

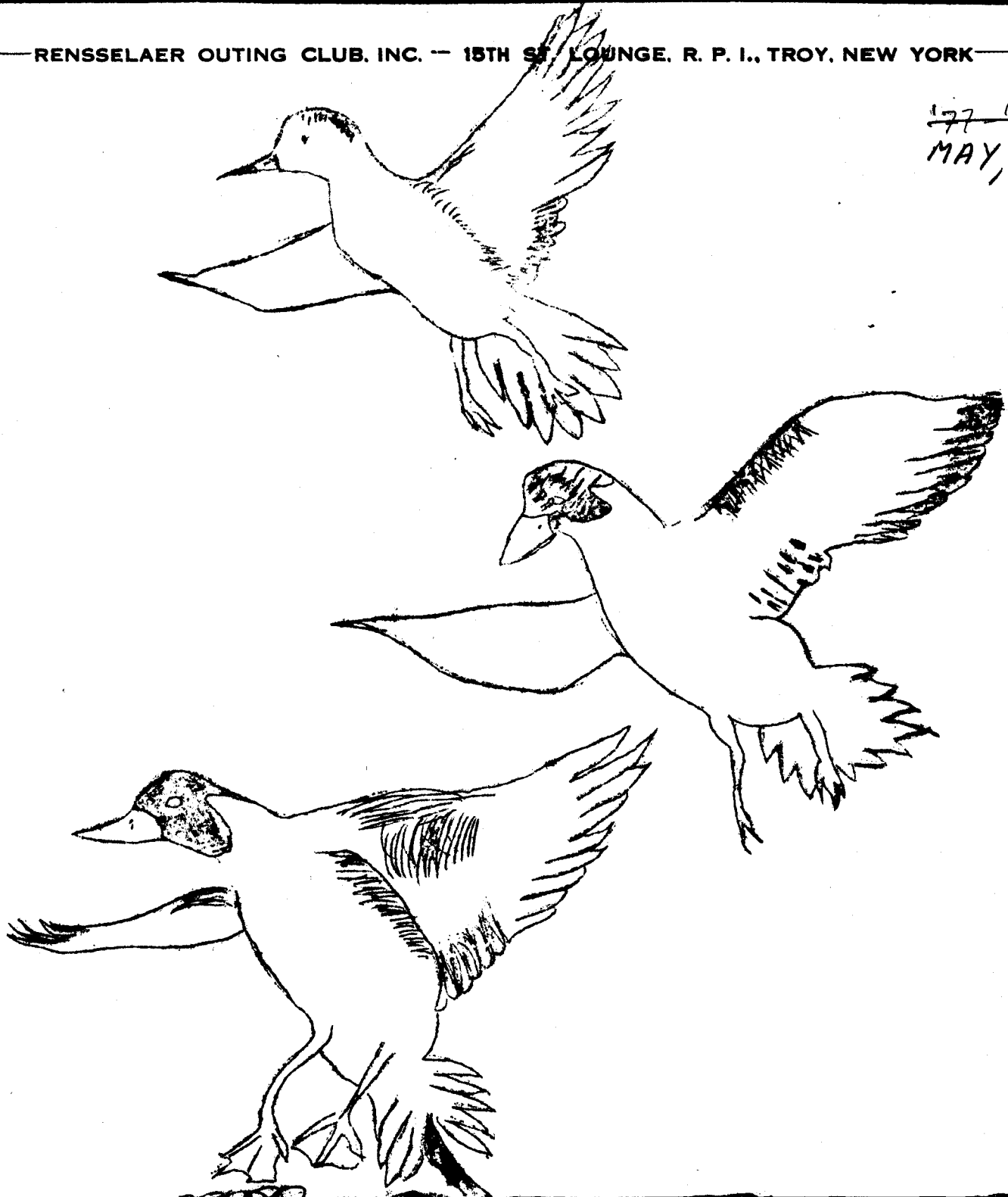


THE ROC CAIRN



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

~~177-178~~
MAY, 1977



*** CLUB NEWS ***

Not much has been happening around the club recently. (C'mon, guys, where's all the trips ?!) The club elections were held recently, and the results are posted below. Good luck to all of you. The Outing Club's banquet is (was) on April 30th. Hope to see everyone there! A list of summer addresses also appears in this issue (try looking on the last page).

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FIRST IN FREEDOM, CAROLINA CLIMBING

One of the worst enemies of any friction climber is water. When we arrived at Stone Mountain, North Carolina five or six streams of water were glissening on the cliff in the afternoon sun. Luckily it seems Stone Mountain is always sunny and we hoped in a day or two all the routes would be dry.

After being blown out of Linnville Gorge by snow and cold, it was pleasant to be on the warm granite dome of Stone Mtn. Since we had only a few hours of ~~the~~ light left we headed for several of the routes we had done the previous year. It was Mike Sack and Dan Stevens first time here so they headed up the classic dihedral "The Arch." Mike Wand and I moved out on the friction face close to the Arch. I lead up the first pitch following the grooves and pot marks of "The Yardarm." The protection was typical of Stone, only two points on any of the pitches and most of the pitches were over 130 feet. We climbed two more pitches of moderate friction and were at the top. Dan and Mike soon popped over the top of the dihedral. On our way back to the car we met Doug McBain and Al Mathews who had also given up on Linnville Gorge.

