
THE AXE AND SAW

Volume 63, Issue 1

Fall 2001

Grove City College Outing Club

<http://www.gccoc.org>

Ben Grubb and Jeff Willard

A Letter from the President



It has been a fairly good year. The student club is doing well with the support of the Alumni Association. I would like to express my thanks to all of the alumni who so generously give to keep the cabin and student club running so smoothly. I would also like to thank the active club for coming out and making the club what it is today. As I pass from the realm of the active club to alumni status this December I leave the club in capable hands. I hope that everyone reading this can come and share some memories at the cabin sooner rather than later. To the club, the cabin, and Doc.

Mike McElHaney '01
President '01



The OC on the AT in VA, Spring 2001

Over Easter break, five of us (myself, Josh Butler, Erin Lyon, Mike McElhaney, and Jeremiah Otto) carried everything we needed to survive on our backs and set out for VA to hike the AT as it runs through the Lower Shenandoa. We left campus about noonish on Friday and drove off in two vehicles. Underestimating the

time it would take to get there, we arrived at our destination as the sun was setting. We parked Josh's car at an info center and stuffed everything into Jeremiah's van to head north to where we would start our hike. As we entered the park, we were met by an army of deer. They were everywhere and unafraid. We parked across the street from the trail and got ready for our adventure. It was already dark, and we had to hike 3 miles till we reached the first shelter for the night. Josh informed us that the biggest climb of the trip lay ahead of us. What a climb! Feet and backs were already sore by the time we reached the summit. It would have been a great view, except that it was dark and cloudy. Halfway down the mountain, we came to the first shelter, where we met Frog. Frog had long, greasy black hair and a beard and a perpetual cigarette — which may have contained more than nicotine in it — protruding from his lips. Frog spoke with a cadence that said, "I am either high or drunk," and loved to punctuate his sentences with the word "dude." He quite enjoyed talking. For dinner — we were clearly starving by this late — we had some chicken and dumplings — which would have been better called chicken flavored paste with peas — and we enjoyed every scrap of it. For dessert was some apple stuff. We hit the sacks (Mike hit his hammock.) and rested up for the first of some strenuous days. The night passed without incident, except that Frog woke up periodically to have a smoke, and a mouse ran over Erin's hair. Saturday morning, we sat out after sleeping in a little. Frog headed north, we headed south. Saw some pheasants. It was an overall pleasant morning, except for the blisters. We stopped for breakfast (oatmeal) after a few miles at a gap in the trail and likewise for lunch. Lunch every day

consisted of Josh's awesome deer jerky, (mostly-broken) crackers, PB, lemonade, dried fruit, tuna, and/or kipper snacks. It is amazing how good such items taste on the trail. We had a brief siesta before continuing, because today was our shortest — 8.5 miles or so. But eventually, we headed out again.

The next shelter was really nice. A stream passed by the shelter; things were relatively clean. Even the outhouse was nice. It was built by boy scouts and even had a mouse-proof TP container, which "works best when the cover is on." Josh and Erin introduced me to the trail ritual of pump stands. Fun. Dinner was McElhaney's secret recipe, chicken, rice, and a large amount of Taco Bell sauces mixed with Tabasco. Very nice. Tonight, we had the shelter to ourselves, but we noticed a very strange looking giant frog drawn on the ceiling with the words, "Frog was here." I cut some logs (Shh, don't tell.) with Mike's pocket saw, and we had a fire. All in all, a nice night. It passed without incident, except that a mouse ran by my ear. Sunday was to be one of our longest days, close to 13 miles. However, after looking at the map, Josh thought that he could make a shortcut by connecting to Skyline Drive. It was very wet this morning and a little chilly, but as we started to climb the hill away from the shelter, we suddenly passed into where the air was very warm. It was the strangest thing. The day continued to get hotter. We stopped for breakfast (oatmeal) at a gorgeous overlook and then continued. At first we all thought Josh had read the map wrong, but he did find a trail that led to the road. We hiked along the side of the road, which felt much nicer to our feet, for about 3 miles. This ended up cutting off about 2.5 miles from the original plan and allowed us to avoid a mountain that appeared very threatening when we were tired. We connected back up with the AT, stopped for lunch, and finally ended the day by climbing the summit of Rocky Top. This was a really neat mountain with a great 360 degree view and a huge pile of mountains atop it. On the way up, however, Jeremiah became rather dehydrated. But after a nap on the trail and some of Mike's

