

# the SCREE

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

October 2015

Volume 58 Number 10



*"The purpose of life, after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experiences."*

- Eleanor Roosevelt

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Monthly meeting: 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 20th.

Program: Aaron Thrasher, who grew up climbing in the Chugach and Talkeetna Mountains, will present on a traverse of the Mint Peaks; a traverse of Diamond Peak, The Pinnacle, and Fairangel; and a climb of the West Ridge of Mount Yukla. This event is free and open to the public, so feel free to invite non-members.

# The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

[www.mtnclubak.org](http://www.mtnclubak.org)

**"To maintain, promote, and perpetuate the association of persons who are interested in promoting, sponsoring, improving, stimulating, and contributing to the exercise of skill and safety in the Art and Science of Mountaineering."**

Join us for our club meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 20, at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage, Alaska.

<http://www.alaskageology.org/graphics/meetingmap.gif>

For the MCA Membership Application and Liability Waiver, visit

<http://www.mtnclubak.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=members.form>.

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## Cover Photo

Matt Rafferty and Andy Moderow, descending to Gunn Creek near the Arctic Man race route.

Photo by Justin Wholey

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**Article Submission:** Text and photography submissions for *the Scree* can be sent as attachments to [mcascree@gmail.com](mailto:mcascree@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted by the 24th of each month to appear in the next issue of *the Scree*. Do not submit material in the body of the email. Do not submit photos embedded in the text file. Send the photo files separately. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. If you have a blog, website, video, or photo links, send us the link. Cover photo selections are based on portraits of human endeavor in the outdoors. Please submit at least one vertically oriented photo for consideration for the cover. Please submit captions with photos.

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## Hiking and Climbing Schedule

**December 5-6, 2015:** Ship Creek trail maintenance. The MCA maintains the five miles from the Arctic Valley Trailhead to the beaver pond. Bring older clothes, loppers, saw, etc. for trail work and overnight gear. Non-technical. Trip leaders: Greg Bragiel and Stu Grenier. Sign up at the October 20 MCA meeting.

**December 19:** Flattop Mountain Sleepout. No leader.

**February 20-28, 2016:** Seward to Hope backcountry ski tour (90 miles) or Bomber Traverse five huts ski tour/glacier travel (35 miles). We will go wherever the snow is. Sign up at the November 17, 2015, MCA meeting. Trip leader Greg Bragiel.

**April 3-10, 2016:** Eklutna Traverse ski mountaineering (31 miles). Glacier Travel. Trip leader Greg Bragiel. Participants must attend trip training March 26-27, 2016.

## Announcements

**Calendar:** It is that time of year again. The MCA Calendar is horizontal this year, so we need your best shots in 8-inch by 10-inch prints by the 6:30 p.m. start of the October MCA Meeting at the BP Energy Center. Make sure you have your name, email address, and phone number on the back of your prints. Have a plastic cover since they will be handled, if you are concerned about that. The photos need to be of Alaska or the Yukon and the categories are the usual climbing, people, scenery, and hiking-open. If you cannot make the October meeting, email Stu Grenier at [stugrenier@gmail.com](mailto:stugrenier@gmail.com) and we can work something out.

Online? Click me!



**Check the Meetup site and Facebook for last minute trips and activities. Or, schedule one that you want to organize.**

## Geographic Names

The August 31 issue of the *Alaska Dispatch News* reported that on August 28 Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell signed Secretarial Order No. 3337 to officially change the name of Mount McKinley to Denali. This secretarial order bypasses the U.S. Congress, which had not acted on legislation to change the name since 1975.

The Alaska Historical Commission has requested that the MCA comment on a proposal to change the name of Thachkatnu Creek to Łach Q'atnu Creek. The stream flows southward to Eklutna Lake in the Municipality of Anchorage and was formerly known as Twin Peaks Creek. East Twin Peak, West Twin Peak, and Pepper Peak are on the boundaries of the stream's drainage basin. Comments can be emailed to Steve Gruhn at [geographicnames@mtnclubak.org](mailto:geographicnames@mtnclubak.org) by October 24.

