

NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE
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FOUNDED BY
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COMING EVENTS

March 28 - Virginia side of Great Falls.

April 4 - Little Devil's Stairs. For location see PATC Map # 9.

April 11 - Garderock. Belay practice with Oscar.

SCHOOLHOUSE DAVE LADDER DOWN

Fourteen years ago Leo Scott and Dr. H.F. Stimson made a wire ladder of cypress steps on copper-bearing galvanized steel stringers. With the help of other climbers this was hung from the Judgment Seat in Schoolhouse Cave. Since that time it has been climbed hundreds of times by visitors to the back parts of the cave. The makers of this ladder had no anticipation of such use, and it was never thought of as a permanent fixture. Apprehensive of possible crystallization of the steel, Paul Bradt dropped the ladder to the mud slope below the Judgment Seat during his visit Feb. 21. Those planning future trips should figure on using the Angel's Roost Route.

-P.B.-

GORDON STRONG

In our many climbing trips to Sugarloaf Mountain we have occasionally gotten a glimpse of our tall, erect, white-haired host. He loved the mountain and allowed us to share that love because, as he once put it when we stopped to thank him, he felt that he would be something of a "poland china hog" if he kept it to himself. His recent death reminds us of our debt to him for the use of his fine cliffs and views. In his generosity he further established a foundation, "Stronghold, Inc.", to see that this debt shall continue to grow. Thus, to the spiritual uplift afforded by the mountain is added that of a man who loved also his fellow men. For this, Gordon Strong, we thank you.

-P.B.-

UPS AND DOWNSFeb. 1, 1954 - Great Falls, Va.

Moira Armstrong	Bill Hemphill	Bill Klein	Jim Shipley
Joan Ascher	Jan Hemphill	Blondie Neuhaus	Jane Showacre
Phil Cardon	Bob Hinshaw	Dave Nicholson	Chuck Wettling
Ellen Davis	Huntley Ingalls	Ike Nicholson	Arnold Wexler
Joel Gross	Peg Keister	Mike Nicholson	Ed Worrell
	Bill Kemper	Johnnie Reed	

It made little difference that there was no ice on the handholds --- stiff cold fingers easily made up for that. Exercises began on the Corkscrew for the more uninitiated and around the upstream corner from the Corkscrew for the more experienced. The Corkscrew climbers were Moira, Bill and Jan H., Bill K., Blondie, and Mike, the last named by a more difficult variation. The climbers around the corner were Huntley, Ed, both straight up, and Joel, Jim, Dave and Blondie on an easier variation still farther upstream. Having exhausted the possibilities there, the party adjourned upstream, Huntley, Mike and Bob climbing Juliet's Balcony, Jim, Ed, Chuck and Mike imitating Romeo, and the beginners practicing in between. An aerial traverse from Romeo's Ladder rigged by Arnold, Jane and Johnnie completed the day at Great Falls.

A huge sack of pistachio nuts donated by the Nicholsons and a chicken dinner at the Wakefield provided energy for white collar and inky finger work at Trail Club Headquarters.

-B.N.-

Feb. 20-22, 1954 - Schoolhouse Cave

Jean Winne	Sayre Rodman	Ike Nicholson	Joel Gross
Bill Walker	Felix Peckham	Dave Nicholson	Paul Bradt
Chuck Wettling	Nicky Nicolson	Ronald Mascn	et al
Frank Sauber	Mike Nicholson	Huntley Ingalls	and gentlemen of the press

The above listing does not include all the rock climbing dignitaries who lent such a cozy atmosphere to the Jumping-off Place as the cavers went below. Since the trip was announced as a rugged climbing trip, unmentioned should also be the rigging used. But, alas, the unnamed climbers saw the unmentionable rigging and we might as well confess to using some of it.

