



FOUNDED BY
JAN AND HERB CONN

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

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SIR EDMUND HILLARY DINNER

The Association of Nepalis in the Americas is hosting a dinner and reception for Sir Edmund Hillary on the eve of the 35th anniversary of Mt. Everest's historic ascent by Hillary and Sherpa Tensing Norgay.

The dinner, to be held June 7th at the Sheraton Premiere Hotel in Vienna, Virginia, will cost \$ 125 to attend. The proceeds will benefit ANA Cultural Center and its charitable projects (\$75 of the cost is tax deductible). If you're interested in attending, you have to send in your ticket request form (with payment) soon. Rich Cunningham (202-332-7931) has details.

LOU WHITTAKER SLIDE SHOW

Lou Whittaker will give a slide show on climbing in the Himalayas at REI the evening of May 25, 1988. Lou's show will feature ascents of several peaks, including his recent expedition to Mt. Everest's North Face (1984). Following the slide show, Lou will be available for questions about climbing and trekking in the Himalayas.

The slide show will be at REI, 7 PM, May 25th, and is free. For more information, call REI at 301-982-9681.

MARCH MEETING

Members at the March monthly meeting were treated to an enjoyable backup film left over from the MS's recent successful film festival. We viewed "Le Couple le plus Haut du Monde" (The Highest Couple in the World), a French film of the attempted first winter ascent of the north face of Annapurna in 1984 by French climbers Laurence de la Ferriere and Bernard Mueller.

The couple decided to attempt the route just after a successful ascent to the summit of Kanchenjunga, where Laurence was the first woman to climb an 8,000 meter peak without oxygen.

Although the couple did not make the summit of Annapurna, their film showed us breathtaking views of their planning and ascent. Their filming style brought us close to the thoughts and actions of the climbers and their party. The sequences showing each laborious rest step as they slogged up the mountain evoked the pain and determination necessary for mountaineering. Although the film lacked some of the technical proficiency and "BBC gloss" of the "Sherpa" film shown at the film festival, it was a spirited yet thoughtful look at modern mountaineering.

As the climbers reached what would have been Camp 3, they decided to descend. The weather was changing for the worse and they learned on the radio that an avalanche had crashed through their base camp killing two people in their party. At that point, they also assisted two members of a Korean party descend. Six Korean climbers had reached the summit, but four fell to their deaths while descending.

As if this weren't enough, we watched some spellbinding footage of the French climbers took of Yves Mandin doing the first ski descent of Annapurna. We learned that he died later of exhaustion at base camp.

The film also included good stills from the first ascent of Annapurna in 1950 by Maurice Herzog, Gaston Rebuffat and others. Theirs was the first expedition to reach the summit of an 8,000 meter peak.

Another climber on the Annapurna attempt was Patrick Sance, whose Houston-based business, The Adventure Company, helped us obtain the film for the festival. The same group attempted Makalu in 1987. They are planning to make a film of their trip to Gasherbrum II in 1988. Anne Baron, who did an excellent job of simultaneously translating the film, is also associated with The Adventure Company and has climbed with them in Nepal in 1986.

CHANGE OF OFFICERS

At the February monthly meeting, a motion was made and passed to elect Gary Prince as Secretary and Jeff Kramer as Treasurer. At the annual elections held in January, Gary had been elected Treasurer and Jeff had been elected Secretary. Got it?

POST SCRIPT TO PENNSYLVANIA ICE CLIMBING REPORTS

RIEGELSVILLE RATINGS

Big Banana: NEI4+, 3 pitches, 35' vertical ice crux.

Right of Big Banana: NEI4+.

Dead Deer Gully and Main Gully: Both NEI2 on approach, NEI4 at the top.

SHIKELLAMY RATINGS

1st Gully: NEI3+, 3 pitches.

2nd Gully: NEI4, 2 pitches.

3rd Gully: NEI 2+.