The Alaska Historical Commission has requested that the MCA comment on a proposal to name Peak 6608 in the Paradise Creek drainage of the Chugach Mountains as Mount Carl Brady. The mountain is north of the Glacier Fork of the Knik River and east of Metal Creek. Comments can be emailed to Steve Gruhn at [geographicnames@mtnclubak.org](mailto:geographicnames@mtnclubak.org) by October 24.

At the September 10 meeting of the Domestic Names Committee of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names, the BGN approved changing the name of the Chandalar River and the North Fork of the Chandalar River to the Teedriinjik River, approved changing the name of the Middle Fork of the Chandalar River to the Ch'idriinjik River, approved the name of Helen Gwin Peak for a 3650-foot point on the north ridge of Helen Rhode Mountain (3947) in the Cooper Creek and Russian River drainages of the Kenai Mountains, and approved the name of Old Buzzard Ridge for the west-northwest ridge of Helen Gwin Peak.

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## Hut Renovations

A big thanks to Insulfoam and Rain Proof Roofing for donations that helped make possible renovations of Pichler's Perch this summer!



## Nuggets in the Scree

The September 3 issue of the *Alaska Dispatch News* included a report that the U.S. Geological Survey announced that the summit of Denali had been resurveyed this year and the new summit elevation was reported to be 20310 feet. The 2015 survey used global positioning system data and superseded both the 2013 survey (which reported a summit elevation of 20237 feet) that used aerial radar measurements and the 1953 survey (which reported a summit elevation of 20320 feet) that used the technology of that era.

## Eklutna Canyon: Tragedy and the Exposure of Heroes

by Wayne L. Todd

Tragically, on August 18 another person fell to his death in Eklutna Canyon. Unfortunately, this treacherous precipice, with easy access, convenient parking and flirtation with exposure, appeals to the passerby. No one survives the 400-foot fall.

The Alaska State Troopers again relied upon the services of the Alaska Mountain Rescue Group (AMRG) for the recovery of this body. These members, who thrive on the successful location and retrieval of live persons, also step forward for unpleasant missions such as this. These **volunteer** members leave their jobs, families, and recreation and put aside their own misfortunes to provide expertise where few other agencies, paid or volunteer, have the capability to fill, in this high-risk endeavor.

The members who are on point and have to directly handle this gruesome task are true heroes. They do so with little recognition from the news media (half a sentence in the *Alaska Dispatch News*).

For this mission, those four AMRG members were Allyson

Youngblood, Jeremy Lilly, Kris Klein, and Matt Green. If you know these people, or perhaps meet them, a serious acknowledgement or thank you goes a long way in coping with such trauma and recognition of sacrifice.

Other AMRG members who were part of this successful team were Bill Laxson, Brett Woelber, Brian Aho, Brian Gehring, Carrie Wang, Dean Knapp, Eric Dale, Justin Ramsey, Larry Oliver, Ryan Cross, Stephanie Rice, and Tarri Fairbanks.

Chugiak Fire and Rescue, also a volunteer organization, was on hand for this mission.

The AMRG recovered another person there from accidental death just four months ago.

For more information about the AMRG, visit <http://amrg.org/>. If you wish to support this non-profit organization, you may do so through the Pick, Click, Give program.

After this tragedy, there was finally some talk of installing a safety fence, installing signs, or making the parking less convenient.

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### ***MCA Ice Fest:***

A special thank you goes out to Jayme Mack (Organizer), Glacier Park, and all the volunteers and instructors for making Ice Fest (prior and future) such a success. There was a great turnout this year.

Happy birthday, Tom Choate!



