

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

SCREE

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MEETING, SEPTEMBER 14, 1959

The next meeting of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska will be on Monday, September 14th at KENI Auditorium at 8 p.m. Will you please note that this meeting will be on the second Monday in the month since the first Monday is Labor Day. Also, the meeting will be at KENI. In the future, MCA meetings will be held on the first Monday at Willow Park Recreation Hall, 9th Ave. and Fairbanks.

The slides to be shown will be those of Joe Hill.

MEETING, SEPTEMBER 14, 1959

The Constitution of the MCA stipulates that a quorum is 51% of the membership. A quorum is necessary for the election of officers. There are approximately 75 members of the Club. The meetings have been attended quite regularly by about 30 which is not a quorum. Since there is no provision for proxy voting, it has been suggested that a motion be made at the September meeting to postpone the election of officers until the October meeting (October 5th) and that dues for the next year be payable by or on October 5th the quorum being determined by the paid-up memberships on October 5, 1959.

If this is not agreeable, the Club will be happy to have you present on September 14th to present your argument or alternative suggestion.

MEETING, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1959

"Climbing on the rocks" ended Thursday, August 20th because of darkness. This has been a fine experience, and the participants will be looking forward to continuing next April when the days begin to lengthen. A group was present every Thursday from late April, some four months of practise.

CLIMBING SCHEDULE

On the weekend of September 19th and 20th, there will be a glacier school. Those interested in rescue work should attend as practise in hauling somebody out of a crevasse is scheduled. Crampons, ice axe, and warm clothes are essential. Leaders: Paul Crews (phone: 38625) and Hans Metz.

A rock climbing trip is planned to the Portage Lake area where some rock that showed climbing possibilities was spotted. Either Sunday, September 13th or Sunday September 27th have been set aside since dry weather is required for this one. Leader: Erik Barnes (phone : 32602).

PIONEER PEAK as told to G. Wilson by Norm Pichler.

An attempt was made on Pioneer Peak on July 26th by Norm Pichler, Gregg Erickson, Joe Pichler, Andy Brauchli, Joe Hill, Chuck Warren, Larry Johann and some Morning. The group started up the mountain at 5 a.m. with hopes that the weather would break. Climbing up the clouds, Gregg Erickson said, "The ceiling will rise." At the 3000 ft. level we ran into clouds but the climbing was easy. We climbed in the clouds and walked way up a cockscomb-like ridge which ran into an abrupt wall. Everything was saturated. Upon running into the wall, we sat and waited for the cloud layer to lift about an hour, and then we elected to go down because we didn't know what was above us.

On the way down, we rappelled from our resting spot to a snowslide and here Gregg Erickson and Chuck Warren learned how to glissade rapidly after brief spilling in snow which ended in rock. They both bounced very nicely! (Ed. note: A note of glee was placed in the voice of N.P. as he recounted this.)

Norm Pichler thinks that the eastern basin on the face is a good basin to start Pioneer Peak from because it is fairly easy walking without any technical difficulties.

BYRON GLACIER by Joe Hill

At 3:00 p.m. on August 2nd, five climbers from the Mountaineering Club made the top of the peak at the head of Byron Glacier. This is the small glacier to the south

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and above Portage Glacier Lake. The climbers were Gregg Erickson, Wayne Rhoades, Chuck Warren, Gene Horning and Joe Hill.

We had started the night before from O'Malley Road and the Seward Highway. We got to Portage Glacier Lodge about 6:30 p.m. and started up the creek to the base of the glacier shortly thereafter. We got to the base of the ice falls about 8:30 p.m. and pitched camp for the night. It was a wonderful campsite. There was water less than 20 ft. away, but we were on snow making crampons on the campsite unnecessary. The next morning we found that we had a wonderful view of Portage Lake and its icebergs. However, the Lodge was behind a mountain. We arose about 7:30 and after a leisurely breakfast, we started up the glacier toward the ice fall. We found an easy route over the ice fall, and we were soon within sight of Portage Glacier Lodge. At our lunch break we looked at the people at the lake through Chuck's telescope. They were looking back at us. After about one half hour of gawking at each other we moved on.

