

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

EDITOR  
Gwyneth Wilson  
1215 -8th Avenue  
Anchorage, Alaska  
ER 4-7833  
Vol. 4, No. 4

SCREE

SECRETARY  
Marjorie Prescott  
Box 1119, Anchorage  
Office: SK 3-2211  
Home: SK 3-3119  
February 1962

MEETING, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska will meet on Tuesday, February 27th at 6 p.m. for a Potluck Supper. It has been decided to experiment with bringing the ingredients for dinner as follows: Will those here named please bring a MAIN DISH - Pading, Bockstahler, Gardoy, Horning, Johnston, Pichler (j.), Schuck, Willard, Wilson (r) and Wolfe. Those assigned SALADS are: Clement, Duncan and Prescott. DESSERT will be provided by St. Palley, Wilkerson and Crows. Everyone should bring table service and himself. All not listed may contribute bread or rolls, butter, salt and pepper, pickles and olives and "odds and ends" (please use discretion!). Any snags in this scheme should be referred to Jackie and Gene Horning at ER 8-9395. The attendance is usually between 25 and 40. However, Potlucks often bring out a few more than a regular meeting.

The program sounds fascinating. Dick Brarton and George Mickel, Counsellors at the Wasilla Youth Camp, will bring four of the boys and a program. The program will consist of a 25 minute color film of the clearing of the Chilkoot Trail, sometimes called the Trail of '98. There will be slides of this area as well. Also, they will have an aerial photographic map of the proposed trail to Lake George.

CLIMBING SCHEDULE:

- February 25th: Sunday - a one day snowshoe trip in the area leading to Johnson's Pass. Leader: Marguerite St. Palley. SK 3-2330.
- March 3-4: This will be a 20 mile ski-snowshoe trip from the Seward Highway to Moose Pass over Johnson Pass. It can be arranged so that the ski party starts at one end, leaving cars, and the snowshoe party at the other end, leaving cars, with a car key exchange at their meeting. For details, contact Jon Gardoy. FA 2-1658.
- In the future: Sometime in March or April, the Alaska Alpine Club will have a week's trip to the Black Rapids Area.  
  
In early May, Hartmut will take the Prospector's Club to the Russian Lakes Area, and he has invited any interested MCA members to go along.

HONORARY MEMBERS:

At the January 23rd meeting of the MCA, Mr. and Mrs. Clark who have been exceedingly gracious to wandering mountaineers and Jim Branch who has been helpful in the renovation of the hut at Crow Pass were elected Honorary Members.

HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION:

It was felt that the MCA should take donations to help contribute to the expenses of the American Mount Everest Expedition 1963. A suggestion was made that a benefit could be held for the purpose of securing additional funds for the Himalayan climbers.

GIRL SCOUTS:

Fifteen Girl Scouts under the leadership of Helen Wolfe, Donna Poincin and Gwyn Wilson snowshoed while carrying heavy packs a short distance up the Indian Trail in the Chugach Forest. They established a winter camp and spent the night of February 17th-18th in it, returning without mishap to Anchorage on Sunday. There was good coverage of this trip in both newspapers, and there will be an article by one of the scouts in the next Scree.

RELATED REPORT ON THE FRIGID FLIGHT FROM FESTIVITIES by Ed Fisher

Eight a.m. December 23rd found John Dillman and Ed Fisher anxiously awaiting the arrival of Gregg Erickson for the beginning of what was expected to be a routine winter climb. The objective was the east peak of the ridge between the south fork of Campbell Creek and Rabbit Creek. Plans were to travel along the power line on the north side of the ridge and camp near a snow chute which lead to the peak. The following day we were going to climb the chute and return to Anchorage.

Gregg's phone call shortly after eight told of a previous night of revelry and the resultant over sleeping. A late start plus almost two hours taken to extricate the red Nash from a snow bank placed us on the power line road about one in the afternoon. Temperature -25 degrees F. The snow was firm and snowshoeing was easy but as we dropped into the valley so did the temperature. Our parkas soon wore a layer of frost from our breathing. Darkness found us at the low point on the power line road not far from Campbell Creek which was still open in places. After a hurried erection of the tent we quickly crawled into our sleeping bags after removing only our footwear. Temperature -42 degrees F. The night was spent with little discomfort. Gregg who had little sleep the night before slept well. The next morning it was -40 degrees F. so we unanimously agreed to abandon our objective and return to the festivities.