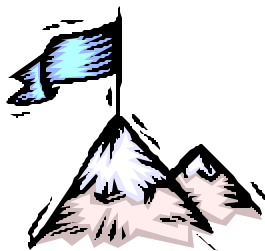
pills from his new med. kit, we made it down to the next shelter. This time, at the shelter were three middle-aged guys. Much more normal than Frog, these people had normal everyday names like Bill. Later, a couple showed up with a tent, then a guy who just read the log book, complained about never being able to sleep in this shelter, and then left. They had Mac & Cheese for dinner, I had Raman noodles, and we all conversed with the three men about crazy trail stories. It was a good time. The next night really did pass without incident. Monday, to our dismay, Josh made us get up early. We had about 13 or 14 miles planned for this day to take us to the next shelter. We set out, some of us in much pain by now, but we kept on. We had to go up and down three or four hills that looked a lot less steep on the map. We then had breakfast (surprise! oatmeal), and continued on. Josh and I were in the lead and hiked to the next gap for lunch. Well, we were sitting there for about 45 minutes — much longer than usual — waiting for the others when poor Erin came into view very visibly hurting. A while after her, Jeremiah wobbled into view. He had hurt his foot or ankle and was limping. We were still 3 miles from the next shelter and 11 miles or so from Josh's car. We knew that we needed to call it quits. We ate lunch and then had Erin try to hitchhike for us. (We figured she'd have better luck than any of us dirty bums.) But, probably because the rest of us were in view, she wasn't successful. So we sent Mike around the bend in the road to try, thinking that, "Everybody likes Mike." Sure enough, about the first guy picked him up. So we waited. And waited.... Then Josh remembered that he had pulled something out of the engine lest some one try to steal the car. So Erin had to hitch a ride to meet Mike. She was picked up by a family that spoke German to their little child and two gorgeous dogs. Right after she left, lo and behold, Mike arrived after all. He had figured out what Josh had done. We stuffed in to Josh's tiny car, and drove to where Erin was sitting, waiting for us. She didn't have the heart to tell the family that Mike wasn't there anymore. We were ready to go, but there was a slight problem. A belt had broke. We had about five

minutes to drive to an auto parts place. We stuffed into Josh's microscopic car, and in the stifling heat drove into town. We found the part, fixed the car, and stuffed back in the nanoscopic car to head back up to Jeremiah's van. Fortunately, it was still there. It was still light out, and we were now able to see how huge the mountain was that we first hiked in the dark. We suddenly became thankful that we hadn't see how steep it was before. We divided up and headed back home.

The adventure wasn't entirely complete, though. On the way back, there was an incredible thunderstorm. Lightning lit up the sky. Trees were struck down on the side of the highway, and it POURED. Not very prime driving conditions. When things calmed down, we stopped at Wendy's, were they weren't very happy to see 5 dirty, sunburned hikers limp into the store 5 minutes before closing. But we enjoyed our melted Frosties.

And so ended the excursion. We had hiked about 35 miles in all. The weather was beautiful, and despite the pain, I think we would all agree that we had a good time. I look forward to next year....

Jason Labonte '01

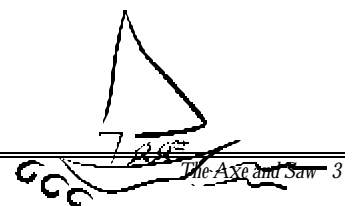


Hamilton and New Trout

OC'ers always itch for a good adventure. Something new, something different... And last spring a few of us had the chance to break away from campus for a few short hours to explore 2 caves in West Virginia. It was Saturday May 5th that we set out: 5 OC members and our leader. Josh Butler ('02) provided walkie-talkies for the

