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JAN AND HERB CONN

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EDITOR'S CHIMNEY

Longtime mountaineer, onetime Up Rope editor and friend Chris Scoredos died suddenly earlier this month.

When I first started climbing at Carderock, Chris still did some bouldering and top roping. Noticing me fumbling with my anchor knots, he showed me how to do a double French bowline--"it's sexier than a regular bowline," he said.

One of the first Carderock hardmen, he put up Chris's Goat and the (notorious) Chris-Wex-Don Traverse, but most Carderock climbers will remember him for his energy and dry sense of humour.

The following is a reprint from March 1, 1948 Up Rope.

MOUNTAINEERING WAS SIMPLER THEN

By Chris Scoredos

My early boyhood was spent in Colorado in the shadow of the Sangre de Christos range and

it seemed natural to want to climb. Although our climbing equipment was simple, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and were able to reach the summit of many of the mountains in the range. Our wardrobe consisted of a pair of blue denim pants, a blue denim jacket, wool socks and ordinary work shoes with miner's hobnails. Pitons, carabiners and swiss edging nails were unknown to us and the only piece of climbing equipment we used was the lariat of the cowboy.

Our camping equipment and way of living would please those hardy members who believe camping is not to be enjoyed but to be endured. Our tents were made from household sheets and waterproofed by being dipped into hot turpentine that contained paraffin. An ordinary bed-tick stuffed with alpine grass covered with a Hudson blanket made up our sleeping equipment. Our food was always precooked and eaten cold which eliminated the need for cooking utensils.

At 3 a.m. in the morning we

started our climb, usually arriving at the base of the cliff at the crack of dawn. This early start enabled us to get to the top in the late morning; leaving the whole afternoon for the return trip. It is difficult to tell at this late date what our reaction would have been to some of the methods employed by climbers of today who carefully peruse all literature as to routes and also study photographs to ascertain which route will "go". We usually studied the mountain and whoever was leading the group decided that a certain route would bring us to the top. Our return was made with all possible speed, a pole serving as an ice axe for glissading on snow.

I have neither the time nor space to trace in minute detail the gradual changes in climbing equipment through the years, but I will try to touch on the more important points. Probably as most of you will agree, the climber and mountaineer is most concerned with his feet. His feet may make or mar his trip, and the use of proper footwear has a material bearing on his safety; for many are the recorded deaths caused by climbers falling during a storm, because they did not have the proper footwear. In all our early climbs only hobnailed shoes were used, later we began to use rubber soled shoes. On hearing of edging nails we began to use them and later found that by having one shoe nailed with edging nails and one shoe nailed with tricounis, the purchase on the rocks was much more satisfactory.

For a good many years we

believed or thought the overalls and other clothing worn by the natives were quite satisfactory for outdoors wear. After being benighted on several peaks (it still happens today, as most climbers will tell you), we discovered thjat a series of very light woolen undershirts plus the usual denim jacket was more satisfactory.

Beginners usually overstress the importance of climbing aids: by this I do not mean to imply that they aren't important, but if you have the proper footwear and proper clothing, you are more likely to make the top and enjoy the adventure than if you have the finest rope and hardware made and are improperly dressed.

[...]Although we have used the least expensive and different types of the most expensive cooking utensils, I feel certain that four lard pails that can be abandoned at the last camp are the most satisfactory for mountaineering purposes.

HANGING AROUND

Shawangunks, NY.

July 4, 1986. Although certain killjoy Northern Light barflies later denied their existence, there were fireworks in New Paltz on Independence Day, and quite respectable ones, too. All the citizens of New Paltz dragged their lawn chairs over to the duckpond on campus and turned up their radios real loud. The fireworks were timed so that you could just about finish your Bud before the

next one went pop and everyone went aaaaaaaaaw. The grand finale, mirrored as it was in the duckpond, was certainly no less spectacular than the Liberty Weekend display in New Paltz' sister city up the Hudson.

And of course, there were fireworks on the rocks. Karen and Stuart exploded up some of the Land climbs; Jacques and Martha blasted through Jackie and Classic; the two Garies Roan and Beal put on a brilliant display downcliff; and Helen got a few ooohs and aaahs as she casually danced up Apoplexy.

The sudden heat wave Saturday prompted some to forsake climbing in favor of cooling down at the Hole.