When we arrived there was a ladder with wooden steps on $\frac{3}{4}$ inch manila stringers down to the Grotto. From the Grotto to the Nick of Time there were: (a) a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch manila rope; (b) a $\frac{5}{8}$ inch manila rope; (c) a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch steel cable; and (d) a wood step ladder as above (editor's note: plus (e) a train of invective from Rodman calculated to turn even the Schoolhouse atmosphere blue). Add a safety rope to that mess and mix well in the dark and you will see why Nicky was ready to come out almost as soon as she got below. Jean Winne and Sayre Rodman stayed to look at the Plateau and Dome Room.

Joel Gross escorted the Nicholson family and Huntley toward the back of the cave. Dave lost interest at the top of the Pendulum Pit so he and Ike joined the others on their return trip, and so to bed after 13 hours.

Joel's team carries the distinction of being the last to use the Judgment Seat ladder (see note elsewhere in Up Rope). However, the last man to use it was Felix, who dropped out of Paul's rope for this distinction, also thereby avoiding the Angel's Roost climb. Paul, Frank, Chuck and Earl, on their way to bed via the back of the cave, succeeded in jamming their rappel rope on the Judgment Seat.

During the fifteen hour absence of this team, Bill and Ronald had tried to extend the crawlway in the West Passage. Ronald (wt. 130 lb.) reports that the clay

Schoolhouse (cont.)

comes practically to the ceiling where they turned back.

With the excuse of retrieving the jammed rope, Paul enlisted Mike and Huntley, Bill and Ronald for another trip below. The latter two surfaced after a visit to the Dome Room. The rest killed the remainder of twelve hours visiting the Angel Roost and retrieving ropes. They report that only the steel cable remains.

-P.B.-

Feb. 28, 1954 - Great Falls, Md.

Billy Alley	Bob Hinshaw	Alice Marshall	Chris Scoredos
Dolores Alley	Huntley Ingalls	Tom Marshall	Eric Scoredos
Maira Armstrong	Ken Karcher	John Meenehan	John Scoredos
John Christian	Pin Karcher	Blondie Neuhaus	Barbara Thompson
Ellen Davis	Andy Kauffman	Mike Nicholson	Bruce Thompson
John Fillion	Betty Kauffman	John Reed	Bruce Thompson, Jr.
Earl Haskell	Peg Koister	Ted Schad	Arnold Wexler
Bill Hemphill			Ed Worrrell

It was, even by English standards, a fine warm day, and a long stream of climbers wound along the banks of the Potomac to disperse in small and enthusiastic assault parties. Unfortunately these parties vanished so quickly, round islands or behind buttresses, that all your temporary correspondent can report (apart from a general impression of hammering, clanking, shouting and rope slithering) are the climbs she watched, was dragged up, or was told all about afterwards. (Complaints to the editor, please, not to the correspondent.)

Huntley Ingalls and John Christian limbered up by swinging neatly round and up the Red Overhang. A number of people, including John Meenehan and Dolores Alley, struggled after the Sturgeon, and a larger number started to struggle but finished by straggling up a crack to the right. Meanwhile Johnnie Reed was impressively hammering pitons in a crack on the opposite cliff, but at his press conference later he said modestly that the climb did not deserve a name. (Ed. note: Peg, who got dragged along, says she can think of several -- unprintable.)

After lunch Ted Schad decided to lead a rope up the Karcherhorn. He found the foot of the climb flooded but undauntedly improvised a traverse just above the water-line. He and John Meenehan thereafter climbed by the orthodox route, but, much to the horror of the two Karcherleute who not inappropriately appeared at the top, he permitted the rest of his party several unworthy variations.

Arnold, Torrie and Ed all succeeded in finding the Little Handhold That Isn't There. Chris and Bob overcame the Great Falls Bulge. Blondie, Ed and possibly others may have straddled their way up a chimney near the Karcherhorn. The obscurity is due to the fact that each person who reached the top was told by all the others that he had used a handhold outside the climb. Discouraged by this and by Bill Hemphill's bloodstains on the lower holds, the party drifted off to watch John Christian dancing down the face of the Karcherhorn. He and Ed also climbed the top part of the direct route, but the Karcherleute had already left, despairing of contemporary climbers.

