

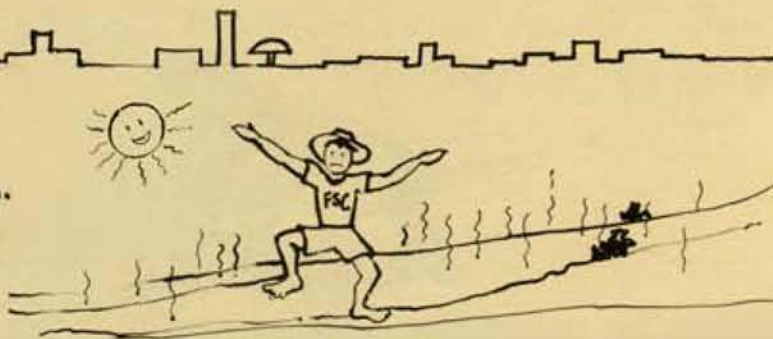
Folks call me Old Piney up here on Stone Mountain. I've been growing here for close to 200 years. From this high I can see the whole city of Atlanta!

It's not very easy living on Atlanta's giant rock mountain. In the summer, temperatures up here may be as hot as 140 degrees! I see lots of people burning their feet as they climb.

When we have storms, there is no shelter from very strong winds, rain and lightning.

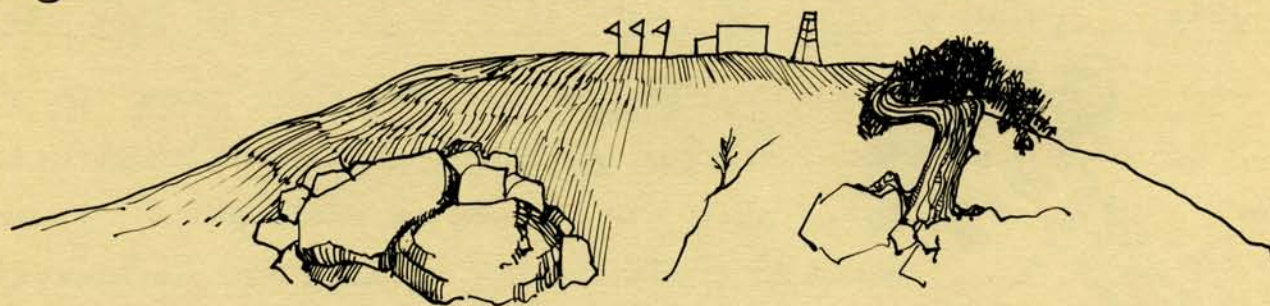
Rain water washes off the rock in huge gullies.

Sometimes it washes the soil right off my roots!



My branches have been toughened by weather over the years.

As you can imagine, it is very lonely living up here. There aren't many trees or other big plants that can stand this desert-like environment. Our roots must find cracks in the rock deep enough to hold soil and to hold us up. The cracks in the rock have a rich store of minerals that we need to survive. A few of my tree friends have been growing for over 800 years! They are called red cedars.



Some places in the mountain are dish-shaped and can hold enough soil for little flowers, moss, and even a few bushes to grow.



See that flower over there? That's the Confederate daisy. It is a very special flower on Stone Mountain. These daisies only grow on places like Stone Mountain.



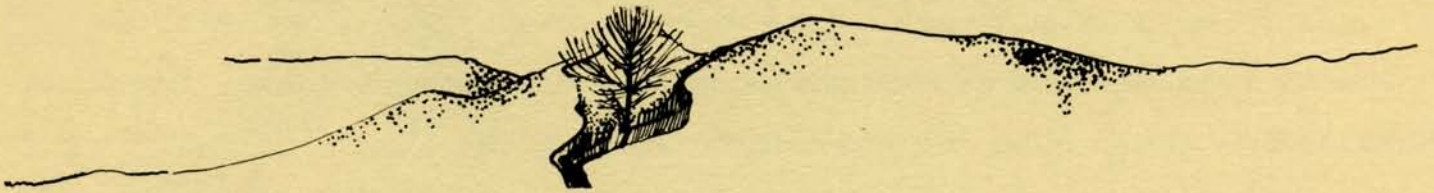
In the fall, the mountain looks colorful because that is when the yellow daisies are all blooming.



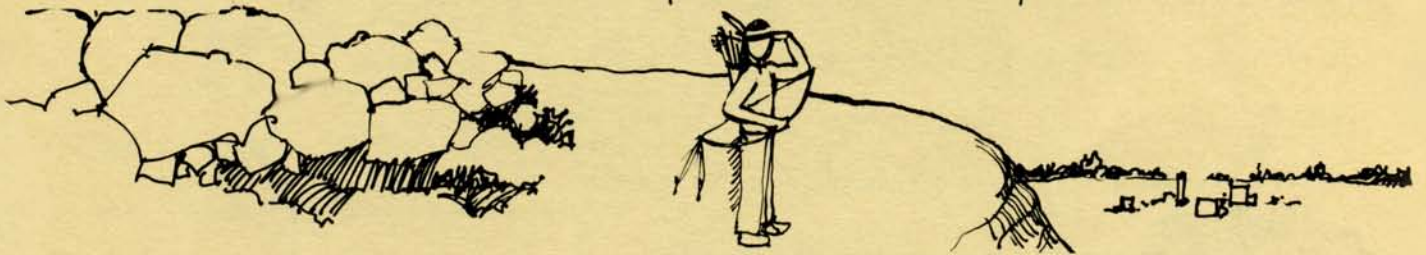
Most of the animals that live here are insects, spiders, and scorpions. Lizards and small mammals like the short-tailed shrew can be seen sometimes where a few trees live. There is enough shade and cover to protect them.



