



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

July 1986

Volume 29, Issue 07

JULY MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 16th at 7:30 p.m. at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle Sts., Anchorage. After the business meeting, Jim Pommert will give a slide show of some of the many club trips he has been involved with, past and future.

MINUTES FOR THE JUNE MEETING

The meeting was held June 18, 1986 at the Pioneer Schoolhouse, and was called to order by Vice President Willy Hersman at 7:43 p.m. The reading of the minutes for May was waived.

The club welcomed new members and guests.

Willy reported that this was the 333rd meeting of the MCA, and that the club was founded in 1958, before Alaska was a state.

TREASURER'S REPORT

\$ 243.87 - Petty Cash
3,998.24 - Money Market Rate Plus Acc.
586.70 - Checking Account
\$4,828.81 - Total MCA Monies

While Laurie is away, Bernie Helms will act as treasurer.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Hut Committee

There will be a Hut Repair trip in June to use the materials flown in earlier to repair the Whiteout and Eagle huts. See Eklutna - Girdwood Traverse listed on the hiking/climbing schedule.

II. OLD BUSINESS

None.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mint Hut.

The Hatcher Pass Management Plan suggests converting the cabin at Mint Glacier (built, maintained by the MCA) into a public use cabin. Willy Hersman has applied for a personal use cabin permit on behalf of the club at \$100 a year, which needs to be paid for within two weeks. After a brief discussion it was felt that it would be better to pay for the permit for one year and try to keep some claim to the cabin rather than just let it go and regret it later.

A motion was made for the MCA to spend \$100 for the personal use cabin permit for one year. Passed unanimously.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Mail

The club received Trail and Timberline, a map and info from Prince William Sound Area Plan, and Matanuska Valley Moose Range Plan update.

B. Dan O'Haire encouraged people to come along on the Harding Icefield Traverse, promising an exciting and beautiful trip. See listing in the Hiking/Climbing schedule.

C. Camp stamps are being made available to campers to give them a 15% discount and to help the Forest Service reduce their overhead.

D. The Cook Inlet Region, Inc. wants people to get a permit before going onto their lands. Their land includes areas near Mt. Susitna, Talkeetna, Kenai, Fire Island, Anchor Pt., Ninilchik, etc. See map on file at the MCA library.

E. Tom Choate reported on his recent trip up Bear Valley. See trip reports.

Willy adjourned the meeting at 8:12.

Tom Choate, long-time MCAer shared some of his slides of an incredible adventure he and a few other "legends" undertook back in 1963. It's easy to be an armchair mountaineer and sit back and enjoy the climb of Denali and Hunter. But, you have to remember that we could only enjoy this and other fantastic slide shows because the people taking them have drawn a little deeper into that inner strength to endure cold fingers or a few more minutes delay on getting back to camp just to take a few more pictures. Maybe this is all selfish photography at first--but after a while they come and share them with us. Thanks to Tom Choate, Vin Hoeman, Dave Johnston and Cliff Ells for drawing a little deeper. And just think--plastic honey bears lay in wait for all good mountaineers!

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Burke

ADZE

Still getting together an order for topo sheets in order to save 50%. The U.S.G.S. offers a discount on all orders over \$500 (at the regular price) which means we can get them for \$1.25 instead of \$2.50 each. So far we have \$365-worth of orders. Contact Willy Hersman, 338-5132.

TRIP REPORTS

Wolverine Peak

On April 26 a group consisting of Don Hansen, Doris Curtis, Bill Wakeland, Claire Latamor and myself ascended by the standard route on this club trip. The descent was made down Rusty Point ridge to the prominent notch. We then glissaded back to the normal route.

Jim Pommert

Bench Peak

The 9 mile trip in to Bench Lake on May 24th took a little longer than normal due to knee deep snow, but the weather was perfect without a cloud in the sky. An avalanche at about 6 miles has knocked the bridge across Bench Creek almost off its footings. Another nudge and that bridge is gone.

Tom Choate, Don Hansen, Ellen Abramson and I started early on Sunday to take advantage of the crust which had developed overnight. Tom led us up the broad valley south of the peak to the ridge which descends to the SW from the false summit. We ascended this ridge over mixed snow and rock to the false summit and then across the narrow ridge to the 5575' summit. The clouds which had begun moving in earlier now started to drop a little snow. But we still had nice views out to Portage, Grandview, and the nearby mountains. The ridge line across the valley to the south of us was alive with avalanches as we descended from the peak down the western ridge at about 4700' onto the small glacier SW of the summit and all enjoyed the thousand feet of glissading.

