove with a heavy right foot on the gas pedal...I worried about the cost of the ticket if we got caught. Let's see now, about \$50 for the first 10 miles per hour over speed limit, \$75 for the next 10, maybe a 100 for the next 10...get the picture??

Driving up US-211 from Sperryville to Thornton Gap (at Skyline Drive) was pure pleasure. The Audi may be a sedan, but it's a thoroughbred at heart--as is the Saab-- and taking advantage of the two lanes going uphill, and the extra power of our

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Chimney Rock (cont.) turbochargers, we passed other Sunday drivers at speeds that must have left them wondering if we were escapees from a nut house. Incidentally, squealing of tires is often mistakenly thought of as an indication of high speed, but that's far from the truth as it actually is a sign of poor car or tire design---or most of the time, poor driving technique. I must admit that my tires screeched a couple of times. It's been years since the days when I raced my TR-4, and I have never driven a front-wheel drive car at high speeds before getting the Audi. Looks like I'll have to take it out on back-country roads more often and learn its little habits...like not backing off the throttle in the middle of a turn.

Chimney Rock is a blade of rock similar to Seneca that sticks straight up from the ground. It is only about 20 feet thick at the base, narrowing to three feet at the summit. One can climb to the summit in a single pitch with a 165 foot rope, but is best split in two if taking the easier South Arete route. I was using a 150-footer and ran out of rope just shy of the top of the main pinnacle. Both John and I led routes to the south pinnacle, but starting from opposite sides, our paths meeting 15 feet below the summit. Two top ropes were set up, one by leading a pitch to a ledge half-way up the west wall, and the other by leading up an overhang at the south end of the rocks. Wow, what an overhang!! I had to resort to using my head (safely encased inside a helmet) jammed against a block to relieve the pressure off my hand holds long enough to reach the next one above the overhanging precipice..

Other bit of interest: John and I rigged a Tyrolean traverse from the south pinnacle to the main summit. Helen, Claire, John and I made the crossing. It seems that a climbing rope is too elastic for this purpose; even though we stretched it tightly across the chasm, it sagged badly as we put our body weight on it. Otherwise it worked fine and was a lot of fun!

A thunderstorm at around 4 brought the day's climbing to a sudden halt. A stop for a light dinner and heavy icecream at Howard Johnson's rejuvenated our bodies and charged up our mental batteries to help face the Monday morning back-to-work blues that were sure to follow.

Pete Grant

P.S.: I plumb forgot my promise to tell you where Chimney Rock is: It is on VA-259 about 10 miles west of Timberville VA, half-way between I-81 and the West Virginia border. The shortest way is to take I-66 to Gainesville, then US29/211 through Warrenton, past Sperryville, past Skyline Drive, to its end mile or two past I-81. Turn south on VA-4 for 3/4 mile, then turn right (west) on VA-259, and drive about 15 miles. The Rocks are on the right, plainly visible above the trees. Park on a side road next to a VFW post.

### Harper's Ferry, June 30

A s-l-o-w breakfast at the famous cowboy's and a 50-mile ride brought our group of five to the sleepy little village of Harper's Ferry WV. There, at the ranger station, being honest and law-abiding citizens, we registered for climbing and headed out across the river to Maryland Heights, the most prominent cliffs visible to the tourists from the town of Harper's Ferry.

Our first assault occurred in the easy gully (5.1) to introduce lead climbing to some of our newer climbers. That finished, top ropes were set up in the lower, more vertical cliffs, where we honed up our skills for the rest of the day. Participants: Tim Powers, Selma Hamel, Mitch Auerbach, Mike Murton and yours truly, Pete Grant.

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## CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

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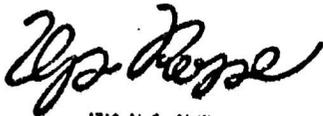
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For program information, call PATC tape (202/638-5306) during daytime; for trips call the leader or Tom Russell (301/869-8058). Day trips to toprope or short multipitch climbs require no partner. Weekend trips (identified with an asterisk\*) are to lead climbing areas. Please arrange for your own climbing partner(s) in advance. For instruction in basic and advanced rock climbing techniques, call John Teasdale (301/262-9128). Basic Rock Climbing is a four part course: introduction to rock climbing at a nearby crag followed by additional instruction on three regularly scheduled Section Sunday climbs.

July 27	Section Picnic & Swimming party James Eakin	301-977-5811
	Potluck dinner--bring one dish. Noon to ?,	
	2000 Flint Hill, Silver Spring MD	(on July 27 301-598-6047
	(East of Georgia Ave., Norbeck Road (rt. 28)	
July 28	Sugarloaf	Ed Cummings 301-933-1457
Aug 3-4	Hermitage/Wolf Rock	Tom Russell 301-869-8058
Aug 11	Annapolis Rocks	Pete Grant 703-960-6033
Aug 14	No monthly meeting	
Aug 17-18	Stover State Park/Stony Ridge	Ed Cummings/Stuart Pregnall 202-338-6140
Aug 25	Bull Run	Charlie Dorian 301-946-2373
Aug 31-Sep	2 Shawangunks	...
Sep 4	Executive committee meeting	...
Sep 8	New Market Gap	Pete Grant 703-960-6033
Sep 11	Monthly Section meeting, PATC HQ, 8 pm, Business & Program: Searching for Hal Goldstein and Janet Young In Peru and Bolivia, by the Incas	

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Mountaineering Section, PATC



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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