

Scree

Denali

which mountain?

Vol. 9, No 6
April, 1967
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA
P.O. Box 2037
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

ARG POLKA PARTY !
Friday, April 14
Ballroom, Anchorage-
Westward, 9 p.m.
Music by Dan Zantek

EVENTS TO COME

APRIL MEETING: Willow Park Community Center, 9th and Fairbanks, April 17, 8 p.m.
Bill Long and his climbing in Antarctica will star on the program.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING: Tuesday, May 2, 8 p.m. 3104 W 30th.

McHUGH PEAK,, April 16. Approach on skis or snowshoes. Moderately long one-day climb. LEADER: John Wolfe, 272-7698 (home).

TWINS, April 29. Long one-day climb. Good rock climbing at top after approach on skis or snowshoes. LEADER: Hans Van der Laan, 277-7525 (work).

EKLUTNA CABIN "PICHLER'S PERCH", May 20-21. Probably will require four-wheel-drive vehicles to get to base of glacier. Severe winter conditions may be experienced. Overnight in spacious MCA cabin. LEADER: Gayle Nienhueser.

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING April 4 decided against sponsoring Hans Gmoser and his film next fall.*** The Mountain Conservation Committee, which had been approved by MCA at the last regular meeting, will be set up so that interested members may work through the Committee on issues that concern them. A "chairman" will be appointed soon. *** MCA plans to have a facsimile of a "Bishop Ultimate" 4-man tent available soon for summer use by club members. See Equipment chairman Dave DeVoe for rental and chargeout.*** Discussion of the MCA cabin program considered whether to begin work on a new cabin this year or wait until another year, where will materials for a new cabin come from, what direction should the MCA go in positioning of next cabin, and what should be done about improving the condition of the Eklutna cabin. The Committee decided to work from the Crow Pass side of the traverse and position the next cabin at the site nearest there. If materials can be acquired this summer, we should begin work this year.

Ray Genet's bright orange Alp Sport jacket, which he wore on McKinley, has been stolen from his car. It has a patch on the right arm and a plastic zipper. Anyone seen wearing this should be apprehended.

Mountain silhouette on first page of March Scree is the Moose's Tooth (10,335') in the Alaska Range. It was first climbed in 1964 by a German party.

NOTES ON MCA DIRECTOR #2: Paul Crews, first MCA president...charter member...mechanical engineer...from the Pacific Northwest...came to Alaska in the mid-fifties...has a mountain named for him in the Olympics...made first ascents of Mts Iliamna, Torbert, and Gerdine...climbed McKinley in 1960.

Vin and Grace have gone off to Europe and hope to climb Mont Blanc and then climb in the Haut Atlas in Morocco.

WINTER ASCENT OF WOLVERINE PEAK 4455', March 12

Frank Nosek

On Sunday, March 12, a bright but breezy day, eight MCA'ers and one guest briefly gathered their wits and equipment in the Safeway parking lot and headed up the Campbell Airstrip Road, sometimes known as the Basher Road. Bill Hague, Tony Bockstahler, Mac Myres, John Wolfe, John and Jo Ann Merrick, Peter Vlasveldt, Frank O'Connor (guest), and Frank Nosek were ready to go. We parked at the Cremo homestead (advance permission absolutely required), waited thirty minutes for Gary Hansen and Carol Wood before concluding our wait was futile and that they had decided on other pursuits. The day was clear but large snow plumes were blowing off the nearby peaks and ridges. The party had one set of trail snowshoes, two sets of bearpaw snowshoes, and a combination of downhill and touring skis, all with skins.

We left Basher at the 1000' contour and moved in an easterly direction approximately 1/4 mile to a small lake which appears on the USGS maps, then northeast threading our way through the woods onto the shoulder of Near Point (2960') behind the pioneering trail breaking of Tony, John and Mac. Traversed south around the shoulder of Near Point just at brush line (2000'), then we dipped down into the creek bottom which is apparent between Near Point and what appears from town to be the north ridge of Wolverine Peak (but would actually be a west ridge since it leaves the peak and proceeds in a westerly direction more or less). Because of the high wind along the north ridge, a route was chosen which approached the peak between the north ridge and what appears to be the medial ridge from town. Snow conditions were soft on Near Point and across the valley onto Wolverine, firming as altitude was gained. Skis and snowshoes were left at the 3250' level as the snow was firm enough for walking and the grade was getting steep. Peter was experiencing difficulty with his skins and elected to stay and ski in the valley. The rest of the party proceeded up the draw (45°) and the rest of the medial ridge, viewing the old wreckage of a single engine airplane. John Merrick found that his finger mittens were not warm enough for the wind exposure on the ridge and dropped back down into the valley. The other members of the party all reached the summit from 2.30 p.m. to 3.15 p.m. A cairn is existing on the summit but there was no register in evidence. I had brought along a coffee can, paper and a pen to place a register but upon arrival found the pen was frozen and wouldn't write. Gary and Carol had come up on to Near Point behind us, sighted our party, determined that they could not catch up, and had turned back in the meantime. There was some variable skiing on the trip down with most of the party arriving back at the cars shortly after 6.00 p.m. Frank, our guest for the climb, experienced difficulty with his snowshoes (trail) and arrived with John Wolfe and myself back at the cars at approximately 9.00 p.m. A delightful one day (10 hour) climb which could be made all the way on skis: non-technical, no crampons or ropes necessary, nor exposure, and panoramic view of lakes to the east and the city and upper Cook Inlet to the west.