We spent Sunday night at our camp in the trees above Ohio Cr. Enrique Toro and Gennie Blaustein, who elected to pass up Bench Peak, and continued on to a nice camp at the crossing of Johnson Cr. We were glad to leave the snow behind at Upper Trail Lake but taking off the boots at the cars is still tops.

Jim Pommert

Falls Creek - Suicide Pk.

June 7

This was supposed to be an overnighter with a climb of Suicide, weather permitting, combined with trail maintenance. Six of us signed up or called and three of us showed up. Willy Hersman was to come out Sunday for trail work, but

we weren't there! I forgot to call him Saturday night.

We did the trail work, working our way up into the wind, fog and rain. After lugging our packs to 2500' to an exposed but dry camp spot, we waited around in a howling, foggy wind and finally decided to bag it and go home - never even saw the mountain! The faithful included Don Hansen, Rick Maron and myself.

Bill Wakeland

Mt. Yukla

As one hikes up the Eagle River trail it would be difficult not to notice the great craggy walls and scree-filled gullies which make up the peak named Yukla (7535'). With all its decaying cliffs and numerous intertwining gullies to nowhere, I've always thought of Yukla as kind of an ugly mountain. But Todd Miner gave me a call one day to go climb the thing and along with Mike Miller how could I resist to step on the highest point above the valley?

We started late on June 9th and hiked to Twin Falls, about 8 miles from the visitor's center, making camp on a river bar. Todd cooked a steak as we figured out a way to tackle the brush the next morning. The brushy cliffs next to the falls turned out to be a fairly easy obstacle as we ripped our way through very early in the morning.

Up the hanging valley below the south face we went, bearing left over rather firm snow (in the morning anyway) to a small glacier with a few devious cracks. Carefully passing these on the left we continued to a pass at 6250. Without missing a step in the upward pace we noted the Icicle Glacier below and traversed northwest to an obvious large snow gully. This gully takes one nearly all the way except for the last 200 feet which can be easily kick-stepped on the NE ridge.

It's a twin summit and we waited for a hole in the clouds to determine which was higher (west summit). Before noon we drank a summit beer and searched for the register. Greg Higgins placed it there in 1980, but it appears to have disappeared. As far as I can tell we were about the 7th or 8th ascent. (F.A. 1966, A. Davidson, J. Bousman).

This is the "standard" route up Yukla, and involves an elevation gain of almost 7000' in a day, which took about 6 hours.

Probably the most daring attempt on Yukla was one done in the winter of 83-84 by two very capable locals, Charlie Sassara and Marty Schmidt. They spent 5 days on the 3 1/2-mile long west ridge, starting at its beginning near the trail. The climb, mostly on rock, included a bivy in a nasty storm. And although they stopped just short of the summit, it seems unlikely that anyone will ever complete their route.

Willy Hersman

Devil's Pass Hike

No one signed up for the Devil's Pass trip, but all who called in did show up! There were ten of us, including 7-month old Galen Paulke. We left the Devil's Pass trailhead, elev. 1500', Mi. 39.4 Seward Hwy., at 10:30 am, 6/14/86, for a 10-mile, easy upgrade climb on an excellent trail through Devil's Pass and around the lake to camp near the Forest Service cabin at about elev. 2400' (the cabin went unoccupied that night). Weather was so-so, neither hot nor rainy. This trip is mentioned in 55 Ways, trip #14, and is a good hike to avoid the more populated Resurrection Trail, and yet see some of the best country.

That evening, Ron and Donna climbed "4295" to the north, while I climbed a similar knob to the east, and we could see Cook Inlet and the Chugach Mts., and had some long glissades down the snow. It cleared off that night and the sun warmed the tents next morning.

Distances in and out were each supposed to be about 10 miles, but the trip out seemed much longer on a beautiful, but hot, day. After a mile or so of the Resurrection Trail, we cut off and climbed to a 3300-foot pass. Most of what trail there was here was under snow, but it was firm. During a brief break there the temperature was 70 deg. in the shade. Descending into East Creek valley, Liz fell into a very narrow "crevasse" where the creek had cut a 2' wide, 4' deep trench through the snow, and one lip gave way - she let out a yelp when the cold water hit her, and didn't appreciate our efforts to pull her out two ways at once!

With more snowfields, a little scrambling and some light brush, we headed up another pass, 3400', climbing rather steeply up firm snow, to have a long rest stop up there surveying the upper Summit Creek watershed, taking photos, attending to sore feet and nursing the baby! We'd seen four sheep here, and the day before several moose, including a very young one and its mother across a small lake from us, fully out in the open.

