

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

Wynnoth Wilson  
215 - 8th Ave.  
Anchorage, Alaska  
BR 4-7833  
Vol. 3, No. 10

SCREE

SECRETARY  
Lois Willard  
1107 I Street  
Anchorage, Alaska  
BR 8-5929  
July 1961

MEETING, MONDAY, AUGUST 7

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska will meet on Monday, Aug. 7th: usual time - 8 p.m. - usual place - Willow Park Recreation Hall. The Board hopes that it will be possible to show a film of an Italian party climbing in the Himalayas which is presently in Anchorage.

PEAKS AND MOUNTAINS

The MCA is proud of the great accomplishment of the strong Italian group which climbed a most difficult route on the south face of McKinley under the leadership of Riccardo Cassin. Three of the party are in Providence Hospital with frostbitten feet.

Bob Goodwin, a member of MCA, joined the Italian party after returning from his Mt. Russell reconnaissance. He climbed with the Italians to the 15,000' level, taking his turn leading on the nearly vertical route. Much to his disappointment, he had to return to his job before reaching the Summit.

\* \* \*

Also returning from the Summit are the members of "Smoke" Blanchard's party. These have been mentioned off the mountain in dribbles - first, Wednesday July 19th, Monty Alford of Canada who went to Fairbanks and Dr. Bruce Meyer and Jack Henry who came to Anchorage. On Tuesday, July 25th Dick Kauffman flew through Anchorage from Talkeetna to Outside. Blanchard and Les Eichorn are currently marooned in Palmer by the Lake George Breakup but should be along to join "Chuck" Saylor in Anchorage. The MCA, at this writing, is planning a "potluck" at Hugh Park on Thursday, July 27th in their honor. Don Gordon ne Clonch will remain in Talkeetna.

\* \* \*

There is a concise and well-written account of the first Canadian ascent of McKinley, May '61 written by Jim Woodfield in The B.C. Mountaineer published by the British Columbia Mountaineering Club.

\* \* \*

Word of thanks and praise to Don Sheldon who runs one of the nation's most successful and difficult commuter's services from Talkeetna to Mt. McKinley and return.

\* \* \*

Finally the MCA has had the pleasure of a visitor from Switzerland, Dr. Heinz Haas, Secretary General of Swissair, who thought he would like to try our mountains. He came and saw and did love them! And those in the parties who went with him to Byron Glacier on Sunday, to the west end of Lake Eklutna on Monday, and to Middle Goat Mountain on Tuesday enjoyed having him here.

CLIMBING SCHEDULE:

- MT  
Anton Anderson

July Hike to Juneau Lake      July 29-30      Leader: Lois Willard -BR 8-5929. This is only 6 miles each way, over a good trail almost level (500' rise in altitude) with a Forest Service cabin at the end in which to spend the night if it is not already occupied. This cabin contains a stove for cooking and bunks, probably with springs! ! !
- Stetson  
Stetson Creek Trail

August 4-5-6      Leader: Norm Pichler. Friday evening, Sat. and Sun. This will be a six-man party. Any interested, experienced mountaineer should contact Norm.
- August 5-6      Leader: Howard Schuck. 114-SK 2-9448. The plan is to drive the 100 miles to the Cooper Creek Forest Service Campground on Kenai Peninsula, leaving Anchorage about 4 a.m., Saturday the 5th. From the Campground (elevation 500') the Stetson Creek trail reportedly will take us 5 miles up to the 1500' level. From here not too much brush, if any, should remain, and the top of the ridge (4000') will be attempted and possibly the mountain at the head of Stetson Creek

(4700') and Cooper Mountain (5350'). This will be something more than a flat country hike. It will be necessary to spend 1 night someplace enroute, total round trip distance - 20 miles, gain in altitude - possibly 4900'. We may establish camp at the Cooper Lake Campground and make the entire round trip and back to base camp in 1 very long day. Or we may carry essentials for staying overnight part way, spend Sat. night there, and go the rest of the way up, back to base camp, out to the road, and drive back to Anchorage on Sunday. Participants should realize that the trip will be "exploratory" to a certain extent, and the plan may be changed somewhat depending upon the exact composition of the party, and upon what conditions are encountered.

