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Anchorage, Alaska
P. O. No. 7

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA
Box 2037
Anchorage, Alaska
MAY 1963

MEETING, MONDAY, MAY 20

Program for the MCA meeting on Monday, May 20th at 8 p.m. in Willow Park Recreation Center will be on Katmai National Monument. There will be a 16 mm movie which is distributed by Northern Consolidated Airlines; followed by a discussion of the area for the proposed summer outing, July 21-28.

The June meeting will be an outdoor affair as is proper for a Mountaineering group. Details of this will be found in the Summer Climbing and Hiking Schedule, attached to this issue, as item #7.

EDITORS: Beginning with the June issue of Scree, Helga Eading and Marge Prescott will become co-editors. Material for "publication" should be sent to the Club postoffice box - 2037, Anchorage.

CLIMBING SCHOOL: During the first three weeks in June Climbing School will be held: on Tuesday evenings indoors for instruction; on Thursday evenings outdoors at the Rocks for practice. A syllabus on climbing will be mailed to the membership. The Climbing School is open to members of MCA only.

CLIMBING ICE FIELD: Don Stockard (Box 127, Seward) would like to organize an exploratory party for the Harding Ice Field. Interested MCA'ers should contact Dave DeVoe (FE3-1492).

NEWS: It is exhilarating to know that Everest was climbed by a first American who had no previous experience - Jim Whittaker. It is especially gratifying that the feat should have been accomplished by one of the very capable members of the ill-publicized John Day Party.

THEIR SCOREBOARD or How to Know Which Party Might Be Where:

There are 6 parties definitely scheduled to work the highways of McKinley and adjacent peaks on the McKinley massif; one additional party tentatively scheduled for July is as yet indefinite. In the utterly useless and unreliable department are the following statistics: The average age of the 37 members of definite parties is 27½ years; the oldest is 48 and the youngest 15! There is much variety in the choice of footgear: 2 parties use Korean boots; and the remainder will use (1) Eiger boots (double leather ones with space of inners and insulated overboots), (2) Ski Mountaineering boots made by Tri-Dyne (with interchangeable felt innerboots and non-insulated overboots), (3) Linmer boots (insulated plus Gerry insulated overboots), and (4) "insulated boots" - type specified. The parties are:

ION ALASKA EXPEDITION - April 20th to the middle of June
Climbing East Buttress Route with an alternative to return via South Buttress. Afterwards attempt to climb either Moose's Tooth or Mt. Huntington.
Members: Warren T. Bleser, leader, Rod Newcomb, William A. Read, Fred Wright and Peter Levin. The group is from Wyoming-Colorado area.

HANS ZOGG MCKINLEY EXPEDITION - starting May 20
Climbing West Buttress route
Members: Hans Zogg, leader, Stanley Jensen, Arnold Bloomer, Donald Liska, Calvin Magnusson; and Meek, Harold Williams. All of the group from the state of Washington.

HANS GROSSER WICKERSHAM WALL EXPEDITION - leave McKinley Road about May 25 - return end of June
Climbing Wickersham Wall, taking skis with the intention of skiing down West Buttress Route
Members: Hans Gmoser, leader, P.A. Boswell, Leo Grillmeir, Hans Schwarz, Guntram Prinz, and G. Kaufman, W. Pfisterer, J.M. Spencer. All Canadian party (probably by importation from European climbing areas for some of these people) except Mr. Spencer who is from Calif.

ALPINE CLUB WEST BUTTRESS - starts up June 1
Usual and popular route to the summit.
Members: A.L. (Bert) Parks, leader, Karl Winter, Vinzenz Bauer, Paul Nielson. From British Columbia and all members of the Alpine Club of Canada.

HARVARD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB - starts June 15th
Climbing Wickersham Wall, starting from base camp on Peters Glacier opposite Jeffery Peak. This route is not the one Don Gordon (nee Clonch) tried in '61, but lies rather to the east of it and goes pretty well straight up. Return by Muldrow Glacier.
Members: Henry L. (Hank) Abrons, leader, Christopher Goetze, John Graham, David Roberts, Dr. Carmel, Richard Milliken. All members of the Harvard Mountaineering Club - probably from various states of the union.