For all climbs: No rock protection required, trees available for most belays and rappelling.

For local information on PA ice conditions:

Appalachian Trail Outfitters, Doylestown, PA;

Wild Ware Climbing Store, Harrisonburg PA 717-564-8008;

Larry Johnson, PA Mountaineering Association, 717-337-1342.

The PMA meets monthly at Wild Ware.

FILM REVIEW "UP ROPE" AND "BELAYING THE LEADER"

Karen and I were treated to an hour long preview of the rejuvenation of two of the Mountaineering Section's most important climbing achievements. "Up Rope" and its sequel "Belaying the Leader" are films produced in the late forties and early fifties by the Section to demonstrate climbing and its techniques. There was only one copy made, and it was shipped around the country to be viewed by other interested climbers. Miracles to happen; the single copy survived in sufficiently intact condition to be preserved for future generations.

John Meenehan, Arnold Wexler and Don Hubbard took it on themselves to get the two films preserved and transferred to video format. Gordon Swenson's expert abilities (and precious time) were called upon, and he in turn managed to persuade Jack Smith to take time away from his busy schedule to participate in the films' rejuvenation.

The end result is a marvelous, occasionally humorous, and important historic glimpse into the past. The films, shot by Meenehan and directed by Wexler, show some of the Section's climbing stars in action. Don Hubbard demonstrates the legendary style with which he surmounted problems still considered difficult, and Chris Scoredos is given latitude to show off his prodigious arm strength in one sequence. Arnold Wexler, Tom Marshall (a really young Tom, to boot!), John Reed, Ken Read, and other notables are also featured. Several of the Section's accomplished women are given active roles, Pim Karcher, Marian Jackson and Jane Showacre to name but a few. A musical score has been added to the background, copied from original glass recordings owned by Arnold Wexler, and featuring the lilting voice and satirical wit of Jan Conn. Commentary in the form of observations from John Meenehan, Arnold Wexler, and Don Hubbard give the films depth and perspective from a modern view, but also explain the sometimes puzzling practices of the day. Technically, modern critics may find some of the film's transitions and color a bit rough, but given the circumstances, it deserves an Oscar.

Both films will be premiered for the Mountaineering Section this summer, hopefully at a special meeting to be held in late May. Video copies (either VHS or Beta) of these films made be ordered by Section members at cost. John Meenehan (703-323-9570) will take your order (approximately \$15) and tell you where to send the check.

Another highly enjoyable aspect of the evening's entertainment was the wit and wisdom of the company with which we viewed the films. Don Hubbard, surviving elder statesman of the local climbers, Arnold Wexler, who admitted to giving up counting first ascents in the Canadian Rockies "after about 50 or 75," John Meenehan, whose accomplishments with either camera, climbing or caving equipment are legendary, John Christian, still active in the mountains (and remember, he considers himself one of the "bridging generation," and Jack Smith, who graciously fought off long work hours to participate in the evening's entertainment--plus wives, friends and one of the most amusing and cuddly couch companions I've ever had the good fortune to meet! In the hour or so we had to chat, Karen and I were frequently reminded that these people had accomplished more than we could ever hope. Their memories and stories are rich and historic, and well worth hearing. Join us when we view "Up Rope" and "Belaying the Leader" and have the chance to listen to them, too.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MOUNTAINEERING

The International School of Mountaineering, or ISM, is a British run all around mountaineering school based in Leysin Switzerland. The school has been in existence for over 20 years and its directors have included such luminaries as John Harlin, Pete Boardman, Dougal Haston. It is currently headed by Pat Littlejohn. Several MS members have taken courses there and come back with rave reviews, so last summer I took the alpine mountaineering course.

