



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

May 1986

Volume 29, Issue 05

### MAY MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, May 21st at 7:30 p.m. at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle Sts., Anchorage. After the business meeting, there will be an equipment swap and after that Bill Wakeland will present a slide show featuring last year's MCA trip to Katmai National Monument. Bill's slide shows are always a treat.

### MINUTES FOR THE APRIL MEETING

The meeting was held April 16, 1986 at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, and was called to order by President Mark Findlay at 7:49 p.m. The reading of the minutes for March was waived.

The club welcomed new members and guests.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

\$ 208.66 - Petty Cash  
3,956.67 - Money Market Rate Plus Acc.  
398.82 - Checking Account  
\$4,564.15 - Total MCA Monies

For membership in the Mountaineering Club, the following fees are in effect:

Single membership: \$10.00  
Family membership: \$15.00

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

MCA  
Box 102037  
Anchorage, AK 99510  
(Attention: Treasurer)

## I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. The Hut Committee reports that supplies were recently flown in to the Whiteout Hut (Hans' Hut) on the Whiteout Glacier. Willy Hersman and Tim Neale stored paint, wood and nails in the hut for use later in the year. They ask that anyone visiting the hut please leave these materials alone. A shovel was placed outside the hut and a quick window was made (to be finished off later this summer).

## II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Julian Mason is working on updating the club waiver. A recent court case in Washington has shed new light on the effectiveness of such waivers which have been fairly standard in the past for outdoor organizations but rarely tested.

B. On the same note, the MCA received a letter from the National Forest Recreation Assoc. stating they had found an insurance carrier for outdoor groups. This is being further investigated.

## III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. The Crow Pass Race is on again this summer, July 19th. Tim Neale needs people to help with the race by camping out at various spots along the trail. Anyone interested in helping out with this great race through beautiful backcountry can contact him at 274-4952.

B. Dan O'Haire is planning a ski tour on the Harding Ice Field in July, for 6 days. Anyone interested in going call Dan. (See schedule)

C. The club received a newsletter from the Society of Saunterers, Int'l. Anyone interested can find it on file at the Hoeman Library.

D. The Alaska Youth Hostel is looking for house parents and board members. Contact them at 276-3635.

E. Christy Tews is leading an attempt on 7 virgin summits in the Himalya in the autumn of 1986. Anyone interested contact Inner Asia, 2627 Lombard Street, San Francisco, CA 94123. 415-922-0448 or 800-551-1769. Or for a detailed itinerary and trip description contact Christy Tews at 702-883-9292. Or read the letter we received from her on file in the Hoeman Library.

## IV. POLITICS

A. There is a need for outdoorsmen to attend and voice their opinions at the Arctic Wildlife Refuge Hearings. Business interests are well represented and they are pushing for opening up the Refuge to landing fields and corridors for oil.

B. The South Fork access issue goes on. Money is being pooled together to

survey the Chugach State Park boundary near that entrance. This may help some of the confusion, but probably will not end the dispute. Call collect to Randy Philips and Sam Cotten to voice your support on this issue.

C. BLM sent us a notice of proposed easements to be reserved in the title document conveying land to Doyon, Ltd. on the Yukon and Koyukuk. The notice is on file at the Hoeman Library. Comments to Northwest Resource Area Manager, BLM, 1541 Gaffney Rd., Fairbanks, AK 99703, no later than May 26, 1986.

D. The U.S. Forest Service is planning to build a road near the Resurrection Pass Trail, supposedly to stop the spruce barkbeetles. The infestation may be too far gone for a road to do any good. Anyway, comments to the Anchorage District Ranger at 345-5700.

E. Senate Bill 269 would allow the sale of an acre of land occupied by a squatter's cabin built on state land before 1981, if they show "historic use and occupancy" and "investments" in the cabin before 1981. There are 23 of these in the Hatcher Pass area alone. This bill is in the House now. Call your representative through the Personal Opinion Message, 278-3668.

F. A bill has been introduced to close part of the Little Susitna Valley in the Hatcher Pass area to new mining claims. Call and leave a message for Senators Faiks and Kertula supporting the bill, SB 334, on the Personal Opinion Message, 278-3668.

