



OCTOBER 2001

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska

Volume 44 Issue 10

Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday

October 17, 7:30 pm

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets

Downtown Anchorage

Elections: There will be nominations and voting for
President, V.P., Secretary, Treasurer and Board.

Calendar: Voting for categories.

Program: Bill Romberg will give a brief slide show of a
1997 attempt on MT. FORAKER..

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

Oct 13, 20, 27, Nov 19 Ship Creek Trail Clearing
Between Arctic Valley and Indian. Wear rubber boots and leather gloves. The state park may supply the tools. Leashed dogs and kids welcomed. Lets watch the seasons change in a spectacular valley while getting the trail ready for xc skiing. Leader: Stuart Grenier 337-5127

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Oct 17 Leader Orientation
A short orientation on being a trip leader for the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Course will cover basic requirements, skills, pre-requisites, and procedures for leading MCA trips. Course is required for all new leaders and once every 5 years for existing club trip leaders (as a refresher).

TRIP REPORTS

More on the Tower Mystery

by Tim Kelley



In the August Scree I posed the question "What da Hell is Dat Thang" concerning the old communications tower that's on the ridge 1 mile south of Hope Point. On a recent climb of Maynard Mountain I realized that I had found another piece of this puzzle. At the 3100 foot level on Maynard Mountain's summit ridge (1 ½ miles SSW of the summit and just north of the ridge point under which the tunnel passes) there are remains of a similar communications tower.

The Maynard structure is the same green fiberglass cone shaped fabrication as the one near Hope. Both communications housings were made

by the Wright company out of Bellingham, WA. However the top of the Maynard tower is missing, no doubt the victim of Passage Canal funneled winds.

From the Maynard tower there is an unobstructed line of sight to the Hope tower. From the Hope tower there is a straight shot to western Anchorage. So these towers are likely remnants of a communications system between Whittier and Anchorage. Were the towers used by the military during WWII? Was it set up by the Alaska DOT, State Police or Alaska Railroad? It would be interesting to know the history of these towers.

I climbed up and looked into the Maynard housing. Inside was an array of batteries and canisters of unknown contents. Because this structure fills with snow and then melts out in the summer, there is a chance that hazardous materials leach from this site. There is only rock and snow around the site, so not much can get contaminated. But still this site should one day be cleaned up and the hazardous waste properly disposed of. Should anyone know of a National Guard, Army, Air Force, State Police or State of Alaska helicopter crew that is operating in the area and has time to perform a public cleanup service - there are good landing sites right next to this old tower.

Or maybe the Girdwood heli-skiing operator could stop by here and clean up the batteries while they are out picking up the landing site refuse they have strewn on many of the local peaks in this area. Okay, so maybe this is a far-fetched fantasy thinking that heli-skiing operations would actually clean up after themselves. Hopefully someday this Maynard Mountain battery dump will be cleaned up.

The Dome and Kanchee

by Stu Grenier



When I first envisioned this trip I wanted to include those people that you often meet at the meetings that are new to the mountains, but want to get out a bit. What I got was ten of

the regular MCA folks, two women in sneakers, and two dogs. Going in from Basher we dropped down to the North Fork of Campbell Creek and

then up to where the trail runs into the overgrown trail that comes all the way up from the Bull Dog Trail. The Bull Dog Trail is the military name for the road used by the Mayors Marathon and the Iditarod.

Anyway, I had this idea that if some folks were too spent by the time we reached the top of the Dome I could find an assistant leader to make sure they made it out. Fortunately we had perfect weather and everyone was game for the higher points of interest. Being September 8th the fall colors were just coming out. We followed the old motorcycle trail along the ridge heading for Konoya (D'niana for beaver). Of course with so many experienced folks the original plan of the Dome and Kanchee now had Konoya added on. After all, anyone can see Kanchee (D'niana for porcupine) is connected to Konoya by a ridge. Kanchee, because it isn't 500 feet higher than everything around it, is technically only a point, not a peak, though it appears to be a prominent peak from Muldoon.

As we headed up the ridge to Konoya the clouds moved in from the south and made Konoya with its termination dust look a little more formidable than what I would like to do with the folks in sneakers. Side hilling in termination dust without an ice ax and good boots can be a bit more exciting than what I wanted to do with these folks. So four of us, Scott Bailey, Julia Pechersky, Melina Pastos, and I decided to stick with the original plan and do Kanchee. I had this idea that the faster moving folks would have no problem taking care of business on Konoya and we could all meet up on Kanchee at about the same time.

Going up Kanchee the four of us stayed on the south facing slope and avoided almost all of the termination dust. Julia, an accomplished food gatherer from Russia had zigzagged up the slope collecting a bunch of mushrooms. She explained that these higher altitude mushrooms don't have the bug problems that the ones down below do.

