



Chicago Mountaineering Club

The next CMC General Meeting will be Monday, May 9th, 2005 at 8:00 PM at the Goose Island Brewery, 1800 N Clybourn Ave., Chicago IL (312) 915-0071. There will be a CMC Board Meeting at 6:30 immediately preceding the General Meeting.

General Meetings are open to the public and held on the second Monday of each month, September through May. Everyone is welcome.

CMC Board Meeting Minutes are available to members on the club website. Everyone is encouraged to stay informed and get involved. If you don't know how to log in, please contact the webmaster at cmcwebmaster@cmcwebsite.org.

General Meeting Schedule

With the Annual Dinner on April 2nd, there will be no General Meeting in April.

May 9, 8:00 PM: Please join for a presentation by Olle Swartling on his expeditions to the Cordillera Blanca in Peru from the 1970s. You won't want to miss this.

The next General Meeting will be Monday, September 12th. The program schedule for the fall is still to be determined.

Many thanks to George Naxera for his presentation on Mt. Whitney at the March General Meeting. George is a new member, and an avid mountaineer and photographer. I think we'll see more from him in the future.

New Members

Congratulations and Welcome to our newest member, Julie Thomas of Rockford. She had a second reading and was unanimously approved at the February CMC meeting. Julie is a teacher in the Rockford area and an active climber.

There was also a first membership reading at the meeting for George Naxera, sponsored by David Ireland and Aimee Edwards.

Stettner Ledges

Stettner Ledges is a Grade II, Class 5.7-8 alpine rock route on the left side of the lower East face of Long's Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park. As with the CMC Route on Mt. Moran, Stettner Ledges deserves a special place in the hearts of all CMC members. As most of you know, this was a visionary climb for its time, first ascended by Paul and Joe Stettner in September 1927. For years afterwards it was the hardest route in Colorado, and quite possibly the hardest route in North America. In the succeeding twenty years there were only two repeat ascents (one of the two led by Joe Stettner himself.)

In the new book *Long's Peak: A Story of Colorado's Favorite Fourteener*, Dougald MacDonald writes about the first ascent:

"Toward the end of the 1920s, one pair of European-trained climbers launched Long's Peak climbing toward the future. The route they pioneered on the East Face demonstrated that difficult rock could be climbed safely with the right skills and equipment. By eschewing the easiest way up the mountain, their route was a precursor of all modern climbing, and their low-budget, anything-to-climb trip to the Rockies presaged the climbing bums of today...."

"This was an extremely bold climb. The two men had never seen the face and knew almost nothing about the climbs that already existed on it, yet they pioneered a route so far ahead of its time that nothing harder on Long's would be climbed until the 1950s."

In a new history of American mountaineering, *Ways to the Sky*, Andy Selter writes that after the first ascent of Stettner Ledges, "for years the few who knew of the 'Austrian Route' spoke of it in a context of unattainable daring and mystique."

Surprisingly few CMCers have climbed it. Surely there are others, but I could only round up two current members. Rod Harris boldly made two very early ascents. Once guided in 1952 after only a handful of previous ascents had been done on the route. Then

once again in 1955 on lead. Keep in mind what he was working with at the time: 120 foot gold line ropes tied around the waist, no sticky rubber, no easy camming devices to pop in nor even basic hexes or nuts, relatively little in the way of route information or history. Pitons (and slings) were the only form of protection, driven in by the leader and, if possible, pounded and pulled out by the second or third on the rope. Climbers who came into the sport in the last twenty or thirty years often fail to realize the obstacles and risks these early climbers faced.

A long gap for CMCers on Stettner Ledges apparently ran from Rod's early ascents until Jack Gorby reclaimed the torch and climbed the route a number of times starting in the late 70s. As of yet no new CMCers have stepped up to carry on this legacy, though word is some members have it in their sights this summer. (Are you listening, Alex?)