Sleeping was a trial, since the mosquitos were relentless and insatiable. Responding to weak cries for help, I trained my headlamp on Bill H.'s thrashing bivy bag and watched as one actually swelled to the size of a small cat after having penetrated Bill's carotid. I threw my thermarest at it, and it sluggishly made off into the night.

"It's the bee pollen in my bloodstream," he gasped, visibly shaken by the attack, "the bastards'll do anything for it."

Bull Run, VA

July 21, 1986. Was it the pouring rain at 8:00 a.m., or maybe the forecast of 95+ degree temperatures accompanied by humidity of about the same scale that kept people home on this Sunday morning? No matter--four of us waited extra long for the no-shows at A0 before deciding to go ahead and climb.

Since none of us were beginners at this game, no easy routes were set up. Warmups were Charlie's Crack and Bull Run Overhang which we all cruised. Then work began on a variation of Bull Run Overhang--placing the right side of the flake off limits and climbing the face only. Nobody got that one, although some of us got very close!

Next, we moved the ropes down to the Baby's Bottom area. I don't know the names of the climbs there, but they are all **HARD**. After a couple of hours of unsuccessful attempts at one route, we gave up (but promised to try it again on the next trip) we decided to do our flailing downhill a bit. We all made that one, but not the way I had intended when it was first set up. All of us avoided the overhang to a varying degree.

Although we failed to make some of the climbs, overall it was a successful day. I got my fingers sore enough that typing this report is a bit of a chore!

Climbers: Successful McKinley climber Rich Cunningham, Tom Isaacson, Helen Grant, and myself, Pete Grant.

Directions to the new parking lot and cliffs:

Take I-66 West to US-15 exit and turn left (South). Go 1/8 mile, then turn right onto VA-55 toward Front Royal. Drive on 55 approx. 1 mile to Antioch Rd, and turn right crossing I-66 on an overpass. Drive a couple of miles to the end of Antioch Rd. and turn left at the stop sign and T-intersection. Go approximately one mile, look for some mail boxes at a road

junction where a dirt road takes off to the left at a 135-degree angle. Take this road, which is mostly one lane wide, and stay on it for about a mile until a totem pole, 10 feet high is reached at an intersection. Turn right and go about 1/2 mile to a small parking area on the right where a trail marked with red/orange streamers begins. Hike along this trail 1/2 mile up hill until a blue-blazed trail is reached. Turn left for about a 1/4 mile, maybe a bit more, until at the cliffs where we usually climb.

Annapolis Rocks

August 10. A late and unorganized start for this trip brought five climbers to the breezy, shaded side of the Prow area at Annapolis Rocks. A few routes were rigged and some were even climbed, including The Sniveler and the Prow Direct. Present were Anne Baron and an office intern, Francois (of Paris, no less!), famous Alaska climber Rich Cunningham, and the Pregnalls. Various fourfooted support animals were also in evidence.

Bull Run Mountain

August 17. Bull Run is getting to be a fickle place to climb. We started out by looking for Charlie (Dorian) and got Charlie (Hurricane) instead. A couple of alpinists decided to join the crag rat crowd on Sunday--John Christian and Joe Wagner provided lots of good stories to enliven the day, and climbed enthusiastically to show us that there's still a lot of spunk left in them. Anne Baron demonstrated that training for Himalayan

assaults can also be beneficial for rock climbing, trotting up Bull Run Overhang with little difficulty. James and Nori also appeared later, James having failed to negotiate the steep trail with his new 4 x 4 and being forced to adopt a more conventional (but tiring) pedestrian approach. Of course, even though Virginia is suffering from the worst drought in history, our presence at Bull Run worked its heavenly magic and we were deluged--the rains came on in earnest just as Climbing Guide centerfold Karen Pregnall finished off Charlie's Crack. A bedraggled crew of crag rats rapidly abandoned ship, while the better prepared alpinists broke out complete foul weather gear and descended in more leisurely fashion. Also along were wet dogs Yankee and Genesis, and the rather damp and now mildewed Stuart Pregnall.

--Pregnall

FROM OTHER PEAKS

Uncle Remus Eakin said "let me tell you about the time we went climbing down in Dixie--worst drought in two centuries, one hundred and five degree heat, ticks the size of trash cans, chiggers big as Mason jars".

