

JULY MEETING: Monday, July 18, 1966 at 8:00 PM, Willow Park Community Hall, 9th & Fairbanks. This will be a joint get-together with the Alaska Rescue Group. A film on rescue SAMALITANS OF THE ALPS will be shown. This film is based on Mariner's book, MOUNTAIN RESCUE TECHNIQUES.

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

JULY 16 EYER'S PEAK (6119'), Near Palmer, top guaranteed in return for 12 hours hard work. Gary Hansen 272-1145

JULY 23-24 PTARMIGAN LAKE: This is a special children's hike, but anyone is welcomed. Mile 102.6 Seward Highway (24 miles from Seward) 4 miles up trail to Ptarmigan Lake. Goats and spectacular hanging glaciers can be seen. This is a trip for the children, however each child or family group must be accompanied by an adult. We are going to go slow so the kids can enjoy it. We will camp out by the lake and return the next day. Leo Hannan 277-4748

JULY 23-24 CROW'S NEST CABIN: One day or overnight. Drive to Girdwood and then to the broken bridge on the Girdwood road, hike to cabin from there. In the area of the cabin there is alot of hiking and climbing possibilities. Steffen Maagoe 752-1163

SPECIAL

ROCK CLIMBING WEEKEND - INDEPENDENCE MINE - HATCHER PASS AREA

JULY 30 - 31

Bring your family - camp, hike, climb on granite. For climbing, bring vibram soled shoes and/or sneakers, a sling rope, a carabiner and leather gloves for belaying. A hard hat is recommended. Register with Dave DeVoe 333-5492

AUG 6-7 EAGLE LAKE TO EAGLE RIVER VALLEY HIKE: South fork of Eagle River 7-9 miles overnight at Eagle Lake (2570') climb (grass) to 5,500' descend height of land 6-8 miles to homestead (1857'). John Wolfe 272-7698

AUG 13 or 14 PIONEER PEAK (6398') More information at the next meeting.

AUG 21 LATE MOUNTAIN: (3723') Near Palmer, have vistas of Palmer, Talkeetnas, Pioneer Peak and the Matanuska Valley. Marge Maagoe 752-1163

AUG 27-28 Glacier School, Eklutna Glacier. Stay overnight at the cabin. Dave DeVoe

The Board on Geographic Names announces that the following mountains and places have been named.

THE MITRE, Elevation 6,600 feet, 5.5 miles SSE of Eklutna Lake and 30 miles ENE of Anchorage, 60° 15' 52" N, 148° 52' 12" W.

RACE POINT, A point of land elevation about 3,000 feet at the East end of the South East ridge of Marathon Mountain, 1 mile W of Seward, 60° 6' 40" N, 149° 28' 25" W.

FROENIX PEAK, Elevation 5,155, 2 miles SW of Iron Mountain 3.5 miles WNW of Seward, named for the first ship ever built in Alaska which was constructed in nearby Resurrection Bay in 1794. 60° 7' 23" N, 149° 32' 10" W.

TEMPTATION PEAK April 23 Bob Spurr  
On April 23, Bill Hauser, Barney Selzer, Ron Sullivan and Bob Spurr climbed Temptation Peak, approximately 5,300 feet. This is reputed to be previously unclimbed and no trace of an earlier ascent was evident. A register was left.

APRIL ACONCAGUA ATTEMPT

Vin Hoeman

Three continents only exceed 20,000 feet. After climbing McKinley, the altitude-hunter's attention becomes naturally fixed on Aconcagua, the highpoint of the Americas at 22,835. This culminating point of the Andes is well-known as the highest point in the Western Hemisphere, but it is seldom mentioned that it also reigns supreme in the Southern Hemisphere. Indeed, only in the Himalayan region, nearly 10,000 miles away, does the earth's crust wrinkle higher.

At the proper time of year Aconcagua is not a hard climb, perhaps 100 parties have reached the summit since 1897, and it is said that a mule was taken to the top, but fierce storms can assail the mountain any time and have taken their toll of poorly equipped, inexperienced, and foolhardy climbers. There is a cemetery at its base near Puente de Inca, Argentina, at least half the graves in which are of climbers Aconcagua has claimed. The

summit has not been reached except during the summer period from the end of December through March.