The next day was sunny, but a bit cool. It took several hours for the water streams to dry off. In the mean time Mike and I took off to look at some of the climbs on the left side of the cliff where we had not been before. After climbing up through the berry bushes and rhododendrans we were confronted by a steep wall with bolts placed every 40 feet or so. We found another route that didn't look quite so severe. We tried the first few moves and decided it was too hard. Soon we were back at the main section of the cliff doing routes we had done the previous year.

Thursday we set off again to do some new routes. Sack started us off by leading the first pitch of "Mercury's Lead" on small crystals and small sloping pockets. I followed up and lead through to the next belay with Sack hanging off two nuts in a flaring crack. Everyone leap-frogged up the route in much the same fashion we had used the previous year on another route.

Two hard routes a day are about all the hands can take from being rubbed and clutched to the granite. In the afternoon, Sack and I went up the "Grand Funk Railroad." The climb follows several small dikes that run diagonally up the cliff for 5 pitches. Unfortunately near the top of the cliff they turn into water troughs and were wet that afternoon. Nothing could dampen our spirits as we climbed right over them with the warm Carolina sun at our backs. That evening we sat around the picnic table (ah the pleasure of a state park) making plans for the summer and climbing out West.

The next morning Doug and Al left early for Washington, but we had time for one more climb. Sack and I had heard good things about "Rainy Day Women" so we were off for one last slide on the cliff. That's exactly what it turned out to be as Sack made the first bolt and fell often ten feet higher up. I went up and finished off the pitch and came to a hanging belay. Sack cleaned the pitch and started out the next one. At 15 feet he fell, but I was right there to save him, as he landed in my lap. One last

hairy pitch and a belay offarusted, half exposed bolt brought us to the top. It was just another great spring break down south. As we drove back along the Blue Ridge Parkway the sun was shinning and warm just like the climbing on Stone Mountain.

Rich Tocher **

***** West Virginia *****

Friday night at about 6:00, two hours before we were supposed to leave for W. Va., I got a phone call from Bob Harris: "My boss says that he needs me next week. I'm afraid I can't go to W. Va."

I immediately put all my years of mathematical experience together and figured out that I had three people going instead of four. I called around and after a few hours of confusion about who actually wanted to go we decided to leave the next morning since there was a blizzard going on.

About 20 miles from the sugar shack, the car sounded a little strange, and wouldn't move so well. We got out and took a look. "Hey we don't have any transmission fluid". It was about 9:00 at night and we walked back to a small gas station, knocked on the door, got the wener up, and bought a couple of quarts of fluid. We decided to wait till morning to take a look at it and see what we could do. We set up the Mckinly and after a nauseating dinner of PB&J sandwiches and Shoo Fly pie, we sacked out. Being a saturday night, the locals found a new source of entertainment--- US. They were were driving their muscle cars around and beeping their horns. At about one a.m, someone yelled "you better be outta hea by one hour!" One hour later we hadn't moved, so they got bored and left.

The next mourning we poured a few qts. of fluid in and

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drove to Marlinton, W.Va. We put the car on a lift and the mechanic said he couldn't see any leakage, but figured it was the front seal which would cost 50 bucks to start. Since it wasn't leaking too bad he suggested pouring in some break fluid to thicken it up. We did that and went to the sugar shack.

The next day we got up late and tried to do Overhalts saltpeter but found infinite "NO TRESSPASSING" signs scattered about. WE later learned it was due to some cavers who left a gate open so the owners cows could escape the premisis. We decided it wasn't worth the hassel to try to get the owner's permission, mainly because I'd been there last year and didn't remember anything phenominal about the place. So,we played glow-in-the-dark frisbee for a few hours.

The next mourning we were going to do Swago Pit. It started raining during the night so so we thought the water level might be too high. We didn't bother to check the water level in the mourning when the rain turned into snow. It snowed most of the day, so we stayed in the sugar shack eating oreos, fritos and playing cards and singing songs, a lovely way to spend the day.

Wednesday we did Swago. Considering the amount of rain and snow we had the day before, the waterfall wasn't overly violent. I went through the fissure that leads to the second drop a bit early, and instead of landing on the bridge between two parrallel ribs, I found myself hanging from my helmit over the first pit. I rigged the second drop and we continued on into the dry gallery. The dry gallery is just about a railroad tunnel. We spent some time trying to find the and taking pictures of gypsum flowers,heledites, and flowstone. We spent some time at the large formation called "The Organ".

The next day we did Base and found the definitive "dry cave" that people are always talking about.

We left friday, figuring that if we broke down again we wouldn't want to be stuck on sunday in some little hick town. As long as we were going north I suggested we go to Senica Rocks. This was another of my many mistakes I made on the trip. The rough road took its toll on the transmission. We were 30 miles from the nearest town and we only had 3 qts. of fluid when the car decided to quit. We were leaking fluid almost as fast as we could pour it in. We did manage to get to a service station a couple of stops later for refilling. Of course the station was about ready to close and had to wait till the next mourning to start work on it. We played on the swings and ate pepperoni,cheese, and corn chips in a local park until they had finished.

The rest of the trip was rather uneventful except for a couple of wrong turns I made. All things considered, we had a lot of fun and it was definitely a worthwhile week.

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