



THE ROC CAIRN



RENSSELAER OUTING CLUB, INC. — 15th ST. LOUNGE, R. P. I., TROY, NEW YORK

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SPRING 1954

RMC COLDEN DYKE CLIMB, MARCH 27-28, 1954

Mt. Colden, two miles northwest of Mt. Marcy in the high peaks region of the Adirondacks, was the site of a recent RMC snow- and ice-climbing practice trip. The north face of the mountain is split by a couloir (the Dyke) about 100 feet wide rising from Avalanche Lake to a saddle on the ridge of Mt. Colden. In the winter the Dyke fills with snow and ice which is well enough consolidated for ice climbing by late March. The slabs on the north face of Mt. Colden offer a challenge to friction-pitch rock-climbers in the summer but become rather solidly coated with ice in winter. Our route to the summit consisted of climbing the Dyke about halfway up the mountain, then traversing out on the slabs, and continuing on to the top.

The majority of our crew arrived at Marcy Dam Friday night (except for Dick Bailey's crew which came in late and arrived at Marcy Dam at 4 A.M.). After a fairly scroungy supper we sacked out and entertained ourselves with raunchy songs and limericks. The next morning dawned bright and clear - a few went to climb Wright on skis, the rest of us took off on skis and snowshoes, dropped our gear at Avalanche Camp, and continued on to Avalariche pass. The snow was soft with a hard crust on top, which made the going easy for the skiers, but miserable for snowshoeing - you either slid around on the snowshoes or took them off and sank knee deep in drifts.

At the foot of the Dyke we cached our skis and snowshoes and put on crampons. Henriksen instructed the beginners in step-cutting and self arrest techniques. We climbed directly up the Dyke. There were two small frozen waterfalls to get over - one of them took considerable step chopping. Henriksen was first up and belayed the rest of the party up the icefall* We continued on to where the Dyke leveled off and traversed out onto the slabs. The snow in the Dyke was well consolidated and the crampons made the going easy even though it was quite steep. The snow on the slabs was not so good; the crust was soft and tended to break through in places. Only Henriksen and Opsahl made the summit; the rest of us gave out about two-thirds of the way up, being very much out of condition.

*read "frozen waterfall"
(editor's mistake)

RMC Golden Dyke Climb (cont.)

As we were coming off the steep part of the slabs Opsahl tripped and fell sliding headlong down the slope, his ice axe flailing madly in an attempt to make a self arrest. Fortunately, he hit a clump of bushes which broke his fall, and then a second clump of bushes, which stopped him. He suffered only minor injuries - abrasions on his face and a small puncture in his leg, in addition to numerous bruises. The descent was made without further mishaps, though Opsahl was a bit shaken by his experience. We arrived very, very tired at Avalanche Camp that night.

The next day Win Oaks, Dave Shearer, and Carl Henrikson set out for Keone Valley via the Klondike Trail and Dick Bailey took another party up Mt. Golden in spite of the decidedly lousy weather Sunday afternoon.

Jin Butler

"NEW" ROG CANOES

Sometime last spring the club appropriated \$300 to be used to buy canoes and canoeing equipment, with the idea that we would be more independent if we did not always have to rent canoes. After a great deal of shopping around and various discussions three fairly battered canoes were bought from Lamb's on Lake George in November. They are 16 foot jobs and we paid \$20 apiece for them. During the next few months a group of dedicated individuals set themselves the task of making them seaworthy (they have since been restored to their original condition by these same individuals).

Sometime in February, before the start of the white water season, the club adopted a Canoe Constitution governing the use of these canoes. The main feature of the constitution is the charging of a rental fee which, though low, will contribute somewhat to the purchase of new canoes when this becomes necessary. (The canoes are not expected to last forever nor, indeed, very long.) At the same time, Ned Gulbran was elected Canoe Chairman to be officially responsible for the canoes.

A few weeks ago we bought an additional canoe in the form of a used 18 foot monster for which we paid \$50. It was bought specifically for use at the fall IOCA Lake George trip, with two possible uses seen:

- a) as a flagship
- b) as an island, if we can get an outhouse for it.

Along with another, privately owned canoe, which the club can use, this makes five canoes which are available to us.

To partly offset those gains, we lost the Henrikson Folboat when it folded over a rock in midstream. Another version of the story has it that he accidentally ran through a hydroelectric turbine while shooting Niagara Falls. Portions of the boat were recovered.

ROC Canoes (cont.)

So far, the canoes have been used at a canoe-tilting contest in the Campus Carnival, three weekend white water trips, and the big trip down the Delaware River over Easter vacation. They will probably tend to boost tremendously the interest in this phase of OC activity.

