

FROM THE EDITOR

I'll admit it's been a long while since anyone has seen a Cairn, but I apologize only to those of you who contributed to this issue. I'm sorry you had to wait so long to see your names in print and I hope the delay hasn't discouraged you from ever again writing up trips in the future. As for the rest of you, maybe we should bring back a club policy of the early 70s - no Cairn article, no patch. But seriously, would someone PLEASE (I'm on my hands and knees begging - How degrading, do you people really enjoy seeing me in this state? - Hmmm, I thought so) write up something on the Winter Mountaineering and Cross-Country Ski trips that went out over break.

Actually, I'm beginning to come to the conclusion that the only people who know how to write are Cavers. Do Climbing, Canoeing, or Hiking somehow induce chronic writer's cramp? Anyway, for those of you who are new to the club, although a lot of this issue is about caving, do not get the impression that this is all that we do. In addition to the sports above there's Ice Climbing, X-Country Skiing, Kayaking, the annual IOCA Fall Lake George trip, Vertical Training School, the trip over Thanksgiving break to the caves of West Virginia, and of course Woppling.

Also, thank you Andrew for drawing up a cover, especially since I didn't even have to ask you to. GLWTW.

- WENDY HEATON

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THE FEARLESS CAVE LEADER
(Or HOW I SPENT FRIDAY THE 13TH UNDERGROUND)
by DAVE MACKERSIE

If you like to crawl around on the floor,
There's a crack here you might like to explore.
You just crawl in, and I'll follow behind,
And I think you'll like what you will find.

CHORUS

Uhuh, sure Dave, whatever you say,
You know we're behind you all the way.
I really hate to rant and rave,
But do you think you can get us out of this cave?

You might find that passage a little bit tight.
If so then turn your head to the right.
Try taking the light off of your head,
That is if your light isn't already dead.

Let's see, what have we here in store?
This passage wasn't here before.
This isn't the cave that I remember
When I was here just last September.

When a streambed flows underground,
It sometimes changes things around.
What I'm trying to say at any cost
Is technically speaking, we're not really lost.

Aha! You see? There's leaves on the ground.
I knew the way out was soon to be found.
Soon we'll be out in the cool night air,
All wet and muddy, but what do we care?

Well, we're almost to the end of the run.
I really had a lot of fun.
I hope you enjoyed crawling through the crack
Cause the exit's blocked, and we have to go back!

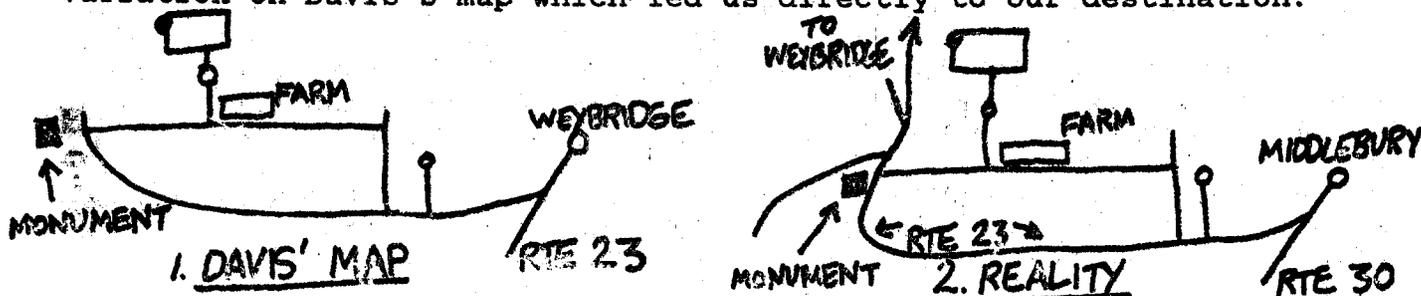
WHICH WAY TO THE BRIDGE ?
by HENRY WELCH

An adventure starring the not yet ready for subterranean
adventurers: Alan Martin, Jim Rasmussen, Jim O'Donnell, Jim Guilford,
Lee Schipper, Warren Weckesser, and Henry Welch

It was a cold November morning (Saturday the 16th at 8:00 AM to be
exact) when our intrepid adventurers gathered inside the armory.
After a brief delay while waiting for the armory employee to open
access to the basement area, our adventurers sallied forth to the pit
to obtain the necessary vertical gear. Since there were more than a
few grumbles about breakfast, our group split up - one to head
directly to Dunkin Donuts, the other to make a short detour to
Warren's abode for the caving gear.