Crow Pass

August 19-20. Leader: Jackie Horning. BR 8-9395. This will be a long hike - approximately 7 miles to explore the cabin possibilities in the Crow Pass area; then 7 miles out.

Glacier School

August 26-27 Leader: Paul Crews BR 4-4731

There will be a Glacier School on August 26-27. The object is to have as many people as close to the glacier as possible with the greatest pleasure possible to the participants. It will not be a strenuous climb. This is for everyone who hasn't been on a glacier or climbing outing and would like to be. No mountain will be scaled, but everyone participating will have an opportunity to become familiar with glacier travel.

In order to attend the following equipment will be necessary:

- Air mattress
- Down sleeping bag or army mummy
- Ice Axe
- Crampons -No Army crampons!
- Climbing boots -Please be sure the crampons fit the climbing boots before the school
- Mittens and leather gloves
- Sunglasses
- Ski pants
- Wool shirt and a sweater
- Wind parka
- For rain: either rain pants & parka or a long raincoat. But no panchos!
- Extra socks
- Large handkerchief (to be used for usual purposes and also for wind protection)
- Towel
- Cup and spoon
- Toothbrush (optional)
- Carbiners & 3 slings
- Hat with brim for water shedding (use your own discretion about headgear)
- Food for two days
- Pocketknife

In addition: used but clean coffee cans can be useful for cooking and may be discarded after use. There will be need for an extra quart of fuel per stove. Nothing besides the above can be brought - neither coke cans nor accordions; C rations or T.V. dinners!

It will be desirable for those attending to arrange their own parties of 2's and 3's for the purposes of sharing tents, stoves and food. Everyone must register a week before the outing and state what additional equipment he has available to bring such as: stoves, ropes, ice pitons, etc. Persons who have not become a part of a 2 Or 3 man group will then be assigned to groups from the list of registrants. Persons registering must not back down, as this may cancel the rest of the group.

Participants will meet on Friday evening at the parking lot at the end of the road to Heritage Glacier no later than 7 p.m. If it rains the outing will be postponed since a glacier is impossible in rainy weather.

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE:

- 1 Austrian rucksack - medium size
- 1 Primus 71L Stove
- 1 Hard hat

Contact: John Dillman FE 3-2053

JOHN'S JOINT "IT'S JUST A HIKE"

by Dave Duncan

At six o'clock in the evening on Friday, June 9, a group of dauntless mountaineers met at Joe Pichler's to climb Mary's Mountain, the peak south of Pioneer Peak. After considerable discussion such as, "Now look, we're all ready to go, so lets go, ---rain or no rain," we were off. These hardy adventurers were Leader Joe Pichler, Lois Willard, Chris Ridell, John Dillman, Elmer Feltz, Irman and Dave Duncan, and late comers Gene and Jackie Horning. The first seven of us finally got on the road at seven and arrived about eight at our

-3-

ping off spot, a homesteader's yard just past Goat Creek. We all cast hopeful eyes at a few clouds, bravely shouldered our packs, struggled up the road to the jeep truck, threw our packs and climbed in. It seems that Joe after watching the commercial on "Maverick" asked the man for an "eye-opening demonstration of the forward control jeep pickup." The ride was actually quite hazardous. Low branches threatened to knock off heads and at one spot the jeep threatened to slip off the road. The jeep stopped at the power line and we were on our own. Gene and Jackie, of course, called us sandbaggers for this climbing aid but we all thought they were only jealous. The jeep driver probably would have extended the little service but the jeep's brakes went out on the way down.

The trail, a typical no-switchback Alaskan trail, is straight up. Perhaps, this is because many of the trails exist from mining days, and the shortest line to gold is a straight line. We got to our camping spot, a knoll right at timberline, at 10:30 and pitched camp. The youth on the climb, John and Dave, carried sherpa packs the last 100 yards. Of course the sherpas did get two rupees deducted from their pay. Our party was completed when Gene and Jackie arrived at midnight. By this time the rain stopped, the clouds lifted, and the Staruska valley cloaked in twilight hues of somber purple spread out below us. Across the plain the friendly lights of Palmer blinked out their message of civilization.

The next morning Joe and John went looking for water. In two hours they were back with a bucket and three canteens full. Joe threatened to commit mayhem on anyone who even thought about nanaushing or teeth crushing.

