



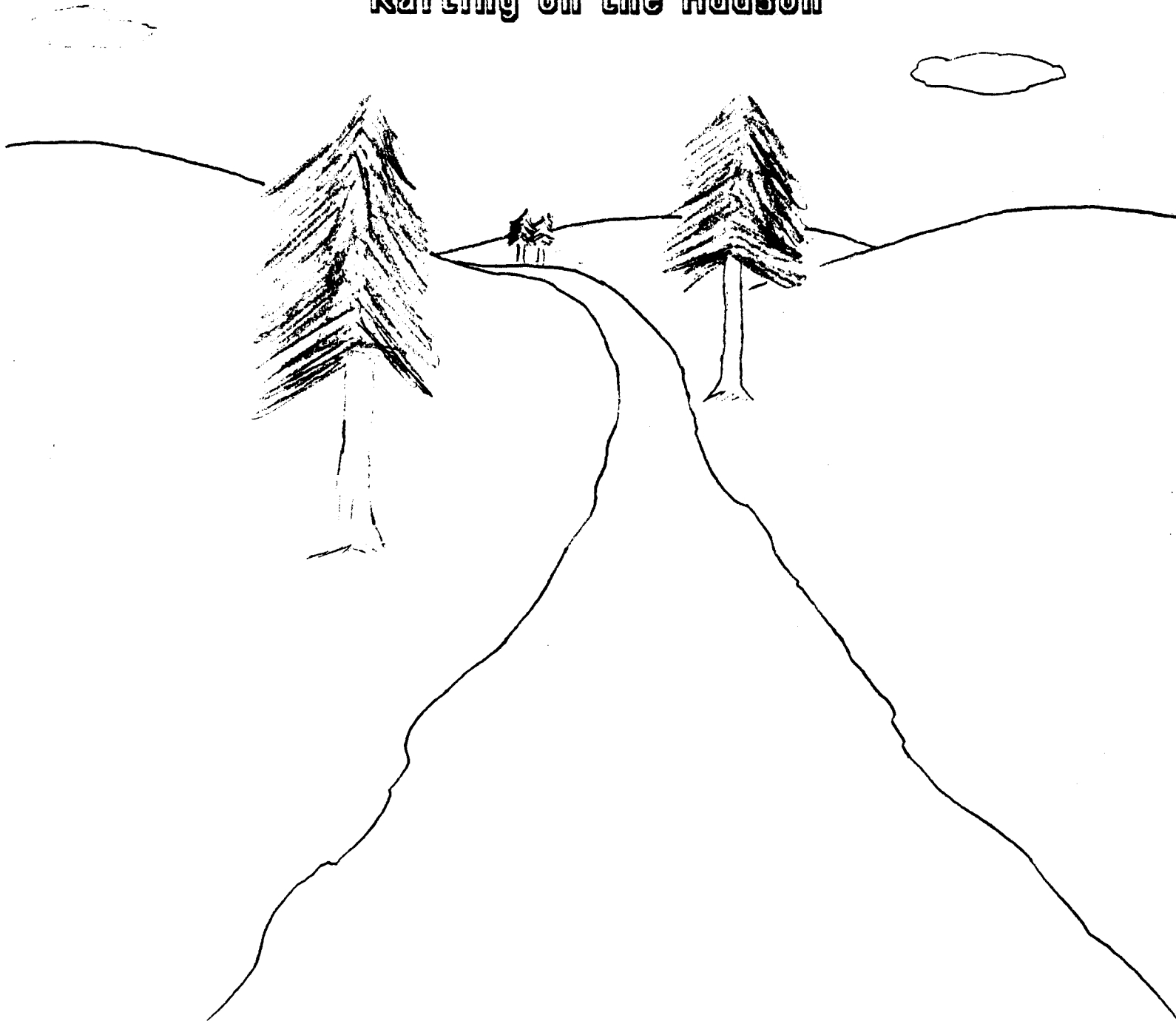
THE ROC CAIRN



3 May 1988

—RENSSELAER OUTING CLUB, INC.—UNION BOX 26, R.P.I., TROY, NEW YORK—

Rafting on the Hudson



Rensselaer Outing Club

Executive Committee 1988-89


| | |
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From the Editor

Greetings everyone, and welcome to spring. I hope you've all enjoyed one or more of the wonderful trips this semester. Soon the semester will be over and summer will be upon us.