G. The Copper River Basin Area Plan is under way. There is a short survey for opinions available from DNR.

H. Chugach State Park is looking into opening up the road around Eklutna Lake. The Army would do the work, and in return, get use of the road to the glacier for rock and ice training, etc. There will be a public meeting on this later. It was suggested that the MCA form an ad hoc committee to follow this. At any rate, go to the public meeting and state your opinions one way or the other.

I. House Bill 561 attempts to create a state public cabin system, similar to the Forest Service cabin system, whereby the state will open up cabins to the public. Some of these may come from the squatter's cabins.

J. There are plans to dam the Merced River near Yosemite. Write Merced Canyon Committee, Box 152, El Portal, CA 95318.

Mark adjourned the meeting at 8:25.

Thanks to Tom Williams for his superb slide show and talk on the Haute Route. Anyone for taking up permanent residency in one of those great huts? Any volunteers to lead a MCA trip there next spring?

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Burke

May 86

3

### Russians are Coming

Actually they're here already. Ten climbers participating in a U.S.-U.S.S.R. climbing exchange sponsored by the American Alpine Club are presently up on Denali right now. They are expected to return during the end of May to Anchorage. A regional meeting of the AAC-Alaska Section will be held then so they can show slides. There will be a charge of \$4.00 to help defray costs of the exchange. The Soviet climbers are expected to show slides of the Pamirs and other ranges in Russia.

The slide show will be at Henshaw Junior High at 7:30 pm on May 28th. There will also be a drawing for a John Svenson Block Print (on display now at AMH). Tickets for that are \$5.00. For more details call Ernie Borjon 344-8661.

### GLACIER TRAVEL CLASS

Sunday, June 1

Byron Glacier

This is an introductory class in glacier travel techniques mostly for beginners to learn, and also for anyone who wishes to practice crevass rescue. A classroom session will be held to go over knots, equipment and basic considerations for crevass problems. The time and place for this classroom session will be announced by Mark Findlay at the May meeting, but will most likely be held at AMH. The Mountaineering Club provides ropes and crampons for those who need them. You provide the rest, and if you don't know what to bring to a glacier, then come to the classroom session.

On Sunday the first of June we will go out on the Byron Glacier for practicing the use of crampons on ice, ice axe use, roping up, etc. And, of course we will set up a Z-pulley system and practice ascending ropes. Contact Mark Findlay 337-8666, and be sure to sign up at the meeting; that's important because Mark may limit class size.

## TRIP REPORTS

### Logan's Heros

First Winter Ascent, March 16, 1986

It was cold outside. The six of us had just settled into the trench. At 16750 feet, we were at our high camp on the east end of Mt. Logan's huge plateau. The digging had been the worst so far, over four hours of back-breaking work to finally get enough blocks to finish off the roof of the trench. Steve Koslow smelled something funny. "Okay, who sliced the cheese?"

No answer. A few moments passed and the smell got worse. Suddenly, Steve threw one of his stuff sacks, like a hot potato, into the kitchen area where Todd Frankiewicz was melting snow. Todd reacted immediately and tossed the "bomb" outside. There was a mad rush for the door as the fumes permeated through the cave, each of us gagging for air. In the chill night, at -30 F, in our longjohns, we tried to decide what happened.

In the stuff sack was Koslow's headlamp. Somehow Steve's lithium battery had begun a chemical reaction which was giving off toxic fumes. A sort of "headlamp meltdown". We knocked a few holes in the roof, and after airing out the trench, got back in our sacks, a bit nervous about the whole affair but dismissing it as a fluke. I moved my lithium headlamp away from my head anyway and tried to sleep before the summit attempt the next day.

It had taken nearly three weeks for us to establish the final camp on the mountain. The loads which started out at over 160 lbs. each were finally down to a more reasonable 80 or so. Still, the push over the last pass, at 18500 feet, was a slow grunt. The skis had been left at King Col, long before we reached the plateau to save weight. But even skis would not have helped much...the sastrugi was the biggest we had ever seen. Some of it over 4 feet high! The wind had been a constant sand-blaster, especially this winter since it had snowed less than average.

