



APRIL 1980

APRIL MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, April 16th, at 8:00 p.m. on the top floor of the Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third and Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting, there will be a slide show featuring Bill Wakeland's slides of his recent trip into the Brooks Range.

MINUTES OF MARCH GENERAL MEETING, Mountaineering Club of Alaska
Wednesday, March 19, 1980, Pioneer Schoolhouse, Anchorage, Alaska

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 p.m. by President Tim Neale. The secretary read the minutes of the February meeting which were approved. He also read the Treasurer's report. Current balances are: Checking account, \$753; cash, \$59; and \$1,500 in money market fund, of which \$30.08 has been earned as of 3/3/80.

The following committees reports were given:

Equipment: All ropes have now been returned. A membership card is required to borrow club equipment which is kept at A.H.

Program: Bill Wakeland will give a slide show next month on a trip to the Brooks Range. In May, Steve Reese will show his slides on climbing in the North Cascades and Pugarbos.

SCREE: A new place may have to be found to print our monthly newsletter. We need suggestions on this. Any accounts of interesting hikes or climbs should be sent to the Editor or to the Club's P.O. Box.

Climbs and Classes: March 22, Saturday. Self-arrest class by Dave Pahlke.
March 23, Sunday. Hicks Creek, leave at 6:00 am
April 9, map reading class, 7:30 pm, Romig Junior High School, by Tom Falker and two others. Bring compass and Anchorage A-7 and A-8 USGS quads. The class will go to Flattop April 12 for map exercise.

All members willing to lead climbs were urged to fill out the coupon in the March SCREE so spring and summer schedule can be in the April SCREE.

April 11-13, Avalanche School at Alaska Pacific University, \$135 with excellent leaders such as Ed LaChapelle, Fred Beckey, Yvon Chouinard and Dr. Peter Hackett.

Old Business: None.

New Business: The Club needs a new projector screen or a new face C for the present one C. A new one will be priced but any good second-hand one would be considered. All meetings from now until December will be at the Pioneer Schoolhouse on the third Wednesday at 8:00 pm.

After the intermission, Bill Devine gave a lively slide show on the history and route of the Iditarod Dog Sled Race, replete with anecdotes over the years since the diphtheria race to Nome in 1925.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm Al Robinson, Secretary

Tentative Trip Schedule through July 1980

- 10 Bird Creek Ridge-Leader Bob Hume. This is a good early conditioning hike. Come to the April meeting for details or call Bob 248-4975(H) 276-5152(N)
- 17&18 Gull Rock-Leader Richard Hall 333-2090
This trail begins near Hope in the Porcupine campground. It is a favorite early spring trek because the snow departs relatively early. However, the ground may still be muddy except for the area at Gull Rock itself which is well drained and protected from the winds. It is a good beginner's hike and is 9 miles round trip. This will be a joint venture with members of Glaciers Grotto and instruction will be offered in tape and compass surveying. Side trips futher along the Gull Rock Trail, up the mountain, along the beach or looking for seacaves are possible. Leave UAA parking lot 7 AM saturday return Sunday PM.
- May 24-26 Puritan Creek to Chickaloon. Leader John Nevin. This is our favorite Memorial Day hike which is fast becoming a NCA tradition. Families with some back-packing experience should find this an enjoyable weekend. Sign up at the May meeting or call John at 349-1707(H) or 243-3776(N)
- 7&8 Crow Pass to Eagle River, sign up at the May Meeting Leader-Ron Rhodehamel 333-5159

- June 21 Flattop Overnight. This is our traditional summer solstice overnight on Flattop. Come to the June meeting for details.
- June 28-July 12 Porcupine River Trip. Old Crow to Fort Yukon
Leader-arty Bassett 694-3917 (H)
- July 4-6 Resurrection Trail, Leader Bob Hume 248-4975(H)
276-5152(W)
- July 12-13 Reed Lakes, Leader-John Lohff 276-8714(H) 276-8514(W)
- July 20 Rendezvous Peak, Leader Al Robinson 279-8873
- July 26-27 O'Malley Camping and climbing, Leader-Gene Klymko
- July 26-August 3 Kobuk Valley National Monument, Leader Dona Agosti. This is a unique trip involving river-boat charters and backpacking. See the March issue of Scree for further details or call dona 248-0089.