Extending this period with an April climb was not our original goal, but Dave Johnston and I used so much time climbing and seeing other things in our overland trek, from Alaska that it was mid-April when we got off the train at avalanche-shattered Puente del Inca. We left our excess gear there at the military fort, 8,500' elevation, and began backpacking up the Horcones Valley, spending the first night at Horcones Lake, near which are such lowland outposts as parrots, toads, lizards, and a road.

Next day the way became more rugged and barren as we crossed remains of last August's avalanches, and a wind bearing stinging sleet and snow battered continually at our faces before we stopped for the night at a tiny stone wall enclosure roofed with tin at about 13,000'. This was the limit of all vegetation on Aconcagua, whereas we'd had flowering plants above 17,000' in Bolivia.

The wind howled all that night and in the morning we were covered with fine snow that had blown through the chinks. We continued up valley, bucking headwind and soft drifts, past pitiful mule skeletons with shod feet protruding through the snow in mute protest to their sacrifice for man's ambition. At last we ascended steep, loose slopes alongside the jagged Upper Horcones Glacier where the gale seemed to drive us back half of each step we'd take, and at 14,500' we reached the shelter cabin at Plaza de Mu'les. The door was ajar and mouse tracks decorated the snowdusted floor, a welcome indication of life. This was the only Latin American refuge in which we found a supply of food and medical supplies - the 35 kilometer trail is seemingly enough to protect it from looters, or the input has more than kept up with them.

Gusts of wind in the night shook even this stout hut, and the storm dumped heavy snow all the next day that prohibited us from even thinking of attacking the exposed slopes above. We cooked, copied Spanish inscriptions of success, failure, and rescue from the walls, and lay in our beds listening to the storm. Years of climbing and observation have taught us that there is a time for valor and a time for prudence, and the factors now added up to the latter, so morning found us beginning our two-day retreat to civilization although the wind had slacked after blowing much of the snow away. We wondered if we might have pulled off our April ascent because there are other tiny shelters up there as high as 22,000' (the highest building in the world), but a glimpse up a side valley at the summit area enveloped in a ghostly, changing, lens-shaped wind-cloud was enough to make us glad for our decision to return some nice December. Days later, in a jet from Chile to Jamaica on our way home, Aconcagua was a shining monarch, clear and cold and still above us in the grip of the approaching austral winter, but a magnet that will draw us when northern nights again become long.

#### A CLIMB ABOVE MARY'S MOUNTAIN

June 11 & 12

Gwyn Wilson

Mary's Mountain (4,895) was a favorite target of Joe Pichler. The register on top must read like an all-time membership list of MCA because so many people have made the climb with Joe. From the Palmer Highway the Mountain looks difficult and it is because the route is devious and the way steep.

On the Wednesday afternoon prior to the scheduled climb, Rod and I explored the possibilities as far as the knoll above timber line. The ascent begins at an abandoned house across the road from the Knik Tavern. Behind this building is an old jeep road which leads up to the Klutna powerline. Shortly after this point is reached it is necessary to branch off into the trees and devil's club for a steep 3/4 mile hike. This is the hardest part of the trip. Rod and I went too far to the west on our way up and felt that we were too far east on our descent.

The group met on Saturday, June 11th at noon. Rod, Grace Jansen, Ursula Meienberg and I picked up Tony Bockstahler at Eagle River. We were able to choose a direct way up through the devil's club, alder, willow, etc. We were accompanied by swarms of mosquitoes.

Camp was made on the knoll which from the road looks as if it has scum wisps of hair on top - the last remnants of the timber line. It was raining when we arrived and continued to do so steadily throughout the night. I have a distinct memory of Grace bailing out our tent in the wee hours of the morning. Sleeping in lakesize puddles did not seem to fret Ursula at all.

Having maneuvered on thoroughly wet boots, we were recovered after breakfast and so was the day. We traversed behind the ridge to the east and moved steadily along above Goat Creek valley. There is a long grassy slope which we ascended and then turned east to continue along the ever evasive ridge which yielded numerous summit like points but no Mary's Mountain. When it became apparent that we were actually climbing the quite formidable west ridge of Pioneer Peak, we retreated having reached an altitude of approximately 5300 ft.

