



MAY 1996

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc.
Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Volume 39 Issue 05

MAY MEETING
Wednesday
May 15th, 7:30
Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets
Downtown Anchorage

Slide Show: The Cafmeyers on the
Continental Divide in Colorado.

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- May 19** Byron Peak
Kenai Mts. Eight miles roundtrip. 4500-foot elevation gain. Class D. Need helmet, harness, axe, crampons, beacons, shovel.
Leader: Wayne Todd 522-6354
- May 25-27** Bomber Hut
Talkeetnas. Hike and possible climb of nearby peak. Sixteen miles roundtrip. Class D.
Leader: Aze Azegami 266-9249
- May 25-27** Moose Creek Hut
Exploration of the new hut area. Hike in/out via the Mint Glacier and Grizzly Pass. Need crampons, ice axe, harness for glacier portion—some strenuous hiking/climbing. Approximately 22 miles roundtrip. Class D. Will spend 1-2 nights at hut depending on conditions on way in.
Leader: Bill Romberg 267-2145

- June 1** Trails Day
Mile High Pass, Eagle River. Junk car removal! Meet 8:30 A.M. at Carrs Eagle River. Carpool to site. Need two other 4WD vehicles to carry 4 adults and some gear. Leather gloves, safety glasses, water, snacks, sturdy work boots needed. An extra come-along and 50 feet of goldline would be helpful. Picnic afterwards in Eagle River.
Leader: Scott Bailey 696-7250, 269-7572
- June 15** Mt. Williwaw
Prospect Heights to Near Point to Campbell Creek. Climb Williwaw's north ridge and descend south ridge/west face. Complete loop back to car by going out the Middle Fork. RT is roughly 20 miles with 4000' elevation gain. Ice axe, sturdy boots/gaiters required. Class D. Meet 8am Prospect Heights trailhead.
Leader: Dave Hart 274-4423

Your MCA card shows you signed the waiver. If you can't find it, or don't have one, remove the back page of Scree and fill out the waiver for the trip leader. Thanks.

June 22-23 Temptation Peak
Western Chugach. Class D.
Leader: Dennis Morford 522-1179

June 28-30 Resurrection Trail
Class C.
Leader: Kathy-Jo Stevens 373-1257

July 20 - Aug 3 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge
Peter Schrader Lakes to Hula-Hula River.
Mostly backpacking, with possible climb
of Mt. Chamberlin if enough climber-
types show up. Class C. \$400-450 air
charter cost per person. Limit 6 or 9
people.
Leader: Don Hansen 243-7184, 271-6656

Aug 9-13 Talkeetna Hut and Glacier Traverse
Visit Snowbird, Bomber, Mint, Moose
Huts. Loop starts at Archangel, ends at
Buffalo Mine. Crampons needed on the
glaciers. Last day is the only long one.
You can arrange to go out earlier. Limit
8. Class D. Sign-up starting June.
Leader: Willy Hersman 373-4734

APRIL MEETING

Four visitors introduced themselves. Total attendance was about 60.

TREASURY REPORT

Money Market:	3910.50
Checking:	2649.79
Petty cash:	<u>62.00</u>
Total in treasury:	\$6622.29

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Huts.

Chairperson Mark Miraglia announced that the committee plans to construct a new outhouse at the Mint Glacier Hut and an outhouse at the new Moose Creek Hut sometime in June or July. Those looking to volunteer to help with these projects this summer should contact Mark at 338-0705.

Parks Advisory.

Chair Scott Bailey reminded everyone that a lot of the bridges are washed out in local parks. He also urged members to contact the Chugach National Forest regarding the use of helicopters in parks.

ALASKA MOUNTAINEERING & HIKING

10% Off With Your Copy Of Scree

Bring in your May copy of Scree and get 10% off on a one-time purchase of any climbing gear, boots or Gore-Tex clothing at AMH!

- Offer is limited to stock on hand •
- Offer good through 5/31/96 •

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ANCHORAGE, AK 99503
272-1811



Library.

Bill Romberg reported the library is in good shape, but short on space. Duplicate magazines will have to be donated to another library or to members to free-up space.

History.

Chair **Mark Fouts** explained that the purpose of the History Committee is to provide the club with a good reference for new officers to know who the MCA is when they make decisions affecting the club's future. Members will also benefit from an index of literally hundreds of trip reports and club trips that can be used when planning trips or looking for new areas to explore.

