



vol 10, no 3, january 1968  
mountaineering club of alaska  
box 2037 anchorage alaska 99501

happenings on the way

January meeting... Ben Crawford Memorial Park, 3rd and Eagle, January 8, 1968, 8 p.m.  
Special attractions: Chuck O'Leary of the Forest Service, a Snow Ranger at Alyeska, will give a color slide program on snow and avalanche conditions in the Chugach. Chuck has been selected to attend the Forest Service Avalanche School for several years and he also conducts an avalanche training course for the Denali Ski Patrol. The Climbing Committee will announce an unusual and provocative club activity. (?)

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SNOWBIRD MINE, January 13-14. (see new hiking and climbing schedule, this issue)

O'MALLEY PEAK, January 28. (see hiking and climbing schedule)

WERNAGAIN PEAK, February 10-11. (see hiking and climbing schedule)

(Alperley)

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happenings that were

Executive Committee Meeting was held this month.

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BYRON 'ATTEMPT'

November 19, 1967

Bob Spurr

Assisted by the Scree editorial staff to assist future parties, we report that a high powered MCA party of ten, bent on the summit, penetrated no further than the periphery of the lower Byron icefall. Members were Bill Babcock, Dick Barquist, Lotte Kramer, Jim Lethcoe, Ron Linder, Gayle Nienhuesser, Norm Stodem, Peter Vlasveld, Hans van Der Laan, and myself. Lack of snow and some shifting ice has exposed numerous crevasses, precluding a one-day ascent of the central N-NE ridge at this time. (Two previous successful climbs via this route were in mid-April and late June. See Scree, Vol. 9, No. 2 and Vol. 9, No. 7) Enthusiasm for this route remains high, however. Watch Scree for a re-scheduled Byron climb sometime in late winter.

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WOLVERINE 'ATTEMPT'

December 3, 1967

John Merrick

Evening of a cold winter's morning saw Dave Fowler, Bill Stivers and the Merricks waiting for the rest of the group who had car starting problems. By 8:30, with the addition of Hans Van Der Laan and Sharon Cissna, the group was well on the way to the upper O'Malley area to try a new homesteader's road approach to the base of Wolverine. The road was marginal without 4-wheel drive so we skied and snowshoed two miles to the jumpoff point at the bottom of Wolverine's long medial ridge. Progress was slowed by equipment difficulties, minus temperatures, and a minor mishap when Sharon sat down in a fresh wet overflow of Campbell Creek. Some hours later, when she was threatened by the imminent probability of frostbite of the hand, she and John Merrick returned to town. The remainder of the group pushed on but soon realized that because of short daylight and inclement weather, it would not be possible or practical to attempt the summit. Instead the objective was switched to the nearest up place—a point at the west end of Wolverine's southwest trending ridge (VABM Rusty 3562'). This summit was achieved by 2 p.m. under the bright conditions of -8° and a 25 mph wind, so the stay was brief.

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Bob Hansen has resigned as MCA treasurer because of the out-of-town demands of his job. The executive committee will appoint a replacement soon.

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HUPPAH FOR A R C! Alaska Rescue Group Notes

Bill Davis

We are now the proud owners of a gasoline motor driven winch. We won it as a door prize at the semi-annual meeting of the Mountain Rescue Association. Here is the story in somewhat more detail.

About a month ago Bob Byhre reminded me that the fall meeting of MRA would be held in Portland, Ore. just after Thanksgiving. I marked it on the calendar and planned to go if all went well. All didn't go well--our kids got sick and there were a number of other complications --so for a while I gave up the idea of going. Then things began to look a bit better and then, at the last minute (turning down two invitations to go climbing instead), Nancy and I decided we needed a vacation in Portland. So we went. We got there after the meetings had begun but I got to most of them anyhow.

Since it was such a last minute affair, I indicated that I was a member of ARC but that I couldn't serve as the official representative because no one in Anchorage knew I was attending. I maintained I could not act in any official capacity even though representing the group. Even so, everyone was glad enough to see me that they treated me as the ARC representative. Luckily so!

At the banquet Friday evening prizes were to be awarded to all the groups attending. Now I wasn't at the banquet because of our late arrival, problems of taking the kids to the dinner, and (excuse me for saying so) the cost. But Helga and Bob Byhre were there. So when it came time to draw names out of the hat for prizes, the MC read off the names of the MRA members there. ARC was omitted. But when the MC said, "Have I forgotten any groups?" Helga chorused out, "What about Alaska?" Now everybody knows she is from Seattle, so she said, "Bill Davis is here from ARC!" So they put ARC's name in the hat and sure enough--when it came to the drawing for the motorized winch, who won? ARC!

