

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

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SCREE

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MEETING, MONDAY MARCH 6

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska will meet as usual on Monday, March 6 at 8 p.m. at the Willow Park Recreation Hall. Since the ballots for voting on the change of the meeting night have just been sent out, no decision has been made as yet about changing. Persons who have a preference for either the first Monday or the fourth Tuesday in the month should return their marked ballot-postcards promptly. The next issue of Scree will announce the results.

Sepp Weber who recently joined the Hans Metz Ski School as an instructor and who comes to Alaska from Austria by way of Canada will show his color slides of two exploring expeditions in Greenland and Lapland. This should be a superb opportunity to see something a bit different pertaining to the outdoors.

The last MCA meeting had a highly successful symposium on Footgear. The panel consisted of George Wichman, M.D., Johnny Johnston, Keith Hart, Hans Metz and Norman Fichler with Howard Schuck serving as moderator. A tape was made of this discussion, and Scree hopes to publish a summary of the symposium at a later date. It was agreed generally that footgear is a personal matter in regard to the particular kind of boot or shoe although certain conditions clearly demand a specific item. The range of choice was covered very well by the participants. MCA hopes to have more symposia as valuable as this one.

ILIAMNA

There will be an attempt on Mt. Iliamna (10,016') at the end of March. Bob Goodwin will lead and the following MCA members will make up the party: Bob Bailey, Steve Foss, Chuck Metzger, Norm Fichler and Wayne Rhoades.

CLIMBING SCHEDULE:

Peaks -
Suicide Peaks - March 4 & 5: Leader, Paul Crews (Home: BR 4-4731 or Bus.: BR 6-3455) Leave Sat. Camp at head of Rabbit Creek. Will attempt both Suicide Peaks on Sunday. Paul, prior to the Fur Rendezvous Snow, was considering opening this trip to snowshoers. If interested, please contact Paul by March 2nd.

and Passes-
A Joe Fichler Special - March 5: This will be a snowshoe trip up the Eklutna Lake Road toward Goat Mountain. Joe's telephone number is FE 3-2101.

Independence Mine - March 18 & 19: This will be a repeat of the marvelous outing the Club had in February (account to be printed in the March Scree) Details will be discussed on March 6th at the meeting.

TRIPS:

Three Mile Lake-Knik Village Trip January 1 by Elinore Schuck

At 7:30 a.m. on New Year's Day, fourteen people left Anchorage for a combination sight-seeing-fishing trip. In the group were Gwynneth and Rod Wilson with their five children, Joe Fichler with his three grandsons and their friend, and Howard and Elinore Schuck. After reaching Passila, we turned onto the side road that goes to the old village of Knik. We had planned on driving to Knik Village and from there hiking about three miles to the lake. However, Joe found that a new road had been built, so we were able to drive within about a half mile of the lake. With the aid of a Swedish auger, holes were soon cut through the ice, but only a few small fish were caught. After enjoying lunch around a campfire, we packed up and went on to Knik Village, where we saw the remains of a once busy village, inhabited now by a few Indians. We returned home, having spent another enjoyable day in the Alaska out-of-doors.

Snowshoe and Dog Sled Trip January 7-8 by Irma Duncan

Leader Joe Fichler, Elinore and Howard Schuck, Jim Messick and Irma Duncan shared the fun and beauty of this adventure. From the cars to Clarke's Homestead was an easy crunchy walk on a snow-plowed road. A sled and a toboggan loaded with gear for luxurious camping was pulled by seven of Dr. Erik Barnes' dogs. The dogs' arrival was delayed because of

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able car trouble (Erik's truck and Joe's pickup). In the meantime Elinore, Irma and Howard had been through frosty clouds to the end of the road and down again before plans and dogs were re-entangled and the outing officially begun.

Soon we were in sparkling brightness above the fog hiding Anchorage. Emil (named by Joe), boxer type canine who had adopted us, found running with the dogs great sport. Luckily, the dogs accepted him too. Down a dip in the road raced the dogs: snowshoes, packs, tents, sleeping bags, kettles, stoves and food scattered in all directions. While we were repacking and stacking heavy non-essentials beside the road, the dogs ran away (fortunately uphill). After order was restored, we were quickly at the end of the road where we attached ourselves to snowshoes for the mile to a power line cabin. The gear was unloaded, the dogs untangled, and we said "Good bye" to Erik and the team.

