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I N M E M O R I A M

Grace Hoeman

Hans Van der Laan

Eklutna Glacier

April 12, 1971

"Sometimes the climbing rope which binds us together as humans is short and fragile...The rope has broken, and we stand with a slack line in our hands...Who knows which end of the rope he holds."

Sam Wright

G R A C E H O E M A N

Grace Hoeman was born in Silver Beach, Washington. The lilting accent was the result of her moving to the Netherlands at an early age.

She had medical degrees from both the University of Berling (where she spent the war years) and the University of Utrecht. She had a M.P.H. from Yale and was trained in several specialities, the final choice being anesthesiology which she practiced in Anchorage. She was the author of several medical papers.

Grace Hoeman was the mother of two daughters: Helga Nieman who is living in Holland and Marianne (Mrs. Frank) Kufel of Anchorage. There are three grandchildren. Her mother also survives.

As the reader of SCREE will know, the number of mountains climbed, explored and first ascended by Grace is impressive. While she climbed McKinley and other renowned peaks, the achievement lay with climbs such as Hurdy-Gurdy, Mt. Kimball, Mt. Palmer, Peak 6220 (near Montana Peak) and Mt. Wickersham. All were first ascents. Some were solo.

Grace was generous with her resources. The large mountaineering library acquired by both Hoemans was available for those seeking information and Grace's correspondence on behalf of people seeking background about Alaska and its climbing possibilities was prodigious. She organized the local chapter of the American Alpine Club.

Few of us have a passion, the singleness for one thing, which satisfies. Grace Hoeman had such a passion for the mountains and mountaineering. It led her to a supremely satisfactory relationship in her marriage to Vin Hoeman and it provided a dignified death which Grace would have appreciated.

Gwynneth Wilson

H A N S V A N D E R L A A N

The thoughts on the following page were written by a close friend of Hans'. A little biographical information may also be of interest. Hans was born in Arnhem, Netherlands, in 1937. Following the war, in 1945, he moved to Galveston, Texas, with his family. As an adult he chose to remain in the United States and became a citizen in 1963, the same year he first came to Alaska. His parents, his brother and two sisters returned to Holland.

He was a structural engineer with KPFF, designing structures for use in Arctic regions. He held a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Cornell University and a master's degree from the University of California at Berkeley.

Hans became a member of MCA in 1963, was president in 1966-67, and director from 1967-69. Climbing was an important part of his life, for it was while climbing that he felt most involved in living. His ascents included first ascents of Mt. Gannett, "Ice Cream Cone" Mountain, and possibly Flute Peak. Hans also climbed Mt. McKinley and participated in the 4th winter ascent of Mt. Rainier.

Conservation was also an important part of his life. He was a founding member of the Alaska Chapter of the Sierra Club and was, at the time of his death, Conservation Committee chairman for MCA. His interest in conservation extended into all areas of his life and he combined engineering and conservation harmoniously. This past winter he completed the maps for "55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska" to be published this summer.

Helen Nienhueser

REPORT TO HOLLAND

The present is a present.

Life, like a candle, burns with the blessing of its context.

To live is to climb. To test all your faculties and so quicken the condition of life. And having climbed, one may have learned that there is an art to conducting oneself in the lower regions with the knowledge of what one has seen from being high.

Knowledge would be empty if it were not motivated by concern. Love is the active concern for the life and growth of those that we hold dear, that they may be held dear tomorrow. This is the service of life to life. The being human of the human being. In the act of giving, something is born.

In nature there is a condition of approximate balance. That is to say, a corrective tendency towards maintaining a quality of life for all species sufficient for each to regenerate itself.

Human evolution through the development of its faculties of intelligence has seemingly, though not actually, short circuited the natural laws of check and balance.

The result for each thoughtful individual is for him to take a position relative to the issue as he perceives it. The crux of this issue lies in the recognition that the Natural Law must prevail over the Law of Man inevitably.

We have enjoyed the brief luxury of thinking that our intelligence can overcome all adversities without reference to a general code of behaviour.

It is not sufficient to observe that the Law of Man is being violated, but rather it is imperative that one inquire whether another, higher law is not being brought to bear on the issue, overriding the Law of Man.