Thanks very much to Rod Harris for these memories:

"In 1952, Felix Hagerman was working at Crag's Lodge in Estes Park and made friends with Otto Von Almen who was working as a guide at the time. [Felix is Rod's childhood friend and longtime climbing partner.] I stopped by to see Felix after climbing in the Tetons and we talked Otto into taking us up Stettner Ledges. We agreed to pay him forty dollars since the usual rate was thirty-five dollars each. The climb went up very well. I don't remember much about it except I was last on the rope and had to gather up the hardware after each pitch. We didn't know who the Stettners were at the time. However the following February, we met Paul Stettner at a slide show in Chicago that Maurice Herzog was giving on his first ascent of Annapurna. Paul invited us to come to a CMC outing and the rest is history.

"In 1955, Felix and I were working the summer at Crag's Lodge in Estes Park. After climbing in the Northern Wind Rivers, we decided to climb Stettner's again. After a successful ascent, we got to Broadway about 9 o'clock and decided to try the Windows route. This was a bad mistake as Felix fell as we were half way up. He fell about 60 feet but since I had a good belay spot, I was able to hold him. He broke his arm and had a bad cut on his knee. We got back down to Broadway and Ed Williams and Bill Yowel, a fellow CMC member, came by and helped us. [Ed and Bill had climbed Alexander's Chimney that day and knew Rod and Felix were on Stettner's.] Bill had a large first aid kit so he bandaged up Felix's knee and put a temporary splint on his arm. We belayed Felix up the regular Route and then down the North Face.

"We were suddenly famous as the fall made the Denver papers and even made the A.P. news. Our folks at home didn't think much of it. Joe Hawks [a CMC founding member] drove his motor bike over from Winter Park to see us. I will always remember his first words, "What did you do wrong?"

"I hope young members will climb Stettner Ledges because it is not hard by today's standards. A 5.6 or 5.8 and you get the feeling of a big wall."

This accident on the Windows Route is documented thoroughly in the 1956 Edition of 'Accidents in North American Mountaineering' by the American Alpine Club. Felix had apparently gotten off route and was down climbing back to easier terrain. When trying to sling a piton for aid, he slipped.

[Felix] "Fortunately the drop was sheer enough that I was able to kick myself clear and drop outside the flake. The only physical sensation was one of extreme speed. I never saw so much slack — there seemed to be miles of it coiling up. The last thing I can remember is a small prayer that I'd hit my head quickly so it wouldn't hurt too bad. Then Harris, who had not consigned either of us to a record descent to Chasm Lake, put on the brakes ending my progress. I am probably prejudiced but I think it was a wonderful job of rope handling."

Rod of course under-states the situation. Felix had also broken several ribs, and, according to the article, Rod's hands were badly cut from holding the fall and scraping on the rock. After the rescue, Rod and Felix had to climb up and over the summit of Long's from Broadway, at least another 1000+ vertical feet of moderate technical climbing; then down-climb and rappel the North Face Cables Route; and finally hike eight miles back to the trailhead before getting to a hospital. If Rod hadn't held the belay, both he and his best friend would have likely died that day nearly 50 years ago.