After about one more hour of zigzagging to miss crevasses, we came to an arm of rock leading to an exposed rock ridge which ran to what we thought was the summit. Here we left our crampons and took to the rock. After about 45 minutes of rock climbing, we came to a knoll and discovered that the ridge that we were on did not lead to the real summit but only to a small false summit. To get to the real peak we had about 300 yards of snow to cross. From where we were, it looked like a steep, badly corniced ridge, but when we got closer, we found that it was almost level and presented no problems, even without crampons. We stopped on the small false summit for a few moments and took pictures of Portage Glacier Lake, Port Wells and part of Port Whittier. Then we pushed on to the summit. After only about 20 minutes of snow we reached the rock of the real summit. In 25 more minutes we were on the top.

From the top we had an excellent view of Portage Glacier from an angle seldom seen by tourists - the Top! We could see part of Port Whittier which is surprisingly near Portage, and the end of Turnagain Arm, Port Wells, Mt. Witherspoon and Marcus Baker. We found the cairn left by Hans Metz, Johnny Johnston and party last year. However, we did not find a register.

After the long walk down we reached camp about 9:00 p.m. We got back to the cars at about 10:30 only to find that they had had disputes with both the Cheny Construction Co. and a bear. There was a note saying that our tag numbers had been turned in to the State Police for trespassing (we were on a closed road) and a bear had pawed Gene's car. Engineers and bears have no respect for their superiors (MOUNTAINCLIMBERS).

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It is really hard to say "Sayonara" to a friend of the MCA such as Joe Hill. Our ebullient Joe (There's one for you to look up, Joe!) has given much to all the members who have known him from Thursday night rock practise or weekend parties both club and privately organized. His final and inadvertent act was to entrap the doctor who administered to Joe's crampon wounded leg in the activities of the Mountain Club.

LAZY MOUNTAIN

On Tuesday, August 4th, Joe Pichler led a youthful group up Lazy Mountain - Larry Johann, John Graves, Thomas Wilson (age 11), Norman Brauentgen (age 8), Russell Brauentgen (age 6) and Gwyn Wilson. Joe and Gwyn were young in heart if not in years.

Lazy Mountain is blessed with a trail which only demands "fireweed-wacking". The trail, however, is a typical Alaskan mountain trail i.e. up, steeply so. There are three false summits which were a bit disillusioning to those under 12, but the party made it to the top. There is a really good view of the Matanuska Valley, Byers Peak and the Inlet including Fire Island from the "summit" (3,000 and some ft.). Actually the view is more exciting from Lay Mt. than from Mary's Mt. though the climb is less exacting.

The group found a can on top with a message from a lone climber earlier in the season. Proper notations were added to this and a cairn built. The rain clouds closed in on the descent, and the group came down in damp condition. Larry, Joe and Gwyn decidedly slowed up proceedings by taking some 30 minutes longer than the rest of the party to descend. The last three suspect that the first down may have rolled some of the distance from the looks of their clothes. This was a most successful outing, and Lazy Mountain is actually a hiker's domain. In short, no rocks, glaciers, problems just breath is needed to reach the top.

LAZY MOUNTAIN II by Helen Wolfe

A second Lazy Mountain "lilliputian" hike was organized on Saturday, August 15, by John and Helen Wolfe. We were accompanied by Mrs. Russell Staley, and the three little Staleys, Carol, 7, Jan, 12, and Kit, 13. Also with us was Judy Butts, 13. This was supposed to be a little mountain, well within the ability of young and old. John had to work that morning so we did not start climbing until 3:15 p.m. When we finally reached the top three and a half hours later, at quarter of seven, we had decided that if Lazy Mountain had had one more saddle we just might not have made it!

The weather was cloudy, but we had only one shower. Toward the top the clouds whirled in around us most dramatically, yet they cleared at the summit to reward our labor with a real mountaintop view. We were crushed, however, to find no pencil with the "register" at the top since the prospect of signing her name at the top of her first mountain was all that had kept our "leader", seven-year-old Carol, going. Even that prospect had not been able to keep Jan and Judy with us; they had stopped halfway to pick blueberries. We arrived back at the cars at 8:30, having made the descent in an hour and a half. The quick descent was made possible by the slickness of the trail after the rain; we slid most of the way!