The course starts with dinner Saturday night. Afterwards, the students and instructors meet to decide on grouping and take care of equipment needs (ISM will provide everything except boots and clothing). Each of us described our experience. The nine students included two with no experience at all, a few with experience on rock but not on ice or snow, and some with a variety of experience. ISM accommodates a broad range of skills and pairs students accordingly. The normal course spends three days rock climbing starting with one pitch routes on Sunday and graduating to an all day 10-12 pitch route Tuesday. Wednesday is spent on crevasse rescue and Thursday and Friday are spent climbing an alpine peak. Wednesday is regarded as a non-climbing or "rest" day and is scheduled to break up the week. Ours was not a normal week.

On Saturday morning, the rain was light and intermittent. We went to an area with one pitch rock climbs, where we reviewed some rope techniques and did some climbing. That evening, we were treated to another slide show,

this time on snow avalanches. Monday, the weather worsened; the rain was steady and soaking. Five students were taken onto a glacier to learn crevasse rescue. It was their first time wearing crampons, so they came back excited about the experience despite being drenched. The rest of us stayed indoors. We practiced crevasses rescue, learned some advanced rope techniques, and dangled off the rafters. That evening we had another meeting followed by yet another slide show. During the meeting, Pat Littlejohn announced that if the weather didn't improve we would pack up and head for Italy. The slide show was about an instructor's recent expedition to Bhutan.

Tuesday morning, the weather was unchanged. We packed our equipment, loaded into a van, and took off for Italy. The ride over the St. Bernard Pass was spectacular. Italy was clear, cool and dry. We spent the afternoon on some two pitch rock climbs picturesquely situated above a valley covered with vineyards. There were some local climbers there who managed to communicate to us about the interest and difficulty of the climbs. The routes were marked at the bottoms with red paint on the rocks, and the anchors were fixed with heavy duty bolts and chains. It was now three days into the course, but we had done barely one day of climbing. We would make up for that over the next three days.

Tuesday night we crowded into a pensione in a small village. The next morning we went to an area of 8-10 pitch climbs in the Val d'Aosta region. I was on a 9 pitch climb, each one a full rope length. It was mostly friction

climbing, with extensive thin sections in the fourth and fifth pitches. In order to climb this many pitches efficiently with a party of three, the two followers climbed simultaneously about 20 feet apart. It really felt good to get into a rhythm on this type of climb and I would like to do more of it. The hike down took us through some old stone ghost towns with a real medieval look.

After the climb, we drove to a trail head to hike up to an alpine hut at the foot of the Gran Paradiso. A sign at the start told us to expect a four hour walk. It was only two hours till dark so we hiked pretty steadily. I got there a little after dark. Alpine huts are not at all like AMC huts or even CMC huts. Although sleeping is dormitory style, the alpine huts are comparable to tourist class pensiones.

On Thursday morning it was snowing hard and nobody stirred from the hut. Around eleven, the snow stopped. By noon, we were off. Two ropes of us went to climb a satellite peak of Gran Paradiso. We were on the glacier very quickly. Most of the route was a long knife edged ridge, where every few feet was a 5-20 foot climb up or down. Mostly the route was Class IV, but there were sections of V. We actually traversed the peak and at the end had a 40 foot free rappel to get off. We got back to the hut about seven that evening.

The next morning the same two ropes left to try the Gran Paradiso. We were approaching the peak from a non-standard although frequently climbed route. It was not clear there would be time to reach the summit and get down to rendezvous with

the others at a reasonable hour (two folks had flights out of Geneva that night and Pat Littlejohn was leaving for Pakistan the next day). The route is very heavily crevassed and required occasional front pointing until it joined the standard route which can be safely soloed. We got to the summit about 11 AM. The summit is a rock outcropping from the glacier. It is perhaps the most spectacular place I have ever seen. There is a view of the Alps from Mt. Blanc to Monte Rosa. This view is set off by several high rock pillars giving a clear impression of depth. I was stunned. We descended the standard route which went by a different alpine hut. On the way down we stopped for lunch on the glacier. The wear of the three days inspired me to ask about parapente lessons.