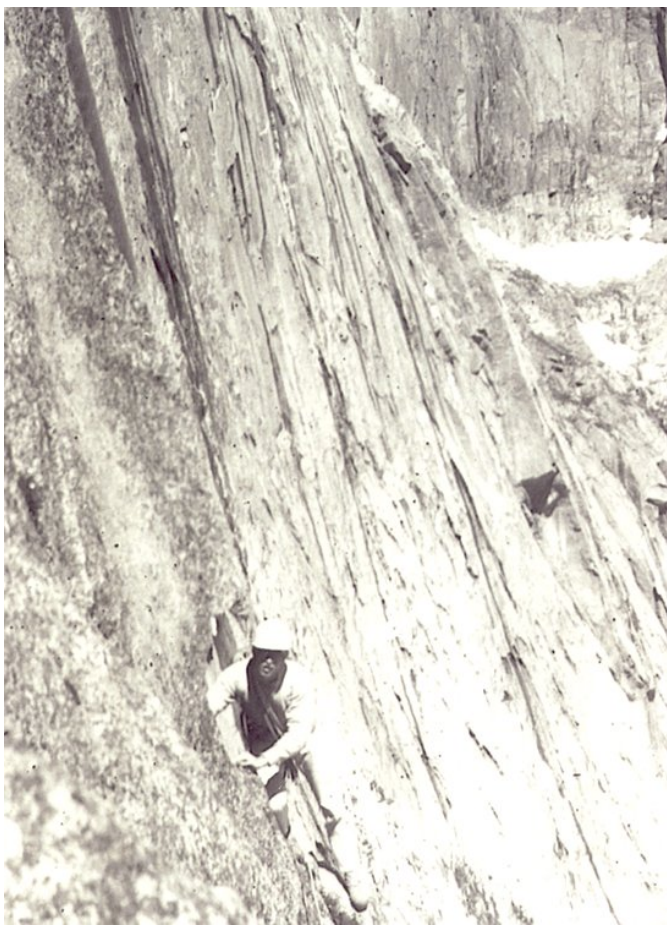
In Felix's analysis of the situation, he writes: "I am convinced that mental attitude and watchfulness during a climb are quite as important as any technical aspects... This accident demonstrates that good technique and adherence to standard safety procedure such as starting early, not attempting difficult routes in bad weather, etc. can turn what might have been a fatal slip into nothing more than a painful incident. Belay technique should be practiced until it is automatic. Rod said all his actions were unconscious as were mine in jumping away from the rock. When something does happen you don't have time to think."

Lessons of value as much today as they were then.

Though not a CMC member, Bob Gould is a long-time Midwesterner and friend of the CMC. He's active with the MFC library and might be joining us this summer on the Bugaboos Western Outing. Bob sent in this early experience on Stettner's:

"My friend Ken (Boomer) and I had been in Boulder, CO for about five days in the summer of 1962 on our way to California. Not into any climbing as yet, just observing the scene and knowing that this was the place to be.

"In June 1963 we drove out to Colorado from Chicago in his 1960 MGB. After our 1962 Boulder experiences, we had enrolled in Summer School at BU. We had purchased copies of "Belaying the Leader" and "Fundamentals of Rock Climbing," both published in 1956. As we drove west we read up on how to be accomplished climbers. I still have both books – with underlines in the important parts i.e.: "vertical pitons may be used as long as precaution is observed". Still not exactly sure what this means!!



(Bob Gould on the Ledges, 1963)

"A few days after getting settled in, we went to into Gerry's (?) Mountaineering and asked the person at the check out counter if we could hire someone to teach us how to climb. No problem – and that afternoon, Jim Disney (or was it Tex Bossier) took us

up to Flagstaff Mountain for \$5.00 and taught us how to climb! We climbed in tennis shoes and learned how to rappel on a single carabiner with brake bar (how things change). After about three hours, we were rock climbers!

"Soon after we each bought a pair of Dolomites rock climbing shoes, some pitons, hammers, two one hundred and twenty foot nylon ropes, some lengths of webbing and were ready to go. No harness – just tied in to the end of the rope or made a swami belt. You took about 20 feet of webbing and wrapped it around your waist and then tied it off. We just stuck the hammers in our back pockets. Choice of gear was rather slim in those days.

"We went to several hours of class at BU each day and then climbed in Boulder Canyon. We did climbs like Cozyhang on the Dome, Cussing Crack on Castle Rock, several climbs on Elephant Buttress. Then the Third Flatiron. That turned into a classic as we missed the correct rappel off the back and had to down climb that face in the dark. Boomer was not a happy person and about half way down on the descent, he got "upset" and threw the rope down – as far as it would go. We found it and he threw it down again. Anyone who has ever climbed with the nylon ropes we had in the 60s knows how kinked up and unmanageable they could get. Finally we walked out about 10pm. The next day, Boomer was talking to a friend in the mountain rescue squad and he said that the previous evening, they had been on "alert" for missing climbers on the Third. Someone had heard voices coming from up in the Flatirons in the dark and called it in.