Resorting to a map and talking with others who made the climb, it was clear that we should have gone left at the top of the first grassy slope and from this rocky chute gained access to the summit of Mary's Mountain, which in reality is just the end of the ridge we had been on. Although it is a relatively long and a very steep climb, we would recommend it being made in one day as Joe did with the original MCA group in June 1959. The long day would more than offset carrying water and camping gear up the brushy, "vertical" 3/4 mile.

O'Malley Peak (5,100' +)

June 18, 1966

Dave DeVoe

O'Malley Peak beckoned with its black spire for many months to Forest Hunt through his dining room window. He learned from Dave that the forbidding peak had a friendlier side than the one it presented to his window and he determined to "do it".

A February attempt on snowshoes succumbed in deep snowdrifts in the South Fork valley of Campbell Creek.

The June trip got underway on a partly cloudy morning with Forest Hunt and son Steve, Gwyn Wilson and son Brian, Carrie Lewis, Steffen and Marge Maagoe and Malah, Ruth Schmidt, and Dave DeVoe. Crossing Campbell Creek was the first problem. This was done directly by wading, sans boots, with a line stretched across the creek for balance. That was the only use of the rope all day. The brush patches were easily negotiated to the open meadows and rocky slopes of the southern side of the ridge.

There was a lunch stop on top of the ridge, among large rocks near the col above a steep snow gully which is the approach from the west side of the mountain.

Many of the party were surprised to find O'Malley a relatively easy peak to ascend, and most went much farther toward the top than they had planned. Six of the nine signed the summit register: the Wilsons, the Hunts, Steffen and Dave.

Rain, sleet and fog discouraged any long stay on top. A short, steep scramble down from the summit brought us to the scree and below that the high meadows with softer walking.

Forest and Dave, coming down after the others, had a somewhat disagreeable, wet bout with a patch of mountain hemlock (the evergreen that grows about 5 or 6 feet high, with iron-like branches that kick back if they can be moved at all) worse than alders, if that's imaginable.

After the wet brush, it wasn't worth the trouble to take off boots before wading the stream. Forest and Dave met the others just as they came up out of the creek bottom onto the powerline road - remarkable timing.

SUMMIT MOUNTAIN | RAVEN PEAK | GLACIER PARTY TRAVELS |

June 25-26

Dale Hagen

We left the fallen bridge over Crow Creek about noon and had a pleasant hike up the road and donkey trail to the Crow's Nest Cabin. Two of my five companions were visitors to Alaska and they were impressed. Why not, where is there a place in the world more beautiful when the sun shines? The cabin seemed to be in reasonable condition and leaving it and the hikers I headed up the snow field toward Summit Mountain. Two groups of MCA's signed the register in 63, but none since. Dropping down a couple hundred feet, I spent the night at the junction of Raven and Milk Glaciers. It frosted that night and in the morning I was delighted to find a hard crust on the snow. Unfortunately I slept a little too long (10 hours) and shortly after I got under way the snow had warmed up and the crust began breaking through. Agony! It took almost all morning weaving through the crevasses to get the short distance to the pass to Eagle Glacier. I spread my sleeping bag on the rocks in the sun to dry the condensation and clambered up the falling down rock pile flanking the pass. According to the map this is 6,600' and about the highest point handy to Girdwood. There was an ammunition can register there, the interior bone dry, and a list of MCA signatures from 1959 naming this Raven Peak. A logical choice, since it heads up Raven Glacier. From the pass down to Eagle Glacier there is several hundred feet of loose rock and dirt. I crashed down it, hoping I never have to crash up it. Up the glacier ways I encountered the party, I was a little late but fortunately got a quart of beer anyways. It was only two in the afternoon but the party was breaking up because clouds were on the deck and it was coming down mixed rain and snow. Poor for flying. Poor for climbing too, so I got in Ted Huntly's bird with the last of the party and evacuated.

On May 14, 1966 two MCA members Steffen Maagoe and Marjorie Prescott were united in marriage by Rev Gay at the Unitarian Fellowship. A lively reception was held afterwards at Ruth Schmidt's.

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