Helga came roaring down to the room and dragged me off to the banquet and I accepted on behalf of the Group, so we are now the proud owners of the machine. Bob and Helga are tending it for the moment. Unless you have some other ideas, the plan is as follows: Bob will be coming up to Anchorage sometime in January and will bring it along with him at that time. This should save the cost of shipping it up. Also, Bob has had much experience with winches and can check you out on it --as well as showing some necessary modifications. The present anchor chain has a wholly inadequate lock on it, for instance. However, if you want it sooner, we'll send it to you at once.

There are a few minor strings attached. One is that we haven't paid our MRA dues lately. It might be a good idea to send them \$10 to show 'em we really love 'em. I sort of promised we might do that. Also, they would like a copy of the Articles of Inc. and By-Laws. Sorry to mention those dirty words. Other than that, we are in good graces as far as I know.

I'll try to send a longer report on the meeting soon. (27 Nov 67)

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JOHN BOUSMAN WRITES...

My wife and I had the sizable pleasure of entertaining Dave Johnston in the Shawangunks this fall and would like to extend a blanket invitation for other people in the MCA to visit us in Cambridge should they happen to be in the area. We have adequate room to put people up--they should try to contact us prior to arrival as we may be temporarily out on some job. We enjoy hearing the latest tales of derring-do! (15 Dec 67)

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Scree is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, which is affiliated with the Anchorage Dept. of Parks and Recreation. Scree staff: Marie Lundstrom, Callie Van der Laan, Sharon Cissna, Joanne Merrick, Carol DeVoe.

Articles on trips and other material to be published in Scree should be sent to Box 4-964, Anchorage 99503--or call 277-0846.

## SNOWSHOE CLIMB BY MOONLIGHT

December 17

Vin Hoeman

How do Alaskans climb mountains in December with so few hours of daylight? Mostly they don't--December ascents are rare, and those who must climb would do well to pick easy objectives close to civilization in this darkest month of the year. Sometimes, however, naturally lighted traveling time can be extended by planning routes to take advantage of moonlight.

Grace and I did this recently by selecting Government Peak, 4781', in the Talkeetnas close by the Fishhook Road on the west side of Little Susitna Canyon at its mouth. The only previous ascent we knew about was that of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer surveyors who established a bench mark on top in 1941, though there have doubtlessly been others by prospectors, hunters, and summer hikers.

It is easy to overestimate ability in the winter, and we got our characteristic late start mid-morning on Sunday, the 17th. The road was strictly one-lane through deep snow and we were lucky not to meet any cars as we drove to Little Su Lodge, turned around, and came back down across Fishhook Creek bridge to about 1400' elevation where we shoveled a carport to park in. Then we started out on skis carrying snowshoes tied to our daypacks, but soon abandoned the slats in the brush and wore webs over the deep powder to the NE Ridge of Government Peak. In waning daylight we went straight up to minimize avalanche danger in reaching its crest. We wore the pair of snowshoes with "grausers" (removable spikes through crossbar) all the way to the summit, taking turns wallowing behind the wearer after ditching the other pair. The weather was wonderfully clear and calm. At dusk we were etched at the animate end of our long track as the whole slope turned deep pink with alpenglow. We rushed to the top at 2:40 in time to see half the sun poised red on the horizon by the dark silhouettes of Iliamna and Redoubt while a silver dollar moon rolled onto a purple velvet sky behind Montana Peak. Our Sanka-jar register deposited beside the brass cap that protrudes highest on Government Peak, we retraced our steps in sparkling moonlight so clear we could count the ptarmigan that flushed from the willows at brushline. The trip took us about 6½ hours, and though the temperature was about zero Fahrenheit the whole time, we have warm memories of the clean line of our tracks and the exceptional beauty of winter scenery.

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## MCA-ers ADVENTURE THE WORLD AROUND

John B. Walker

Other MCA members might be interested to keep track of Bill Hauser. He was the assistant climbing leader this last summer for the Iowa Mountaineers East African Expedition. In late July he and Kyle Atkins and I and about 5 others took the 3-day hike through the fantastic scenery--and endless mud--of the Ruwenzori (Mts. of the Moon) in Uganda to the basecamp shelter at about 13,000 ft. He led me on a beautiful snow and ice climb to the top of Mt. Stanley (Alexandra Peak, 16,703'). Kyle unfortunately got very sick and had to leave basecamp, but recovered in a couple of weeks.