Each jaunt, no matter how small, teaches. Some of the things we learned were:

- 1- It doesn't take extremely expensive equipment to be reasonably comfortable at low temperatures. John slept in a down bag advertised to be comfortable down to only 0 degrees F.
- 2- Insulation between the sleeping bag and the air mattresses on which Gregg and Ed slept wore wet from condensation of body moisture as it passed through their sleeping bags. John who had borrowed a  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick pad of plastic foam (ensolite) from Paul Crews and had placed it on top of his air mattress did not notice the cold at pressure points as did the others.
- 3- The bottom of a valley is not the most desirable place to make camp as all the cold air funnels down the valley.
- 4- The jokes and laughter of companions can erase the unpleasantness from any situation.

#### ARCTIC VALLEY TO INDIAN

by Tony Bockstahler

At about 5:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 3, the following sleepy hikers assembled at the parking lot at the foot of the road up to Arctic Valley Ski Area: Joe Pichler, Howard Schuck, Scott Hamilton, Mike Chase, Ed Fisher, Clayton Cooper and Tony Bockstahler. The group drove up to Arctic Valley in Tony's four-wheel drive truck.

Everybody loaded up their packs and put on their snowshoes (Tony wore skis with climbers), and the party got under way at 6:00 a.m. from the parking lot near the army ski shelter. First came an interesting descent into the valley. This is rather steep and a bit tricky in the dark. Soon the going became better, and, with daylight approaching, we made good progress. We were not on a trail but headed up the valley thru a spruce forest on fairly level ground. Soon, however, we encountered alders and willows, which slowed our progress. After awhile, we got into clear going again, and we soon found ourselves on the trail, as identified by blaze marks on the trees. We lost and re-found the trail a number of times. We crossed and re-crossed Ship Creek about a dozen times where it was bridged over with ice and snow. On one of these crossings, Howard gave us some excitement by breaking thru the ice and dunking his lower half in the water. We hauled him out, and he didn't seem very upset with his experience and elected to continue on rather than building a fire and drying out his clothes. Fortunately, it was not very cold - about freezing temperature.

We had had good weather all day, starting with light snow early in the morning, which soon stopped. It was mostly overcast during the rest of the morning and cleared up partially during the afternoon. We reached the old roadhouse at about 3:00 p.m. The roof is fallen in so this didn't offer any shelter, but we decided to stop for the night so we would have plenty of time to build a fire and dry out Howard's boots and clothes. Also Mike had wrenched his knee, and walking on it was becoming more and more painful. We found a spot nearby with plenty of firewood and set up a comfortable camp.

At 6:00 a.m. the next morning, we were up and soon were eating breakfast and packing gear. Mike's sprained knee was worse, and he said it had stiffened and he didn't think he could walk on it. So, we decided to leave him there with a tent and continue our trip. Then we would get help to come in and evacuate him by air or akie if necessary. Scott Hamilton stayed with him.

Our reduced party of five left camp at about 7:00 a.m. The weather was fine; the going was clear, and we made good time. The route led gradually up toward the head of Ship Creek Valley. We encountered some wind but not bad. The climb was gentle but long to the pass at about timberline. The country leading to the pass is quite open, and it would be easy to lose one's way in fog or snowstorm.

We reached the pass at about noon and started down Indian Creek Valley. This was quite a bit steeper than the other side of the pass, and we tangled with some alders, but it was not too difficult. The weather continued fine, in fact too warm. In the bottom of the valley the snow was sticky.

About half way down, we got onto a logging trail and followed it, crossing the creek numerous times. At the bottom, this led into an old logging road, which we then followed until we hit the Seward Highway about a half mile south of Indian House at about 4:00 p.m. We then hiked to Indian House where our transportation back to Anchorage was waiting.

We all agreed we had had a fine trip, although we were sorry about Mike's misfortune. Joe Pichler had very ably led the trip, assisted by Howard Schuck, who made the trip two years ago. This is a rather strenuous two-day trip. We made it in good time, but we had fine weather and better than average snow conditions. It would make a nice three-day trip with plenty of time for stops. The scenery is excellent, especially from the roadhouse to the top of the pass.

We had taken the precaution of getting a letter of approval from the army for this trip, as part of it goes thru army reserve. No one challenged us. However two years ago the party making the trip was accosted by M.P.'s and transported to the army hoosegow for several hours until they were cleared.

The only game we saw was one ptarmigan and one porcupine. We saw plenty of moose tracks.

The following day an Air Force helicopter evacuated Mike Chase so everything ended happily.

#### TO A PAIR OF KOREAN BOOTS:

Keats wrote about Grecian urns;  
Rouben Gaines on Arctic terns.  
This humble rhymers'  
And would-be climber's  
Spirits soar with delight  
When wearing Korean boots on a winter's hike!

G.W.