"After several weeks of one and two pitch climbs, we knew that we were ready for a 'big time climb'. So Boomer said we should do Stettner's. I, not being overly smart about such things said that was a good idea and we were set. We got a late start into Chasm Lake and ended up getting to the old shelter cabin about 10pm that night. This was the original shelter cabin which was destroyed in a rock slide in 2003. We missed the trail on the hike in and ended up going cross country above the tree line in the moonlight. We were still the first arrivals and got to sleep on the bunk bed (springs only – no mattress.) I still remember trying to get some sleep. Two other climbers arrived sometime after midnight. They got to sleep on the stone floor.

"We did get up early the next morning and climbed Stettner Ledges. First we had to walk around Chasm Lake and then climb the snow field below the East Face. The climbing was 'interesting' and I remember having trouble at the piton ladder. I had the pack and I know that I pulled on at least one piton to make it up. But in those days, I'm not sure anyone counted.

Boomer did all the leading and took a picture of me at about the very same spot as the picture of Joe Stettner on the cover of CMC issue September 1977. You can see the same rock formations behind him. Boomer was much more camera aware than I was and I'm really glad that he was willing to carry the extra weight.

"About noon we got to Broadway and then topped out via Kieners and very much enjoyed our brief stay on the summit. We descended via the Cables back to Chasm View. I think we rappelled off the big eye bolts that were holding the cable. I don't know how long the Cables Route has been gone, but I really liked that bit of my different Long's Peak experience. Unfortunately, we missed the proper descent route at the Camel and started descending too early. We did a lot of down climbing on narrow ledges and I thought that it would never end. Steve Komito and his partner were watching us from Lamb's Slide and he told us later that they thought we'd fall for sure.

"We finally got down to the snow field leading to Chasm Lake and Boomer was first off the wall. I jumped down the last 5 or 6 feet and the weight of the pitons caused me to pitch forward. I fell and started sliding down to the boulders at the bottom. Boomer yelled 'catch' as he watched me slide by. He threw me our newly purchased ice axe. We could only afford one. I caught it and somehow arrested my slide. Once again, 'dumb luck'.

"We were able to make our way down to Chasm Lake and back to the shelter cabin with no other mishaps. We walked out that night. A long day!

"Stettner Ledges is still probably the one I'll remember as the 'best'. Boomer and I climbed together until 1995 and I've been at many different climbing areas – done a lot of things (including "The Casual Route" with Derek Hershey for my 50th birthday) but this climb is still near the top of my list. As I recalled this Stettner story I kept pulling up more climbing memories, mostly good and all worth it."

Thanks for the great memories Bob. Stop in and see us at the CMC campground sometime this summer. For those of you out there putting off Stettner's "until I have more experience," don't wait too long. Let Bob's ascent in '63 be a lesson.

When I discussed the route with Jack Gorby, he wasn't aware of any CMCers trying it in recent years. Jack has climbed it a number of times with his first ascent being in the late 70s, and says he's always had an exciting time.

"It's a great climb and nearly made Roper & Steck's 'Fifty Classic Climbs,' except that it doesn't end at a summit, which seemed to have been a factor in the authors' decision making," says Jack.

"I climbed it one time with a dear friend and fellow CMS guide Lee James. We finished the route but got into an ice storm above the lunch ledge and rapped down instead of finishing Long's off via Upper Kieners. When we got off, Lee said, "My, those Stettner boys sure had big balls!" To me, this captured the spirit.

"Based on today's standards, Stettner Ledges is intermediate but for us Midwesterners it's still a good challenge. And for CMCers, it's something precious. It is hard, sustained 5.7, requires some route finding and it's high, let's say 12,400 to maybe 13,200 or thereabouts. And it frequently gets icy.