ROCK CLIMBING TALK AT VASSAR

Friday night, April 9, Hans Kraus, a pretty well-known rock climber hereabouts, gave a lecture on rock climbing, down at Vassar College. More precisely, Mr. Kraus sat and listened while his fellow rock-climber Dick Hirschland gave a running commentary on two very fine color films, one on skiing in the Swiss Alps and one on rock climbing in the Dolomites. These movies were really exceptionally good, and some of them were taken under extremely adverse conditions, namely with Mr. Hirschland, the photographer, and all his gear tied in to an apparently vertical cliff face. All his gear, that is, except for what looked like an exposure motor case, which he kept chewing on. Must be a substitute for smoking. Or maybe he had no other place to put it.

The trip was mainly an ROC - VOC affair. Seems the VOC is trying to get some rock climbing activity started, under the direction of Mr. Kraus. First step was naturally to get up a very imposing set of regulations including certain physical qualifications which, it appears, darn few people at Vassar meet. One of these is (you guessed it) to run around Vassar Lake (or equivalent body of water) for ten minutes, without panting when one is finished.

Investigating the use to which this particular clause is being put, this writer trotted down to Vassar Lake and found, sure enough, an embryonic rock climber running around the lake. Identifying herself as a Miss H.----, this damsel stated (unpanting) that she had been at it for 45 minutes already and was I Hans Kraus? Just after assuring her to the contrary, your reporter (trotting around to keep her company) tripped over an ironwood tree; and when he looked up she was out of sight. Sadly shaking his head, he departed.

Saturday that weekend was spent climbing in the Shawangunks and Sunday, waiting out the rain (this is not the worst sort of activity under certain conditions). A small group of diehards hiked some eight miles from the cliffs to Mohunk. All in all, a good weekend.

NOTICE

Out at the last IOCA square dance at Mt. Holyoke College, someone took a picture of five ROCers sitting on a mantelpiece over the fireplace in the gym reception room, banging away at guitars. We would very much like to have a copy, or possibly several, of this picture. Please notify us if you know anything about it.

EASTER TRIPS

a) Canoeing Down the Delaware

Hundreds of man hours of hard work on some former Lamb canoes were repaid with an enjoyable trip down the Delaware River during Easter vacation. On Thursday morning, after the canoes had been finished the night before, two cars and the Shearermobile left Troy for Walton, New York. We took the "80 mile route" to Walton, 80 horizontal miles and 30 (apparently) vertical miles (the odometer said 110).

Before the canoes were even unloaded a newspaper man was asking us questions. Pushing our way through autograph seekers and newsreel cameramen we found the river and launched our four canoes. That afternoon was spent in painting the rocks red until the runoff from the rain swelled the water level far above all rocks and eel racks.

From then on we traveled at twice the first day's speed, enjoying wonderful canoeing. We enlivened the last day of canoeing by playing "chicken" with bridge abutments. They won every time. Only two dunkings occurred during the trip. "Florence Chadwick" Behm and Dave Shearer went under in some white water while Ed Breen and Red Derbyshire got theirs not quite on shore.

After four days and 125 miles of canoeing, shuttling cars, and scrounging off a dozen or so very nice people along the river, we ended the trip in a Port Jervis cemetery.

Ned Gulbran

b) Rock Climbing In the Shawangunks

During Easter vacation a group of the rock-climbers of the ROC and RMC camped in the Shawangunk Mountains west of New Paltz for four days of rock climbing. We were fortunate enough to have very good weather for the whole trip and managed to climb a great many routes on the cliffs there.

There will be other trips to the Shawangunks this spring for those who are interested in rock climbing. We have established a new system of leader classification:

1st Class Leaders

Carl Henrikson
Don Bailey
Fred Hochgraf
Jim Butler
Dan Behm

2nd Class Leaders

Bob Stoyer
Chuck Stoyer
Ned Gulbran
Dick Bonker

The second class leaders may lead climbing ropes under the supervision of one of the first class leaders. We hope that having an adequate number of capable leaders will avoid any accidents due to inexperienced climbers climbing without adequate leadership.

Easter Trips - Rock Climbing (cont.)

We stress ability to judge one's own capabilities and concern for the safety of the party above technical skill in climbing for leadership requirements.