So far, 28 members signed up to read at least one year of Screes, covering 35 of the 38 years the Scree has been published. Only years 1985, 1986 and 1987 need volunteers. Wayne Todd and Kirk Towner had already read a year of Screes, and announced at the meeting that it took about two to three hours to complete the Scree Data Form for twelve Screes. Both thought it was very interesting reading, but it was also easy to get caught-up in reading about club activities or trip reports from 20 or 30 years ago and spend more than three hours. Members signed up are:

- 1958 Ron Kruse
- 1959 Ron Kruse
- 1960 Pam Seiser
- 1961 James Larabee
- 1962 Tom Choate
- 1963 Wayne Todd
- 1964 Mark Flanum
- 1965 Neil Tieszen
- 1966 Neil Tieszen
- 1967 David Hart
- 1968 Wendy Sanem
- 1969 Ron Rickman
- 1970 Ron Rickman
- 1971 Kirk Towner
- 1972 Bill Romberg
- 1973 Dave Storkel
- 1974 John Mander
- 1975 Mark Fouts
- 1976 Mark Fouts
- 1977 Curtis Townsend
- 1978 Richard Baranof
- 1979 Michele Potkin
- 1980 Gary Runa
- 1981 Chris Riggio
- 1982 Tina Boucher
- 1983 David Gilmore
- 1984 David Gilmore
- 1985 _____
- 1986 _____
- 1987 _____
- 1988 Larry Rundquist

- 1989 Larry Rundquist
- 1990 Larry Rundquist
- 1991 Elena Hinds
- 1992 Lavonne Rhyneer
- 1993 Mark Miraglia
- 1994 Steve Gruhn
- 1995 Steve Gruhn
- Club policies (all Screes) - Willy Hersman
- Past club officers and chairs (1989-1995) - Willy Hersman

Deadline for Scree Data Form is May 15, 1996 General Membership meeting.
Contact Mark Fouts at 248-0048 for information.

OLD BUSINESS
None.

NEW BUSINESS

AAC liaison **Julia Moore** announced three items of interest: 1) an international gathering of rock climber's in Wales; 2) a joint American-Turkish Expedition to Denali this spring is looking for two members; and 3) Adventure Network International is offering significant discounts to AAC members who wish to climb in Antarctica. Contact Stacy Taniguchi at 345-2481 for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
None.

If you ever wanted to spent a month trekking across Nepal and ascend a 23,000-foot Himalayan peak (Mera Peak), Deb Geeseman's slide show is about as close at it gets without leaving Anchorage. Deb's vivid images and keen insight into the culture, people and mountains of Nepal gave the viewer the feeling they too had been to Nepal with Deb in 1992. Thanks for the trip Deb!

Respectfully Submitted,
Mark Fouts



Alaska Rock Gym

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But, for those of you who couldn't come by for a free night of climbing we offer....

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Alaska Rock Gym 4840 Fairbanks Street, Anchorage 562-7265

Spring Break in the Wrangells

The first three weeks of April proved to be one of the most productive mountaineering periods ever in the Wrangells for Ultima Thule clients, personnel and friends. To begin, Ruedi Homberger, Reto Ruesch, Tom Evans and Paul Claus tore up the slopes with multiple Super Cub assisted first ski descents. Later I joined the group to help with three local Alaskan Cub skiing customers. Though the weather dictated several days of tree skiing, we snagged two awesome first descents in excess of 6,000 vertical feet in length.

Carlos Buhler arrived in the second week and we dedicated ourselves to personal projects. For Paul it was the summit of Mt. Miller, which we snagged on April 12 (see write up). For me it was a huge water ice climb east of Goat Creek, on the south side of the Chitina River which Carlos and I climbed on April 14th. At 600' high with a 400' monolithic curtain, "Birdman" offered good protection and a classic WI5 arm pump. The high point was climbing out of a cave onto a vertical chandeliered curtain with 200' of air beneath our toes. The low point was skiing down through 2,000' of trees and alders in the dark.

In the third week, I returned to work and Carlos left for home. Meanwhile back at the lodge and between air charter commitments, Paul, Ruedi and Reto continued to ski and climb spring waterfall ice. Their best achievement came on April 18 with a super alpine ascent of an unclimbed and unnamed 11,500' peak at the head of Canyon Creek, which Paul has dubbed "Ultima Thule Peak". Leaving the lodge at 4:00AM the boys flew to the peak, climbed 5,000' of steep snow and ice to a tiny summit, then returned to the lodge by 2:00PM.