Construction work was in order for vandals had removed the windows, door and some of the walling insulation from the cabin. The openings were blocked with sheet rock, debris chopped from the floor, wood sawed for the stove, and a fire started. Refreshed by hot tea and sandwiches, we snowshoed across the valley and up a slope where we left the snowshoes and climbed to the ridge beside "The Mountain behind The Mountain behind o'Malley Road". We disturbed one galloping moose, many ptarmigan and a lone creaking raven. The snow pinnaled peaks were mauve and golden just before dusk sent us shuffling back to the shelter. Another cozy fire, hot drinks (melted snow was our water supply) and pot luck unrivaled by the Chart Room were enjoyed. Double sleeping bags and many layers of clothing proved cozy that night while the stars shone brilliantly in a black sky, the Northern Lights danced, and the lights of Anchorage glowed below us.

The next morning everyone marveled at the beauty of the sunrise. Mt. Spurr, Susitna, Crater, peerless McKinley and unrecognized others were magnificently pink and unusually clear above the foggy blue of the inlet and against a pale blue sky. Before breakfast was completed, we greeted Emil and two dog teams, the second team driven by Dr. Scott, Erik's partner. This gave us twice as many dogs to pat, admire, untangle and chase. Somehow, the gear did get loaded, the dogs untangled, turned around, and sleds, dogs and drivers were catapulted across the snow and down the mountain.

We snowshoed toward the mountain we had climbed the afternoon before. The men again climbed the ridge to take advantage of the bright light and the superb view for picture taking. Then back to the cabin, a snack, and to the road where we loaded the snowshoes on the toboggan. Toboggan rides added to the fun on the way down. Iliamna was splendidly purple and amber in the sunset. Waiting at the cars was Emil. And at home was central heating and hot showers!

Alyeska Ski Area

February 12

by The Bockstahlers

An intrepid band of five chose Sunday, February 12 (a beautiful day!) for an impromptu ski-and-snowshoe trip to the Alyeska Ski Area. Promptly at 7:30 a.m. Betty and Tony Bockstahler in their car and Gwyn Wilson and Howard Schuck in Howard's car arrived simultaneously at Joe Pichler's house as he emerged laden with his gear. Everybody consolidated into Howard's car and proceeded south on the icy highway.

We arrived at Alyeska (which is several miles from Girdwood, 40 miles south of Anchorage on the Seward Highway) at about 9:00 a.m. Well ahead of the crowds, we rode the chairlift all the way to the top. There the "Sun Deck" lodge provided shelter, coffee and snacks. The temperature was about zero, but it was a sunny, windless day, and the view was magnificent.

The snowshoers proceeded to the top of the nearby peak over gentle snow-slopes. This was a pleasant climb and very soul-satisfying, although not the type to win the participants any mountain climbing laurels. However, this is real Alpine country, with many steep slopes around (which are avoided, of course, in the winter due to avalanche danger). Upon returning to the Sun Deck, Gwyn and Howard rode down the chairlift to trade their snowshoes for skis and to join Tony in some skiing. Betty and Joe stayed at the Sun Deck for some picture taking and general loafing in the warm sunshine.

The slopes became quite crowded in the afternoon because of the good weather and a special daily chair lift rate of \$2.00 (regular rate, \$5.75). The skiers waiting in line to catch the chairlift at the intermediate loading platform were treated to an unscheduled jumping exhibition at one point in the afternoon, when Howard soared from the loading platform, triggered by a gentle shove from an oncoming chair, and made a beautiful landing (without injury!) from the ten foot fall. He tells us he had decided to postpone (indefinitely!) further training for the Olympic 90-meter jumps.

Leaving the area at about 3:30 p.m. we arrived back in Anchorage a little before 5:00.

We were well impressed with the Alyeska Ski Area. The upper slopes are wide and timber-free, medium grade, with excellent snow. Further down the slopes become steeper and are more plentifully supplied with trees. In this area is an intermediate loading platform on the chairlift. Most of the skiing was being done on this upper section of the hill because of the better snow conditions. Skiing to the bottom was feasible but rather difficult due to icy spots and exposed tree stumps. The snow conditions at the bottom of the hill are not very good at present, but with some more snow the skiing should be excellent from the top all the way down by many different routes. At present the skiing is excellent at the top and down to the intermediate loading platform, although considerably beyond the beginner category.

The new chairlift worked fine. There is a shelter lodge at the bottom of the lift with a snack bar in addition to the Sun Deck at the top. Although the area is, of course, primarily for skiers, it was well patronized the day of our trip with sightseers who rode the lift for the view at the top -- and then returned the same easy way.