Jim Butler

CLUB ELECTIONS

On March 30 we elected new club officers to serve from then through next spring. They are:

President - Win Oakes
Vice President - Chuck Stoyer
Treasurer - Bob Stoyer
Secretary - Fred Evans
Cairn Editor - Bern Gottschalk
Members at large - Jim Butler, Ned Gulbran

Some of the activities chairmen, who were chosen by Jim, are: Jack Hershey, ski; Jim Butler, winter mountaineering; Dan Behm, rock climbing; Dick Miller, cycling; Ira Schnall, spelunking; Ned Gulbran, canoeing.

The elections went off peacefully and in the best of democratic tradition, being distinguished mostly by a lot of walking in and out of the room on the part of the Stoyers (they were nominated for 'most everything) and cries of "He cycles!" or "He doesn't cycle!" after every nomination. The cycling faction of ROC is small and very noisy.

LAST WINTER

ROC has had, we think, a pretty successful and certainly very active winter. (Academic casualties due to overactivity in ROC are expected to run satisfactorily high this term. Is this not the mark of a good outing club?) The main disappointment was the warm weather which made skiing difficult. The trips we have had are summed up below.

Winter mountaineering started off with a practically snowless trip over Thanksgiving around the Golden area, on which thirteen peaks were climbed in five days. During Christmas vacation there was a two-man trip using Grace Camp on Johns Brook as a base where the only climb in four days was Big Slide. A later weekend trip to the same area climbed Upper Wolf Jaw and Big Slide. There were three subsequent weekend trips to the Adirondacks, one of them to Giant and Rocky Ridge. The winter's climbing was wrapped up by the big Golden Dyke trip.

Spelunking has grown a lot in the past year. There was a big trip to some Virginia caves over Christmas. Local trips have included four to Church Cave and one each to Ball's Cave and Wynd's Cave. Twin Lakes Cave in Connecticut was also explored.

Last Winter (cont.)

Most of the ski trips, at least the local ones, were last-minute affairs, usually one day, and there were few of them this winter because of the lack of snow. But there was a big trip to the Laurentians over mid-terms which everybody enjoyed (well, almost). Our representation at the Yalo Snowski was not as good as it might have been since our school refused to grant financial aid for this purpose.

We tried to start the idea of regular songfests at R.P.I. but held two with such poor attendance that we gave it up. If anyone knows of some sure-fire publicity for getting people to come to these things please let us know.

Also this winter were the Hudson Valley "Ski Trip" and a few social trips: square dances at Smith, Holyoke, and a couple of unofficial ones at Vassar.

SOCIAL NOTES FROM ALL OVER or IT HAPPENS AGAIN

Our congratulations go to Ellie Osborne, RSOC, and Il Ratsep, ex-ROC, who are getting married shortly after Ellie graduates school this June. Good luck to you both!

In this connection (no offense meant) we offer two remarks on coupling off which are so good we feel they should be on the record.

Gardner Perry (MITOC), at a recent College Week - "Why discourage future chaperones?"

Pete Oliver (ex-ROC), at a recent Vassar Square Dance - "I frown on it." (grinning from ear to ear)

'PUN MY WORD !

We would like to thank Cornell's editor Pete Dirlam for his letter of criticism, which we have duly printed*. We think that he has summed up the criteria for good material very neatly. However, we cannot agree that this philosophy, at least as exemplified in "Air'n Our Views", best fulfills the purpose he states, and which we agree is the important purpose of an outing club paper, namely, "...to appeal to the more uninterested and "seldom seen" ...".

The striking difference between the COC and ROC papers is in their general organization. "Cairn" is a more or less rambling collection of reports and articles on various subjects which, we will freely admit, are of interest only to those who are somewhat interested in OC activities to begin with. We try to keep these articles dealing with our club as clear to outsiders as possible, so that they will be of more general interest.

*see appendix

'Pun my word ! (cont.)

"Air'n Our Views", on the other hand, strikes us as being perhaps a little too businesslike in its concise, organized, systematic presentation of admittedly very useful articles. It seems to us that the worst mistake an outing club paper can make is to take itself too seriously. The "more uninterested" reader certainly does not want to pick up a textbook on outing club for his leisure time reading.

We feel that humor, albeit a mite arbitrary, is important in interesting such a reader. Of course we agree that such humor as is only understood by members of our club or the people who were on a particular trip is not at all useful, and we try to keep this down as much as possible. However, for the rest, we can only talk about ourselves, what we have done and plan to do, and hope that others will be interested.

As far as format is concerned, we absolutely disagree. We think that our format is far less confusing to look at than a two-column organization. In addition, it saves space and is probably a good deal easier to set up. We would like the verdict of other outing clubs on this question.