trip so that his navigator, Erin Lyon ('02), and passengers, Sarah Ristow ('01) and Jason Labonte ('01), could keep in contact with Amanda Adams ('01) and Werner Gilliam, who led the way. After a pleasant afternoon's drive we found our way to a small campground with a row of cabins. Why, we OC'ers thought we were at the Ramada! Our cabin had bunks, running water, a working toilette and a refrigerator!! Pleased with our luxurious accommodations, we arranged our gear for the morning and hunkered down for a comfy night's rest. The trip went off with few glitches. Though our trusty leader had left his headlamp at the OC cabin the night before the trip, we were able to tape two small mag-lights to a caving helmet to provide enough light. The hike up to the caves was a pleasant one and the caves were exciting. The first, called Hamilton Cave, was a large wet cave with bats and clay everywhere. In our explorations we found one room full of clay sculptures left by previous adventurers and even added a few to the collection. We also found plenty of bats and were able to do some small, wet tunnels on our bellies. After exiting Hamilton we had a quick bite to eat and entered the second cave, New Trout, which was very different. This cave was straight, deep and very dry with lots of wide passages and large rooms. We explored for another few hours, and then made our way out. Unfortunately, we had to drive back to the Grove as it was Sunday afternoon and exams were looming near. So we wandered down to our cars and unpacked our gear (much of it was happily unused, such as the zip-lock bags which had been brought along in case of bladder emergencies and the larger garbage bags in case of... well, never mind.). As a pleasant added surprise, both of our vehicles made it out of the hills of West Virginia without breaking down, and we were able to safely drive back to PA where a final few days of classes remained.

Amanda Adams, '01
President, '00



White Water Rafting

In mid-September GCC's Outing Club took its first major trip of the year as they journeyed to the famous Ohiopyle for a little whitewater rafting. Twenty students attempted to conquer the mighty Youghiogheny River in four rafts, wandering for six hours through the gorge formed by the beautiful Laurel Mountains. Aside from the water level being a tad low and the temperature being a smidge under ideal, the day was perfect. By the end of the run, three of the four rafts had fully capsized, two being the victims of the notorious dimple rock. The occupants of the doomed rafts ended up either floating down the rapids boatless or walking a third of a mile along the shore, curious as to the fate of the paddles and rafts that were lost. Fortunately, everything was eventually found. Other highlights included the carefully-planned dunkings of various members, as well as the "freshmen" raft whose occupants spent as much time in the water as they did in the raft. The route was as good as any, with several breaks throughout the class 3 and 4 rapids where everyone could catch their breath and do a little swimming. The prime swimming spot undoubtedly came near the end of the route where several brave participants climbed a twenty-foot high outcrop and then leaped off towards the water below. After nearly six hours of gruelling paddling, all rafts finally made it to the exit point. All participants reluctantly walked away from the river but were satisfied with the day's events. Another trip is already under consideration for next spring, when the water will be just a tad higher and a smidge warmer.

Dave Plitt, '03

Caving

Date: Sept. 22, 2001

Time: Early morning

Place: Roadside in Harlansburg

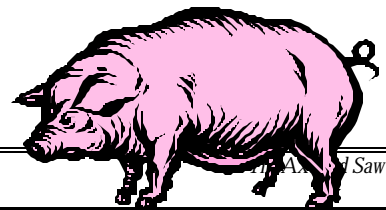
This Saturday morning we gathered behind Alumni and loaded into cars and headed to the little town of Harlansburg. There were 20 or so that came out for the adventure. Many were new faces mixed in with some whom were old, but all got very, very dirty. We got ready in the nice little parking lot - armed with several layers of clothes, a little bit of marking chalk, and three light sources each. We then proceeded to hike along Rt. 108 until we found a hole. Not just any hole, mind you. This hole as the grand entrance to the underworld. Ok, so this hole was only about a little bit larger than some of the men in our group. We climbed up the embankment a little to the entrance and then scooted, slid and shimmied ourselves in. Here, we split up into two groups and parted at the first turn off. Then, for the next two hours we crawled through passages, waded through knee-high mud (or waist-high for some), and had a lot of fun navigating through the many parts of this cave.

The groups didn't meet up until the very end when we arrived at the exit at the same time. What great timing. And...I was glad that my group didn't get into a mud fight, for it was pretty evident that the other group did.

