Montana IA: *Awesome!*

THE INCREDIBLE 585-FT. STACK IN ANACONDA, MONT., world's tallest free-standing masonry structure.
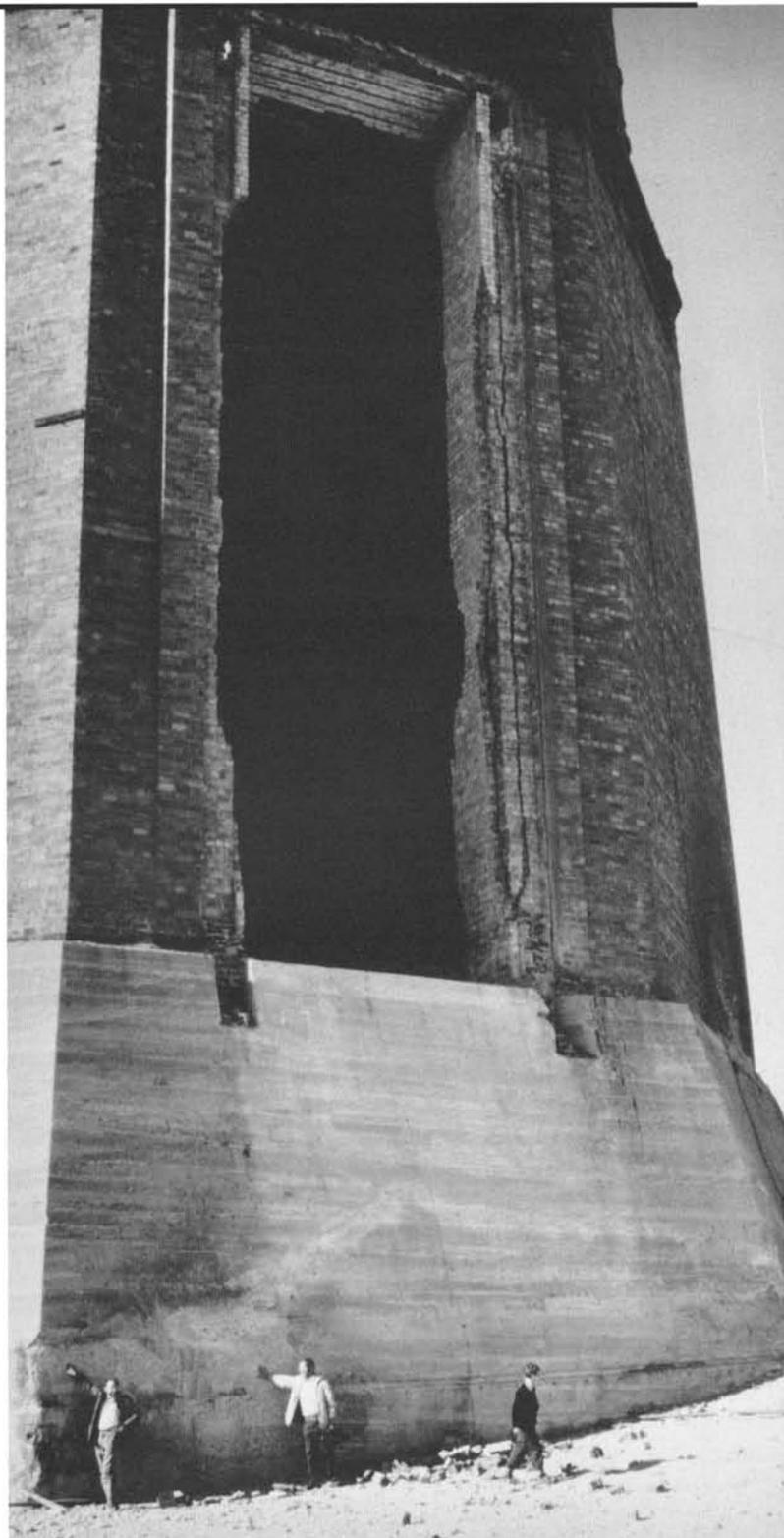
Above: This is about as close as most got to the stack. *R. Frame photo.*

Right: An unstoppable few climbed to the stack and returned with this photo of the foundation, showing the structure's titanic scale. *Photo courtesy Gerry Weinstein.*

On Thursday, Oct. 12, we arrived at the "Richest Hill On Earth." Admittedly, some of us were a bit disoriented at the Capri Motel, our Fall Tour HQ and first introduction to historic uptown Butte. There, surrounded by a horizon of mine headframes, was a Montana motel with a (very cold) palm tree in the parking lot. It was an novel sight, to say the least. As the tour ended on Sunday, and we were winging out over fantastic western mountain terrain, the palm tree remained a mystery. But we knew a great deal more about the headframes and Butte copper mining.

Our hosts, the Frank Klepetko Chapter of SIA, provided a first-class introduction to the Butte area and the early 20th-C industrial empire built by the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. (ACM). This region was the world's greatest producer of copper, zinc, and manganese. The industrial archeological remnants of that mining empire in the cities of Butte and Anaconda were the study area of the Fall Tour. In particular, Friday was devoted to process tours of operating plants, while Saturday involved abandoned sites and structures. In 1962, Butte—the entire city—was designated a National Historic Landmark, and since 1985 efforts have been under way to develop a Butte/Anaconda Historical Park System.

On Friday morning, we followed the Butte mining chronology backwards by first visiting the Continental [open] Pit mine and the