We were going to Stone Mountain, North Carolina for some friction climbing, undaunted by tales of "running" belays (the belayer runs when the leader falls) and 150 ft. runouts. Our adventure started in Chapel Hill Trail Shop where Bob the

shop clerk ridiculed us for even entertaining the notion of climbing at Stone. "Fire" rubber melts to the consistency of hot tar and the bolts on the wall get so hot you can't get close enough to clip in."

Having been on the other side of Yankee baiting myself, I pulled my Southern accent out of my back pocket and quizzed Bob more closely. "Ma'am," he continued, in that polite Southern way, "last August I participated in a major rescue. We barely got two Yank...I mean, Pennsylvanians...down off Grand Funk Railroad. Their brains were actually poached in their skulls.

Somehow, that had impact. We went to Moore's Wall in Hanging Rock State Park. The cliffs were a two mile hike up the mountain and a steep scramble down through catbriars and laurel hells. Climbs are three to four pitches long on good, solid quartz conglomerate, but the lines were not really spectacular.

Our first exposure to area climbers was a small group of army reservists with bodies by Peterbilt eating cans of catfood with gusto. Downcliff three teenagers in jams were hangdogging a 5.13.

We chose "Bugles", a moderate 3 pitch climb and headed up. Midway up the second pitch James called down, "I've got a thirty foot runout up here...thank God we didn't go to Stone!" As directed, I attempted not to pull him off the rock "with a sudden tug of the rope."

We tried futilely to work up some enthusiasm for a ghastly 130 foot offwidth

monster that was the third pitch. Oh, but it was fun. James demonstrated a technique he gleaned from Downward Bound--the buttjam. Not only is it effective in offwidths, it's hilarious entertainment for the second.

Just as we got off, a thunderstorm broke with lightning lashing the ridges and rain pounding the rock like a fist. The army guys hiked out. We're sure they were seared like hotdogs on the ridgetop. James and I found a deep overhang, sat on our packs and pondered what Freedom of the Hills had to say about waiting out electrical storms under overhangs. [It says, DONT]

Moore's Wall is a relatively small series of cliffs, but with hot showers and a lake in the campground and within 2 hours of Chapel Hill, it's a good alternative to Stone or Linville.

Sources for this and other North Carolina climbs:

--Southern Rock
--Dixie Crystals

CLIMBING AROUND WHITNEY

I thought that some of my recent experiences in the Mt. Whitney region might be of interest to anyone who is thinking about a trip out West this Summer or Fall. This part of the country provides a good introduction to general mountaineering for folks like myself who have become too accustomed to just getting out of the car and roping up. The excursion was done as a

weekend trip, driving up on Friday from San Diego, where I had spent the week. The main trail up to Whitney seemed like a super highway, too, but once I managed to get myself off that, it became easier to relate to the statement in Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills that, "...the major defenses of a wilderness mountain frequently lie below the snowline and the final scramble to the summit is anticlimactic after the epic approach."

I had gone astray when I passed up the first ford over Lone Pine Creek, which was swollen to a torrent by snowmelt from higher up. It being Friday the 13th, the vision of wet boots or (worse yet) wet sleeping bag seemed unavoidable. I finally went upstream and got across over a large tree trunk which was lying lengthwise in the stream bed. From that point, I picked up a trail which led up a steep gully where I eventually spent the night.

The following morning I emerged onto a plateau surrounding an outlet lake and soon started up a snowfield which lay in a glacial channel leading in the general direction of Mt. Whitney. About this time I met some climbers from the Angeles Sierra Club who informed me that I was on the route to the East Face, and that if I wanted to pick up the summit trail, I would have to hike back out. Time constraints being what they were, I stayed on the East Face Route and stopped for the night at the 12,500 foot level, just below Iceberg Lake. It had been 97 degrees in the shade the day before, when I checked in at

the ranger station in Lone Pine, 20 miles to the east, but that night there were sub-freezing temperatures and stiff winds buffeting the sleeping bag.

Sunday morning I accompanied the Sierra Club folks over to where they started their climb. This was the Mountaineer's Route pioneered by John Muir on October 21, 1873. On this particular day in mid-June, it was mostly a steep snow slope which afforded good climbing conditions. I made the foot of Whitney my turn-around point due to lack of time and 12-point crampons, but I should have known then that there was no way that I was going to get out in time to catch a 10:45 p.m. flight out of L.A. I did exchange names and contact information with the trip leaders, which I hope will be helpful in planning future trips to the area.