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SUICIDE PEAK, 5005'

February 12

Dave Meyers

On the morning of February 12, Ned Lewis and I began a trip up Suicide, hoping the name was inappropriate. We began by removing Ned's VW from a snowbank. In retrospect it was the most difficult part of the trip. We then walked along the road which ends at a cabin two miles from the base of Suicide. At the cabin we donned our oversnow devices (skis or snowshoes). We arrived at the base of the mountain at noon or later (we loafed), and decided to ascend the southernmost of the Suicide group. Our route was up a gully on the north to the level of a 4000' col, where a traverse was made to said col. From the col it was merely a walk to the summit. On top we discovered a register, difficult to find in the snowdrifts. Our trip out was uneventful, save we had to push the VW to start it. Ned discovered that skis have certain advantages over snowshoes, especially on the descent.

* * *

SUICIDE PEAK, 5065'

March 11

Steve Stewart

Hans van der Laan and I left his house at 8 a.m. on March 11. We dropped down 500 feet to Rabbit Creek valley on skis and headed up the valley to the lake at the far end where we made our camp in late afternoon. All went well until a bit of a wind came up during the night. By morning the tent was anxiously awaiting

takeoff. We got up at 6.30 a.m. and ate breakfast amid a flapping tent with food and hot tea flying about. We secured the tent and headed towards the mountain under clear, cold and windy skies. We climbed up nearly to the saddle between the two Suicides and cut left up a gully which led almost to the top of the northernmost Suicide. Close to the top of the gully, we went up about 400' of rock to the 10065' summit which we reached about 2.00 p.m. There were no winter ascents recorded on the register. We stayed on top a short time and headed down the same way. After breaking camp and eating lunch, we skied the long way out to the van der Laan's house, where we had a delicious dinner of buttered chicken.

"ROUNDTOP", 4755'

March 25

Callie van der Laan

The following formidable group assembled at Ptarmigan Ski Area on March 25: Roger Crosby, Dave and Carol DeVoe, Helen and John Wolfe, John and Joann Merrick, Dave Matsen, Richard Dangremond, Jim Krob, Tony Bockstahler, and Callie van der Laan. Helen Wolfe was our 'leader', although she appointed several 'field leaders'. The majority had skis equipped with an assortment of waxes, skins or crisscrossed ropes for uphill travel. We went up a long sheltered gully on hardpacked snow in marvelous sunshine. We took a long lunch break which gathered the somewhat spread-out party together for a time. The gully led up to a large bowl, where the snow was extremely hard packed by wind. Some of us were fortunate enough to have crampons. (I did not and regretted it.) Bearing to the left up through the bowl, the party reached the top in several small groups. I am told the view from the top was excellent, but since I was the only one that didn't get all the way up, I can only say that from my high point (at the ridge above the bowl), the clear peaks in the Eagle River area were magnificent.

The skiers came down through the bowl in attitudes varying from enjoyment to apprehension. We went back through the gully in a leisurely manner. Our leader carefully checked at all times on the slower members by staying in the rearguard. The trip was quite good and would be a superb skiing trip earlier in the winter. A lesson that we learned was to always take ice axes and crampons on early spring trips.

SUMMER MCKINLEY GROUP ACTIVITIES

Bill Babcock

February 25, 26. All members of the team spent two days on the Portage Glacier. The team practiced prussiking, sinking ice screws and arresting falling climbers. All members of the party were given the opportunity to descend and ascend the ice wall.

March 3, 4. Chet Hackney, John Ireton and Bill Babcock took two days to attempt King Mountain. With the winds blowing and the mountain in clouds, the three climbers snowshoed up to the lake at the foot of the north ridge of King. Departing at 6.00 a.m. from a camp at the lake, the three ascended on snowshoes until reaching firm snow. The winds made going difficult but it looked like it was trying to clear, so the group went up to the main ridge. Bill decided to turn back because of ankle trouble. John and Chet pushed on in the wind and clouds and reached the summit about noon. Fortunately, as the two went higher, the weather improved and the winds abated. John and Chet were greeted with an unobstructed view of the Chugach, and a magnificent view of Skybuster, recently named by Vin Hoeman.

March 12. John Ireton, Chet Hackney and Bill Babcock departed Anchorage at 5.00a.m. to attempt Peak 6119 (Beyers or Mt Vigor). By 6.30 they were snow shoeing up soft snow on Lazy Mountain. Upon reaching the ridge of Lazy Mountain, the snowshoes were left behind and the long up-and-down ridge walk began. The conditions were good with hard wind-blown snow most of the way. The last 1000' were ice and snow. Only the last 100' posed much of a problem to the climbers, but did not bother Bill's dog (six months old) who scampered on the summit unroped.

Scree is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Scree staff: Marie Lundstrom, Marge Maagoe, Callie van der Laan, Carol DeVoe. Articles on trips and other material to appear in Scree should be sent to Marie Lundstrom, Box 4-964, Anchorage 99503, or call 277-0846 (home) or 272-0554 (work).