Approaching the summit the clouds cleared a bit. We could see two people traversing across from Konoya's ridge through the deeper termination dust. From where we were it looked rather steep. Soon the clouds closed up again and we were sitting on the summit of Kanchee with occasional glimpses of the Snowhawk Valley.

I was glad it was cloudy because it meant we didn't have to worry about getting harassed by military helicopters. If one happens to spot you out on the Army Reservation it is not uncom-



mon for them to come down and give you a helicopter hairdo. While the four of us sat and waited on the summit Scott and I talked about the others up on Konoya. We tried to guess who those two fast folks we spotted were. After what seemed to be a long time to my surprise I saw my brother Tom Grenier and Jim Sprott pop out from behind a rock. Jim said there was no obvious summit up on the ridge so they just came down to Kanchee.

After about half an hour Amy Murphy showed up and said she just followed Jim and Tom's tracks. Then nobody showed up for a long time and people had to start moving again. I wasn't too worried about the others because I knew Tom Choate would keep them together and probably would get everyone on the true summit of Konoya. Just as we dropped down off the summit on our way down we spotted the last five people coming up the ridge. As expected they all had summited Konoya. They were Tom and Charlu Choate, Pam Bell, John Multas, and Ann Binnian. Unfortunately the people who had been waiting for them at the summit were not in the mood to climb back up for a summit picture so one group Kanchee summit shot wasn't taken.

On the way down people had different ideas about how to go down and since we were below the clouds and could see everything we went every which way to avoid rock fall. Nine of us ended up picking berries on the ridge between Konoya and the Dome while three people went straight for the top of the Dome. Tom and Charlu checked out of the trip and took a little known trail that saved them from having to do the ups and downs of the ridge and Dome. This trail dropped down toward Campbell Creek and then ran into the main trail. The rest of us went back the way we came and gathered everybody up. It was a good trip on a perfect day.

ADZE

Wilderness First Responder Class
Tuesday night, 13 Nov, from 6 to 10pm, then the following weekend, 17-18 Nov, from 8am to 5pm. The cost is \$127. This course will teach you how to take care of an injured person in the wilderness, where an ambulance may not be available. An excellent class for trip leaders.
Deb Ajango 332-4800



WEB CHAT



news.independent.co.uk:

Viagra is renowned as the drug that makes men feel they can scale mountains. Now doctors have discovered it may literally help them to do so.

Scientists at Hammersmith Hospital in London have found that the cure for impotency may also boost the oxygen- absorbing capacity of the lungs in climbers, preventing mountain sickness. Working with colleagues from the National Centre of Cardiology in Bishkek, Kurdistan, where many people live at high altitude, they observed that the same enzyme that caused men to droop by constricting blood vessels in the penis also produced breathlessness at high altitude by constricting the arteries in the lungs.

A dose of Viagra, which inhibits the enzyme, called phosphodiesterase, meant climbers could breathe more easily on the mountain tops. The find may bring to climbing a new erotic charge – giving a different meaning to the “mile high club”. It might also make the pills a key part of the medical kit on Everest expeditions.

The British mountaineer Stephen Venables said: “Climbers have always boasted about the highest point at which they have scored. Some have claimed to have done it on the south col.”

Martin Wilkins, a professor of pharmacology at Hammersmith Hospital, said there was still a need for clinical trials into the safety of administering Viagra routinely.

Jeremy Laurance



Mountaineering Club of Alaska

Officers

President	Bill Romberg	677-3993
Vice-President	Tom Choate	333-5309
Secretary	Jayne Mack	258-7571
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Board

Kirk Towner	344-5424
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John Hess	348-7363
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Richard Baranow	694-1500

Annual membership dues: Single \$10.00 Family \$15.00 (one *Scree* per family)

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the treasurer at the MCA address below. If you want a membership card, please fill out a club waiver and mail it with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you fail to receive the newsletter, or have questions about your membership, contact the club treasurer. The post office does not forward the newsletter.

SCREE is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles and notes submitted for publication and other communication related to the newsletter should be mailed to my address: 1106 W. 54th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99518, or e-mailed to willy@mcaak.org Articles should be received by November 2nd to be included in the November issue.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be "camera ready" and pre-paid. Your cooperation will be appreciated... Willy Hersman, Editor, 561-7900.

Missing your MCA membership card? If so, stop by one of our monthly meetings to pick it up or send us a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

E-MAILING: willy_hersman

HIKING/CLIMBING CHAIRS: matt_nedom, 278-3648, richard_baranow, 694-1500

HUTS: mark_miraglia, 338-0705

WEB: www.mcaak.org (go here to change your address)

MAILING LIST SERVICE: mcaak@yahoo.com

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Box 102037

Anchorage, Alaska 99510