The trip down Summit Creek reversed the process of yesterday - from snow and barren land down through stages of spring until at the mines near the Seward Hwy., many flowers, including lupine, chiming bells, etc. were blooming and foliage was lush - temperature must have been 80 deg. Baby and parents did fine - not even bringing up the rear at times! Besides myself and Loren, Galen and Carol Paulke, were Bill Benjey, Jim and Liz Mroczek, Donna Wartenberg, Ron Van Bergeyk and Terry Thomas.

Bill Wakeland

Begich Peak

June 15

Ten promises brought a team of six out at 8am on the most perfect day imaginable. So good that we headed for a "good weather only" choice: the little known peaks east of Portage Lake. The first adventure of the day was using my old 4-man raft to cross the river. At one stage a passenger had to keep a finger over a large hole to ensure reaching shore without getting wet as the tubes deflated! After hiding the raft, we set off around the alder-covered

trail toward Bear Valley and then climbed the rounded rocks near the point of the ridge.

The forest turned out to be easy to move through, with short detours around several short cliffs. Most spruce and hemlock trees were big for the first 1500 feet, but inevitably they became stunted and we had to crawl under and climb over for an unpleasant half hour before reaching the timberline. The views from here are outstanding: far below is an iceberg-filled lake, and the Portage Glacier flows as a crevassed highway ending in the beautiful peak of Carpathian and of course there are 5 other glaciers and many other peaks visible.

After a long session with the alpine flowers, snowbanks, quartz outcrops, etc., four of us moved off rapidly along the ridge toward Peak 4545 (Begich Pk.). The ridge curved left and became narrow (but still easy) before merging with the SW face. Soon we were admiring the views from the top, higher than all neighboring peaks and including a number of parts of Prince William Sound and even the St. Elias Range on the horizon. The trip down included glissades and rock ptarmigan before timberline, and a much easier alder route to the south of the scrub hemlock area, traversing back west onto the main ridge forest. Finally there was another opportunity to brave the icebergs and doubtful raft on the way across to tourist-land.

Tom Choate

Eklutna - Girdwood Huts

Five members turned out for the glacier traverse and hut repair trip beginning June 20th. Mike Miller, Ron Van Bergeyk, Carmen Russo, Greg Griffin and I met at Eklutna Lake on Friday night for the boat ride across the lake, which was provided by Chugach State Park. And much appreciated...at 95 lbs., it was the heaviest pack I've have ever carried. Mike's pack weighed 87 lbs., and he didn't carry a sleeping bag! Along with the usual gear needed for the traverse we had such items as hammer, saw, paint cans, two 50-foot rolls of aluminum, four windows and much more. Never has the trip up Eklutna on crampons ever been such a grunt. We reached Pichler's just in time for a windy storm.

We had hoped to bypass Pichler's so we could spend more time on the other huts, but the stop afforded us a chance to replace the back window and assess what will be needed there in the future. Once on the snow we were able to use sleds to get some of that weight off our backs. At the Whiteout Hut we ran into a guided group of five, who lent a hand. A new window was installed downstairs and plexiglass put in upstairs. The front received a second coat of paint (Tim Neale had put on the first coat last month.), and the back received one coat. Aluminum printer's plates were put on over a section which had been bare on the roof.

Next day we loaded our sleds with plywood, paint and nails, which had been stashed at the Whiteout in April, and headed over to the Eagle Hut. For two days we painted and hammered; the hut is a bit different now. Eagle Hut received a fresh paint job (barn red), two new windows, and plywood patches over the holes made by a bear in 1981. The entire roof was covered with tar paper and, until we ran out of it, the long sheets of aluminum.

Mike, Carmen and Ron left for Raven Headwall on the 25th. Cliff Belleau's group stayed one more day and since the work was done, Greg and I went climbing. From the hut we skied towards Raven Pass until we reached a wide gully SE of Rook Mt. (6685). We kicked steps up the gully to the rotten-rock ridge and then scrambled to the summit. The rock cairn and register left by Dave Johnston and company were gone. Quite likely we had done the second ascent after 23 years! First ascent: 1963, D. Johnston, V. Hoeman, H. Van der Laan, K. Degenhardt, B. Reed, G. Hansen.

