

FOUNDED BY  
JAN AND HERB CONN

NEWS OF THE P.A.T.C. MOUNTAINEERING COMMITTEE  
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August 1963

COMING EVENTS

August	4	CARDEROCK, MD.
	11	ROCKS, MD.
	17-18	OLD RAG, VA.
	25	PURPLE HORSE, MD.
	25	Last day to call SUZY (Phone no. below)
August 31 and		
September 1-2		SENECA ROCKS, West Va.

Sunday trips start from Howard Johnson's at Wisconsin and Western Avenues, N.W., at 8:30 a.m. (Come early if you want breakfast.) New climbers are welcome. Bring lunch and canteen. Sneakers are suitable for climbing. Latecomers look for note behind drainpipe at Western Avenue side of building.

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CHURCH SUPPER

At Riverton Methodist Church Saturday evening, August 31, 6-8 p.m. This is the annual event where climbers, cavers, and local residents renew old friendships while enjoying some real country style cooking. Be sure you don't miss out on this--call Suzy Moore for reservations before August 25. This is important as they must know how many to expect. Cost of supper is \$1.50.

SUZY MOORE, Overlook 3-1437 (Call evenings)

## THE ARMY ENGINEERS' POTOMAC BASIN REPORT

About six years ago the Corps of Engineers began a study of the water resources of the Potomac Basin in order to plan for water supply, pollution abatement, flood control, and recreation for the next fifty years. The resulting nine-volume report was released last spring. The two major objectives of the plan are augmentation of the river's natural flow during drought periods when it is insufficient to meet municipal needs, and improvement of water quality (i.e., removal of pollution). Essential features of the proposal are sixteen major dams and reservoirs for water storage, plus 418 small headwaters reservoirs and improvements in waste treatment and land-use practices.

Nine of the reservoirs would be constructed by 1977, the remainder in the succeeding thirty years. The largest dams are one on the main Potomac near Seneca which would back up the river to Weverton and flood out thirty-odd miles of the C. & O. Canal, and the Royal Glen Dam on the South Branch near Petersburg, W. Va., which would inundate the Smoke Hole area. The aggregate impact of the reservoirs on communities, agriculture, and recreation would be terrific. 1125 families would be displaced; 78,530 acres would be flooded; a total of 179,453 acres would be taken for the reservoirs and surrounding areas.

The Corps of Engineers admits that there are losses as well as gains when reservoirs are constructed but judges the desirability of its projects on the basis of the cost-benefit ratio. Costs include the monetary costs of land and construction and the estimated value of the agricultural and recreational potential of inundated areas. Benefits include the estimated value of water for irrigation and municipal use, savings in flood damage prevented, and estimated value of the new recreational potential of reservoirs. If benefits are believed to exceed costs, the project is considered good. Of course this does not take into account the intangible values which can't be measured in financial terms.

In attempting to measure recreational benefits and losses an arbitrary figure of \$1.60 per man-day has been selected as the value of recreational activity. This ignores differences in quality of recreation and makes it easy to show that a big reservoir attracting mass use is more beneficial than a free-flowing river used by fewer persons.

Conservationists point out that reservoirs are subject to wide fluctuation in levels and that late-summer draw-downs expose extensive ugly mud banks at the season of greatest recreational demand. They also make the point that there is already ample opportunity for slackwater aquatic recreation on the estuaries of the Potomac and other tributaries of Chesapeake Bay but that we cannot afford to lose mileage of free-flowing streams.

The report of the Corps envisages eventual removal of a maximum of 90% of pollution through sewage treatment in the Washington Metropolitan Area and 85% elsewhere. Analysis shows that 78.1% of the water to be provided at Great Falls would be for dilution of pollution rather than municipal supply. Thus the great bulk of

water to be stored would be for the purpose of flushing the remaining pollution downstream.

An alternative plan proposed by conservationists would remove 100% of pollution, eliminating the need for huge quantities of water for flushing. With an abundance of clean water in the upper estuary it would then be feasible to pump water directly to the Dalecarlia Filtration Plant whenever natural flow was inadequate. This would drastically reduce requirements for water storage upstream and probably make all big dams unnecessary.

The key to this alternative plan is complete removal of pollution from sewage treatment plant effluents in the Washington Metropolitan Area, which would necessitate some type of distillation process not now in use on a large scale. The Corps of Engineers dismisses this as impracticable and uneconomical. But research now underway in the Interior Department's Office of Saline Water and elsewhere is improving distillation processes and reducing their costs. Important break-through may come at any time which will make large scale distillation technically and economically advantageous.