*Cory Hinds (right) giving Tom Choate a birthday hug.*

*Photo by Dawn Talbott*

## Serenity from Sea to Summit: A Trip Report on “Jatt Peak” (Peak 3452)

Text by Jayme Feyhl-Buska

With Matt Lemke



*Route overview of Jatt Peak from our kayak on Blackstone Bay.*

*Photo by Matt Lemke*

Matt Lemke and I were fortunate to be driving through the Whittier tunnel on the afternoon of June 18th, comfortable within the confines of Lynne Gallant’s blue Subaru and unencumbered by the plethora of sea kayaking, backpacking, and mountaineering gear that we had been hauling around for the better part of the summer. After leaving Montana in early June, we had made our way up to Mount Olympus in Washington, temporarily got stuck in the bustle of Los Angeles, and then found some peace and quiet while backpacking in Chugach State Park. With numerous planned trips remaining on our itinerary, we were more than happy to have the help of Lynne and her husband, Chris Kennedy, in not only reaching our destinations, but also in finding them initially. It was on Chris’ recommendation that we began to look into the possibility of a sea-to-summit trip in Blackstone Bay.

Our first challenge arose when trying to fit Matt Lemke’s 6-foot, 9-inch frame into a sea kayak. While I had numerous years of sea-kayaking experience under my belt, Matt had yet to even sit in a sea kayak, and neither of us were sure that one even existed that would allow him to do so. A few calls around Whittier later, we determined that an extra-long double-kayak would do the job, assuming that Matt took the front. Thus, for the remainder of our trip, I grumpily used the rudder pedals to steer us around boats and past icebergs, while Matt happily took pictures and enjoyed the views.

Scree—October 2015

In addition to renting our kayak from Alaska Sea Kayakers, we chartered a water taxi to take us and our gear to the middle of Blackstone Bay. Arriving in the bay on the morning of June 19th, we set up camp on Willard Island before spending an enjoyable day exploring in and around the glaciers of Blackstone Bay. Huge waterfalls cascaded down from high ice faces, while nearby we eyed small icebergs that floated precariously about on the surface of the water. Farther off in the bay, a plucky juvenile humpback whale chased a plethora of fish, causing a veritable storm of sea birds to descend on the nearby islands and icebergs. As the sun hung low on the horizon, we floated out toward the middle of the bay and plotted a route up an enticing nameless peak, deciding that it offered the best combination of accessibility and excitement.

The next morning, we arose early and paddled to Twenty-Mile Beach. There, we hauled the kayak far upshore and stashed it out of the reach of the sea. We were happy to see that while the day before had been cloudy and calm – perfect kayaking weather – today was sunny with only a few clouds. Our timing was perfect. The toe of the Lawrence Glacier had receded in the last few years, allowing us to peer into a few ice caves, some spanning the size of a large home and sparkling a brilliant blue in the morning light. We skirted left around the glacier, and made our way up a series of boulders and slabs to a small waterfall trickling down the side of a thickly brush-covered

hillside. Heading directly up this waterfall, we spent easily a couple of hours ducking under and around branches and thorns before reaching a faster-flowing and easier-to-follow waterfall. This path led us to the crux of the route, where wet moss-covered rocks at the top of the waterfall made for a slippery third-class scramble out of a gully onto a flat bench.

From the bench, we were treated to sweeping views of the entire Blackstone Bay. To the south, we could see the massive glaciers that we had kayaked by the day before, stretching unbelievably far into the horizon. To the north, seemingly tiny tour boats packed with people sped their way up the bay, eager to catch sight of the “elusive Alaskan glacier.” Ahead on our route, we could see what appeared to be an endless ridge, which we utilized to straddle the boundary between two glaciers, thereby avoiding crevasses and other dangers. The route from there on up proved to be an easy walk on snow, eventually reaching the base of a craggy false summit – the “peak” that was visible from the bay. In order to skirt this summit, we cut quickly left onto the upper Ripon Glacier and then began yet another ascent up a nearby snowfield just left of the crag. Ahead, the rocky summit ridge was guarded by a huge bergschrund, which we avoided by traversing a steep snow slope directly above a huge crevasse. Luckily, this section of our summit bid was short, for a fall on this slope would have likely proved fatal. Reaching the summit ridge, we scrambled in and out of a large moat and past some rocky pinnacles before reaching the top of our unnamed peak.