"When people tell me they want to climb the Ledges, I have always suggested that they go to RMNP and spend a couple of weeks. First, climb some challenging routes on Lumpy Ridge. Then try the Spiral Route on Notchtop (5.4, if you can stay on route) and the Northeast Ridge on Sharktooth (5.6 or so, if you stay on route). These latter two climbs are good mountaineering routes and confidence builders, if you don't frighten the wits out of yourself. If you can honestly say to yourself, "That was fun, and I want more", then Stettner's is logically the next step.

"There are certainly a number of CMCers who can do it and some perhaps have. The route demands more than just Devils Lake rock gymnastics. Time, patience, practice leading in the mountains and confidence are essential, and I assume that for any one of these four reasons not many CMCers have given it a try."

Thanks Jack. Interestingly for a route of this caliber, there is only one death on record for it. This was on one of the very early attempts in 1946, where an unanchored belayer fell while trying to hold a leader fall. The leader survived. The belayer did not.

Newsletter Information

First off, thanks very much to those who have helped contribute to the newsletter in recent months. Some were voluntary, some only after being dragged into it kicking and screaming, but all contributions are appreciated.

There are many, many interesting stories buried in the minds and memories of the 200-odd people who get this bulletin by mail or read it on the web each month. Surely you have things to share with your fellow club members? Whether that means a short piece about your favorite climb, anecdotes on various routes,

mountain photography, instructional bits, information you think members might be interested in, a report from a recent trip you took, or memories of trips you made in the 1950s.

Reading about Tommy Caldwell's new 5.14d sport route in Climbing magazine, or a new 43 pitch Grade VIII 5.17X A7 WI11+ route on Mt. Impossible in Pakistan, gets old. Personal experiences from people we know or see around the club does not. Please help keep the newsletter fresh and interesting by writing for it. Nearly anything climbing related is welcome. You can submit material, or contact me with any questions, via my mailing or email address on the label.

And as an additional reminder, don't forget about the annual Mountaineer. Two recent articles – on the CMC Route in February and Stettner Ledges this month – were personal projects of mine, but longer articles like these are better suited for the Mountaineer.

Rob White, Editor

Self-Rescue Workshops Update

Our first workshop on March 20th went surprisingly well. Ron Rolnicki stepped up to give us an initial demonstration of a multidirectional belay anchor set-up and simulated leader fall, then the eleven of us got together in smaller groups to practice. Everyone got a chance to escape a belay and ascend a rope, using and learning key knots - Munter, Munter Mule, Klemheist, Prusik, and Mariner - in the process. We all agreed it was an eye-opener. No matter how much you read and study this in a book, putting it into practice is a different story. Some also worked with mechanical ascenders; and we set up 3:1 and 6:1 pulley systems as a intro to raising. Of course we also found time for lots of climbing. Thanks again to T.J. Pierce for opening the Elk Grove climbing wall to us, and to Ryan Eddingfield for setting up the pulley system.

The next two workshops will be:

5/8 Sunday of the Devil's Lake Outing
5/22 Sunday of the Devil's Lake Outing

Then two days for 'dry land' glacier travel/rescue skills. At least one of these will be mandatory for 2005 Western Outing participants:

6/12 Sunday of the Devil's Lake Outing
6/26 Sunday of the Devil's Lake Outing

After some experimenting we thought 3 and 4 foot lengths of cord to be a little short for Prusik loops. 4 to 5 foot lengths might be better. And most thought a longer cordelette, tied with say 20-21 feet of cord, was more versatile than tying one with a shorter 16-17 foot length.

It will be helpful if you prepare ahead of time and have an idea of what you'd like to practice. Examples of what we can work on in the May workshops include: rappelling; raising and lowering; escaping belays; ascending a rope using slings and prussiks; passing knots on rappel or belay; improvised rappels; rappel anchors; and improvised pulleys.

The following books are recommended:

How to Climb: Self-Rescue by David Fasulo

How to Climb: Climbing Anchors by John Long

Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills Don Graydon

Announcements

Interested in climbing in the birthplace of Alpinism? This is a great opportunity to join an experienced member and climb classic European Alpine routes...