BG

MISCELLANEOUS

Remaining trips this spring: Hudson Valley Lake George and the ROC banquet (sorry, members only). Probably some white water canoeing. Smith and Holyoke Outing Clubs are being invited to spring Lake George to try to alleviate a chronic shortage of women at this affair.

The next issue of Cairn, a couple of weeks from now, will be a special College Week issue written largely by Jim Butler, IOCA College Week Chairman. It will contain hints of all sorts on various ways to get to Colden, what to bring, what to expect, how the thing is run, etc.. We hope that there will be a good turnout this year since this is the main reason Colden was chosen over Katahdin.

In this Cairn, we are trying out something new by including a page of songs. This is done with the purpose of stimulating song-trading between clubs and thus perhaps raising the level of IOCA songfesting, which is in a rut. We will try to stick to songs which are not too well known but for which someone in a club will probably know the tune. In this issue, we have "Venezuela", which goes very well as a round without any instrumental accompaniment; "Darling Corey", sort of a mountain wail, and "Torelli", a happy song if we ever heard one.

Please give us your opinion on this move and any requests for songs you may have.

IOCA CONFERENCE

Conference was practically a reunion for the ROC, where we got to meet such alumni as Harry Ledyard, "Jorge" Houghton, and Dick Opsahl. Ledyard had previously been climbing with the RMC on that Easter trip to the Shawangunks (contrary to the opinion some people seem to have gotten at Conference, he is not the President of the ROC). In fact, it is the number of old friends from previous meetings, such trips as College Week or IOCA Lake George, that one meets at Conference, that makes the experience so wonderful.

We would like to wish the best of luck to Mike Cole and Gardner Perry in their new jobs and also take this opportunity to congratulate (all digs aside) Walt Dunlap on a very good job.

Actually, the most important election as far as the IOCA was concerned was the choice of a site for College Week, not that the position of Exec Sec is unimportant, but that all the candidates were well qualified for the job. In connection with the College Week business, the ROC delegation pulled a tremendous boner which needs explanation.

We went to Conference with no doubt that Katahdin would be chosen by a vast majority. The morning of elections, some of the ROC went rock climbing, intending to be back by 9 o'clock. Those that remained, when polled at the election, were in favor of Colden by a slight majority so that was the way we voted. When the others returned, we found that we were actually slightly in favor of Katahdin; since the vote had been so close, this became quite important. The Exec Sec was, of course, perfectly justified in not re-opening the vote. The whole thing made for a delicious bit of convention theatrics.

One last word: the issue was fought on the argument of greater convenience to Southern and Western clubs just forming (only one person argued that Colden was the better campsite). This is a very powerful argument; but we would not like to see it used indefinitely, year in, year out. In previous years, at both Katahdin and Colden, the greatest attendance has been by clubs in the Northeast. If the Southern clubs claim that having it at Colden will make it possible for them to attend, let them show up this summer. Otherwise we will be having clubs that don't go to College Week decide where the ones that do shall have it.

APPENDIX

The Cornell Letter

The ROC Cairn Editor
Rensselaer Outing Club, Inc.
15th St. Lounge
R.P.I., Troy, New York

March 10, 1954

OPEN LETTER

Dear Sir,

We accept the gauntlet cast in your last issue of ROC CAIRN. Contrary

VENEZUELA

I met her in Venezuela
With a basket on her head;
If she loved others, she didn't say,
But I knew she'd do to pass away,
To pass away the time in Venezuela,
To pass away the time in Venezuela.

I bought her a sash, a sash of blue,
A beautiful sash of blue,
Because I knew that she could do,
With all the tricks I knew she knew,
To pass away the time in Venezuela,
To pass away the time in Venezuela.

When the wind, the wind was out to sea,
The wind was out to sea,
And she was taking leave of me,
I said "Cheer up, there'll always be
Sailors ashore in Venezuela,
Sailors ashore in Venezuela."

Her lingo was strange, but the thought of her smile,
The thought of her beautiful smile,
Would haunt me and taunt me for many a mile,
For she was my gal, and she did the while
To pass away the time in Venezuela,
To pass away the time in Venezuela.

DARLING COREY

Wake up, wake up, darling Corey,
What makes you sleep so sound?
Them revenue officers are comin',
Goin' to tear your still house down.

Go 'way, go 'way, darling Corey,
Stop hangin' round my bed.
Bad liquor's ruined my body,
Pretty women have killed me 'most dead.

Wake up, wake up, my darling,
Go do the best you can.
I have got me another woman,
You can hunt you another man.

Oh, yes, oh, yes, my darling,
I'll do the best I can.
But I'll never give my pleasure
To another gambling man.

