

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

SCREE

Editor
Mrs. Gwynneth Wilson
2215 - 8th Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska
Phone: BR 2-6153

Secretary
Mrs. Helga Bading
c/o Jonas Bros.
700 - 5th Ave.
Phone: BR 7-7822

Vol. 2, No. 4

January, 1960

MEETING, MONDAY FEBRUARY 1st, 1960

The next meeting of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska will be on Monday, February 1st. This will be a potluck dinner at the Willow Park Recreation Hall beginning at 6:30 p.m. It is reputed that the world's best cooks are men and the following plan for arranging the supper was dreamed up by some of the "experts". They decided that all persons whose last names start with A through F should bring a hot dish; those from G through L should bring a salad or bread; the m, n, o, p, q and r's also bring hot dishes; while the rest of the alphabet is stuck with the dessert. Fortunately nothing world shaking is to be proved by this scheme, but it is the hope that the members of the Club and guests, who are most cordially welcomed, will have a pleasant evening and will go home well fed.

MEETING, MONDAY FEBRUARY 1st, 1960

The MCA was treated royally at its last meeting to the slides of Jake Breitenbach. These pictures of the successful climb of the southeast ridge (sort of) of McKinley were excellent and the comments - witty and modest. If you weren't there, that's really too bad!

West Rib

CLIMBING SCHEDULE:

- February 13-14: Joe Pichler will lead a snowshoe-cross country ski trip up Ship Creek over Indian Creek Pass via the old mail trail. This will be overnight. Since there is a group already committed to go, this "show will go on". However, interested persons are invited. On Tuesday, February 9th, there will be a meeting of those going to plan for equipment and supplies. This meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Joe Pichler. Phone Joe at FE 3-2101 for directions.
- March 5-6 Paul Crews will try (if weather conditions permit) to lead a trip up Pioneer Peak. It is not merely helpful, but often essential to let the leader know in advance that you are interested in going so that he can plan the right equipment. If you would like to go for Pioneer call Paul - at home: BR 4-4731 or at the office: BR6-3455.

In the Trite but True Department:

A warm send-off to Norm Pichler who will serve on the ski patrol at Squaw Valley and the hope that the Olympics will be a wonderful experience for him.

Hans Metz was married to Rosemary in December. Betty Clement to Reuben Alleman in January.

And Joe Pichler - we always knew that Joe is young in heart and action but now we know just how young - had his tonsils removed.

MEETING, MONDAY FEBRUARY 1st, 1960

"The Mountain before the Mountain behind O'Malley Road" - *False O'Malley*
by Paul Crews

On Saturday nite and Sunday, Jan. 9 & 10, a group of MCA members made an insignificant ascent of the peak with the most significant name in the Chugach Range. The name (see title above) was given by Helga Bading, and judged by the rest of the party to be most descriptive of the southern peak on the mountain due east of O'Malley Road. If we had climbed the highest (northern) peak, we could have cut the title to "The Mountain Behind O'Malley Road".

The party consisted of Helga, Johnny Johnston, Rod Wilson, Chuck Metzger, my two boys David and Paul Jr., and me. We had dreamed up the trip earlier in the week and decided to make it a training trip for a proposed McKinley trip next summer. As long as we were training we decided to go first class, so we packed in tents, stove, etc. and made a real project of it.

We met at Hanson's service station about 6:30 Sat. nite and after picking up Johnny Johnston on the way drove directly to the homesteader road leading on up into the mountains above O'Malley Road. At about 1500' feet the drifts became too great for Helga's jeep and we resigned ourselves to our training mission, put on snowshoes and

-2-

The tent was pitched by the light of a full moon, in a dead calm ten above temperature. Although the "flatlands" we had left behind were still covered in clouds, at our level we could make out very distinctly the details of "The Mountain before the Mountain behind O'Malley Road", Flattop Mountain, and other equally substantial unnamed moonlit peaks. It was agreed that the impressive moonlight had already made out trip a success, if we made the summit next day or not.

Sunday morning we were up at six, but it was after eight before we struck camp and with light packs headed for our goal, "The Mountain ... etc." About two miles of snowshoeing across the Campbell Creek flats and up the side of the peak brought us to a point where because of a combination of steep slope and a shortage of snow the snowshoes were no longer practical. We therefore cached our snowshoes (as well as skis and poles for David and Paul Jr.), and with ice axes in hand started up the frozen scree slopes. About 500 feet of this, plus floundering in soft snow in gulleys and chopping steps in wind crust, and we reached the south ridge for a short stop while we ate lunch.

The weather was still fine although the clouds in the valley were rising and would probably engulf us before long. The sun was periodically hidden behind the higher points on the ridge to the south of us as it made its horizontal flight only a few degrees above the horizon and we knew we would have to climb faster if we were to make the summit this day.