George Rooney started the day on the 15th with the 5-hour ordeal of running three stoves and forcing a gallon of water down each of us. Plus, of course, the inevitable, huge pot of dreaded oatmeal. Such delight. The weather seemed fairly calm and so we packed for the summit.

In ropes of twos we headed southeast to bypass one of Logan's many summits. We had still not even seen the main one. Soon we rounded the corner, and a ground blizzard began to kick up. Vern Tejas came to a stop at the lead after about 3 hours of leaning into the wind. It was too much. We hid behind a large sastrugi stomping the cold from our feet and putting on parkas. It was just about the coldest moment of the trip...30 mph wind, -40 F. The summit, 2000 feet above, was twice as bad. We went back to camp, got in the sacks and downed another gallon and a half of water each and waited.

When Steve got up before dawn on the 16th to start the day it looked good again. We packed lightly. And quickly, because standing around at -36 degrees is a great incentive to get things rolling. By noon we were just below the main

summit in fairly calm and very sunny conditions. We dropped the packs and continued on in our parkas.

Near the top it got steeper, 40 to 50-degree ice and hard snow. The summit ridge is a sharp knife-edge with an ice pinnacle intervening. But it posed no problems, even in our bunny boots, which are not always reliable with crampons on a steep slope.

George planted an Alaskan flag. And there we were. At 19850 feet on a winter day, -20 F, the wind blowing 20 mph; all of us faced Vern and sang Happy Birthday through our face masks, as loud as the wind would let us. It was his birthday, one he won't forget. A moment for us all to remember.

Remaining roped for the descent, Todd started down, with John Bauman right behind. Suddenly John yelled something and we all looked below to see that he had lost his footing and was sliding out of control. An attempt to arrest the fall resulted in his ice axe being ripped from his grip. In seconds Todd was yanked from his feet and instinctively buried the pick under his weight. 12,000 feet below, the huge Seward Glacier waited for them. We watched.

Todd's axe put a 20-foot gouge on the mountain's face before he finally came to a stop. John, undamaged but shaken, proceeded to put back on the crampon, which had come off, and climbed up to the ridge. "I hate that when that happens, you know?" "Me too."

It was very fortunate that we had no other problems to speak of on the whole trip, which lasted over a month. Even small problems can turn into sure frostbite if one is forced to stand around for long at such cold temperatures. Making snow blocks during a ground blizzard was the worst for me. They still haven't made goggles that can such conditions. Mine iced over in ten minutes or less, and then my eyelids would freeze over. "George, I can't see!" "Keep sawing.", he would say.

We passed our old trenches on the way down, six in all, and gathered extra food and fuel to carry it off the mountain. From base camp at 10,000 feet we called our pilot, Andy Williams, on the radio. He was still reluctant to fly (we had to resort to using a helicopter to get on the mountain) and we did not hear from him again for five days. Vern, Steve and John got anxious with waiting and decided to ski out. It was something like 120 miles to the road!

When Andy finally did get three of us it took 1 1/2 hours to fly over their route. But our friends are wise to the ways of swift glacier travel. With the help of a tarp, used as a sail in the day and a roof at night, they cruised to the Alaska Highway at Kluane Lake in 8 days. It took them three days just to ski past Logan! Quite a hunk of rock.

And so, 19 years after the first winter ascent of Denali, number 2 had its day. Number 3, in Mexico, was an easy target long ago. Anybody for St. Elias in winter? Go for it.

Willy Hersman

## McHugh Peak

May 3, 1986

Saturday, eight of us braved the crummy-looking weather to climb McHugh Peak from the Turnagain Arm side, some 4200 feet and 7 miles round trip. This was to have been Jim Pommert's hike on Langille Mt., but he was called to Calgary on business and gave his sign-up sheet to Hansen, who invited Wakeland to move his McHugh hike up a week, since nobody had signed up for it on May 11th.

