

SCREE

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, 99510

July 1981 Volume 24 Issue #7
The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 15th at the top floor of the Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third and Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting Gunnor Naslund will present a show on his recent trip to Tierra Del Fuego.

June Meeting

Meeting was called to order by Vice President Jim Eason at 8:00 pm. It was agreed to waive the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting due to their having been published in the Scree.

Treasurer's Report:

Bank Acct: 465.44, Petty cash 68.00, Money Market: 2741.06 for a total of 3324.50. Disbursement was 96.75 to Arctic Office Machines.

New members and guests were introduced, we had at least 10 new individuals.

Standing Committee Reports.

None.

Old Business:

A member pointed out that one of our Mt. Club members had received an honor which we overlooked, the Alaska Press Club Award had been presented to Mark Skok for his article on climbing methods and mistakes often made in ascents on Mt. McKinley, an article which was published in the Anchorage Times. Our congratulations are extended to Mark.

New Business:

Al Robinson announced that revisions are now being made to the publication "55 ways to the Wilderness in S C Alaska."
Area Ranger for Chugach State Park, Dave Mills, spoke to us regarding the fire permit for the Flat Top Solstice. The permit was denied due to acute fire danger. Dave gave a short presentation on the reasons for denial as well as information regarding Sat. programs at the new visitor center at Paradise Haven in Eagle River, as well as Sun hikes and trip plan systems. The systems allow a backcountry traveller to register his trip plan with the PLSL for security. He also announced that the Glen Alps entrance to the Park now has an emergency telephone. We are grateful to Dave for taking the time to come and speak to us.

LaVonia James gave a schedule of hikes.

The Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs wrote the club, asking us to join. The letter outlined the purpose of the club and the cost of 40.00 per year. Board Member John Dillman will contact Denny Wood, our former representative for Alaska and inquire as to why she chose to leave the club.

A Bibliography of Colorado Mountain Ascents, a book was offered to the Club at 6.95. The membership voted to purchase a copy for the library.

Jack Dugan was given honorary membership in the club, due to the fact that he is informal library chairman.

Paula Quering resigned her post for collating the Scree. A volunteer offered to duplicate the July issue. The executive Board will consider a proposal by Mark Findlay to prepare the newsletter on contract for the club. Other interested perspective printers were invited to apply for the job.

The Program:

Was a presentation of slides by John Dillman of "Little Switzerland", a lovely and humorous expedition into the Alaska Range. We thank John for sharing with us.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Madeline Jones Secretary

Trip Schedule

- July 12 Dew mound, Eagle River. Good family hike. For details call Rick Severn at 344-7269.
- July 18-19 Resurrection Trail, Cooper Landing to Romig Cabin 20 mi RT. Call leader LaVonia James before July 11 if you plan to go on this trip. 345-5152. Meet at UAA Sports complex, at 7:00am.
- July 25-Aug 2 Wrangells, Castle Mt. to Shitstone Falls to Glacier Creek. Leader Dona Agosti 248-0089.
- Aug. 1-2 Peters Creek Valley, climbing and hiking. Leader Greg Higgins.
- Aug. 8-9 Crescent Lake Trail overnight 14 mi. RT. Meet at HAA Sports Complex at 8 am. Leader John Nevin 349-1707.
- Aug 15-16 Peters Hills. This trip is fairly easy up and down over tundra above timber line, from 1800' to about 3900' at Long Point, 6 or 7 miles in. We will probably camp Sat. about 4 miles in, go to the point for a grand view of Mt. McKinley, and return via camp to cars on Petersville Road the next day. Carry water for first couple of miles, and bring blueberry pail. Please no dogs unless very small or on leash. Meet and coordinate tents and cars at U of A parking lot 8 am, Aug. 15th Sign up at July meeting or call Bill Wakeland, 274-7539 Or 279-2270.

- Aug 23 **Rendezvous Peak, Day Hike.** Leader Al Robinson 279-8873.
- Aug 22-23 **Williwaw Lakes, Blue Lake, Prospect Ht overnight.** Bill Stivers 277-2869.
- Aug. 29-30 **Powerline Pass to Indian.** Leader **LaVonja James** 345-5152.
- Sept. 5-7 **Crow Pass to Damp Creek out Bird Creek for very exper-** ienced backpackers, 3½ days. Leader Bill Barnes.
- Sept. 12-13 **Skilak Lake to Cottonwood Creek,** Leader **Donal Agosti** 248-0089.