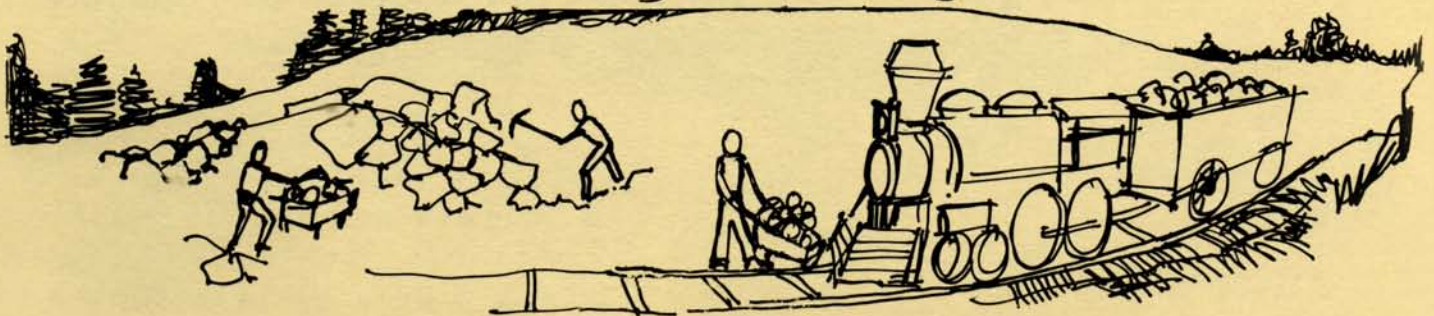
Many interesting things have happened on Stone Mountain since I was a little seedling nearly 200 years ago.



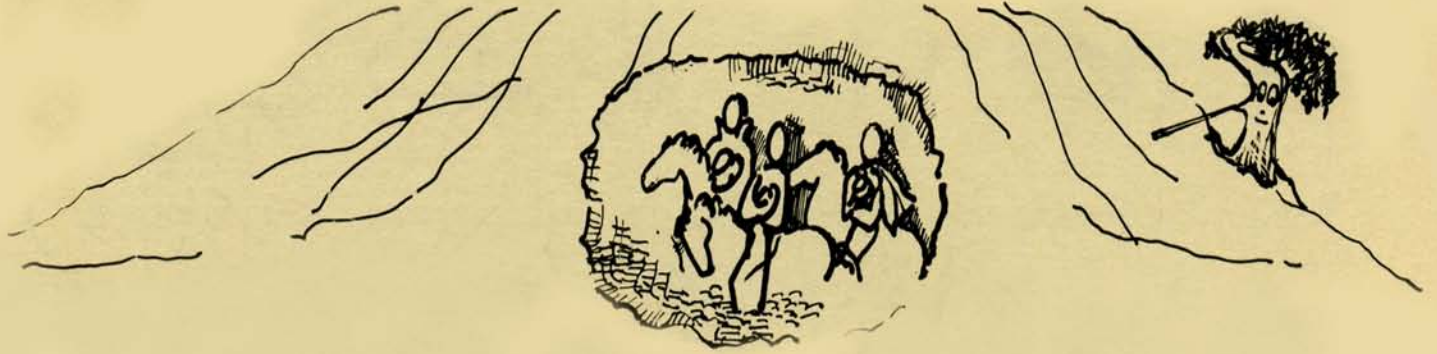
Back then there were Indians living nearby. Their families lived here for thousands of years. Indians used the mountain as a look-out post and for special ceremonies.



After the Indians left over a hundred years ago, towns were growing up all around Stone Mountain. The strong, hard "granite" that the mountain is made of was needed for paving roads and making curbs and buildings. Men blasted parts of my mountain home with dynamite to make the thousands of small rocks the towns needed. A short railroad was built to carry rocks away from the mountain.



In 1915 (65 years ago) something really exciting began to happen. An artist named Mr. Lukeman started work on the biggest carving in the world right here on Stone Mountain! It was not finished until 1970. Hundreds of people worked on the giant artwork over the years.



It is a giant picture of three famous men: General Robert E. Lee, President Jefferson Davis, and Lieutenant General Stonewall Jackson. They were all important during the Civil War.

The carving is so big, a man could walk on General Lee's nose!

Now, Stone Mountain is a park. More people come to see the carving and climb the mountain than ever before. My home is a very unusual place. If you come to climb Stone Mountain, look for me and my friends.



Yours truly,
Old Piney

PUZZLE

Find 6 words from your newsletter.

B	O	L	N	G	E	R	S	L	E	C	P
U	T	H	C	M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N
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answers - carving, granite, daisy, rock, mountain, shrew

This month's Primarily For U.S.
text and layout by Judy Cutchins,
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consulting by David O. Funderburk.