Dave Kenealy is looking for a partner to climb in Chamonix, France, for a week starting around June 13th, 2005. Call him if you're interested at:

708-386-5180 (H)

630-516-1115 (W)

Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour will be Wednesday, April 20th at Park West in Chicago. Tickets are on sale for \$12 at the Patagonia store at 1800 Clybourn Ave in Chicago. Patagonia has been a generous regular supporter of our CMC/AAC Annual Dinner. A group of CMCers will be going.

Books for Sale. Lee Voigt of Holland, Michigan has a large (100+ volumes) collection of mountaineering and adventure books he'd like to sell, either together or individually. Many are modern signed first editions. If interested, contact Lee at tril@macatawa.org.

Wilderness First Aid Course. Interested? This would be a 16-24 hour course taught over a 2 or 3 day weekend this fall. We would bring in a professional instructor. The estimated cost is about \$80-\$90 per person, half the normal rate. If you'd like to participate, please contact Jim Considine at cmcsergeant@cmcwebsite.org.

April Outing

Our very first 2005 outdoor outing (for experienced climbers) is April 23-24 at the Mississippi Palisades State Park, just north of Savanna, Illinois. For more information or directions, please contact the Outings chair, Jamie Norris.

2005 CMC Western Outing

Bugaboos, Sunday, July 17th to Friday, July 22nd

Don't miss the April edition of Rock & Ice which profiles the Bugaboos. And lest you think it's a new discovery, CMCer George Pokorny climbed both Snowpatch and Bugaboo Spires in 1959. Both still worthy goals today.

From:
Chicago Mountaineering Club

c/o Robert White
1845 N. Orleans, Apt. 2R
Chicago, IL 60614

TO:

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS MAIL

NEWSLETTER: Please submit your comments, announcements, outings or personal climbing reports, items of interest, ephemera, or questions to the Editor: Robert White at 1845 N. Orleans Street, Apt. 2R, Chicago, IL 60614 or e-mail: cmcsecretary@cmcwebsite.org. Also, please contact me if your newsletter was damaged in the mail and you would like a fresh copy sent.

New Website!

If you have internet access please have a look at our new website: www.cmcwebsite.org

It's pretty impressive, provides some functional upgrades, and puts forth a much improved face for the CMC. Our President and technology guru Matt Mead put a lot of work into this, along with some help from Donna Martino. Need to see the weather conditions in Baraboo for the weekend or trying to find the next outing? It's all right there on the webpage now.

If you forgot your password or login id for access to the members only section, you can contact Matt, a.k.a. the webmaster, at cmcwebmaster@cmcwebsite.org.

Editor's Choice

Way, way out there...

"If anyone else is going to try this, I would recommend three Sno Balls."

-Derek Hersey, in 1991, after thrice free-soloing the Diamond on Long's Peak in 2½ hours – up the Yellow Wall route, down the Casual Route, then back up Pervertical Sanctuary – fueled by two Hostess Sno Balls and a few Fig Newtons.

2005 Board Members

Directors:

Pieter Fockens, Chris Young, Ron Rolnicki
cmcdirectors@cmcwebsite.org
President: Matt Mead
cmcpresident@cmcwebsite.org
Vice President: Mike Burian
cmcvicepres@cmcwebsite.org
Secretary: Robert White
cmcsecretary@cmcwebsite.org
Treasurer: Steve Broadie
cmctreasurer@cmcwebsite.org
Sergeant-At-Arms: Jim Considine
cmcsergeant@cmcwebsite.org
Outings Chair: Jamie Norris
cmcoutings@cmcwebsite.org
Expedition Chair: Stephanie Hoffman
cmcexpedition@cmcwebsite.org
Program Chair: David Ireland
cmcprograms@cmcwebsite.org
Publications Chair: David Harrison
cmcpublications@cmcwebsite.org
Safety Chair: Jack Fletcher
cmcsafety@cmcwebsite.org
Grounds Chair: Bill Dietrich
cmcgrounds@cmcwebsite.org