After a leisurely breakfast, we started up the mountain. The pace was easy and the weather was beautiful. Upon rounding one corner, we looked into the eyes of about fifty mountain sheep. Cameras came out, nasty exposure readings were taken, and the other mountain climbers on Mary's Mountain were recorded.

We found a snow patch about 500 feet from the top and ate a snack while we melted snow for our camp water supply. Rested, we continued to the top. This was Joe's ninth trip to the peak. Joe's flag which he put up on the 4th of July in 1951, although, now well weathered, was still waving over the summit. His first climb was made in 1949. The story is that the next day close to his base camp, he met Mary, and after leading her to the top, named the peak after her. After proper summit ceremonies, we descended with the aid of scree and soon were back onto flowering slopes and then camp.

Lois Willard and Elmer Feltz packed down Saturday night because Lois had to catch a plane for Seattle on Sunday, and Elmer had Sunday chores. The rest of us sat around the fire and heard about Joe's cat-eating alligator.

The good weather ended about 2 A.M. Sunday. This ended our sunbathing and climbing plans for Sunday. After breakfast we retreated down the path. About a mile from the bottom we met Jim Messick who had decided to see what we were doing. He shouldered Sherpa Drag-a-long's pack and we continued to the bottom encouraged by the knowledge that refreshment could be purchased at a cafe just across the road from the parked cars.

The mountain will be pointed out with pride and a pleasant weekend remembered whenever driving in the vicinity.

#### MIDDLE ABOVE KENAI LAKE

by Irma Duncan

The Horning V.W. and the Davis jeep transported Gene and Jackie Horning, Marquerite St. Alley, Elinore Schuck, Bill Davis, Irma and Dave Duncan to Kenai Lake on Saturday morning June 17. About noon we parked the cars on the side of the highway, adjusted our packs and followed the power line up the hill for a short way. We turned into the woods to head for a saddle between two ridges, a spot visited before by leader Gene. After a moderate amount of log hopping, bush whacking, and orange surveyor tape marking we were progressing slowly up flowering slopes. Never have flowers been more beautiful. Lupine in profusion, columbine, cinque foil, chocolate lilies, yellow banner, forget-me-nots, wild geranium, vetch, cream paint bruns, and violets vied for a place in the sun. About four, the last of the sherpas reached the camp site aided by the gung ho membes who were able to help with others' packs after getting their own to the top. Into the clear cold water of a small lake were immersed feet and cans of beer. After a snack and a brief rest we leisurely strolled into the valley where a chain of small lakes stretched north-westward. Marmots whistled in appreciation as we admired a flock of sheep high on the slope. Only old signs of bear were noticed.

Thoughts of dinner sent us back to camp and gathering wood. Soon various brews bubbled rigorously over camping stoves while Elinore grilled a five pound steak in the camp fire. Although the evening was "lovely" and the company sparkling, everyone was in his sleeping bag by eleven.

The next morning the heat of the sun made sleeping uncomfortable but who wanted to miss the early view of snow capped peaks and green slopes mirrored in Kenai Lake? After breakfast an assault was made on the ridge to the south. Various members of the group dropped out (poetic license) and returned to camp. Marguerite, Bill, Gene, and Dave climbed almost to the top (4500 ft.) but returned because an early return to town was planned. After lunch we again slipped on our packs and stoically stepped down the steep slopes. A porcupine and a grouse were disturbed by our trek through the woods. We came to the power line just at the orange marker we had tied to a bush the day before. Soon we were reminiscing about another measurable trip.

Kudos to Gene!!

PIONEER PEAK

by Gregg K. Erickson

18 June according to summit register v.H.

Despite her many charms, Helga's penchant for early hour climbing is enough to get a down. So it was as I crawled out of bed at 2:30 A.M. Sunday morning June 25th. I'm the other members of our group, John Dillman, Steve Foss, and Jim Messick, felt the way as they prepared for her insistent 3:00 A.M. honk. She was bound and determined to an early start at Pioneer Peak and an early start she would have.

We arrived at the base of the mountain around 5:30 A.M. still sleepy but ready to go. Bright sunshine which bathes the west side of the mountain and the cool flow of air down the early morning soon had us wide awake. Within an hour and a half we had arrived in a bowl with the sun still shining and what looked like a clear shot at the summit.