GLACIER TRIP by Joe Pichler

On August 9, 1959 the following members of the Mountaineering Club under the leadership of Hans Metz and John Johnston went on a special training trip to Byron Glacier: Gary King, Joe Pichler, Joe Hill, Chuck Warren, Bill McKee, David Dahlke and Steve Foss.

We met at 10:00 a.m. at Glacier Lodge. Bill and the boys mixed up the meeting place and waited in Portage for us. After a half hour of waiting for them, we left for the glacier. The weather was fair and partly cloudy so the high peaks were up in the clouds. The hike went up the glacier stream bed on the right hand side in places through alders, but mostly it was good going over the moraine. For rock hounds a glacier stream bed provides the most interesting kinds of rock which are of many varieties. There is the usual country rock, the shell and shist and some rusty looking pieces which contain iron. There are masses of quartz where the prospectors are looking for gold. Over the stream bed in the open alpine meadows are growing the most beautiful alpine wild flowers. On our way over the black ice, the sun broke through the dark clouds, and one by one the high tops of the mountains came into sight. The beauty of the glacier and the mountains can hardly be described. It is, as we say in German, "Ein Erlebnis". We came up to the ice falls and made lunch. Soon we saw Bill and the two boys coming. Bill wasn't equipped for glacier climbing and went back again.

We left our rucksacks here, and Hans and John began with the training. John took the boys and Hans took the rest of us. Ice climbing is dangerous but easier than rock climbing. The only hold is in the crampons. Steps have to be chopped and pitons hammered in the ice. This all takes time and the process of climbing is very slow. At 3:30 we went back. John left a climbing book in the Lodge for anybody to sign and tell his destination in case he should get lost. This makes it easier for a search party or rescue party.

In all it was a very nice trip and our state has a wonderful treasure of tourist attraction in these mountains and glaciers.

BYRON GLACIER II by David Dahlke

The Byron Glacier trip was planned last August 13th while we were at the rocks and at Indian House. Joe Hill, Chuck Warren and Andy Brauchli were the First party and decided to go down and camp on the glacier Saturday night and then go on to the summit the next morning. Andy was leading this group.

Helga Bading, Joe Pichler, Rod Wilson, Wayne Rhoades, Steve Foss and I left Anchorage at 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning. Helga was the leader of the Second group. The weather was beautiful. There were no clouds in the pretty blue sky.

We met at Portage Lodge. Helga came in her car and brought Rod Wilson and Wayne Rhoades. Steve and I came with Joe Pichler in his pick-up. We left Portage Lodge at 4:45 a.m. At 5:30 we put our crampons on and started up the glacier. At 6:00 a.m. we were at the First party's camp and saw them crossing a snowfield before the ice falls. Helga figured that they were about 30 minutes ahead of us and that they had slept late. Our route was to the right of the ice falls and up a ridge to a lower peak. The First party's route was between us and the center of the ice falls. They went high on a steep snowfield and then onto the rocks. On the way down our route with the First party was down the center of the ice falls.

Before we came to the lower ice falls, we roped up; Helga and Rod, Steve and Wayne, Joe Pichler and I. After going through the lower part of the ice falls, where step cutting was necessary, we went on a snowfield. At 7:30 a.m. we stopped to have a bite to eat. At 8:00 a.m. we had entered the sunlight and it was so warm that we had to stop to remove our outer coats and sweaters, put on our sunglasses and suntan lotion. Helga told that the best preventative for sunburned lips was lipstick. At least she felt safe.

The First party went very high on a snow tongue before they went onto the rocks. They had some difficulty at first, but all made it okay. We went onto the rocks at about the same place as the party of one or two weeks ago. It was 9:00. The climbing was not difficult; except for about fifteen feet where belaying was necessary. Wayne, belayed by Joe, went first and then belayed the rest of us up. Everyone made it okay as there were no falls. We were ready to go again at 9:30. At 10:00 we were on the lower peak and eating. From here we could see the First party's tracks in the snow below us.