We therefore continued on up the ridge to a high buttress that effectively stopped our ridge route. A detour to the left around the west side necessitated alternate deep snow wading and step chopping as we traversed a steep snow field to a point just below the summit of "The Mountain ... etc.". From this point a 500 foot scramble up the snow and rocks brought us - at last - to the summit at 4700 feet.

It was about 1:00 p.m., and to continue on along the ridge to the other peak (The Mountain behind O'Malley Road) was out of question because of the small amount of daylight left. A new route of descent lay before us, down the east side of the peak, and we took it without question, knowing it was by far the faster route.

An hour later we were back to our snowshoes. The two boys put on their skis and in a matter of seconds had sliced down the hill in deep powder turns, making us envious of their good fortune. We had to "train" for McKinley with these darned snowshoes!

Still another hour and we were back to the previous nite's camp where we picked up our gear and by 4:00 p.m., just at dark, we reached Helga's jeep.

During the course of our weekend, we had enjoyed the beautiful moonlight and camped in the mountains away from civilization's frustrations; we had walked, floundered, hiked and panted up an unfamiliar mountainside; we had finally reached its summit and gladly shivered in the weak sunlight and fresh breeze that was flowing; we had, in short, climbed "The Mountain before the Mountain behind O'Malley Road."

MEETING, MONDAY FEBRUARY 1st.

O'Malley Trip, January 17th

by Helga Bading

Three skiers, five snowshoers and one four-legged climber met at 8:30 a.m. at Season's. 20 minutes later we parked the cars at the highest point of Rabbit Creek Road. From there a private road leads uphill. It was covered with fluffy new snow; the going was pleasant and the view fine. But soon we began to feel the breeze. As soon as we had left the timber the storm hit us with its full fury, lashing fine and cold snow into our indignant faces. There was no escape.

Hiding behind a hill we stopped to have a raisin and take stock of the situation. Above us we saw Mr. Clark's beautiful sturdy log house and above it loomed "Flattop Mountain", long flags of snow flying from its top. At this point one of the climbers came to her senses and retreated, but we others forced our way uphill to the point where the road forks. Here we were met by Mr. Clark and his friend. "We saw you coming", he said. "Won't you join us for coffee, the pot's already on". We needed no persuasion.

While the wind howled we were snug and cozy inside having coffee and moose bones (?) with the warmth of the liquid our mountaineering spirits returned. Nobody thought of climbing "Flattop", but we nevertheless decided to "go on". Only Tony thought it best to rejoin his unfaithful wife.

Once outside it was difficult even to get into snowshoes or skis. While I put on one ski, the other blew away. But finally we were ready, hurrying down to the forks and then along the snowcovered powerline trail. Half a mile further we came upon a construction shack with its door open. Lunch was served indoors. When the last sardine raisin had been swallowed we hastily retreated downhill along the same route we had taken. At 2:02 p.m. Bosco joined the Bockstahlers at the cars and the last snowshoers

-3-

arrived at 2:50.

Those on the trip: Snowshoeing were Betty Bockstahler, Elinore and Howard Schuck, Kent and Kent Autor. On skis, David Bernstein, Tony Bockstahler, Helga Bading. On foot, Bosco.

Meeting, MONDAY FEBRUARY 1st.

ICA Ice Skating Party by Howard Schuck

After postponement due to weather too cold even for mountain climbers, a Club skating outing was held on Monday, January 18th at the City Rink. The evening was very much enjoyed by the few who attended. Another club outing is scheduled for Thursday, February 4th at 8 p.m. at 9th and E streets. Telephone Howard Schuck 114-SK 2-9448 for more information or just show up with your skates at the City Rink.

MEETING, MONDAY FEBRUARY 1st.

Arctic Valley

Norm Pichler lead a group of 12 on a climb up the hill with No. 7 tow at Arctic Valley around behind its ridge, traversing the knoll to the east of the bowl and up to the ridge separating the south fork of the Eagle River from Ship's Creek. This was meant to be a snowshoe-ski trip and while it is true the hikers took skis and snowshoes - it was the equipment which was carried and not the participants!

It was a glorious day. The company (Joe and Norm Pichler, Tony and Betty Bockstahler, Elinore and Howard Schuck, Dave Bernstein, Dawn Irving, Sue Rydberg, Carol Orvis, Lois Willard, Loree Herrod, and Gwynneth Wilson) was pleasant. A good situation to be alive and taking part in. All made it up and all made it down. Several showed excellent technique at sliding on the seat of ski or climbing pants; a few thought skiing was the obvious way down and were envied by the others.

If a leader needs to know who is going on a trip for planning, it is also true that the person attending could stand a briefing on what to take. Sunday's party clearly demonstrated that while mukluks and bunny boots may be grand for snowshoes they leave something to be desired on a winter hike.