We wound up doing as much climbing as a normal course at ISM. The last three days were 9, 7, and 10 1/2 hours of climbing and hiking. I could do nothing Saturday but sit around the open air cafes drinking cappuccino with other climbers. Students and instructors alike were exhausted. Sunday morning at 5:45 I left the hotel for an eventful 27 hour trip to Potomac, MD. That trip deserves an article of its own, but it would belong in a newsletter devoted to airline travel fiascos.

Paul Torelli

Editor's note: Paul will be willing to share information about ISM to those who would like to know more about its courses. Call Paul (301-299-8039) for details.

TRIP REPORT NEW RIVER GORGE, APRIL 15-17

At last somebody other than us came along to the New. Stuart R. and Madeleine Carter drove down to sample the excellent Nuttall Sandstone cracks, and they left impressed with the quantity and quality of the routes.

We sleazed down Thursday evening, and Friday morning we cleaned and top roped a route we named Absolution Arete, which just guessing is about 5.12c/d. We'll try and finish it off the next weekend. Then we wandered down to the face right of The Promised and climbed a route we named My Wife is a Dog. We're still awaiting a second ascent to confirm the grade, but it's somewhere in the 5.10/5.11 range. It's a quality route, two or three star, and several people remarked on its aesthetics. Climb directly up past a bolt, then hand traverse right a few feet, then weave up the face to the top. Take TCU's and small friends (to 2 1/2).

Saturday was cold in the AM so we joined forces with Stuart R. and Madeleine and headed for the Central Endless Wall, which is probably the cold weather area of choice. Stuart R. and Madeleine couldn't resist Fantasy (5.8) and Karen couldn't wait to get on Grafenberg Crack (5.9). Both are fabulous routes. After Karen polished off Grafenberg she wanted to lead The Diddler, but after watching Gary Beil make a looong reach for a hold at the crux decided to turn the leading duties over to her rock lizard partner. He managed the crux easily enough, but was reduced to a whimpering fool by the runouts on easy rock above. Much noise and loss of dignity ensued, but

courage was gathered and the final moves were made. Meanwhile, Stuart R. and Madeleine, fresh from their success at flashing Fantasy, returned from a reconnaissance of Crescent Moon (5.7) which they rejected because of not having eight #5 Friends for pro. They decided to try their hands at the famous Grafenberg Crack and were eventually successful. Dinner that night at Pizza Hut was wild, with the PATC gang mingling with Rick Thompson, Bob and Dan D'Antonio, Andrew Barry, Carl Samples, Mark Van Cura, and half a dozen Appies down from Boston including former Gunkie Alan Rubin.

Sunday was another perfect day after a below freezing temperature night. We ended up at the downstream end of the Bridge Buttress searching for warmth. Madeleine took over the sharp end duties and led Stuart R. up Hopfenperle Special and Midnight Moonlight (both 5.7) and Stuart R. made a start on First Strike (5.10a). Our rope was idled by Karen's sore shoulder and a fear of returning tendonitis (later determined to be just the result of sleeping on a deflated Thermarest!). We used the time to good advantage, though, and scoped out at least half a dozen more new routes to do.

Me and my moll were running out of adrenalin. We decided to hit on the punks at the New River and get juiced up again. Since we figured it would be a tough crack to nut, we packed all the heavy hardware into wagon and headed out. We also called in reinforcements; John and Jeanette from the Silver Spring mob loaded their new Beretta and gunned it down to join us.

UP ROPE

Friday morning was wet, so we shot the breeze with part of a gang from the Boston area at the local greasy spoon. After that, we cased the joint real good to get a feel for what we'd be up against. After a quick run around the roads to check out the get away, we made our first hit. Karen decided she'd been without a good hit for too long, so she grabbed the iron and shot up Dark Hollow (5.8*). That did the trick, but she got so crazy on that adrenalin stuff she went and duked it out with First Strike (5.10***). Gotta hand it to the dames; when they get like that, they're tigers. I just sat around and watched the show. Andrew Barry strolled by and he was loose and free, so we packed into the wagon and banged back up to the Bridge. I sparred a few rounds with Absolution Arete (5.12c/d) to work up a sweat and get ready for the big hit on Saturday.