Thus, it was about 9 AM when a gold Caravan and a green Toyota headed north on Rte 40 toward Weybridge, VT and Weybridge Cave. After a lengthy journey traversing the great states of New York and Vermont, our adventurers found themselves in Middlebury, VT for a short in-cave-consumables stop. Following this disaster struck.

Using a map supplied by Davis, we proceeded post-haste to Weybridge on Rt. 23. Alas, we couldn't find any roads near Weybridge meeting the description on Davis's map. So after three attempts and three failures to find the cave, we took a guess and came up with a variation on Davis's map which led us directly to our destination.



Upon nearing the entrance to this subterranean chasm we noted a large stream draining water into the entrance and icicles on the walls. Figuring that we ought to at least give it a try, Lee and I headed into the cave avoiding all states of water, both liquid and solid. As we approached the first drop we noted a great quantity of water flowing down the walls. While Lee and I were trying to decide what to do, Warren came in, climbed down the first drop and then the second. Lee quickly followed and I remained behind to pass information to the surface. After a short while Lee and Warren returned with the bad news - the main drop was impersonating a waterfall.

As we hiked back to our cars (4 of us dry, 1 slightly wet, and 2 very wet), we decided to try another cave. Crane Mountain was suggested and rejected, but this reminded us that there had never been a ROC trip to try Chimney Mountain Cave (a cave rumored to be vertical). So we climbed back into our cars, still in cave gear, and began the two hour drive to Indian River.

The journey was fairly uneventful until near Gore Mountain where white crystalline precipitation began to appear. Not to be daunted, we continued on to Chimney Mountain where the snow continued to fall. After some complaining by Lee, who was still wet, we began our hike up the mountain. After about a mile of trail and numerous encounters with small slippery ice patches, we arrived at what was reputed to be the main entrance to the cave. As Lee began to rig the rope and some of us entered the first room of the cave (to get out of the wind) someone asked the brilliant question: "Where are the prusiks?"

"What prusiks? I thought you brought them."

After ascertaining that the prusiks were indeed back at the trail head we decided to see what we could explore without ropes. As it turned out the entrance we were at had no major drops. The cave "What prusiks? I thought you brought them."

After ascertaining that the prusiks were indeed back at the trail head we decided to see what we could explore without ropes. As it turned out the entrance we were at had no major drops. The cave turned out to have numerous crawlways in and among breakdown and ice

patches. After thorough exploration we were excited to find an inch and a half of snow on the ground where there had been only a quarter of an inch when we entered. After heading down the mountain in the dark with continuing snowfall we packed up the cars and headed out.

Fate, however, was not finished with us. As I led the way out in my Caravan, we proceeded up a hill and someone said: "Where's Jim's car?" Sure enough his headlights had vanished in the swirling darkness behind us. After reaching the top of the hill we waited a few minutes and then Jim R. and I walked back to see what the problem was. We found Jim G. and Warren placing tire chains on Jim's car which had decided it couldn't roll uphill any longer. Jim R. and I started to push and Jim's car promptly spit out the right chain which had broken its strap. So while Warren and I pushed the car uphill, Jim R. concentrated on keeping it from drifting into the ditch.

Having figured the worse was over we proceeded out to the Northway to head back to Troy. All, however, was not uneventful. After about five miles, Jim's Toyota decided it was time for the engine to act up and it proceeded to do just that. After bribing the engine with a dose of gas treatment, Jim started back up the hill only to find himself drifting onto the right shoulder. Those of us in the Caravan quickly came to the rescue by a supply of more horsepower in the proper direction. We then headed to the Copper Kettle for a late dinner and were only treated to a little more excitement afterwards when Jim's car executed an impressive fishtail at 40 Mph.

So, in the future it is best to remember which way it is to Weybridge instead of trying to climb a chimney while it's snowing.