Now, what better way can you think of to spend your Saturday morning?

Erin Lyon, '02

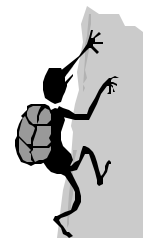
Vice President, '00



Pig Roast

Apple, cherry, or pumpkin pie, do you like homemade pies? How about roasted pork, straight off the pig? Would you then like to wash it all down with some fresh apple cider? If this sounds like your type of activity, you would have enjoyed the Outing Club's annual pig roast. Every year the Grove City College Outing Club holds this event for GCC campus employees. The end result is a wonderful and delicious meal, but a lot of work is put into it. A few days before this year's Sunday meal, about sixteen people gathered at the house of current member Jeremiah Otto. Headed up by Vice President Erin Lyon, the group proceeded to make and bake 30 pies. While the pies were baking a break was taken which involved Domino's pizza with free cheesy bread and some quality TV time, yeah Simpsons!!! Meanwhile at the Outing Club cabin, another group of people were conducting cleanup of the grounds, sign replacement, bunk bed repair, and other various tasks in preparation of the following days activities. The next day, Saturday, various members gathered for the exciting privilege of criscoing a 140 pound pig and attaching it to the spit to be cooked. Starting early Saturday afternoon the pig was slowly rotated over an open flame for the next 26 hours. By Sunday afternoon the pig was done. The meat was collected in serving dishes and served buffet style along with chicken, mashed potatoes, applesauce, gravy, rolls, and drinks. There were introductions and welcomes from president Mike McElhaney. The Outing Club chaplain Tim Archer said a quick prayer, and the eating was underway. Sunday's pig roast gathering was a full attendance of about 120 people (30 active members, 20 alumni, 70 faculty and family). It was a beautiful sunny day for everyone...except possibly the pig!

Dean Schuttner, '04



Rock Climbing

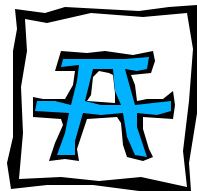
Who doesn't love a brisk two hundred foot climb in the early mornings of December while it's thirty degrees outside? Well, maybe it wasn't thirty degrees or the morning or two hundred feet or even outside, but it was climbing. This fall the club members discovered a new place to do our indoor rock climbing. Slippery Rock's ARC became our new get away when we wanted to just get above it all. And with the ARC only eight miles away from Grove City, those of us that had gotten used to the hour-long rides to North Park were relieved.

The first trip in was on October 5th. Erin Lyon, Joey Mandola, and I met at the top of Alumni and headed down to check out the wall while Josh Butler and others were to meet us there sometime later. When we arrived, we were pleasantly surprised to find a forty-four foot artificial rock wall with five routes and a bouldering overhang. Since it was Joey's first time there she watched as Erin expertly ran up one of the routes and I haphazardly made it up another. We then decided it was her turn and sent her up the first route. Without even a slip she made it to the top and was back down before you knew it.

Later in the semester the ARC was visited many more times. It saw all of the climbers that we had last year and even saw some of the new people take hold during their first climbs. One, in particular, that stands out is Dave Plitt. As a junior, first-year member, Dave was interested in trying a lot of things right off the bat. His first time rock climbing was no different. He quickly scaled two rock walls, and then moved to the bouldering wall while the rest of us climbed. Then, when most were too tired to ascend again,

Dave decides to go up two more times! He was one of the most active climbers the rest of the semester and even got more people interested in it. The ARC wall defiantly got its use by the GCCOC this semester. We even met the SRU Outing Club President while we were climbing, one day. I'm sure the use won't stop now. And maybe we'll just have to get back together with those Slippery Rock Club members sometime.

Jeff Willard, '04
Alumni Secretary, '01



Our P.R. Stint for the Semester

On a beautiful warm day in October, the Outing Club set out to improve its public relations. Five members spent the day at Memorial Park in downtown Grove City. Mike McElhaney, Josh Butler, Erin Lyon, Matt Meyer, and Chrissie Scott volunteered to help the Rotary Club improve their garden in the park. We spent the morning laying plastic and spreading loads of mulch, all the while enjoying the company of the community members present. Our efforts were rewarded with a free lunch and a write-up in a local newspaper.