Getting out of the area was harder than coming in, since I was no longer in a dry gully. After about four crossings of Lone Pine Creek and some reconnoitering, I went up a stadium ramp ledge formation on the south side of the canyon. These ledges varied from sidewalk width to no width at all. At one point it was necessary to give up the undercling which was my last handhold and make a long traversing stretch over to where the ledge tentatively resumed. It didn't hit me until after I had topped out what a thin line I had been walking on.

The lower canyon was a jumble of avalanche debris, brush, rockfalls, and running water. I finally made it back down to the initial ford and

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Conservation: Charlie Dorian	301-946-2373
Publicity: Rich Cunningham	202/332-1931
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Carderock Conserv.: Janet Young	202/966-9091

UP ROPE

Nori Gessler, Editor

703/524-2068

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made it across with the help of a stout pole for balancing. Going out, the wet boots presented less of a problem. Finally made it back to work in D.C. on Tuesday morning, 24 hours later than originally planned.

A couple of additional comments are worth mentioning. The Whitney area quickly becomes booked up from July 1 through mid-September due to the camping permit quotas. However, the late Spring and early Summer conditions seem quite good, provided that you don't mind traversing snowfields and are equipped to do so. I would assume that early Fall is not too bad either.

Secondly, I had few apparent problems with the altitude or pack weight of 45 pounds or so. I would like to think that this was due to a

warm-up hike on which I had bagged Hawksbill Mountain and Old Rag three weeks earlier.
Lloyd MacAskill

MEET US IN THE MASNUTTENS

September 20, 21.
Registration deadline: September 5. Call Randy Taylor at 270-5937 for more information.

PATC is holding its 3rd Annual Meet-Us-In-The-Mountains weekend, a family-oriented retreat with hikes scheduled all weekend and a variety of activities interesting to both kids and parents. A children's program Saturday from noon to supertime features nature walks (bogwalks, treewalks, geology walks), and crafts. Workshops for participants include tips for the backpacking gourmet, ski waxing, signmaking, and a wilderness survival session led by a member of Shenandoah Mountain Rescue.

At night Jim Hamilton will entertain the group with folksongs and storytelling. There will probably be lots of star gazing and meteor gawking. Campers are encouraged to bring along their musical instruments and dust off their scariest version of "The Red Hand" and "The Cursed Thing".

CLIMBER'S CALENDAR

For program information, call PATC tape (202/638-5306 during daytime;

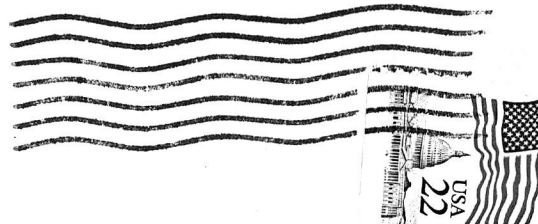
Sept 6	Sugarloaf	Tom Russell	301/869-8058
Sept 7	Big Devil's Stairs, VA	*	
Sept 13-14#	Seneca Rocks, WVA	Pete Grant	703/960-6033
Sept 14	Bull Run, VA	*	
Sept 20-21#	Stover State Park	Stuart Pregnall	202/543-3988
	and Stony Ridge, PA		
Sept 27-28#	Nelson Rocks, WV	*	
Sept 28	Little Stony Man, VA	*	
Oct 4	Cowhoof Rock, VA	*	
Oct 5	Bull Run, VA	Tom Russell	301/869-8058
Oct 11-13#	Shawangunks, NY	Ed Cummings	202/530-6806
Oct 12	Great Falls, VA	*	
Oct 19	Old Rag, VA	*	
Oct 26	Annapolis Rocks, MD	*	
Nov 2	Great Falls, MD	*	
Nov 9	Waterfall Mt., VA	Pete Grant	703/960-6033
Nov 16	Crescent Rocks, VA	*	
Nov 22	Cupid's Bower, MD	*	
Nov 23	Chimney Rocks, WV	*	

#Weekend trip to multi-pitch lead climbing area. Experienced leaders and seconds only. Please arrange your own climbing partners.

*Trip coordinators needed. Please call Pete Grant 703/960-6033 if interested in leading a trip, or to suggest other climbing areas.

Up Rope

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