-M.A.-

March 6-7, 1954. Breathing and Marshall's Caves

Several of the rock climbers, although they sometimes hesitate to admit it, are members of N.S.S. and the D.C. Gratto, so our chairman had no difficulty reserving the cabin for this eventful weekend. The advance party of five, after imposing on Jan and Bill Hemphill's hospitality for dinner Friday evening, allowed Bill the unmistakable pleasure of driving all the way to the cabin, while John Christian and Blondie Neuhaus busied themselves with plans for a trip to Mt. Washington, and Bill, Jan and I murdered numerous lovely old songs. We arrived sometime after midnight and spent considerable time warming up, so that sack time was about 3 A.M. Needless

Breathing and Marshall Caves (cont.)

to say, it took a roaring fire in the fireplace, the smell of bacon and hot coffee, and some needling to get the gang moving Saturday morning. We made excellent connections with Ted Schad, John Meenehan and Ben at the entrance of Breathing Cave, and entered the cave about 11:15 A.M. This was my second trip to Breathing and I was interested to note how much easier (rock climbing is also educational) it was for me to navigate (Breathing having been the first cave that I had ever explored). The party broke up on several false starts, and I managed to lead my group to a deadend pit, which I have since found out is a "go". Back-tracing, we gathered the rest of the party and managed by some trick of fate to find ourselves straddling a corridor considerably higher off the floor than the Nutcracker. Since our female contingent was unable to stretch, we dropped about 50 feet to the floor of the corridor and continued blithely unaware that we had gone over the Nutcracker. After much squeezing and grunting (punctuated now and then), Meenehan managed to join the rest of the party at the waterfall. Several of the men roped down the slope and explored the corridor at the foot of the falls as far as it was navigable, then we all started back and were very much surprised to find that it took us two hours of steady travel to reach the entrance. We left two younger members still exploring, and returned to the cabin where we were joined by late arrivals Gerry Morgan, Dolores Alley and Chris Scoredos. So we watered the stew and winterized our engines for another cold night. Hot buttered "take-your-choice."

Since the river was up a little (why doesn't Ken Perry stretch a cable across it?), Sunday morning found us all wading the ford as the only access to Marshall's Cave. I think John Christian and Meenehan may have some good pictures of that fording (especially Meenehan, since Ted told me he said he'd never go caving with that Davis woman again. He was the only member of our party of twelve who failed to make the test run through the rungs of the ladder to the second bank on Saturday night). He did not go caving with us Sunday. (??)

Marshall's turned out to be somewhat less enjoyable than on previous trips --- the corridors were filled with water necessitating the navigation of crawlways at a higher level --- tight squeezes (not for you know who); some of our party had their troubles but made it both ways. At the end of the passage, we climbed up to take pictures of the beautiful display of soda straws and helictites, then started out. Other members of the party slid down to the stream level and explored some of the cave which is new to me. Several of the group breathed sighs of relief upon reaching the entrance and regrets that such a beautiful day had been wasted in a cave when we could have been climbing at Seneca. My sentiments were divided. John Christian's were not --- he is practicing saying "no" in six different languages to any further cave exploration. But I'll lay a wager that someday someone (e.g. J.R.) will get hip into Schoolhouse. And as for being a gentleman, John Christian takes undignified pictures of the female contingent changing from cave clothes to civvies and also four of us gals en masse, fording a raging torrent with Chris riding piggy-back --- where are the Men in this crowd??? (Cross my heart, we love 'em all.)

I hitchhiked a ride home with Gerry and we met the Hemphills, Blondie and J.C. at Snuffy Smith's for steaks before hitting the road for D.C. and civilization. All agreed it was a wonderful weekend, wonderful weather, and a wonderful crowd.

-E.D.-

March 7, 1954 - Carderock, Md. The following blank space is what Pim Karcher's next Up Rope will look like if I don't get her trip report!!! Ed.