The P.A.T.C. Council has long been interested in preservation of the recreational resources of the Potomac Valley and has expressed its views to the Corps of Engineers on several occasions. In June it sent a letter to the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors endorsing the 418 small watershed projects, opposing the Seneca and Royal Glen dams because of their severe destruction of recreational values, and reserving judgment on other major dams. It also stated its opposition to making a firm commitment at this time to any program of major reservoirs, pending further research into alternative solutions to the problem.

--Philip J. Stone  
Chairman, P.A.T.C. Conservation  
Committee

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CHAMPE ROCKS, WEST VIRGINIA

For those interested in advanced rock climbing the vertical walls and mostly overhanging edges of Champe Rocks provides an excellent opportunity to pursue such ambitions.

Champe is a scant five minute drive north from Seneca Rocks and consists of two spectacular flakes paralleling one another. The western flake is the only one seen from the road and does not present a good view. You have to stand at the base of the rocks to realize their true stature.

On a recent trip to Champe, Mike Nicholson and I completed a climb up the northern edge of the eastern flake. We named the climb "Ultra." A description is as follows:

Mike lead the first pitch up the tapering band of rock. He  
(cont'd on page 7)

## TRIP REPORT OF THE SUBARCTIC SECTION OF THE MOUNTAINEERING-COMMITTEE-AT-LARGE, ETC

Reconnaissance of Skagastólstind, Hurrungæ Group, Jotunheimen Range, Norway,  
July 6, 1963.

Popcorn & marmalade for breakfast! How does that strike your sense of the bizarre and unaccountable? No, it isn't a customary Norwegian breakfast, it was all that was left in the bottom of our grub-box because of cook's bad planning and the untimely advent of Sunday. And us with a 2405-meter giant towering before us.

This was only a part of the predicament facing our expedition of two as we toured Norway by Volkswagen and ferry in the summer of 1963. An even more serious lack than that of early-morning proteins and minerals was that of ice-axe and rope--a circumstance which occasioned great mourning when we topped the last switchback of Route 170 and saw the spires and snowfields of Jotunheimen before us. These dramatic and accessible mountains are the fabled home of the frost-giants, much feared in the days of the Vikings. But unlike Thor, we were here to tackle them without benefit of magic hammer and iron gloves.

Shouldering our pitifully inadequate supplies---landjaeger (Slim Jim with a full stomach), extra shoelaces, and such trivia--we set out over the treeless landscape toward our goal, some 7 miles and 1500 vertical meters away.

Heading a procession of curious ewes and lambs, we were making very nice progress until Alice exploded in a storm of outraged exclamations, accompanied by a thunderous volley of clapping and stomping. When the weather had cleared, the corpses of half a dozen honeybees were scattered about, and Alice was nursing various swelling lumps and muttering darkly about the "outer defenses of the giants."

At 1300 meters we topped a talus slope and saw the first of two small lakes, accompanied by the Norsk Tinde Klub and three brightly colored tents with ice-axes in evidence, but no people. Occasional patches of snow made our progress to the second and larger lake faster. At its upper end we turned our faces expectantly skyward to view the three peaks of Skagastólstind at close range. Instead of sun-drenched precipices, we were greeted by a blast of cold wind and the sight of ragged gray clouds descending to the blue glaciers and snowfields of the upper slopes. The Jotun inhabitant of the mountain had obviously determined to keep us from his stronghold, and he let loose his batteries of rain, hail, and snow.

By this time it was also obvious that the glacier before us would require ice-axes and rope, and the peak itself rope and possibly hardware. A brief war council was called, at the end of which we hunkered heads into collars, stuffed numb hands into pockets, and regretfully turned our backs to the heights--and to the icy wind. In acknowledging defeat, we were contributing to the world the information that the Jotuns still reign in their mountain fortresses, and we were also providing ourselves with an unassailable excuse should we be reproached for our unpreparedness or lack of determination.

Seeing we had turned away, the giant reduced his fire, and we enjoyed a leisurely downhill stroll, untroubled by thoughts of overtaking darkness. The phenomenon of the midnight sun makes benighting an impossibility during the Scandinavian summer and thus lessens the cares of the climbers.