There are quite a few trips planned for this summer; some with the club and some not. Even if you are not staying in Troy for the summer, that doesn't mean there is nothing to do. If you are spending the summer away from Troy, this is an excellent time to get acquainted, if you aren't already, with the opportunities in your area, and to enjoy them if you already are. I myself am planning many day hikes and backpacking trips in my quest for the New Hampshire 4000-footers award.

Be sure to bring back plenty of memories. An issue of the cairn will be printed soon after our return to school, in September. Many interested freshmen will be reading it, so it is very important that we have stories to interest them in what we do. Anyone can write an article for the Cairn; it's not hard, it's fun and besides that, you get to see your name in print. Until September, have an enjoyable, fun-filled, and safe summer.



Eric L. Savage
Cairn Editor

Standardized Cave Report

compiled by Dick Jablonowski

appeared in the IOCA newsletter

Those of you who enjoy caving, plus the large majority of you that hate caving, can now standardize your reports. Merely circle the most applicable category and mail your report to: National Cave Exploration, 323 High St. Newark, NJ 07102.

Cave entrance was:

1. Wide enough to drive two Greyhound buses through
2. The size of a gopher hole
3. Smaller than a gopher hole
4. A gopher hole
5. Mistaken for a sewer
6. A sewer
7. Full of dead sheep

Cave's secret room:

1. Had more than a hundred names written on walls
2. Could not be found

Cave temperature:

1. Fluctuated with migration of the bats
2. Couldn't be measured due to ice on thermometer
3. Could not be measured because thermometer was crushed while going through entrance
4. Dropped 20 degrees every time we stopped

Cave humidity:

1. Greater than 80%
2. Greater than 90%
3. Raining
4. Thunderstorms
5. Dust storms

Cave stream was:

1. Full of blind fish
2. Full of dead fish
3. Full of blind, dead fish
4. Local municipality's sewer system

Cave's passage was:

1. Tight
2. Tight and twisting
3. Tight, twisting and low
4. Tight, twisting and low with jagged rocks
5. Not investigated

Clothing left in cave:

1. Knees from a pair of coveralls
2. A pair of coveralls
3. Underwear

Cave mud caused:

1. Leader to sink up to knees
2. Leader to sink up to waist
3. Rescuers not to drag mud for leader

Items found in cave:

1. Petrified guano
2. Bear cub
3. Knees from a pair of coveralls
4. Flashlight attached to seat of a pair of tight girl's jeans
5. Underwear
6. 1922 Ford hubcap
7. Bag of freshly broken speleothemes
8. Skeleton of a gopher

Number of party counted when leaving cave:

1. n
2. n-1
3. n-2
4. n-3
5. n+1

Cave owner:

1. Gave us tea and cookies
2. Gave us tea, cookies and advice
3. Could not be shut up
4. Threatened us with a shotgun
5. Missed

I will visit this

1. To see its myriad wonderous beauties
2. To retrieve my underwear
3. If I ever get my car cleaned up
4. If I can talk someone else into leading the trip
5. If I am not committed to an insane asylum
6. If my light will work

I will never go caving again because:

1. I was a little frightened
2. I was terrified
3. I left my glasses outside
4. The rappel rope was too short
5. I fell into a room full of guano
6. I got stuck in a tight spot and the leader kept tugging on me and then they cut my clothes off me and then they covered me with grease and tied a rope around my feet and then the guy behind me turned his carbide lamp up until it was burning me and they kept threatening to build a breech and blow me out and then everyone pushed and tugged at me and a bat flew into my hair and the ceiling kept dripping ice water on me

Rafting on the Upper Hudson

The time was 6:30 am, and my alarm had just rustled me from a deep sleep. I looked out the window and saw that a thunderstorm was passing by. I put my polypro, wool, and boots on and grabbed my daypack. All of the other people on the trip showed up a few minutes after 7:30 at the Armory. Henry's group went to pick up Paul and our group headed for Dave Schwartz's house. I guess those two thought the trip had been cancelled.