The trail was a little muddy along the creek, but okay the rest of the way to the ridge, but windy and cold. Proceeding easterly up the rocky ridge the wind got worse, and crossing the rather level pass before the last ridge climb to McHugh we got buffeted with gusts that must have hit 60 mph and we reeled around like drunks. It was well below freezing, with ice crystals blasting us. Having no rope and only a couple of ice axes, we called it off and returned...it would have been real hairy up that last ridge, on on the hard snow toward the lee side.

It was a good lesson for those uninitiated to alpine Alaska - fortunately we all had enough gear to handle the wind chill but there were some side effects - while descending we overheard Mark babbling about mushroom spores reaching around the world and Kathy wondered if McHugh was easier to climb at low tide! Besides Don and me, the hikers were Kathy Burke, Mark Findlay, Cliff Landesman, Bill Benjey, Allen Gnoyer and Tom Saville.

Bill Wakeland

## HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- May 17 BLUEBERRY HILL  
4 miles, 4000 feet elevation gain, no trail. Map: Seward D-6.  
Meet 8 am UAA.  
Leader needed.
- 17-18 GULL ROCK  
9 miles, 700' elevation gain; easy and enjoyable family trip.  
55 Ways #17. Call leader. Meet UAA 8:00 am.  
Leader: Reggie Buchanan 333-7649
- 24-26 BENCH PEAK-JOHNSON PASS TRAIL  
21 miles, 900' elevation gain, trail; optional scramble up Bench Peak on Sunday, 6 miles, 3000' elev. gain. This will be a one-way trip with a car shuttle between trailheads. Call leader for details. Ice axe required only for those going up Bench Pk.  
Map: Seward C-6, C-7. Meet 8:00 am UAA. 55 ways #13.  
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 31 IDAHO PEAK  
7 miles, 3500' elev gain, no trail. Starting from the roadhouse we'll hope for views back into the Reed Lakes area and Mint Gl.  
Map: Anch D-6. Meet 8:00 am UAA. Call leader for details.  
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 31-1 EAGLE RIVER TRAIL  
10 miles, 400' elev. gain, trail. 55 ways #38. Map: Anch A-7, A-6. Leader needed.
- June 1 PTARMIGAN LAKE  
8 miles, 600' elev. gain, trail, easy trip. 55 ways #12. Map Seward B-6, B-7.  
Leader: Eileen Cavanaugh 337-1394
- 7-8 TRAIL MAINTENANCE-SUICIDE PEAK  
Help build and maintain the Falls Cr. Trail. Come out Saturday Morning and work on the trail; then join in the trip up the Suicides. Or come out Sunday and work on the trail. Saturday meet 8 am UAA; Sunday meet 10 am UAA.  
Leader: Bill Wakeland 563-6246.
- 14 MT. EKLUTNA  
4000' elev. gain, no trail. Map: Anch. B-7. Leader needed.
- 14-15 DEVIL'S PASS  
20 miles, 1500' elev. gain; trail. A nice overnight trip to the Resurrection Pass area. 55 ways #14. Map: Seward C-8. Meet 8 am UAA.  
Leader: Bill Wakeland 563-6246
- 21 O'MALLEY PEAK