Our hope rests with our learning to understand and respect our place in nature. This understanding must be built into the wisdom of the race.

We must learn that the roles played by life forms and life-giving forms are essential and can and should be understood by all.

We must change the bias of our culture from conquest of whatever is to participation in it. From unity to harmony.

There are few in this short span of time allowed each of us that we may hold within our breasts and claim truly to be part of us.

To lose a love is to die a little.

It is only with the heart that we can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.

The child of Holland knew all this, dear Hans.

We shall live and travel together.

G.

EKLUTNA GLACIER - April 10-12, 1971

On Saturday, April 10, Grace Hoeman, Hans Van der Laan, and I set off from the lower end of Eklutna Lake on what was to be a three or four day traverse of the Eklutna, Whiteout, Eagle, and Raven Glaciers, ending at Girdwood. At 10:30 Grace's son-in-law, Frank Kufel, who had towed us across the lake on Grace's snowmobile, left us at the Army Mountain Camp below the glacier. We made our way on skis over the boulder-strewn last half mile of river to the snout of the glacier. Here we traded skis for crampons for the blue ice of the lower two miles of glacier. At 1:00, feeling the effects of the heavy packs after a long sedentary winter, we stopped for lunch and speculated on where we would have been at that moment without the help of the snowmobile. Grace agreed that her goal, the Whiteout cabin, was a little ambitious for the first day, and that an early halt at Pichler's Perch, still two miles and 2000 vertical feet away, would be welcome. The days were getting longer and we could get an earlier start in the morning.

Two hours later we kicked our way up a 40 degree slope of firm but not icy snow that affords the quickest access from the glacier to the bench on which Pichler's Perch cabin is situated. This slope, 300 feet high, catches a good deal of the snow blown by winter winds from the steeper rock slopes surrounding it and remains snow-covered much of the year. In late summer and early fall it becomes a sheet of blue ice and is bypassed for one of two longer routes farther up the glacier. By 3:30 we were digging out the door of the cabin and soon we were warming ourselves with tea and soup and glop, the exact composition of which escapes me. As darkness fell, we bundled up for the night against the 25 degree temperature which seemed to prevail for our entire stay. We listened to the stiffening breeze outside and hoped it would pass with the night.

In the morning a 40 mile per hour gale was blowing and it had clouded up and was snowing lightly as we ate a leisurely breakfast. About 10:00 we made an attempt to forge on to the Whiteout cabin but the visibility was so poor on the glacier that we soon turned back. We spent the rest of the day at Pichler's Perch, disappointed that what had started out to be such a beautiful trip should be dashed so soon, but we still hoped to continue if it cleared up by Monday.

Monday morning we were encouraged at times by periods of relative calm but each of these was terminated by a blast that shivered the cabin and we wondered how it had survived seven winters. By noon we had given up the traverse and began to pack up for the retreat to Eklutna Lake. About 1:00 we started down the same slope we had come up two days earlier, having decided that the longer and less familiar route farther up the glacier would be difficult to follow in the limited visibility. As we started over the lip of the slope we were startled to find that a foot of newly deposited snow had fractured all along the lip and slid down, but as the old snow underneath was firm and there didn't seem to be any more slab above us we gingerly made our way down the fall line to a snow ledge about half way down the slope that crosses the entire slope horizontally. At this point the slide had shot over the ledge and left the new snow on the lower half of the slope undisturbed. We held a short conference and decided to follow the ledge to the north side of the slope to a rock outcropping and then to follow the under side of the outcropping as it angled down to the glacier.

I led out along the ledge and the others were to follow when I had reached the rocks. As I approached the rocks the ledge petered out and the snow became deeper and my progress became slower. Hans and Grace must have become impatient for when I glanced over my left shoulder I caught a glimpse of one of them behind and below me, appearing to be going straight down the lower slope. Because of the wind and snow and the way I was dressed, I didn't see the other one but I

assumed they were together. As I turned around, feeling very uneasy about having anyone on the unstable slope below me, the snow fractured just above me and I moved down the hill sideways, gathering speed with the mass of snow. I managed to stay on my feet but the snow was creeping up from my knees to my hips. Then it stopped just as suddenly as it had started. I took off my pack and tried to get out of the snow but I was firmly anchored. With my ice axe I was able to dig my feet out and I climbed out of my hole, shouting and looking for signs of Hans and Grace.