Earlier on our hike, we had been joking about what we should call this unnamed peak, going through a litany of oddities such as “Mount Doom,” “Not-A-Mountain Mountain,” and “Pointy Thing Peak.” Deciding that none of these fit the bill, we instead jokingly began to call the mountain “Jatt Peak” – a rather boring amalgamation of our “couple name.” This worked well enough to be functional, and so upon summiting “Jatt Peak,” we hurriedly took

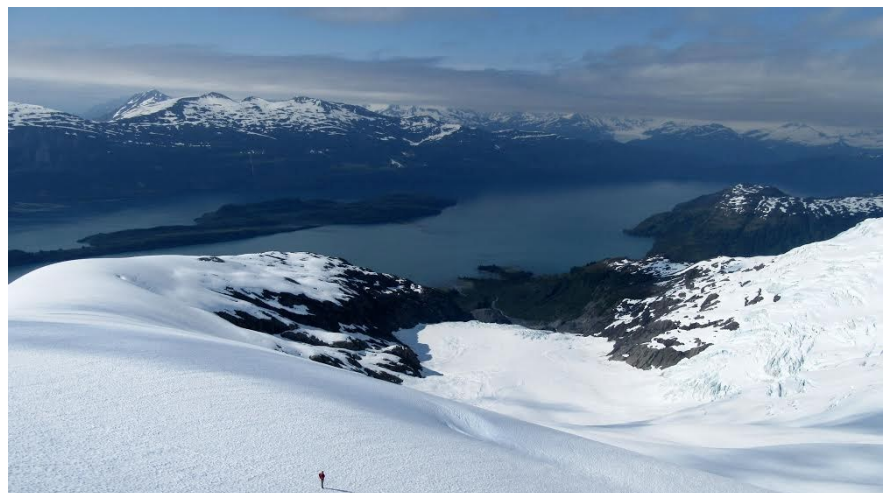
a few pictures and explored the summit ridge before being chased off by a very fast-moving storm. While this did not give us much time to enjoy our accomplishment, we did manage to revel in the grandeur of the massive Tebenkof Glacier, nearly ice-sheet-like in its scope and completely ringed by majestic mountains. Off to the west, we looked back into Blackstone Bay, the water shimmering a blinding gold in the afternoon sun, and the nearby storm lending a dramatic shading to the surrounding mountains.

Getting Matt to descend the snowfields below Jatt Peak proved challenging, as the siren call of the other nearby mountains grew stronger in the gorgeous late-afternoon light; but a nagging concern about where we chose to beach our kayak helped ease the descent. Luckily, we had selected a beach site well,

and returned from a gorgeous day exploring the white-capped peaks above Blackstone Bay just in time to disturb some fellow sea kayakers, who were surprised to see that anyone would ever attempt to actually go up the mountains surrounding the bay. Thus, through a combination of sea kayaking and mountaineering, plus the good fortune of a sunny and gorgeous day, we ascended the slopes of a mountain where few – if any – people had gone before. And both in the journey and upon its summit, we found a peace and beauty that few will ever truly know.



*Matt Lemke takes a break to admire the view of Blackstone Bay.  
Photo by Jayme Feyhl-Buska*



*View down the long snow ridge with Jayme Feyhl-Buska visible for scale.  
Photo by Matt Lemke*

# Lack of Cornices Allows First Mount Silverthrone to Mount Brooks Traverse

Text and photos by Ryan Wichelns unless otherwise noted

With Gabe Messercola



*Aerial View of Route*

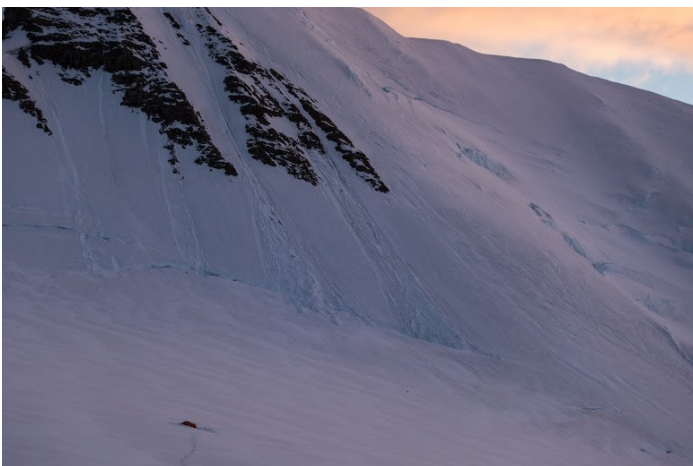
*Photo by Patrick J. Endres/[www.alaskaphotographics.com](http://www.alaskaphotographics.com). Used with permission.*