Eagle Hut, also known as Rosie's Roost, has not been the focus of many ascents like the other MCA huts. In recent years that has changed, however, the ACC classes have been doing more climbs there. Most people agree that it has an unequalled view when skies are clear. On the 26th Greg and I skied across Eagle Gl. to a gap at 5850 feet and onto another glacier which drains NE to the Lake George Gl. We traversed over a ridge coming from P 6400 and headed for the west ridge of 6042, which we easily ascended to the summit. With no sign of a previous ascent, we left a cairn and register. We called it Sparrow Peak and propose Sparrow Glacier for the unnamed glacier below and to the north of it.

Before returning to the hut we also climbed Peak 6400 (Section 9), a double-summitted peak, via the NE ridge, also probably a first ascent. We skied over slush to the hut and out over Raven Headwall the next day under the scorching sun.

Willy Hersman

Climbing Notes

Pete Panarese and Dan Hourihan made an ascent of Organ Mt. (6980) between June 24-27th. The long approach went from South Fork Eagle River, up Flute Glacier, over the 5550 col below Flute Pk. (first crossed by the Van der Laans in 1968) to Organ Glacier. The technical climb was up steep ice and snow via a prominent gully and hanging glacier just east of the long north *arête* of Organ, a route pioneered by J. Pinamont, M. Rainery, L. Swanson, and the Tandy brothers in 1973.

Vin's Nester jar on Idaho Peak showed only two previous ascents when Willy Hersman and Keener (? from Palmer) climbed it in mid-June. (F.A.: 1967, V. and G. Hoeman). Possibly it was hard to find when there was lots of snow earlier in the season, or possibly the false summit to the west is far enough for most who come up from the roadhouse.

Heart of the Sunrise

Most of us who get out on the glaciers in the summer know how powerful the sun can be and so we usually wear a good pair of glacier glasses to protect our eyes. It probably would never occur to us, since it is so overwhelmingly bright out, to ever lift our heads and take a direct look into that big fireball (even for a few seconds). The following letter came to the Scree recently from a climber in Juneau, Mike Clark, who had a pretty bizzare experience on one of his climbs:

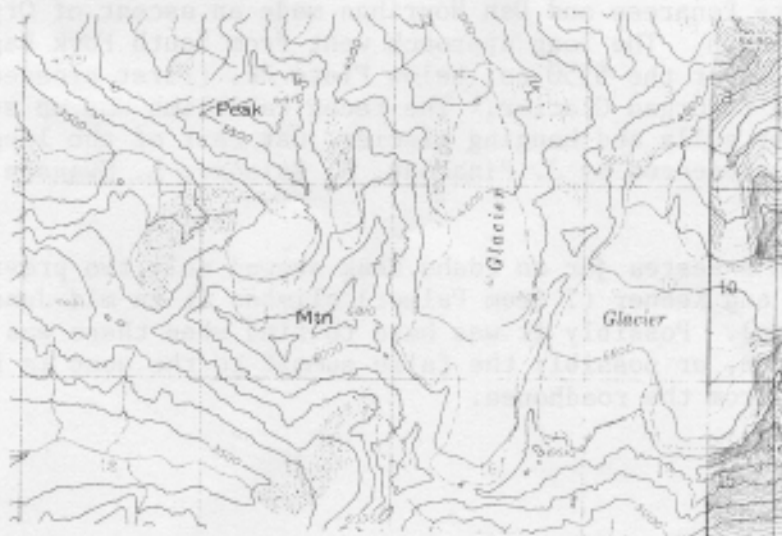
Hello. I am writing to tell of this observation story of group 3994 sunspot seen with the naked eye, wearing only glacier glasses. I was solo mountaineering the Main Tower (Mendenhall Towers) from 18 to 24 Nov. 82. On the 21st at 4pm I first saw the darkened area and sat, listening to tapes. The dot was large and easy to see with the glasses but not seen when they were off. I was camped above 5000'. The enclosed sheet is from the World Data Center, Boulder, who I talked to on the phone and described the sunspot; perfectly located. The project leader said there were over 70 sunspots in that one area.

I was 26 years old and graduated from J.D. High in 73. I'm happy to be the first Alaskan to view a sunspot with the naked eye and will push this news to the Johnny Carson Show if possible. I've climbed for 14 years in Alaska; water ice in Juneau, Haines, all the Mendenhall Towers and also the SE face of the Moose's Tooth in 74. I cover for Snowlion Mag. and Mountain Trip, Anchorage. Any personal thoughts please write. Mike Clark Box 2702 Juneau, AK 99802.

MAP TRIVIA

Answer to June:
Thunderbird Peak (6575)

Okay, on the Anchorage Quad again...What is the peak in the lower right corner?



HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- July 13 SUMMIT CREEK-COLORADO CREEK
11 miles, 2500' elev. gain, trail part way. Map: Seward C-7.
A nice loop tripon old mining trails in the Summit Lake area.
Meet 8 am at UAA.
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 12-13 MATANUSKA PEAK
10 miles, 5500' elev. gain, trail part way. Map: Anch C6. 55
Ways #43. Hike up one of the monarchs of the Mat-Su Valley.
Call the leaders for details and meeting time.
Leaders: Don Hansen 279-0829/Bill Wakeland 563-6246
- 19 CROW PASS
8 miles, 2000' elev. gain on trail. Map: Anch A6,A7. 55 Ways
#25. Hike past the old mine to the pass and Crystal Lake. Meet
8 am at UAA.
Leader: Eileen Cavanaugh 337-1394
- 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
27 miles, 4200' elev. gain. Map: Seward C6, C7. 55 Ways #13.
Starting at Moose Pass to upper Quartz Cr. and then Down Mills
Cr., up Stormy Cr., down to Bench Lake and then down the trail
to the Hwy. Meet 7 am at UAA. Call leader for details.
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 26 TWIN PEAKS TRAIL
9 miles, 4150' elev. gain on trail. Map: Anch B6. 55 Ways #41.
Views of the Mat-Su valley. Optional ascent of of East Twin.
Meet 8 am at UAA.
Leader: Pat Thompson
- 27 PIONEER PEAK
7 miles, 5000' elev. gain, no trail. Map: Anch B6. Climb the
landmark of the Mat-Su Valley. Call leader for details and
meeting time.
Leader: Ron Van Bergeyk 345-1800
- 26-27 LOST LAKE
15 miles, 1900' elev. gain on trail. Map: Seward A7, B7. This
is a joint trip with the Sierra Club. Call leader for details
and meeting time.
Leader: Steve Jones 277-6174

- August 2-3 UPPER RUSSIAN LAKE
24 miles, 1400' elev. gain on trail. Map: Seward B8, Kenai B1.
55 Ways #8. Meet 8 am at UAA. Call leader for details.
Leader: Eileen Cavanaugh 337-1397
- 8-10 MT. WILLIWAW - TANAINA PEAK
24 miles, 7000' elev. gain partly on trail. Map: Anch A7, A8.
55 Ways #33. Non-technical climbs of the two mountains are
optional, both, one or none. Meet Friday evening at 5:30 pm.
at UAA. We will hike in 8 miles Friday evening. Call leader
for details.
Leader: Jim Pommert 344-5656
- 16 MCA PICNIC AT EKLUTNA LAKE CAMPGROUND
- 23 CRESCENT LAKE
13 miles, 1000' elev. gain on trail. Map: Seward B7,C7,C8. 55
Ways #9. Option of fishing in lake or just relaxing along shore
Meet 8 am at UAA.
Leader: Don Hansen 279-0829
- 30-1 BOMBARDMENT PASS - TRAVERSE and CLIMBS
3 miles in, climb Peeking (6925), Raina (6798), Pleasant (6425)
from Ram Valley; camp beyond the pass after the climbs; hike out
Peter's Creek to waiting vehicle. If some people want to return
via Ram Valley they can make it a short trip. Climb all 3 peaks
2, 1, or just watch. Ice axe suggested for Pleasant Mt. Many
blueberries along the way. 22 miles total. Meet UAA 9 am.
Leader: Willy Hersman 338-5132
- Sept. 7 ROUNDTOP AND BLACKTAIL ROCKS
Leader needed
- 13 THE SUICIDES
Leader: Mike Miller
- 14 KNOYA PEAK
Leader: Jim Pommert
- 20 WOLVERINE PEAK
Leader: Mark Findlay
- 20-21 SWAN LAKE
Leader: Kathy Burke
- 27-28 ICE CLIMBING SCHOOL
Meet at the Matanuska Glacier
- October 4 RAINBOW PEAK
Leader needed

- 11 INDIAN CREEK PASS
Leader needed
- 18 EAGLE RIVER TRAIL
Leader needed

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.

- July 8 Deep Lake
- 10 Powerline Pass
- 15 Flattop
- 17 Rusty Point
- 23 Eagle River Trail
- 29 Near Point
- 31 Falls Cr. Trail
- Aug 5 Rendezvous Peak
- 7 McHugh Cr. Trail
- 13 Indian Ck. Trail
- 19 Bird Ridge
- 21 Johnson Trail
- 27 Rabbit Lake
- Sept 3 Flattop
- 10 Near Point
- 16 Rainbow Point