FORAKER EXPEDITION - starting about June 22
Attempt Foraker via 'ice fall' opposite Kahiltna Glacier.
Members: H. Adams Carter, leader, Peter Carter, Lawrence Carter, Harry McDude, M.D., Harry

Archie, James Richardson, Margaret Young. This group has both the youngest and oldest member, and the only woman listed this season. They come from Mass., N.H., N.Y. and Calif. 168

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SKI CLUB - SEATTLE 7 July 10th

at Buttress

Members: Gerard Reach, leader, Jeff Wheeler, Dick Springate, Mike Boyko. All from Seattle.

PEAK OF MT. GERDINE, 12,600', ALASKA RANGE

by Rod Wilson

On May 4, 1963 Paul Crews, leader, Paul Crews, Jr., Lowell Thomas, Jr., George Wichman, and Rod Wilson returned to Mt. Gerdine (Sereno, April 1963) and reached the summit on May 5.

With good flying and climbing weather, with lots of light, and with the route well plotted from the previous attempt and from subsequent aerial reconnaissance, no major difficulties were encountered. Even the airstrip at 5600' on the unnamed glacier east of the peak had been tramped out and marked with bright red flags by Gwynn Wilson, David Ross, and Lowell two days before.

While Dr. Robert Whaley generously ferried two climbers to nearby Skwentna, Lowell sent two of us in early on May 4. By 1030 the plane had been anchored and we were all sitting up our obliterated but well-remembered route through the ice fall under the menacing quiet rock and ice face to the south of the fall. Crevasses and ice blocks had changed slightly in seven week's time. By 1600 we were camped at 8000', a bit above our over-estimated "8000'" high camp in March.

Asleep by 2000 and up and away by 0600 (it never did get dark), we proceeded rapidly on skis with light packs to about 10,500' to the top of the steep snow slope to the east of the peak which gives the only easy access we could see to the upper reaches of the mountain, where we left the skis and all but one emergency pack and strapped on crampons. Instead of going straight up for the ice cliffs which blocked our last attempt, we traversed through deep snow to the north and easily crossed the lower remnant of the ice cliffs onto a steep, smoothly surfaced (ice and snow) slope. It went easily, though we were puffing because we had left our beds at sea-level only 30 hours earlier.

Soon we found ourselves in the saddle (visible from Anchorage) between the higher north peak and the slightly lower, wider, south summit (misidentified, incidentally in the last try). We pecked over huge cornices into the abyss several thousand feet below the near west face of Gerdine. Then turning north, we chopped steps up along this corniced east ridge (to make Lowell's movies look good!). The last 75 yards was a promenade to the final snow. We were there at 1230. The peak fell away vertically to the west and in lightening convexities in all directions other than in the way we had come. As the weather was lowering temporarily, we didn't tarry long, but retreated to the saddle and then to the south summit briefly before retracing our tracks to the skis.

From there it was a ball for the experts on skis. Paul, Jr. and Lowell were back in camp in less than two hours from the top. The more conservative or less expert ones returned in three. On May 6 we broke camp at 0530, were back to the plane by 0730, and were home by noon.

UNNAMED 4500' Bejich Pk.?

by Lloyd Morris

"You're crazy!" That's all they would say, "you're crazy!" But I was happy, glissading again, and nobody needed much coaxing to join in. Sunday April 7th at 6 AM, John Husman, Larry Underwood, Keith Olson, Don Perry, and Lloyd Morris left the Portage Glacier parking lot, and crossing a corner of the lake on the ice, climbed the unnamed 4500' peak to the west of Bear Valley. The ascent took 7 hours and the return 4. From the top we could see far in every direction, even spotting Marcus Baker to the northeast, and the islands of the Gulf coast further south. We also had the remarkable fortune of photographing one of the several goats we saw from only 50 feet away.

The time of year was ideal since the brush was not yet in leaf, the soil still barely frozen, and the snow well compacted, though sometimes sticky. The main problem was the brush, but it was the steep snowslopes that made the climb interesting. They ran around 1500' and continued to the corniced peak. Going up was enjoyable enough, but coming down --boom! I think we pioneered a first descent on this peak, for the final run ran high on a large snowfield and ended far down a slide gully, nearly 1000 feet below. It's the elevation difference, not just the slope distance!