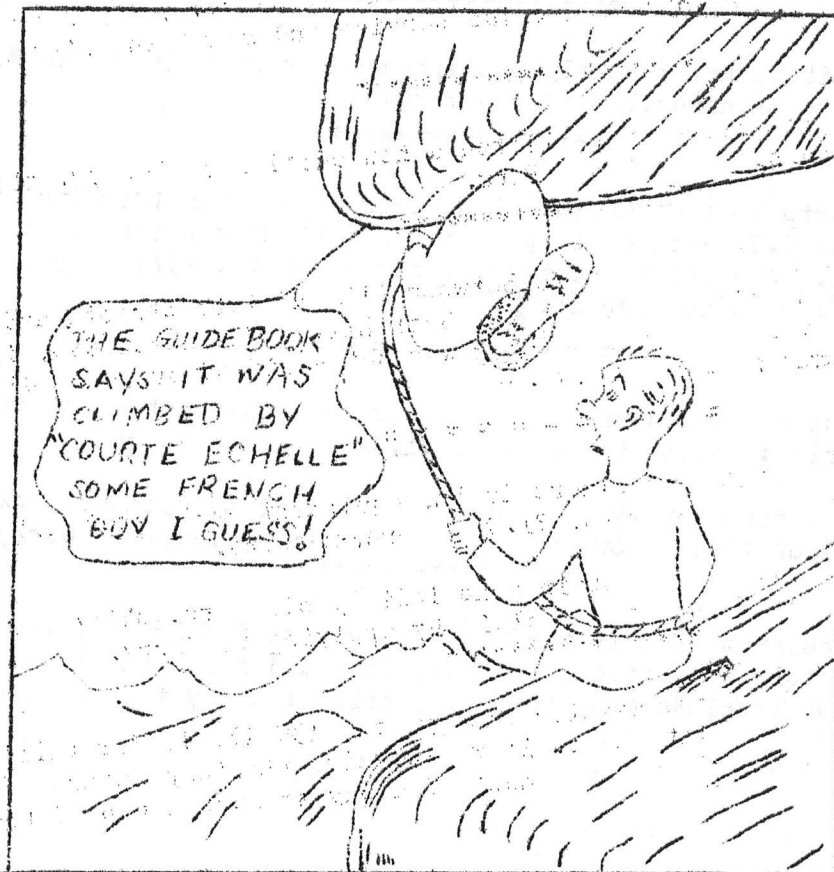
March 14, 1954 - Carderock, Md.

Meira Armstrong	Huntley Ingalls	Louise Marshall	Jane Showacre
Joan Ascher	Andy Kauffman	Tommy Marshall	Bob Struble
Phil Carden	Betty Kauffman	Blondie Neuhaus	Haynes Walker
John Christian	Peg Keister	Johnnie Rood	Bill Welsh
Bruce Finson	Lee Lowinger	Chris Scoredos	Chuck Wettling
Marion Harvey	Alice Marshall	Eric Scoredos	Ed Worrell
		John Scoredos	

The weather man must have forgotten to fix Saturday night's leaks in the heavens --- it was still dripping as we gathered at the Hot Shoppe. Undoubtedly, it was the climbers' smiles of anticipation that dispelled the clouds. Plans for practice with Oscar were abandoned, however. The new climbers were introduced to the Beginners' Crack and other nearby practice climbs, while the more proficient amused themselves (and the spectators) making statistics. Peg, Johnnie R. and Alice decorated Jan's Face; Herbie's Horror yielded to Johnnie R. and John C.; John C., Chuck and Tommy conquered Sterling's Crack. Ed again played spider. Tommy soloed on Wexler's Worst; John C. and Chuck climbed Leonard's Lunacy. The Kauffmans, Joan and Phil completed the ChrisWexDon, while Johnnie led Peg, Bob and Bruce on the first portion of the same.

Huntley closed out the day by a round trip on the Spiderwalk, starting at the top. Two carloads adjourned to the Walkers' for a beer, and were treated to a record concert, art show, and a most enjoyable supper. A large round of thanks to Haynes and Mrs. Walker.

-M.L.N.-



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