Trip Reports

Chickaloon-Knik-Nelchina Trail **John Nevin**

Sat. morning found 23 people and Ben heading up the trail at Puritan Creek under sunny skies. For many it was at least the second time and for some the fourth or fifth. Unlike last year there was virtually no snow and the trail was even dry much of the way. Many sheep were sighted on Anthracite ridge and some saw moose. A new and small cabin was sighted at one of the eastern lakes, not a good sign. Lots of beaver activity has taken place along the route, the most noticeable project being at the lower end of Boulder flats. Here an acre size lake has marooned the boy's club sign and reached the end of the air strip. Several of the young bucks become dam busters at the Sawmill Creek cam sight but I'm afraid only succeeded in injuring themselves. That's one of the most ambitious beaver projects I've seen and makes hiking through the area very tedious.

The middle day found some relaxing, some recuperating, some like Keith Jost, reaching the rotten peak at the end of Anthracite, Jim Schiwe playing tag with mom moose and son, and dutiful son, Tim Agosti and Matt West on an arduous project researching an old (extinct) trail and the 98 mile bridge. We were joined this day by Pat Murray with a 70 lb. Taj Mahal on his back, and Robert and Anita.

Going out day was story book perfection and everyone spent time enjoying the spectacular views along the way. A good end for the McIntosh family's last trip with the club. I'll miss them. Note worthy was the gourmet eating of Ron Rhodehamel and Lulie, and Pat and party with filet mignon, venison steak and the trimmings. Besides those mentioned I enjoyed the participation of Paulene Chase, Don Hansen, Marty Bassett, Marilyn Kamm, Ron West and family, Diane Peterson, Evelyn Doggett, Mark Woelber, Jana Hayenga, and Chris Harbor. I sincerely appreciated Tim's willingness and expertise to lead the front while I swept the trail. For me it makes for a very relaxing trip. It is hoped this was not the last trip on this trail since some of the land is about to become private and village native land.

Ramp- Wedge Hike

Twelve MCA members departed Glan Alps parking lot under threatening skies on Sat. Morning. Participating were Bill Watson, Don Hansen, Bill Wakeland, Jim Morrison, Eileen Foley, Brigitte Ressel, Jan Scott, Mark Kinlay, Marilyn Kann, John Nevin, Marty Bassett, and Reg Buchanan.

Crossing the south fork of Campbell creek posed no problem. Crossing the stream about 10 feet wide.

Old tennis shoes were used to cross this and the marsh area beyond. On the approach to the valley the party split between the valley floor and the ridge to move up the valley. The ridge is decidedly the easiest way to move up and down the valley. Several large snowfields were crossed. A campsite was set up near water about 3/4 way up the valley. The day hikers went ahead and climbed the Wedge (4660') while the overnights set up camp. The overnight group then followed up the Wedge. All members reached the summit cairn and signed the register. The climb is non-technical and was free of snow and ice. A cold strong wind and horizontal rain encouraged a rapid descent. Bill Watson, Bill Wakeland and John Nevin crossed the Valley and climbed the Ramp (5240') under rapidly changing weather conditions. Bill Watson said visibility at the summit of the Ramp was 20'. Bill Wakeland and John Nevin who reached the summit 20 min. after Bill had departed were greeted with blue skies and a panoramic view.

On Sun. morning the group broke camp and headed out. Bill Watson and Bill Wakeland took a side trip and climbed O'Malley Peak (5105') on the way out. It was an enjoyable trip and good company for all who participated.

This trip is well within bounds for most novice hikers and climbers as long as you are properly equipped, wind and rain gear, tents and stoves that will function under windy conditions, and wool hats, gloves, etc. are a must.

Reggie Buchanan, Reg Buchanan, and Gull Rock June 13-14-1981

Nineteen people, MCA members and guests made this year's Gull Rock trip. Included were Jim, Julie, Joni and Jamie Morrison, Loretta Seppänen, Mark Kindlay, Brigitte Ressel, Bill Watson, Holly Stephens, Brian and Debra Britt, Rick Sandler, Marty Bassett, Marylou Begen, Marilyn Kamm, Valerie and Gary Hirschberg and Valerie's brother, and Reggie Buchanan. We were treated to a beautiful, warm, windless sunny weekend, that included sunbathing on the tip of Gull Rock, exploring and beachwalking. Sunday morning several of us were sitting on the tip of Gull Rock and were treated to the sight of six Beluga whale passing directly below us. They were close enough that the peculiar sound they make as they break the surface and breath was clearly audible.