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ANCHORAGE'S OBVIOUS JEWEL

by ERNIE BORJON

After four and one half hours of walking, Jim Bergeren and I arrived at the open book, a rock corner on the east side of the O'Malley North Buttress at the far end of the lake basin, (south). Climbing in the corner would take us up 300' and onto a steep snow face upon which we would traverse right, about 500' to get us into the O'Malley North Couloir proper.

The open book was time consuming, being thin brittle ice, then snow covered ice, and finally thin snow on rock slab. The traverse which had looked like a piece of cake from below, turned out to be a face into the mountain 500' crab crawl with a touchy few crampon on rock moves to enter the bottom gully.

Jim and I had by now been booking for 10 hrs. and we were in need of rest, but because of the angle of the snow (steep), the obvious avalanche conditions and the no ledge characteristics of Shugach rock, we kept moving.

As one views O'Malley from Anchorage, about 600' below the summit there appears to be a triangular slab of rock which tilts to the right. At this point there is also a streak of snow that departs the main gully below the triangle and hooks up and right to the ridge line. I can not describe the feeling, except to say that I had great pangs of providential thankfulness, for there at the bottom of the triangle was a little ledge of snow. The wind must

howl down the two gullys and meet at this junction is unable to fill this hollowed out, protected place at the bottom of the triangle. What more it had a horn onto which we could secure ourselves while sitting on the ledge.

It was now 4:30 PM and the insidiousness of this gully dawned on us, for below was about 1200 ft. of steep loose snow, the airy, time consuming traverse, the 300 foot rock drop off and less than 1 1/2 hours of daylight left. Above was 500-600 ft. of steepening snow and what I knew was the crux, the narrows and the steeper snow above. It was doubtful that we could make it down and across the traverse before dark and the thought of spending the night there was not discussed.

So we struck out with me leading and putting in protection about every 100 ft., clipping in and both of us always moving, no belays.

The narrows is a rock vee tilted to the left with snow only in the corner, so the right crampon is in snow and the left is continually bouncing off of rock slab. I managed it ok but Jim was wearing my pack with his and other gear inside and had fits but worked it out fine.

The narrows is only about 100 ft. long but you can't see it until you start into it because here the gully turns left. From the exit, the gully turns right, to the cornice for maybe 50 ft. but the snow encountered is unbelievably steep. I had no idea snow could stack up that steep and be that loose. The last 15 ft. have to be 75-80 degrees and loose, probably because it is protected by the cornice and continually being blown in.

I was trucking when I hit the narrows, I was trucking and shifting into high gear at the exit. I was there in that gully, but because I was soaking wet and hot in my rain-gear, I really knew I was driving a big Mac Truck, on a hot sultry summer evening, at sunset, in the great California central valley. I was trucking so fast and so hard that I knew the shiny chrome and kalidoscopic paint job on the front of my truck was covered with vari-colored bug carcasses. I was at the narrows exit and I was shifting, I was kicking, I was stabbing, biting, slipping, elbowing, grabbing, jamming, cussin, talking. I felt sorry for Jim because I knew he was having to breathe all those diesel pollutants, only 165 ft. behind me.

I was out onto the snow which wasn't bad at first until just below the cornice, here it was steep and loose. It was almost dark now and after a few gingerly moves I was over the cornice. I straddled it to get over, for this was no place to play Hammish MacInnes. It was 6:10 PM as I stood on the summit and howled at the moon. 15 minutes later, here comes Jim, thinking I'd lost it.

Back to the Glen Alps parking lot by about 9:15 PM. On the way back, we met Janet Smalley and Peter Bennhauser who shared my wife's concern.

The gully is very long, steep and very exposed. It is also prone to avalanch as Jim and I crossed three distinct fracture lines of previous slides. This is a strong intermediate climb and any one going there should be in good condition and well rested.

I had originally planned to lead this as a club climb but the snow conditions would have to be much better, perhaps in May.

In talking to Paul Denkwalter who has done the gully several times, says that the first recorded ascent was by Gary Bocarde in 1975, and that the climb by Jim Bergeren and myself, on March 15, 1980 is probably the first winter ascent. (unwittingly.)