As we limped into camp, with frequent pauses for Alan to readjust his shoelaces, we reflected that our ferry had been a practical if not a mountaineering success. We had had a good 5 hours of much-needed exercise, and Alan, to his discomfort, had begun to break in his stiff new German boots. Our only remaining source of sorrow was the contemplation of the refreshing supper awaiting us. Popcorn and--peanut butter

CLIMBING AREAS NEAR WASHINGTON

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738

VIRGINIA

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DEFLUENT RUN

CORK SCREW  
COWHOP ROCK ECHO CLIFFS  
POT HOLES

MADEIRA SCHOOL

YELLOW POND  
BLACK POND

GREAT FALLS PARK VA

RING BOLT

JULIETS BALCONY

BIRDS NESTS

MAC GORSE

GREAT TRAIL

SPIT Z BERGEN  
PURPLE HORSE

CURRIS BOWER

YELLOW POND  
BLACK POND

POTOMAC CANAL

BILLYGAT TOW PATH

WIDE WATER

FOOT BRIDGE

GREAT FALLS

GREAT FALLS, MD.  
MUSEUM

LOCK 11  
LOCK 12  
LOCK 13  
LOCK 14

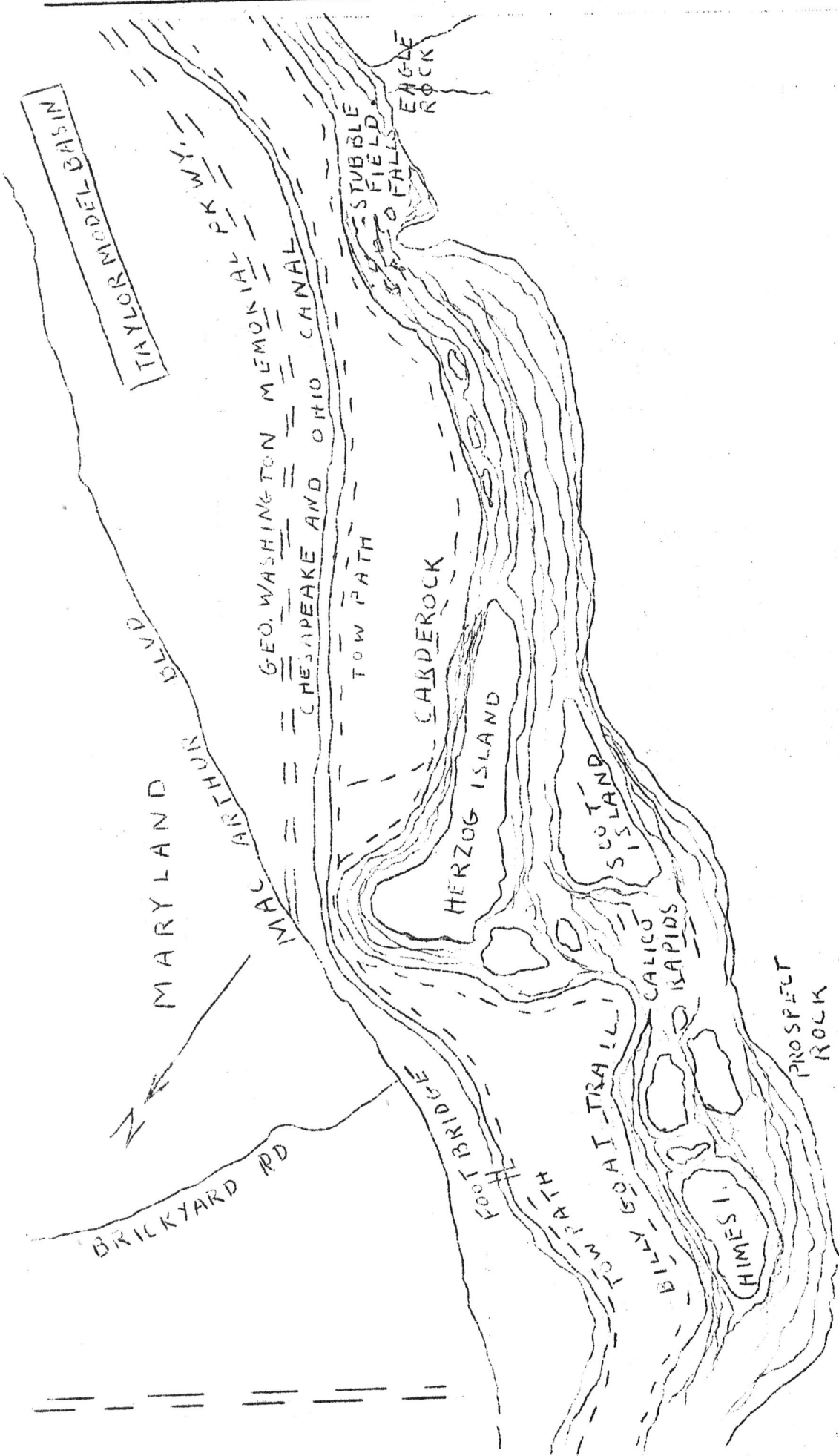
LOCK 15

LOCK 16

MARYLAND

MAC ARTHUR BLVD.

OLD ANGLERS INN



1" = 1/4 MILE

VIRGINIA

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