Eight-year-old Jamis Morrison, who carried her own gear the entire trip, deserved a special mention. When tired little shoulders gave out on the trip out she added a new dimension to the art of transporting a frame pack; by carrying it every conceivable way but on her back. but carry it she did!

Book Review

EXPEDITIONS TO NOWHERE, by Paddy Sherman. The Mountaineers \$14.95

This would be a pleasant book to read if one had never been near a mountain, what with the author's perceptive comments on the life and people of many of the far corners of the earth in which he

has climbed, and his professional journalist's writing skills, but there are special appeals for Alaska mountaineers in his chapters on the St. Elias Range and Mt. McKinley, as well as much about South American and African experiences. I don't think I have ever read a climbing book in which reaching a summit was so often frustrated, but Sherman's experiences on the way up and down are beyond average interest. In discussing a decision to climb in Peru he comments "several of us felt we had enough Spanish to hope we could find out something of the people we would meet in Peru. If you climb mountains only because they are there or to make yourself a hero, then such idle chatter hardly matters. But if reaching a summit is only the final step of a long journey that took you from home to travel ever hopefully, then the people along the way may be as important as the peak. If you can communicate a little as you go, who knows but that a journey up to nowhere may not become part of a modest expedition to everywhere? And if you should reach that horizon, perhaps it would turn out that you had been at home all the time." Could one phrase a sounder philosophy of climbing?

Some other small details. There are interesting comments on the process of pre-conditioning for high-altitude climbs. Alcoholic beverages are an essential part of the equipment of this climber and his partners, and are mentioned repeatedly and in some detail. Sherman follows the Canadian use of the metric scale (highly to be commended) and this reviewer had to keep a conversion scale at hand while reading to make sense of the altitudes cited. British or Gallic spellings tonnes where we write tons, and metres where we write meters, are noted.

A good deal of space is given to description of the massive 1970 rock and ice avalanche from Mt. Huarascan in Peru, apparently one of the greatest in recorded world history. Sherman was in that area both before and after the occurrence, and makes vivid the destruction which occurred.

It is perhaps appropriate that toward the end of his chapter on Mt. McKinley Sherman discusses the hazards of alpine style climbing on major peaks, and quotes Dr. Charles Houson on its risks for both climbers and rescuers. Sherman's background of long experience in mountain rescue, with its resultant caution, and willingness to turn back short of the summit when the risks are too great, is evident here, as elsewhere in the book.

Liz Robinson

History Corner

The Valdez area was also the scene of climbing activity by Club members in 1959. McAer Charles Warren joined 3 "outsiders" in a June ftip onto the Valdez Glacier with plans to retrace the historic route traveled by the gold miners at the turn of the century. Their primary purpose however, was to put up climbs on the untouched peaks in that area.

In the party were Dr. Larry Nielsen from Mass. and Ralph Marron from New Mexico. Larry Nielsen was well qualified to be leading this trip into the Chugach. His list of successful climbs there (many of them 1st ascents) included noteworthy peaks such as Elusive, Einstein Witherspoon, and Valhalla. This was his 6th trip to Alaska for climbing.

The fourth member of the group was none other than Boyd Everett who hitch-hiked up the Alkan to meet the others in Valdez. Having

just graduated from Harvard, this was Boyd's first foray into Alaskan mountaineering. He was destined to become a major force in Alaskan climbing, and before his death on Dhaulagiri in 1969, he would lead successful climbs by difficult routes on Denali, Logan, and St. Elias. Blessed with two weeks of good weather the climbers recorded successful first ascents on Mt. Cashman, Mt. Brookfield, Mt. Mahlo, and Mt. Abercrombie. These peaks were named in remembrance of various pioneers in the early Valdez Glacier crossings of 1898 and 99. Dr. Nielsen later published an account of their trip in Appalachia as well as the AAJ. Boyd's account was recorded in the Harvard Mountaineering Journal.

Greg Higgins