Christina Scott, '02

We Went 2 C the RCBB

On the mild Saturday evening of November 10, eight well-dressed GCCOCer's, one Alumni, and four visitors went to Pittsburgh to wish the RCBB a happy birthday. What is the RCBB-and what's this about a birthday? It is none other than the Pittsburgh River City Brass Band, which is celebrating its 20th birthday this concert season. Under the leadership of Jeff Willard (who happens

to have an appreciation for music), the club helped the RCBB celebrate their birthday by singing "happy birthday to you" from the second balcony of Carnegie Music Hall in Pittsburgh.

The conductor's silly jokes, the light-hearted showmanship antics of the twenty-eight member brass band, as well as the presentation of a birthday cake to the RCBB by members of the Penn Hills Marching Band and the U.S. Marine Corps. helped to make the format of the concert rather informal. How did the GCCOC music critics rate the content of the show? It is fair to say that there was a general consensus that the brass band did not play as many pieces showcasing their technical excellence as was expected. This view however, did not prevent the club members from thoroughly enjoying the concert. In fact, a wonderful time was had by all.

Matt Myer '03

Alumni News & Views Fall 2001

Cabin Repairs

Emergency repairs to the cabin were made at the Summer 2001 outing. As reported previously, a combination of powder post beetles and fungal rot has caused **major** damage to the floor joists and related supports. These repairs have bought us some time, but we are in the process of writing specifications for a major repair project estimated to cost \$10,000 or more. Do to the need to create a set of "as-built" drawings and related bid documents, this work will not likely be out for bid until sometime in 2002. A detailed report on the Summer 2001 Outing repairs is available on the Outing Club web site (www.gccoc.org) or feel free to contact Alumni Cabin Manager Mark Place at 412-892-2000 ext 20.

As part of that very busy Summer outing, we also did a great deal of repair work on the footer drains

installed in the 1980s to dry up the basement and to minimize frost heave every Winter. Unfortunately we have found that while we have great flow around the cabin proper again, the lower yard drain is not performing well. This drain will probably be scheduled for repair/replacement in 2002 prior to starting on the structural repairs. There is no sense putting new wood in a damp environment.

Thanks to Cabin Team member Henry Limmer, we have located a man who rebuilds and repairs gas refrigerators. Hopefully we will be able to get the gas fridge problems resolved once and for all. Our gas supplier has done all he knows how too tweaking the supply and we have tapped both our fridge expert Rick Givens, and a 1920 text book found by Glen McMunn for advise. All this to know avail so far.

Summer Outing

The dates for this years Summer outing for Alumni, students and friends is **July 26-28**. Last year past President John McMillen got the award for both most years away and farthest distance traveled. John joined us all the way from California. We have been getting a great turnout for the Summer outings for several years. Family and friends of all ages are welcome. For those uncertain about the cabin mattresses, Marsh Sanford '65 has found a short drive to the Days Inn at I-80 a good compromise. ✍
Look for additional details in the Spring Ax & Saw!

Summer Rentals

Due to the condition of the cabin floor and the need to preserve the emergency repairs as long as

possible so that we do not have to put restrictions of use by the students, the cabin will not be available for use by non members this Summer and until repairs are completed.

Subject to availability and any construction work, the cabin will be available for students and alumni family trips. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause but the consensus was better safe than sorry.

WEB site and email list

WEB master Cory Gibson has done a great job developing our web site. (www.gccoc.org) If your are not getting periodic email notices and reminders, please send Mark Place your email address at MP306@aol.com so that we can add you to the list. At the present time, almost 25% of our membership receive these email updates. To save on printing and postage, we are also looking at sending the Ax & Saw electronically to those that are interested. Potentially this will save over \$200 per year that can be used elsewhere. Let Mark know if you are interested in receiving at least one issue per year electronically.

Goucher Fund & Morris Challenge

(please check with Tom Ronksley, this is important. H 724-327-7214)

GCC Outing Club
**The Axe and Saw Fall
2001**

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