- 9 miles, 3000' elev. gain, trail part way. Map: Anch. A-7.  
Leader needed.
- 20-29 EKLUTNA-GIRDWOOD TRAVERSE  
Glacier trip and hut repair. Trip need not be this long if we get good weather. Meet in Anchorage at 4 pm or so, drive to Eklutna Lk. Hike around lake. Up on glacier next day; stay in the huts each night. We'll do repairs and painting on especially the Whiteout and Eagle Huts, bring old shirt and pants for that. Hope for some time to go climbing as well. Some glacier experience necessary (see glacier class this Scree ). Get details from leader on gear etc.  
Leader: Willy Hersman 338-5132.
- 21-22 FLATTOP SOLSTICE SLEEPOUT  
Leader not needed. Just show up. Keep eye out for the weather.
- 28 O'MALLEY, THE RAMP AND THE WEDGE  
16 miles, 4500' elev. gain, trail part way. Map: Anchorage A-7.  
55 ways #32. Meet 7 am UAA.  
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 28-29 REFD LAKES  
9 miles, 1900' elev. gain, trail part way. Map: Anch. D-6.  
55 ways #44. Meet UAA 8 am.  
Leader: Barb Byrne 338-5132
- July 4-6 CROW PASS-GLEN ALPS  
Leader needed
- 13 SUMMIT CREEK-COLORADO CREEK  
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 12-13 MATANUSKA PEAK  
Leader: Don Hansen/Bill Wakeland
- 19 CROW PASS  
Leader: Eileen Cavanaugh
- 19-26 HARDING ICEFIELD TRAVERSE  
Ski traverse of the icefield from Tustamena Lake to Exit Glacier \$20-\$30 to cross lake in motorboat.  
Leader: Dan O'Haire 248-3634
- 19-20 MILLS CREEK-BENCH LAKE-JOHNSON PASS TRAIL  
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 26 TWIN PEAKS TRAIL  
Leader: Pat Thompson
- 27 PIONEER PEAK  
Leader: Ron Van Bergeyk

The hiking committee is seeking suggestions and leaders for week-long, weekend, and day trips. Contact: Jim Pommert 344-5656 work: 563-3583; Jane Stammen 563-7703; or Linda White 274-4989, or Kathy Burke 346-2841.

MIDWEEK HIKES

No leader designated for these hikes. Meet at 6 pm at UAA or call one of the hiking committee people.

May	22	<u>Flattop</u>
	29	<u>Rainbow Point</u>
June	4	<u>Rendezvous Peak</u>
	10	<u>Near Point</u>
	12	<u>Falls Cr. Trail</u>
	17	<u>The Dome</u>
	19	<u>Petersen Creek</u>
	24	<u>Indian Cr. Pass</u>
	26	<u>Rabbit Lake</u>
July	1	<u>Bird Ridge</u>
	8	<u>Deep Lake</u>
	10	<u>Powerline Pass</u>
	15	<u>Flattop</u>
	17	<u>Rusty Point</u>
	23	<u>Eagle River Trail</u>
	29	<u>Near Point</u>
	31	<u>Falls Cr. Trail</u>
Aug	5	<u>Rendezvous Peak</u>
	7	<u>McHugh Cr. Trail</u>

MAY - JUNE

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
11	12	13	14	15 REI 7:00 WOODS WOMEN	16	17 GULL ROCK 17TH-18TH REGGIE BUCHANAN 333-7649
18	19	20	21 MCA 7:30 PIONEER SCHOOLHOUSE SLIDES OF KATMAI	22 AUDUBON 7:30 CENTRAL JR. HI REI 7:00 FLATWATER CANOEING	23 EKLUTNA TRAVERSE 23RD-28TH WOMEN OF THE WILDERNESS 688-2226	24 BENCH PEAK (VIA JOHNSON PASS TRAIL) 24TH-25TH JIM POMMEY 344-5656
25	26 NSAA SPRING SKI FESTIVAL HATCHER PASS 277-0827	27	28	29 REI 7:00 BIKE TUNE-UP	30	31 IDAHO PEAK JIM POMMEY 344-5656 SEA KAYAKING WORKSHOP 217-151 WOMEN OF THE WILDERNESS 688-2226
1 PTARMIGAN LAKE EILEEN CAVANAUGH 337-1394	2 SIERRA CLUB 7:30 SPENARD RECREATION CENTER	3	4	5	6 COASTAL ECOLOGY CHINA FOOTBAY 6TH-8TH AUDUBON 786-1055 KAYAKING SYMPOSIUM SEWARD 6TH-8TH	7 TRAIL MAINTENANCE WEEKEND 7TH-8TH BILL WAKELAND 563-6246
8	9	10	11	12	13 INTRO TO KAYAKING 13TH-16TH WOMEN OF THE WILDERNESS 688-2226	14 DEVILS PASS 14TH-15TH BILL WAKELAND 563-6246

3 4 5

JUNE

## RECREATIONAL LANDS UPDATE

### HATCHER PASS

Partial Success: Due in large part to our strong showing at the public meetings, it looks like the proposed Hatcher Pass plan will include a recommendation that some areas be preserved for non-motorized recreational use. Those attending public meetings expressed 2 to 1 support for having areas where skiers and hikers can roam without competing with snowmobiles and three-wheelers. While some important skiing, hiking and mountaineering areas (above Archangel and Reed Creeks) were not included, this proposal is a good start in the right direction.