After a short stop at McDonald's in Glen's Falls, our two vehicle caravan headed north to the Warransburg exit. A short drive on Rte. 28 brought us to the Glen where WILD/WATERS is located. We checked with the owner of wildwaters concerning the level of the river. The bridge markings said the level was about four feet, so we were in business. Henry's vehicle was left at the end of the route and six people plus equipment squeezed into the back of Jim's truck. A few minutes later, we were in Riparius where our rafting would begin.

It took a few minutes to inflate the rafts using a hand pump. A leak was discovered in one of the raft's main air compartments, so we took duct tape off the bottom to patch the hole. We figured a leak in the floor was better than one in the air pocket. Everyone threw on a life jacket and grabbed a paddle. We were off on our journey down the wavy river.

Each person in our raft had a specific job. The bowman scouted the river for a good route and yelled directions to the sternman. The people in the middle provided the forward speed needed to

easily turn the raft. The person in the stern provided steering so the raft would avoid most (but not all) of the rocks.

The route down the river was pretty mellow in the first section. The water level was high and no rocks reared their ugly heads at us. About three quarters of a mile down the river we encountered the first rapids area. The directions to the sternman became more frantic and everyone paddled like mad to give the raft enough speed to be steerable in the fast current. We hit only a couple of rocks and didn't get really stuck on any of them. The motion of the raft in the waves was exciting to all as we cheered our way through the tougher sections. We had time to relax again before the next set of rapids. These were even rougher and good coordination of our efforts allowed us to avoid getting really stuck. When you get really stuck on a rock, some people in the raft may have to shift to a new position or you may all have to get out on the rock to free the raft. The speeding current adds a lot of urgency to these moves, not to mention anxiety.

The river flattened out again and we cheered the other raft on as they finished the last section of rapids. They moved slower through the rough sections since they kept getting stuck on rocks. I guess the coordination of their paddling efforts wasn't as good as in our boat. They caught up on the next half mile long section. We encountered a couple of low water sections where we did get really caught up on rocks a couple of times. A little rocking of the raft and a few pushes with our paddles freed us. About

this time a train rumbled past with its horn blasting. The track ran along the river; we had wondered if we would see a train. The Glen House was spotted about a half mile downstream at this time, so our ride was almost over.

We set our course for the next set of rapids. Our speed was great enough so we didn't get stuck on any rocks. The standing waves were a couple of feet high and when we hit them, we bounced up off our seats. Everyone regained their balance and we maneuvered past a small cliff on the last corner of the rapids. After a short calm section, we readied for the last set of rapids. We chose a good route and entered a big standing wave. A couple of people in our raft flipped off their seats and onto their backs. The wave was rougher than it had been the year before.

The last big drop was a great way to finish this adventure. We paddled the raft over to a sandy section and all got out to watch the other raft come down the chute. They had a little trouble deciding on a route and got stuck on a big rock for a few seconds. After straightening out their craft, they took a route down the center of the chute. Their cheers sounded just like people going down a roller-coaster. A few people in their boat got flopped around a bit, but no-one fell out.

The second raft paddled over to the shore. Then Tom did a very silly thing. He was already wet and figured he would get out about twenty feet from the shore to pull the raft up on the sand. He jumped out and to his surprise found the water was four feet deep there. We

watched and laughed for a few seconds as he wallowed in shock at the forty degree water. Then Paul and I helped haul him out of the water. He had soaked up many pounds of water inside of his Gore-tex and couldn't get out on his own. Needless to say, Tom was the first up to the cars and he changed into dry clothes he had left in Henry's vehicle.

Meanwhile, four of us carried a raft upshore about a hundred yards. We cast off into the current with Dave Schwartz along as a passenger with no paddle. We tried to cut across the current, but it was too strong. Our route was therefore right down the middle of the drop. I was the one who was tossed like a pancake as we hit the standing wave.

All the wet gear was carried up the hill to the vehicle. After talking with the owner of WILD/WATER again, we drove south and decided to stop for dinner. The Mexican specialty dishes at Carl R's Cafe in Glen's Falls were a good way to cap off the trip. We talked about a rafting trip to the Hudson Gorge. That would be continuous excitement, which is what rafting is all about.

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