Our excitement toward getting an early morning start, roping up, navigating crevasses up the Brooks Glacier, and finally finishing our miserable approach was cut short as soon as we started dropping into and wading through thigh-deep slush.

My climbing partner Gabe Messercola and I, with the help of two close friends, Greg Zegas and Geoff Lyman, had left the Denali Park Road on the morning of June 27, bound for the Muldrow and Brooks Glaciers via Glacier Creek. The eventual eight-day approach required three campsites and multiple trips, but by July 4 we had established our base camp on the moraine at the confluence of the Brooks and Muldrow Glaciers. A

window of good weather sent us up to advanced base camp the next day, at 6600 feet below Mount Deception where we left Greg and Geoff, and then climbing toward Silverthrone Col on July 6.

We did the next two days of climbing early in the mornings to be in camp by noon or 1 p.m., just as the soupy, wet snow was turning even soggy, giving us some time to dry out while the sun was at full strength. Camp 1 sat below the east face of Central Pyramid Peak at 8840 feet, a stepping stone to Camp 2



*Camp 2 in Silverthrone Col.*



*Crux of Central Pyramid Peak.*



*East Pyramid Peak and crux from saddle.*

at Silverthrone Col. By the time we made camp, we had gotten an early look at our presumed crux, between Central and East Pyramid Peaks. The issue with that section, which had stopped at least a few teams previously, was the potential for heavy cornicing. But from below, our hopes remained high.

The following day, July 8, we were able to climb from the col to the summit of Mount Silverthrone following the depression west of its North Ridge without any issues. The climb was fantastic and the summit clouds we watched on the way up cleared off right before we joined the ridge proper, treating us to a clear, emotional first Alaskan peak for both of us.

The next morning we drew a direct line, front-pointing up the east side of West Pyramid Peak's South Ridge, a steep 800-foot climb up thin, brittle ice over rock at around 60 degrees. From the top, the route from West to Central was an easy, wide ridge hike and we were on Central Pyramid by 10 a.m. but late morning clouds had obscured our crux and, uncomfortable with dropping into it in the blind, we opted to wait on the summit hoping for a clearing.

Around 3 p.m. it finally did. We could see little of how the ridge dropped from the summit into the col itself, but after spending a night nearly on Central's summit, we successfully down-climbed and rappelled over the intimidating exposure of the Traleika Glacier to our northwest. From there,

the line began with an easy walk to an ice bulge (60 to 70 degrees), between the ridge proper, right, and a jumble of ice, left. At the base of the bulge, we began to pitch out the steep snow climbing. I led around the bulge and up the steep ice on its left side, which was just enough fun to make me wish I had ice tools, but short and we were able to protect it, with a screw at the bottom and a picket marking the top of the knife-edge ridgeline above it.

From there, the climbing was steady pitches along the left side of the ridgeline which consisted of everything from soft powder to steep ice, protected with deep pickets (30 to 40 degrees). As the

rocks got closer on the right, we hopped to the other side to get to the ridge's pointed culmination and a flat area before the final climb, around a small bergschrund and to the summit of East Pyramid Peak, completing a line from the saddle that Geoff jokingly called "Crums along the Mohawk" when we returned, an homage to a local ice cream that we had been craving during the entire trip.