THE HISTORY OF KNOX CAVE
by PAUL PARKER, UCONN OC

The cave was known to locals for about 200 years, but became fully explored after it was "discovered" by professional cavers in the 30s.

Soon after, the cave was commercialized with wooden stairs, walks, and a gate. The commercial venture wasn't too profitable so a rollerskating rink was built near the entrance. Although the rink surpassed the cave as an attraction, the whole operation failed financially in 1959 and was abandoned.

In the early 60s, the National Spelological Society obtained permission to lease the rink as a field headquarters for caving. As these plans neared completion, it burned down & Knox returned to its wild state.

In November of 1970, the old gate was re-established at the entrance to the cave by the Mohawk-Hudson Grotto of the NSS. Entering the cave required knowing the combination to the lock on the gate. The Syracuse University Outing Club controlled this information.

In 1979, Northeastern Caving Conservancy, managed by Tammy Hauser, took over management of the cave. Permission to enter the cave is obtained by contacting her at (518)439-8669.

Knox is closed between Oct. 15 and May each year because of ice build up over the entrance. A huge block of ice fell and killed one caver and injured another before this policy was instated.

NORTHEASTERN OUTING CLUB CONFERENCE
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT, 8-10 NOVEMBER 1985
(or WHERE GUY MET EMILY)

by WENDY HEATON

Well it's early Saturday night and here I am at some lounge in a UVM dorm barely hearing the bluegrass music, dancing, and drinking going on downstairs. I'm not down there because...because I'm being a good Cairn editor and writing a summary of this conference?? (highly doubtful)

Friday night the seven of us (Guy, Ray, Paul, Dave R, Jim O'D, Gwen, and me) checked in at the UVM Outing Club Building - Yes, some schools do have their priorities right - and then split up to check out the other Outing Clubs here and explore downtown Burlington. Dave Reed showed some of the Wellsley group how to builder using orange 69¢ stickers to mark the routes up the buildings. Others of us cruised downtown where there was actually a dozen bars with long lines of people waiting to get in - it's definately not Troy.

In fact, the atmosphere here isn't one bit like Troy, so for any of you guys who are habitually complaining about the ratio at RPI, or in the club, this is definately a trip worth your time next year (Yes the conference is an annual event). Most of the people here at the conference are of the better sex and seem to be easy to meet.

Later Friday night we all crashed in a dorm laundry room and got woken up the next morning by the alarms from everyone's watches, all different times of course. After a breakfast of Common's type food, we played some get acquainted games outside then went to the main event - the seminars. There was about 25 in all of which everyone had time to hit about five. Some were on skills like map reading, knots, cooking in the wild, preventing injuries, and canoe tripping. Others were actual activities: a short hike, outdoor games, and checking out the UVM climbing wall. But the main emphasis was on developing leadership qualities: running winter mountaineering school, running freshman trips, and just plain making memorable, quality trips.

Guy led a seminar called "Getting Outing Clubs to Interact". Actually, he didn't just talk about it, he and Dave acted and put together a list of major trips all the Outing Clubs present were planning for the future, which they later distributed to all the Clubs.

After a good dinner, we listened to a speaker from Outward Bound. Outward Bound is a program aimed at developing the potential of people of all ages and backgrounds by challenging them physically and emotionally in the out-of-doors. A lot of their trips are just like the ones we do where neophytes get a chance to learn that they're capable of doing more than they had thought and enjoy it too. You remember how it was: "No way! You want me to do WHAT?" He discussed five qualities at the core of every real trip leader:

- 1 - Good listener
- 2 - Enthusiastic
- 3 - Encouraging
- 4 - Purposeful
- 5 - Has Pride

and reminded us of problems resulting from poor leadership and of the fact that one never truly becomes a leader, it's a continual process which requires being adaptable to new situations and people.

All in all, as you could find out by asking any of us who went, the weekend offered every opportunity for meeting members of various Outing Clubs, sharing our diverse backgrounds and experiences, learning technical and leadership skills and of course having fun. Speaking of which...It's time to go downstairs and check out that keg.

CONVERSATION OVERHEARD AT UVM CONFERENCE

SHE: Get that out of my mouth!

MALE1: No, push it down her throat.

MALE2: I don't know, it might cause deep trauma.