In the morning we joined up with some of the boys from Pennsylvania, Rick T and E Ric, and Mikey Hoho and his moll. Some of you mugs might remember Mikey Hoho; he left the big jungle here to set up shop in Charlottesville. We all decided to go down and hit on Bubba. His City has lots of adrenalin to spare, all you got to do is go in and take it. It's amazing what a little show of force will get you around a place like the New.

E Ric and Rick T were going to hit Arapiles Please (5.12c***) to see if they could be the first to knock it off. Karen got impatient with waiting for their negotiations to produce, so she grabbed the hardware again and shot up Instant Irony (5.11a**). Mikey Hoho meanwhile had come back with good reports of

Immaculate Combustion (5.10d**), so I finally grabbed some of the action and got some kicks for myself. I liked that so much I figured I could horn in some of E Ric and Rick T's work on Arapiles, and got set up instead. That's one place you need a real strong arm guy, know what I mean? My moll got impatient again, but I was getting a little worried, her getting so hooked on this adrenalin stuff so quick, but I relented and let her think she got her way (better to let them think that's the way it is, you know) and let her gun down D.S.B. (5.10b). E Ric and Rick T had lined up another joint to hit up, and while they were casing the place I called in the chips on an old wager, Raptilian (5.10c**, R). We were all pretty pleased with ourselves when Rob, a copper, showed up. He winked and said he was out of uniform and interested in some action himself. We figured there was enough for everybody so long as he behaved himself. By this time, Bubba was crying his City was getting hit so hard that day. E Ric and Rick T finished working over their last mug for the day (5.12c***, no name yet), and we finished up lamming out of there in a driving rain.

The mob all got together at a speakeasy in Oak Hill, putting down pizza and beer until we were all busting at the seams from eating and laughing so much. It's a pretty good speakeasy, all the mugs hang out there these days since the other joints are too dumb to get the booze figured out.

Next day we motored back to the big city. We'd got a note from John and Jeanette, something about seeing ghosts and meeting a bunch of punks called Twisted Wristers that took John for a fall guy on some milk run, and we wanted to make sure they turned out OK.

CLIMBERS CALENDAR

Apr 30	Great Falls		
May 1	Annapolis Rocks	Ed Cummings	301-589-6261
May 4	Executive Meeting	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
May 7	Boucher Rock	Tom Kawecki	703-237-7227
May 8	Hermitage	Tom Russell	301-869-8058
May 7/8	Lead Instruction/Gunks	Pete Grant	703-960-6033
May 11	Monthly Meeting	PATC HQ 7:30	
May 14	Great Falls	Tom Isaacson	202-332-3710
May 15	Old Rag	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
May 14/15	New River	Stuart Pregnall	202-543-3988
May 21	Great Falls (MD)		
May 22	White Oak Canyon	Stuart Rosenthal	703-527-5247
May 28	Great Falls		
May 29	Carderock		
May 28/30	Gunks	Pete Grant	703-960-6033
May 28/30	New River	Stuart Pregnall	202-543-3988
June 1	Executive Meeting	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
June 4	Camp Lewis		
June 5	Bull Run		
June 8	Monthly Meeting	PATC HQ 7:30	
June 11	Big Devil's Stairs	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931
June 12	Old Rag	Rich Cunningham	202-332-7931

PLEASE NOTE: Call trip coordinators mid-week to make arrangements and contingency plans. In the absence of published trip leaders, call Rich Cunningham or Stuart Pregnall. Trips noted ** are to lead climbing areas. Please arrange for your own partners; the trip coordinator can help with arranging rides and other logistics.



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