"First Ascent of Mount Redoubt - August 1959"

By Jon Gardey

Prior to the climb I was able to take a flight around the mountain and determined that the only feasible route led up the glacier emanating from the NE face. This glacier actually ends up in a southeasterly direction and the river coming from its snout, the Redoubt River, proceeds for about 10-15 miles east and empties into Cook Inlet about 12 miles N of Polly Creek. This was the route we picked. The other ridges are either too steep and narrow or end on false summits.

On Sunday, August 23rd, we were flown in two loads to Polly Creek and the second load was deposited on the beach at Polly Creek by 2 pm. We were four... Gene Wescott and Charles Deehr of the Alaska Alpine Club in Fairbanks, Finley Bennell of Illinois and me.

The first leg along the beach toward the Redoubt River, about 9 miles, was completed by 6 pm. with the tide at its maximum and large breakers running, thus forcing us against the rocks at the base of the cliffs.

The next day we entered the brush and with an average speed of $\frac{1}{2}$ mph we reached the river about 1 pm. The river was very high since the freezing level was near 10,000' and the entire mountain was thawing. We proceeded upstream, staying on one side at first; but waist deep wading and the brush forced us to cross. The crossings, although harrowing, did enable us to make much better time and we camped for the night about 10 miles from the glacier.

The following day began with a light rain; but being soaking wet from the river, the rain was irrelevant. Good progress was made up the river bar and we camped on the moraine by 7. The morning was a grey oozing fog that obscured all beyond 100 ft. Undaunted we groped our way among the moraine hills not knowing exactly where we were going - just that it was up... this was important. After a couple of hours of this dismal prospect we stopped and consulted the nearby rocks but they told us nothing. So we ate. Then the clouds drifted apart and we could see that the ice we were on didn't even appear on the map and that it turned abruptly and thence upward in a series of unclimbable ice falls. We did see though that a route was possible over to another glacier that would get up to a large snowfield below the east face. Then the clouds returned. Climbing on instruments we made it over an intervening moraine and to the other glacier and up to the snowfield. By this time it was 7 pm. and the clouds had lifted so we could see the lower 1000' of Redoubt i.e. to 5000' from our vantage point of 4000'.

This particular 1000' looked very bad.

The next day we had allotted to the climb... only one day, but the extra day was delegated to possible bad flying weather for the flight to Anchorage. Thus the next day had to be clear. It was.

When we awoke in the morning blue skies and the entire mountain greeted our gaze. Studying the thing thoroughly revealed no complete route to the top. Each possible route apparently halted by an icefall of avalanche danger. Nevertheless, off we went, pitons and all.

As we threaded our way among the seracs and crevasses the routes' intricacies proved fascinating. Every apparent stopper had a way either through or around it, and we had a very good time in the continuing wonderful weather. The views across Cook Inlet of Homer as well as the mountains beyond were excellent. As we continued upward we reached a large avalanche debris area under a huge icefall. Even though the time of day was wrong- noon and the debris was recent- we went across anyway, always casting anxious glances upward. We survived and reached the summit ridge at about 9500'. The ridge continued upward and about 500' from our position was crossed by a crevasse. At this point climbing became too steep for crampons and we cut a few steps which brought us to the summit about 2 pm., 6 hours and 6000' from our base camp. The descent was made along the same intricate route, still in good weather, and the base camp was reached by 6 pm.

We encountered ideal snow conditions which made the climb possible in the time we had. The snow was perfect for crampons all the way to the top. There was no new snow. The route should be marked on the ascent if the weather is at all questionable, and it becomes very dangerous under avalanche conditions more severe than those we encountered. A third of the route lies across avalanche debris.

The return along the river was made in clear weather with the river lower. We crossed many many enormous bear and moose tracks but the only animal we saw was one moose. We arrived at Polly Creek 7 days after we left it. Bad weather held up the return flight an extra day but we were able to stagger back at 300' over Cook Inlet.

Alaska Power Authority Community Meeting on Susitna Hydroelectric Development.

On Thursday, April 17, at 7:00 pm in Bartlett High School's Yellow Cafeteria on North Muldoon Road, the Alaska Power Authority will hold the fourth community meeting in the rail belt area of the state to get comments on the plan of study it is now starting on the feasibility of two power dams on the Upper Susitna River. The feasibility of a number of energy sources, as well as Susitna will be studied. Copies of the plan of study are available at libraries in the Anchorage area. Al Robinson