After visiting some of the great national parks, and getting close enough practically to touch the lions, elephants, rhinoceri, crocodiles, etc. we drove south to Tanzania and climbed Kilimanjaro, 19,340'. Kyle and I used the help of the friendly porters--after all, it is a 70-mile round trip in five days, and an ascent of almost 15,000'--but Bill ran up and down the hill in about three days, carrying all his own provisions! Then he had a couple of days of much more adventurous climbs on nearby Mawenzi.

Finally Bill and I and four others drove a couple of days north to Kenya, and then Mt. Kenya. Again a 3-day hike to get to the high shelter, and unfortunately we had time for only three more days up there, which is not enough to do the great twin peaks of Batian and Nelion unless you are fully prepared for the attempt. 17,022 ft. almost 4000 ft of real exciting class 5 rock, with at least one bivouac in that cold and thin air. That Firmin's Tower route (the "normal" route) on the north face is something pretty impressive. We did make some nice climbs on secondary summits up to 16,400 ft, with class 5 rock as a good contrast to the snow and ice we had been on in the Ruwenzori, and the infamous scree of Kilimanjaro. Mt. Kenya is much easier from the other side, in January and February. (cont.)



## MCA-ers ADVENTURE THE WORLD AROUND, cont.

Bill left then for Gisborne High School in New Zealand where he is teaching math--I had a letter from him, and he is having fun in the Alps but already thinking of when he will be coming back to Alaska. He was not going to write to Scree about his climbs this summer because he thought only Alaskan climbs were worth reporting, but I am very grateful for his leadership and so I send you this brief account.

(Dec. 12, '67)

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"NOT BLIND OPPOSITION..."

Callie Van der Laan

An organizational meeting for the formation of an Alaskan chapter of the Sierra Club was held December 18 at Jerry and Marc Ganopole's house. Approximately 40 people were present, including members of MCA, Alaska Conservation Society, and Sierra Club, and others interested in conservation including individuals from Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

With Jerry Ganopole as acting chairman of the meeting, the aims and purposes of the Sierra Club were discussed--"not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress." The need to provide a local face for the national organization was stressed in order for the efforts of the nation-wide Sierra Club to meet with any success at all in Alaska. A Sierra Club chapter in Alaska would need to educate and to direct action on the part of the Club's Board of Directors.

The enthusiasm of the group was apparent, and a petition was started--the first step in forming a chapter. For further information, call a Van der Laan at 277-4251.

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bits and pieces

Newest honorary lifetime member of MCA is GEORGE HALL, superintendent of Mt. McKinley National Park and Alaska district supervisor for the National Park Service:

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NEW AND NEWLY PAID UP MEMBERS: Russ & Rusty Dow (Box 667, Palmer, Ak 99645), Donald A. Messerschmidt (Box 168, Juneau Ak 99801), Dolores E. C. McCrinnon (Institute of Arctic Biology, U of Alaska, College), Barbara Winkley (915 W. 25th, #8, Anc 99503, hm ph: 272-4649, wk ph: 272-5900), Bob & Helga Byhre, Bill & Nancy Davis, Irma Duncan (Star St 3, Fideler Rd, Fairbanks 99701, Dr. David Duncan, Ed Fisher & family, Ray Genet, Bill & Sally Hawue, Dr. & Mrs Richard S. KloeHN, George G. Perkins, John Bousman, Lawrence S. Brown, John B. Walker, Cliff & Lavon Ellis, John Evens, Gary Hansen

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The Mountaineering Club of Alaska is now affiliated with the Anchorage City Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

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Question as presented at the December MCA meeting by Chuck Evans of Nordic Ski Club and discussed by the membership: What should, and can be done about the use of the same areas by climbers, skiers, and people using snow vehicles? Is any kind of zoning limitation feasible, especially in an area such as Johnson Pass?

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ADDRESS CHANGES: Diane Gudgel, Box 4-2118, Anc; Dave Fowler, 2225 Tomig Place, #3, Anc; Howard A Schuck, 4612 Osuna Court N.E., Albuquerque, N.Mex. 87109; Charles Lesley, 275 E. 7th So., Salt Lake City, Utah; April Allen, 301 Sackett, "A", Corvallis, Oregon 99332; Gary A. Mackenzie, Hohn Apts, #210, 843 W. 11th, Anc 99501.

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Anticipated next month is a lively account of the "Sleep-in on Flattop" on Midwinter's Eve which was accomplished by Steffen Maagoe and Peter Ekisch and who (what?) may possibly be the "ghost of Flattop." (Await this adventure in the next thrilling issue of Scree!)

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