It was about 1:30 in the afternoon. The avalanche was about 400 feet long from the fracture line to the toe of the debris. I had moved about 250 feet of this distance and had been on the north edge of the slide whose width was difficult to estimate because the soft slab had left a very smooth rubble and the wind was making it smoother. Later I estimated the width to be about 150 feet. Most of the debris was deposited in a bowl-like depression between the slope and the slide of the glacier. I probed for two hours with a ski pole without finding a trace of Grace or Hans. and then decided to go out for help.

The trip out was slow with bad visibility on the glacier and slow sticky snow on the flat of the river and lake. Darkness and sore feet forced a stop at the upper end of Eklutna Lake. The next morning I skied across the lake and got a ride to the Mirror Lake State Trooper station by two men who were exercising a dog on the edge of the lake. After I reported the accident two rescue attempts were made, first by the Army and second by the Alaska Rescue Group. No trace has been found to date of either Grace Hoeman or Hans Van der Laan.

John Samuelson

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MONTANI SEMPER LIBERI - Mountaineers are always free

Two of MCA's most active members were lost in an avalanche on April 12th, 1971. Grace Jansen Hoeman was chairman of the Geographic Names committee, was on the Board of Directors, led numerous climbs and wrote many articles for SCREE. Hans Van der Laan was chairman of the Conservation committee, was a past MCA president, wrote inspiring conservation articles and worked diligently on the maps for "55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska".

Grace and Hans led two lives--a professional life and a private life. Grace was an anesthesiologist by profession; Hans was a civil engineer. Some of us knew little about their professional life but both were well known in their fields of specialization. Privately, Grace will be remembered for her directness and total involvement in mountaineering (a continuation of her late husband's endeavors). Hans' private life had many sides. He will be remembered for his complaisance, sense of humor, and thoroughness whether it was during leisure time, or climbing and hiking with friends.

Both Grace and Hans donated a lot of their time and energy towards MCA activities over the past years...each in his own way. They played important parts in the history and growth of MCA. Both were distinct individuals. They, like most mountaineers, had different backgrounds, interests, endeavors, and accomplishments but one thing was common between them: their love of the mountains, the adventure, tranquility, and freedom found in them. With their passing we all experience a feeling of sorrow and voidness but we know that both of them are happy...man, snow, rock, ice, wind and sky being one--an indivisible and divine whole.

Steve W. Hackett

* * *

"Mountain climbing is an adventure: an adventure open before our eyes and more or less accessible. There can be no adventure without uncertainty of its results, and in good adventure there is also an element of risk, even of danger to life. In climbing mountains, danger is a constant element, not remote as in other sports: it is always with us behind the veil of pleasant circumstances, and it can be upon us before we are aware. The mountaineer, therefore, has not only to know and observe the rules which govern the good playing of all games, he has to keep another set of values constantly in mind, values which involve the larger issues of life and death. To lose a game may be beneficial and is always educative, to be beaten on a mountain may incur the loss of life or of our peace of mind."

Geoffery Winthrop Young

* * *

I knew Grace Hoeman only two years, having met her shortly after Vin's death. She was continually working to finish many of the projects that Vin had started. This involved the completion of three books, the maintaining and updating of the Alaska mountain files and answering correspondence from literally hundreds of prospective Alaska-bound mountaineers. Grace was worried that Vin's work would either be lost or published without proper credit given to him. Some people would even say she was just a little paranoid on this subject. However, for those of us who are interested in fine details, extensive trip logs, and deep background type information, we saw this characteristic of Grace's more as an asset than a liability. For the last few months Grace had been spending more and more time on the task of finishing Vin's books. With the loss of Grace a large vacuum appears on the Alaskan mountaineering scene. Hopefully the large informative files on Alaskan mountains and those who climb them will be continued and added to continually. I'm sure there are many who would be willing to aid in this very worthwhile, endless, project. Both Vin and Grace loved books and enjoyed gathering information on mountains here and abroad. They collected mountaineering journals from many countries in order to keep current on all phases of mountaineering. Much work still waits to be accomplished as many of the journals are incomplete sets. I am sure that both Grace and Vin would expect all of their projects to be completed and their library continued, enlarged, and made available to all climbers.