NOT A CAVING STORY by VICTOR DUCK

NOTE: This has been placed under the genre of fiction - Unless of course you believe Victor Duck exists.

For those of you who may have wondered how all those Citrullus Vulgaris suddenly started growing on buildings late last November, I have a story to tell about the night your favorite duck learned a lesson.

Late one night I and several other ducks went Citrullus Vulgariting. I was with Duck X and one of the places we wanted to add some seasonal spirit to was the third floor ledge of the Troy building. Well, Duck X tried first - he refused to walk out on the ledge, and soon gave up on ascending the side of the building.

And so, arrogant me, Victor Duck, decided it was really easy and tried my luck next. I would show Duck X that I was not afraid. My first approach was to go from a third story window and onto the ledge. However, while I could walk out on the ledge without a ~~C. Vulgaris~~, I could not do so while holding the Citrullus Vulgaris and manage to also place it on the corner. Looking down three stories was quite an experience, it was like all those scenes I'd watched on TV. Only, now it was technicolor real and the idea that I suddenly had the power to jump & end my life almost instantaneously by merely moving a few inches intrigued me. As I came back in from the ledge, I was scared but also amazed at what it had been like to stare death in the face.

My second approach was to try the stairstep way up along the corner which unfortunately was covered with ivy. No, dear reader, even after that first scare I was not ready to call it quits (birdbrains, I guess).

Anyway, I climbed up almost half way and then because of ivy growing

in a crack I couldn't ascend any further so I gave up and started to climb down, but found I COULDN'T - I felt like I'd most certainly fall and the ground looked so far away.

Why hadn't I practiced a bit of down climbing while I was near the bottom? Oh well, I'd just try a different way down, but that attempt also didn't work and now I was beginning to feel a bit of fear rising inside me. Plus, my right foot was getting the shakes so I rested it with the heel down low and that helped somewhat. How was I to get down besides the obvious way of falling?

Far below me, safely standing on the ground, were four other ducks who were attempting to create a diversion so students passing by would not notice me, Victor Duck, on the side of the building. I called down to them but fear had overtaken my voice and no one heard me. Why wouldn't anyone turn around and answer? Meanwhile, I did my best to fight the fear whose presence was only crippling me. An ugly thought flashed through my head: What if I'd made it to the top, and realized there I couldn't downclimb?

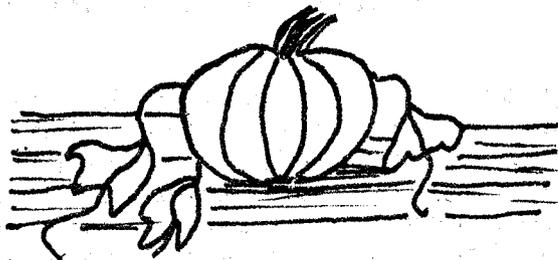
I'd always taken rope for granted, but this was not an ROC rock climbing trip, there was no rope - today a fall would be for real.

Again I called out to my Duck friends below and this time one of them suggested a way down. I tried but half way through it didn't seem like it would work either so I grabbed again for my original position. By now my wings were beginning to feel a bit blown out and the fear was harder to suppress. I was still stuck, couldn't they see I was scared?

Then Duck X, whom I had previously laughed at in my mind for being cautious, came over to the foot of the building and started trying to talk me down. Before I knew it, I had managed to make it down one step and after that the rest wasn't too bad - that first small descent had restored my hope in getting back to ground zero.

When my webbed feet were finally on solid ground, I felt quite shook up and wanted to walk off and be alone, but didn't because I didn't want anyone to start worrying I'd gotten caught by Security. Security does not like ducks, *Citrus Vulgaris*, or especially *Cucurbita Pepo*. Then I heard a freshman Duck tell how he'd gotten a C. V. on the ledge corner by traversing across from the window, although he did use a smaller pumpkin than the one we'd tried to place there.

I looked up, saw it, and thought: Victor, next time be more realistic about your abilities and have some respect for reality. My friends, I hope your arrogance & foolhardiness never puts you in a similar situation.