Senator Kertulla has sponsored a bill to close the banks of the Little Susitna in the Hatcher Pass area to new mining claims. These claims don't make for profitable mining, but provide great vacation homes for a few at public expense and inconvenience. A Public Opinion Message phone call to Senators Kertulla, Faiks and Sturgulewski (278-3668) will help the bill SB 334) along.

### MORE STATE-SPONSORED VACATION CONDOS

Many at the monthly meeting signed the petition opposing SB 269, which would allow sale of an acre of land to the occupants of trespass cabins wherever they may may lie, in state parks, wildlife refuges, etc. There are over 23 such cabins in the Hatcher area alone. Send a P.O.M. (278-3668) to your state rep., or to Committee Chairman Miller, expressing your views.

### RESURRECTION TRAIL vs THE AXE

The U.S.F.S. is planning to build 3 miles of road and cut 800 acres of timber along the trail near Cooper Landing. While F.S. literature seems to indicate this is needed to stop the beetles, just to make use of the trees the beetles might otherwise kill. The F.S. has indicated it would be willing to listen if enough hikers write and tell them they would rather see some sick trees than logging operations. Write Dave Barber, Seward Ranger District, Box 390, Seward, AK 99664.

### COPPER RIVER BASIN

Planning is underway for this unique and beautiful area. To participate, pick up a brochure and survey at DNR HQ, Frontier Bldg., 36th and C.

### RECREATIONAL RIVER SYSTEM

A proposal to protect a handful of primo recreational rivers has passed the house and could use a boost in the Senate with a P.O.M. (278-3668) to Resource Cmte. Chairperson Surgulewski. HB 93.

### AND WHILE YOU'RE ON THE PHONE

...you might want to let your state rep. know what you feel about plans to make deep cuts in the budget of the Dept. of Environmental Conservation, which monitors and cleans up toxic waste and pollution, and Fish and Game's Habitat budget. You might also boost HB 501, establishing a state public use cabin system. Finally, a very small authorization for a survey of boundaries in Chugach State Park would make for safer, trespass-free hiking.

Please spend just one half hour this and every month letting the outdoor recreationalist's views on what should happen to this precious piece of real estate called Alaska be known.

Stuart Ollanik

### Book Review

The Last Place on Earth , by Roland Huntford, Atheneum N.Y. pub., 1985, 544 pg

(Available in Hoeman Library)

If you ever wondered before, and probably you have not, who the real hero in the race to the South Pole was, then this book will erase all doubt. Oscar Wilde once said that God punishes us by giving us what we want, and that certainly applies in this story. Robert Scott wanted to become a national hero, Roald Amundsen just wanted to be first to the Pole.

For many years after each reached the Polar goal, a month apart, it was Scott who received high praises. The English glorified suffering as an ideal. Scott and his party were likened to soldiers marching into battle. Amundsen, you see, had been too clever in his meticulous preparations, in his wise use of dogs and skis which made traveling "too easy", in his careful choice of men and equipment, in short for being a professional. But Hartford gives us, in 500 pages of great detail, why Amundsen was the real hero and Scott (who never returned) was just a bungler.

Several passages in the book remain vivid in one's imagination of the events in 1911. For example, the unenviable conditions aboard the British ship enroute to Antarctica in which men's quarters were below those of the horses (Scott was very stubborn about using horses for Polar travel); each storm produced a shower of you-know-what through the planks. Also, as the Norwegians neared 90 degrees South, several of the dogs, who had literally worked to the bone hauling sledges, were shot and fed to their kin (who ate, with wagging tails, fur and all). I guess it really can be a dog eat dog world.

Willy Hersman