Devils Tower. Climbing every day during "Mountaineer's Week" in July of 1956, rock climbers from 13 states, France, and Switzerland made 81 ascents of the Devils Tower in northeastern Wyoming. The climbers were invited by the Wyoming Mountaineers of Casper College, to this 50th anniversary commemoration of the establishment by President Roosevelt, in 1906, of the first national monument, the Devils Tower. The massed assaults on the Tower clearly demonstrated to more than 15,000 visitors that climbing is a safe sport for those who are trained for it.

Although six new routes were driven up the Devils Tower this summer, bringing the total to ten, the Durrance and the Wiessner routes remain the only ones which have been climbed without the use of tension and the direct aid of acrobatic rope-engineering. Under the impetus of this climbing celebration, more mountaineering ascents of the Tower were made during 1956 than in all the previous years, and more ascents in one week than in the first 25 years of climbing there.

American Alpine Club members, who led or organized eight of the ten teams, climbed on seven of the eight days of the event, and included: Mary Sylvander, Henry A. Waldrop, Robert W. Swartz, Walt Bailey, Henry C. Hoyt, Wilber F. Arnold, Harold F. Walton. Climbing teams also represented these groups and clubs: U.S. Army Mountain and Cold Weather Training Command, Wyoming Mountaineers, Appalachian

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Joshua Tree National Monument. There is a variety of rock climbing to be found in this large Southwestern desert preserve. Here one can climb on large tumbled piles of monzonite and granite or upon individual boulders which rise from 30 to 150 feet above level ground. Some "individuals," including the Old Woman and the Gate man, near the Hidden Valley campgrounds, have long been popular with Sierra Club groups. West of Twentynine Palms, in Indian Cove, there are high rocks used for practice climbing by the Air Rescue Command, while our local group has found class 3 to class 6 routes on Indian Head Rock, also easily reached from the town.

Some of the more spectacular rocks cannot be climbed without direct aid. A few years ago, Rod Smith and Phil Smith made two attempts to reach the top of the Pope's Hat, a massive pointed boulder in Split Rock Valley, but were turned back for lack of piton cracks near the summit. Later Rod and Don Cornell made a successful effort by driving three studs and moving up in stirrups while under rope tension. Following this ascent, Cornell and John Merriam visited the Lost Pencil and used 13 studs to climb the flawless 60-foot summit block. On a repeat climb which I accompanied as a guest, we re-used the anchors to put Merriam on top and there joined him by quick ascent on a Prusik "ladder." The "ladder," which consists of two parallel taut lines with a Prusik stirrup mounted on each, makes this sort of direct-aid climbing easy and efficient. Tension, too, can be alternated in either line to assist the climber in getting over obstructing bulges and overhangs. On this occasion we also found a "new" retractive rappel quite handy for bringing up cumbersome equipment to the base of the summit block.

In recent months, Rod Smith, R. J. Boyle, and John Davis have made numerous new ascents. Headstone Rock, a curved balanced boulder which might have been difficult even with studs, was climbed by resorting to a tricky cord-throw over its top and then carefully pulling a fixed line into a favorable position.

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