WOOL AND WET FEET

(revised from the October 1974 Cairn by Bob Harris)

I hope to relate a quick, but understandable, summary of why one often hears their trip leader scream "WEAR WOOL." I will touch on such subjects as hypo-thermia, frostbite, windchill, exposure, and shock.

Normally one's core (inside the body) temperature is around 100° F, the skin a bit lower. The skin temperature may vary considerably and one will survive without complications. Indeed, even a localized patch of frostbite or a small burn will in general not prove fatal, of itself. The core temperature can not be allowed to vary more than a few degrees, else all one's bodily processes will depart from the normal condition. Specifically, when the core temperature reaches 90° F one's brain is so numbed that he cannot think well or coordinate his muscles. He CANNOT help himself recover, even if he has a stove, adequate tent, and the best down clothing ever made. Chances are that he will just stumble around in a daze, until he collapses, and then dies. The coroner will label it death by exposure, also known as terminal hypothermia.

Water is an excellent conductor of heat. Keep dry at all costs. Wind increases the rate of heat transfer, even more so if it acts upon a wet surface. Cold of course plays a major part in the chilling process, but even 70° F is cold enough if it is also wet and windy.

Dry clothing protects you. An outer shell keeps your clothes dry. Wool and most synthetics retain some air in them even when wet. And cotton (jeans) is useless when wet. Also, your head is a big heat radiator - cover it.

Your physical condition prior to the inclement conditions is a rather important factor. By this I mean how much sleep you have had, how much effort you have expended to get where you are, and to a lesser extent the shape you are in. When one is tired, as at the end of a long hike, he has less reserves to aid in the struggle to maintain barely able to generate enough heat to stay alive. The "hearty" souls who keep warm by a rapid hiking pace, must slow down, and chill. Those already weakened can not spare the energy to help their friend, but do and, then, the remaining few must tend for all, if any remain (Incidentally, the general depression of all vital functions - called hypothermia - if caused by loss of heat, is very similar to the condition known as shock. In shock, one desires to preserve the body's heat; in hypothermia, one must add to it).

Food is an important ally when trying to keep warm. One who constantly nibbles is continually replenishing the energy he loses to the environment. Water is also important: strenuous exercise requires about the same amount of water, irregardless of the temperature. Although one does not feel as thirsty in cold, wet weather, the need is there anyway.

The treatment for exposure is to rewarm the person as rapidly as possible, without burning him of course. Dry clothing, a fire or stove, warm drinks (if he is conscious), all help. A shelter of some sort is always desirable. If it is more than the first symptoms you are treating, it may be necessary to improvise a shelter, and place the stricken person in a sleeping bag with someone who is still functioning well. Remember to check over everyone else too.

SKI TECHNIQUES - RUT TOURING

by RAY TICE

Perhaps in your skiing of unplowed roads, you've come across that strange snow formation commonly known as the rut. To aid your technique in dealing with this condition, I thought I'd give a few pointers.

Uphill. This is the easy one. Just ski in the bombproof snow left between two ruts. (Lake Willoughby skiers take care not to gaff the beagle with your ski poles.)

Now for the hard part. DOWNhill. It might be tempting to try to ski on the relatively soft snow between the ruts, but a few flying faceplants reveal that you're sure to eventually drop a tip into a rut.

So, the way to go is to put both skis into the same rut (unless of course you enjoy doing very wide splits). This might not sound too difficult, but usually one ski tries to ride on top of the other.

Turning is easy. Since your course is all picked out for you, to turn, simply pick up the outside ski and place it against the side of the rut. Just be sure to watch for ruts that split. Putting one ski in each rut could be a painful lesson in "two paths in a woods diverged and I"

Speed control. Simple. There is none. Except for the classic fanny plant of course. (Sitzstop)

Enough on technique. Let's work a bit on style. We'll start with proper rut-touring phrases. "ayayayayayiiii" and "Ohhh Shiiiiiiiiiiiiii....." are two popular ones. Extra points are awarded for originality.

Another method to gain points in style is the wipeout. The areas to concentrate in are gestures, and unique final positions. Classical method here is the hummingbird pole technique, followed by a half somersault with a twist and ending in a full faceplant with one (1) ski tip clamped firmly between the remaining teeth.

Well, the best way to learn is to go out there & start ruttin'. Go to it!