Chuck Pease

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One of Hans Van der Laan's strongest conservation goals was to set aside and preserve a mountain wilderness area in the Brooks Range. A memorial fund for Hans has been established by friends, to pursue this goal. If you wish to contribute, checks may be sent to MCA Brooks Range Fund, Box 2037, Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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MAY MEETING...Thursday May 20...8:00 p.m...Central Jr. High Multipurpose Room...15th and E...use E. St. entrance...PROGRAM: Mini slide show by Alyeska Air Service showing areas which can be flown into for skiing and climbing...business meeting...refreshment break... Will Troyer of the U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will show slides on the Kenai National Moose Range proposed wilderness area...hearings on this proposal will held beginning June 23 in Anchorage.

BOARD MEETING...Thursday June 3...7:00 p.m...at the Snyder's...2806 Alder Drive.

MCA CALENDAR

May 22-23 (Sat.-Sun.) Rock climbing in the FERN MINE area. Leader: Bob Smith (333-8852).

May 29-31 (Sat.-Mon.) ROCK CLIMBING CLINIC - First session. Leader: Randy Renner (333-4025). (see details below.)

May 29-30 (Sat.-Sun.) Ski trip to LOST LAKE near Seward. Leader: Bill Stivers (277-2869). Bill did this last year and indicated that the combination of lots of daylight and plenty of snow made for really pleasant cross-country skiing.

June 5 (Sat.) One-day climb of McHUGH PEAK on the Anchorage skyline. No technical climb-involved, but should be good fun for non-serious climbers and serious climbers who do not feel too serious on the 5th of June. Leader: John Merrick (272-5243).

June 12-13 (Sat.-Sun.) FULLER LAKE in the proposed Kenai wilderness area. Overnight hike for all ages. Information at the May meeting. Leader: Barbara Winkley (272-4649).

June 19-20 (Sat.-Sun.) Annual FLATTOP mid-summer overnight, complementing the sleep-out at the winter solstice.

June 26-27 (Sat.-Sun.) ROCK CLIMBING CLINIC - Second session. Leader: Randy Renner. (see details below)

If you can fill an empty weekend as a leader, Bill Barnes wants YOU. (333-4609). Or if you are at loose ends maybe he can put you in a group on short notice.

ROCK CLIMBING CLINIC INFORMATION

First Session May 29-31 will be in the TALKEETNA MOUNTAINS north of Palmer in the area of Snowbird Mine. There is good solid rock and a classic alpine meadow setting. The plan is to stay overnight at the lake by the mine and climb from there. The base area is accessible by vehicle and is easy for families to hike in and spend the weekend. Things to be covered include: belaying and rope handling; walking, scrambling and climbing technique; rappelling; hardware (pitons, chocks, nuts, etc.) for protection when climbing. Meet at Valu-Mart parking lot at 7:00 a.m. on May 29th. Please be on time. (NOTE: An alternate location will be in the Eklutna Lake area toward the south end of the lake if snow conditions prevent use of the Talkeetna Mtn. area. Be sure to have your phone number on the sign up sheet in case we have to switch to the alternative.)

Second Session June 26-27 will be held at the INDEPENDENCE MINE recreation area--again this is family area where all can enjoy the weekend. More on this session later.

Third Session August (date and place to be decided) will be a climb planned and carried out entirely by the students--instructors will stand by as advisors only.

(over)

Equipment for all sessions: The following equipment is necessary and can be obtained at EBERHARD'S 2820 C St. (Eberhard Brunner) or SPORTS CHALET 906 W. Northern Lights (Barney Seiler). Both Eberhard and Barney are MCA members and are active climbers.

Hard hat	1 or 2 brake bars, depending on your weight
*Swami belt and diaper seat sling or chest and seat harness	Day pack (optional)
2 locking carabiners.	Water bottle
2 non-locking carabiners	10-foot length of $\frac{1}{4}$ " Goldline rope for knot tying practice (optional)
Good boots with vibram soles	

*Bob Smith (MCA program chairman) manufactures seat and chest harnesses to order (333-8852 home phone).

If any further info is required call Randy Renner (333-4025 eves; 277-6686 days).

SCREE

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