Those of you who are contemplating climbing this mountain should be warned that the distance from the bottom of the bowl to the col (we are still on the west side of the mountain going down toward the Knik river bridge) is very easy to underestimate. It took us a full 4 hours climbing through wet snow with a sweltering sun beating down before we reached the point on the ridge. At this point we decided lunch was in order along with some deep consideration of proper headgear. Provoking this discussion was John's climbing helmet, otherwise known as the "Yellow Egg". John is convinced that this plastic and nylon contraption is THE ONLY THING for Chugach Rock. Some of the rest of us were inclined to agree with him before the day was out even though everyone took great pains not to knock anything down on our comrades.

Lunch over we started up around the northeast side of the peak, enjoying the fine views of Marcus Baker, etc. At 11:00 A.M. Jim, who had to be back in town early, reluctantly turned back, leaving the rest of us to carry on till noon when we reached the north summit. The weather was so warm and the climbers were so tired that instead of pushing on to the higher south peak we took our ease in the sun. Starting back at 1:00 P.M. we reached the base in four hours. ALL in all a fine climb.

UNNAMED PEAKS

AROSE?

by Gwynneth Wilson Souvenir PK

In an attempt to get into and climb Montana Peak, Helga Bading, John Dillman and Gwynneth Wilson, accompanied by three bitches, ascended an unnamed mountain with two peaks which was, by the chart, approximately 6,000 ft. high.

On Saturday, July 8th the Sextet left Anchorage and drove to the Little Susitna Lodge. Leaving the car, the hiking was easy over a jeep road, apparently maintained by the Fish & Wildlife Service, to a ford in the river and across a dilapidated bridge. Beyond was a trail which lead to a mine at the east end of the valley. Here the valley made a dogleg to the north where magnificently a cluster of snow covered peaks crowned the valley's end. One of these peaks, a good 8 miles distance from the mine, was Montana. However, the Trio did not distinguish which one until the next day when with the help of a map this was determined from the summit of the mountain climbed.

Beyond the mine, the hikers took to the brush and a series of large boulder fields. It became clear that it would be too far for the time available both to walk to the end of the valley and to climb Montana Peak.

The three humans decided to turn into the first small contributory valley on the right which showed a very striking peak. The smaller valley was very pleasant. The group made camp, after crossing a stream\*, in a level spot some feet above the stream and below some gently rising hillocks.

After supper the area above the camp was surveyed. It consisted of a series of scree and boulder terraces ultimately culminating in the shallow valley below the chosen peak.

With a "Helgalian" start, i.e. early, the climbers retraced the previous evening's route, walked over the flat and up to a ridge traversing to a scree slope, climbing up a small snowfield which gave access to a bowl. The selected route was up another snowfield which lead to a tiny saddle below the summit. This was a deadend. Down came the climbers, traversing the mountain above the bowl in snow\* to a rock buttress, over and around the rocks, down a small blanket of snow\*, up and traversing through the scree to a second gully on the southeast. This time the snowfield lead to a saddle between the two peaks and a rock scramble took the hikers to the top of the higher and more massive of the two peaks.

The second peak resolved into what seemed a precarious and unreliable pinnacle. However, on close examination and with effort a way was found up it too. In fact from the south peak was also an easy rock scramble.

The weather during the entire day was sunny though hazy but particularly nice for this area which is notoriously rainy.

Down a rocky slope to a ridge which swooped with snowy serenity to the shallow valley above the camp. It was poor snow for glissading\* though the attempt was made. All hikers slid wetly down.

We had seen a moose from the summit and found its tracks high up on the snowfield. We saw the moose slowly galloping away. She apparently shared Helga's views of the dismalness of civilization, especially "civilized" people. Rounding up our canine companions, we returned. This is an excellent location for an outing. It is easily accessible to the mine, presents a variety of possibilities to both hikers and climbers and is a superbly beautiful area.

\* \* \* \* \*

Asterisks mark sudden descents by G. Wilson: #1 into a stream, #'s 2 & 3 down a snow slope leading to a stop in scree, #4 the result of a glissade which didn't quite work. Fortunately, a victim was found face down with the ice axe embedded in the snow. There was an "assist" Helga who captured the seat of the blue jeans, aiding the stop.