CLIMBING PORTAGE GLACIER, MARCH 30-31

by Dave DeVoe

Members: Keith Olson, Larry Underwood, Don & Dave DeVoe

Though the evening before had been clear and cold, a hushed patter on the Logan's was told me there had been a change in the weather. So that halo around the moon last night had meant something! We sorted out crampons and started crunching across the lake about 7:30. The lake ice boomed and twanged under our weight, but we assured ourselves it couldn't possibly breaknot with 400 or more feet of water to hold it up! There was a pressure ridge of ice about 150 yards from the glacier front. We noticed that ice, and in spots around the edges of bergs, there was some open water. With our collective lack of glacier experience, we chose a landlubbers' route up the rock and snow slopes on the right side of the glacier. Our two ropes and five ice screws stayed, leaden in our packs for the day. We did find use for one rope later on. Our route took us, alternately, from deep drifts, to rock, to hard-packed snow. Several very steep snowslopes gave us good practice with the crampons, and a whack with an axe was needed now and then

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for steps.

Our exertions finally brought us to a point somewhat above 2000' and a couple of miles beyond the snout or face of the glacier on the mountain that separates Portage Glacier from Igloo Glacier. From there, we could see the several tributaries of the Portage Glacier and Passage Canal by Whittier. The tops of the two prominent peaks on either side of Burns Glacier sported huge, overhanging cornices. There were the makings of some spectacular avalanches. And speaking of avalanchesall day long we heard rock falling down the cliffs on the opposite side of the glacier above the lake. The clattering and crashing never seemed to stopa clear warning to stay clear of south exposed slopes during the thaw!

On the way back, we were cramponing down a hard packed slope that kept getting steeper. It was close to the spot we had climbed up, and though steeper, had a very comforting runoff. The way up had been slightly exposedwe could see the glacier down there, but not the bottom of the slope. We started kicking steps down, but the combination of breaking out steps and 50 degree slope made an axe belay seem desirable. About half-way down, the pitch eased and the snow softened to make a fine, fast glissade the rest of the way.

Back on the lake at last, we explored a large iceberg while waiting for the glacier party (see below) to come in view. The berg was a fascinating object of form and color, and a perfect climbing playground.

THE GLACIER PARTY

by Lloyd Morris

Saturday had been beautiful, as John Bousman, Vance Pagan and I drove to Portage in the evening, but now, Sunday at 5 a.m., the sky was grey and the wind sharply cold from the glacier. We had expected to find Dave and Don DeVoe, Keith Olson and Larry Underwood but confusion ruled so we set off without them to have a look at Blackstone Bay. Across the lake we stopped at the crack into which John had cut steps the week earlier. Out of the wind now, and finally awake, we were looking forward to the trip across the base of Portage Glacier and up the length of Burns Glacier to a col overlooking the fjord south of the one on which Whittier lies. This would be Blackstone Bay. A grating sound attracted my attention. I looked up, and JUMPED! A 300 pound ice block carried away the pack sack I had been digging around in. Well, nobody hurt and the gear was retrieved, but only then did we realize the route might be good but the stopping spot exposed. The rest of the climb was slightly less eventful. However, we crossed two exposed crevasse fields and at least one hidden one. We made the col at 1.30, a little late, and fatigued by the push even so. After a veritable smorgastbord of a lunch, we turned home, reaching the cars after a round trip of some 14 miles and 13 hours.

ADDITIONS TO THE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA MEMBERSHIP LIST:

Em Messick	1413 K Street	ER 8-9141
Mary Michaud	Box 4-842, Spenard	
Bo Pichler	Box 3450, St. Rt. B Spenard	FE 3-2101
Berna Ridley	2306 C Street	ER 7-9152
Kristine Riedel	327 11th Ave.	ER 4-9741
Arnald P. Stockard	Box 127, Seward	
Buise Voelker	Box 7002, Anchorage	
Borge Michman, M.D.	742 K Street	FE 3-3832
Arphy L. Clark	528 14th	BR 2-5561

NOTICE TO ALL ARG AND MCA MEMBERS

Let's all set the afternoon of May 26th aside for some fun on the slope opposite the "Rocks" at that Sunday afternoon- under the sponsorship of ARG - we will practice a search, allowed by a technical rock evacuation. EVERYBODY is welcome to come regardless of qualifications, special skills or the lack of both.

Bring boots, a wind parka and some food. The rest will be supplied: - an injured "body" somewhere among the crags and bushes, walkie-talkie sets to be used by the more technical minded who want to help in the search, first aid kits so the victim may be properly splinted and bandaged (to make sure he can't escape when it gets too hairy), and litter to bring him down to 'safety', as well as the ropes and other gear needed.

Bring your own climbing gear, if you wish. Bring the family too because the practice will be fun. A few sticks of firewood per person would be helpful. It all starts at 9 a.m. on Sunday, May 26th

WE'LL SEE YOU THERE.

H.B.