Mt. Miller

On April 12, Paul Claus, Carlos Buhler, Ruedi Homberger, Reto Ruesch and I made the first ascent of Mt. Miller on the Bagley ice field in the Wrangell/Saint Elias Mountains. Our ascent followed a large rounded southern spur which joins the West Ridge at about 8,000'. From this juncture, the West Ridge continued 3.5 miles over increasingly difficult terrain to the summit. Rising 7000' from the Bagley Icefield, the actual height of Mt. Miller is in dispute. One map indicates an altitude of 8,875' while another shows it to be 11,100'. Our altimeter watches and Ruedi's GPS indicated an altitude between 11,150' and 11,350'.

Our plan was to spend minimal time on the route to lessen the risk of getting stuck by bad weather. This was Paul's third, and my second attempt on the mountain. In 1992 Paul and Doug Rosselin were forced to abandon a camp, and over \$3,000 worth of gear, at 8,500' on the West Ridge in a howling wind storm. The wind continued for ten days until a short lull allowed Paul's father, John, to land and pick up the boys. In 1994 Paul and I never got started as waist deep snow greeted us at the landing site.

Using Paul's Piper Super Cubs, we arrived at Mt. Miller's 4,200' base at 9.30AM on April 11. After a short discussion, we agreed the route looked straight forward and not too difficult. Accordingly, we decided to take one ice tool per person, two days of food and fuel, two 6mm kevlar ropes, a couple of ice screws and two pickets.

By 10:00AM we were underway. A quick ski across the glacier and up the ridge took us up 1,000' where we cached our skis. Using ski poles for the remainder of the afternoon we

followed the broad southern spur to the west ridge. For the whole afternoon our main concern was the heat, as there was not a cloud in the sky. It was so calm the Gulf of Alaska looked like it you could water ski from Cape Yakataga to Cordova. At the West Ridge we passed Paul's previous camp and continued along for another hour and a half until we found a good camp site at 9,200'. We estimated the summit to be between 1.5 about 2 miles away.

Up and moving by 6:30AM, we set off along the ridge. About 1,500' from the large dome we figured for the crux, the ridge narrowed necessitating a front point traverse along the ridge's southern edge. At the juncture with the dome, the ridge rose more steeply and the inch or two of neve turned to ice. Paul, Reto, and Ruedi climbed a line along the ridge crest which had a shorter steep section but moved close to the snowy cornices overhanging the 6,000' North Face. I decided to follow Carlos on a line to the right which appeared to offer nominal relief from the exposure (only 2,000' to the hanging glacier and several industrial size crevasses). This proved to an interesting trade off, because as the ice hardened, the angle increased to 50+ degrees, and I slowed to a crawl. Fortunately, by the end of the day I became more comfortable with the exposure and began to move more easily.

At the top of the dome we took a break for lunch while Carlos cut a huge bollard and set up a rappel over a 25' overhang that barred our way. From the bottom of the rappel we saw for the first time the wild snow and ice formations beneath the ridge cornices. Monster rime icicles sprouting horizontal appendages, indicative of severe winds, hung 20' to 30' from the lips of snowy overhangs around the col. It was as if we climbing inside a massive natural turbine which was temporarily down for repairs.

In any event, across the col the summit dome loomed. With Paul leading, we slogged our way up a couple of steep sections and around a crevasse or two to a modest snow slope and the summit of Miller. It was only 11:30AM. After the obligatory summit photos and backslapping we marked the summit with a wand, and began our descent. The short jumar back up the overhang proved to be the usual pain in the ass, but provided good photographic opportunities. The 1,000' climb down the dome went smoothly and we made one rappel on the steepest section of the route Paul Ruedi and Reto had climbed. The Carlos/Charlie variation looked way too hideous.

The rest of the decent was uneventful, but filled with 7,000' of pain. We skied into base camp at 6:00PM having spent only 32 hours on the mountain. The next morning Don Welty (who works for Paul) picked us up and we were back at Ultima Thule's Lodge and sauna by noon. It just goes to show you that Alaskan mountaineering is not all about snow camping.

Charlie Sassara