Well, the last time I seen darling Corey,
She was standing with a bottle in her hand,
She was drinkin' down her troubles
With a low-down, sorry man.

Darling Corey (cont.)

I'm goin' across the deep ocean,
I'm goin' across the deep sea.
I'm goin' across the deep ocean,
Just to bring darling Corey to me.

Go dig me a hole in the meadow,
Go dig me a hole in the ground.
Go dig me a hole in the meadow,
Just to lay darling Corey down.

Can't you hear them bluebirds a-singin',
Can't you hear that mournful sound?
They're a-proachin' Corey's funeral
In some lonesome graveyard ground.

Repeat 1.

TORELLI

I love Torelli, he is a friend of mine.
I love Torelli, I love him for his wine.
He has my watch, his wine is in my belly;
If it were not for his wine, I would not love Torelli.

Ay, ay, pysano,
Yip! La vida es asi.

You love Torelli, that's a funny joke.
If Torelli were on fire, he would not give you smoke.
Not that I'm so handsome, but my eyes they have a shine;
If it were not for his wife, we would not get much wine.

Listen amigo, and I will ask you this:
Why is a glass of wine just like a woman's kiss?
When it's full of wine, it makes you blind a little bit;
When the wine is gone, you can see through it.

I know a lady named Arabella Gross.
You know her, and I know her, but I know her the most.
Every time I take a drink, I drink a little toast
To your friend and my friend, Arabella Gross.

Mrs. Morales has chickens in her yard.
If you want to catch one, it is not very hard.
Smile for the senora, you'll get a chicken free.
If Denny feels like smiling nice, maybe two or three....

Viva!

to your expectations, however, our comments regarding the paper are for the most part favorable. Being familiar with the difficulties entailed in printing any newspaper, the mere fact that we receive one from you at all is decidedly in your favor.

There are certain aspects of journalism, however, that all OC editors ought to consider. The first of these is the element of humor. This serves one end: to make the paper more readable to a more uninterested audience. Yet with your humor, you do not even attain this end, for it is buried in articles that have little interest to those outside your own Club.

AIR'N OUR VIEWS seeks to appeal to the more uninterested and "seldom seen" by subject matter. This is our only contact with non-participants, alumni, and other outing clubs who hold the same basic interests as we do. Our material is selected in accord with the following principles:

1. Providing pertinent information concisely.
This is the objective of the COMING EVENTS article.
2. To record events in such a manner as to interest others in participating in a similar future event.
Although we also serve as a historical organ for the Club, a "blow by blow" account of every undertaking is felt unnecessary. Other files contain this information. (See the article on WINTER MOUNTAINEERING in the Feb. 15th issue.)
3. Passing on experience and information under headings which can easily be seen.
See the EQUIPMENT article in our last few issues.
4. To elaborate on certain issues of policy, organization, spirit, and services of the Club that cannot be fully covered in meetings.
Examples: The article on elections, the financial report, WORDS IN PASSING, and equipment and supplies available to members.

Humor cannot be a principle concern in filling such ends. Yet on the other hand, we do not seek to avoid all humor. We merely do not seek it as such. The natural good spirit and gaiety with which this newsletter concerns itself we feel to be far more important than the witticisms of a midnight typist.

A second aspect of our journalism is detail. We consider the chief virtue of AIR'N OUR VIEWS to be conciseness. No student wants to spend his time wading through attempts at literature imbedded in an outing club newsletter. Yet there is no relation between conciseness and the length of the newsletter. In cutting down the long articles such as your HIGH CONQUEST - OUTING CLUB STYLE, more room is available for shorter and more diversified articles. There is no merit in a four page issue just because it is a four page issue.

Art work is to be encouraged. If the talent is available, the editor fails in not taking advantage of it. The format is relatively unimportant. But we have found that a two column layout makes reading easier and the paper more appealing to look at. Color also increases the eye appeal, and the ROC CAIRN here wholly succeeds.

Cornell Letter (cont.)

The above analysis is by no means accepted dogmatically. It is hoped that the effort put into this letter will give rise to further discussion and examination of all outing club newsletters with the final aim of improving them all. It is our opinion that the papers of Rensselaer, Syracuse, and Cornell Outing Clubs have the obligation of setting an example for other clubs in the area. During the preceding months, those three clubs have well fulfilled their obligation.

Respectfully yours,
(signed)
Peter B. Dirlam, Editor

(editor's note: Open letters to the CAIRN editor intended for publication in CAIRN, which are always welcome, will in the future, if they are more than one page long, be published only if accompanied by a cut stencil, suitable for use on paper of this size.)