We put on our crampons and crossed a snowfield between the lower peak and the summit. We were on the rocks again and the summit was in sight. Halfway up this last stretch of rock before the summit, we saw Joe Hill, Chuck and Andy on a snowy peak below us. By 12:10 we in the Second party were all on the summit and the First party was coming down off the snowy peak which they were on. They were on the summit with us at 12:30.

We had a bite to eat and had a look around. Joe Hill gave Chuck some licorice candy. He said that it made him seasick. Joe Pichler was looking through Chuck's eye-glasses. He looked just like a pirate. Oh well! He was only 5,000 feet above seal level.

We started down around 1:00, both parties went down together. After we were off the rocky summit, some glissading was done. We put on our crampons and went down a steep slope where a fixed rope was necessary. At the end of the first ^{fixed} rope we made a second. On the second fixed rope there was a crevasse that had to be jumped. Chuck went first. When he was across he secured the lower end of the rope so if someone fell they would not get into the crevasse. After we were all across, we had to tie three ropes together to get down to the snowfields below. The only equipment left on the glacier was an ice piton. From here the going was fairly easy as Wayne had put in two markers. The First party went to their camp and took the tent down and then followed about 30 minutes behind us. We were at the Lodge at 8:00 p.m. We left the Lodge at 8:30 p.m.

A note by Helga Bading:- The first party had actually been out to climb a different mountain. Joe Hill had spotted it on his previous Byron trip and he was anxious to climb at least one mountain in Alaska that Helga had not been on. (Relax, Joe, I was not on the "Mountain behind O'Malley Road.") But the first party discovered there was about a 1500 ft. sheer drop plus a wildly chopped up Glacier between them and their goal. The peak Joe had looked at is 5998 ft. CARPATHIAN PEAK. Mat Nitsch, Keith Hart and Ted Barrett climbed the mountain in April. They skied up Portage Glacier to get there. Just recently the name Carpathian Peak has been officially approved. -- We left an MCA summit register on Byron Peak complete with pencil and paper. (Ed. note: considering the traffic up to it this season, a new register must have been desperately needed).

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We are sorry to see Charles Warren go. As a reader of Scree, you know that he has gone on a number of Club outings this year lending his quiet and dependable presence. We enjoyed especially his account of the Valdez Glacier Expedition. Good luck, Chuck!

THE TALE END BY TAILEND

"About a fortnight ago, while on a recent world tour, we had the opportunity of visiting the new 49th state of Alaska. The hospitality of the city of Anchorage was unexcelled. In the business of mountaineering, keeping in shape is important, and it was with great pleasure that I joined an excursion into the country with the Mountaineering Club of Alaska.

They had mountains that are mountains and scenery that is unexcelled. In these mountains haven't been climbed, at least not by the mountaineer type people who leave records on the top in pretty much the same way so that wandering sheep hunters and other mountaineers can add to the tale. Yes, sire, Alaska builds them, mountains great in number and size and people to match her mountains. When glaciers covered the land and receded, they hewed out jagged peaks to form the mighty Chugach Range, and area rich to all who enter it, the hunter, fisherman, prospector, mountaineer and photographer.

This mountaineering group had just the proper combination of foot gear, food, clothing, camping equipment, transportation and people working together to achieve the goal. On just this perfect day, the ground was dry, the sun was shining brightly, and with all the gear ready, the climb began. The mountains were sharp and rugged against a clear blue sky. The route took us through fields, over fences and up to our armpits in alderbushes. A tired group made the first camp and the weather remained clear. The next day was spent on long long grassy slopes, the Alaskan type very steep. After resting at the base of the rocks our route took us up jagged ridges of rotten rock where each step was threatened by a steep drop. The final assault was made the following day by all the teams and to the climbers a rewarding view of the valley below, the rivers, the glaciers and the mountains all around. Need they ask why we climb?

So to us, who dream and make our dreams come true the conquest of the Bodenburg Butte may equal that of Everest.

Sir Hohn Jillary
Sherpa Tailend "

Ed. Note: Sherpa Tailend may be found on a Thursday evening practising on the rocks under the disguise of Lois Willard.