The descent to the East Pyramid/Brooks col was steep, and a long day of climbing forced us to stop there, once again in time for the afternoon melt. Analyzing the section we had just completed, it was definitely our crux – the only portion of the



*Camp 3 on Central Pyramid Peak.*



traverse that we pitched out. But there was next to no cornicing, the problem that we had feared, something we attributed to a record warm spring, the heat that we had been experiencing, and an overall lack of snow.

But the conditions that may have contributed to our success in completing the full traverse, may have also contributed to the difficulties we had during our descent from the top of Mount Brooks, the following day. After pinballing our way up to the summit and down the majority of the North Ridge in a whiteout, the route became slushy and even rocky in places, forcing us off route and into a basin on Brooks' north side where we made upwards of a dozen rappels well into the morning to reach the Muldrow. We were finally back at base camp around noon on July 12.

Gabe and I completed the first traverse from Mount Silverthron to Mount Brooks including the three Tripyramid Peaks, as well as the first ascent of the southwest ridge of East Pyramid Peak. *VI, AG 3+, 60- to 70-degree snow and ice.*



*Gabe Messercola climbing toward Mount Silverthron's summit.*



*Ryan Wichelns on Mount Silverthron's summit ridge.*

*Photo by Gabe Messercola*

# Bashful Peak

Text and photos by Nathan Hebda

With Mike Ottenweller



*Bashful Peak from camp.*

We drove off for Eklutna Lake Trailhead Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11:15. Mike Ottenweller and I had not hiked together since we first met nearly a year before on a Meetup hike up Cumulus Mountain. It was there that we first discussed climbing Bashful Peak, the tallest in Chugach State Park at 8005 feet.

Mike had attempted Bashful three times before and had come to a full understanding of the route-finding challenges, technical requirements, and sheer endurance the mountain demands. To me, Bashful also represented an advancement in ability. We spent the whole year in training and finalized our plans in the last weeks.

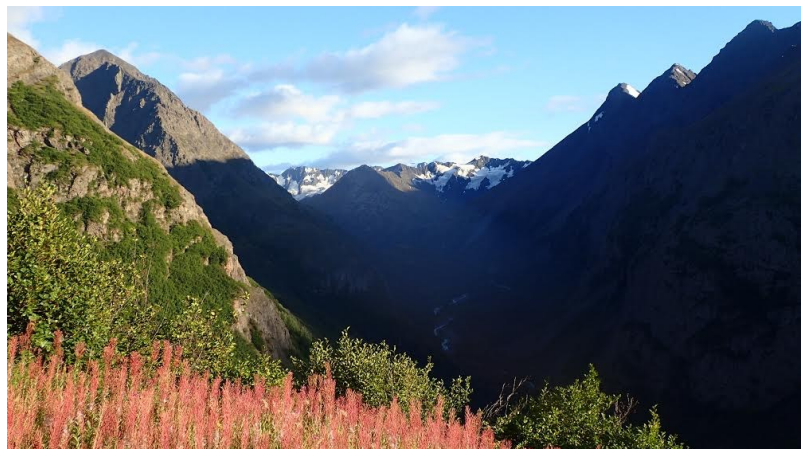
We were on our bikes by 12:30. Before long we were hiking up the East Fork of the Eklutna River and making our way into Stivers' Gully. We found the small trail leaving the western boundary of Stivers' nearly as soon as we broke through into it. Mike led as the trail continued uphill, switchbacking alongside Stivers' rim and then above the waterfalls that are farther up the East Fork Trail. Faint spurs and flagging tape took us through the alders and into an open meadow of fireweed where we set up camp.

That night we hit the bags early. By 7:00 the next morning we were on our way over the rim and into the glacial moraine. From its far edge we tended south to pierce a final arm of alders at its narrowest and

continued up a fan-shaped scree field. Exiting climber's right, it led to steep, grassy ledges that dumped us out on the west ridge just above 3000 feet. A bright sun halo led the way.

With eight liters between us, we each stashed a Nalgene at 4300 feet. Tundra then gave way to intermittent mixtures of scree, talus, and large boulders. Progress slowed a bit. Though the rope and harness we each carried made for heavier loads, we kept our breaks short and infrequent. Trekking poles were indispensable.

Still around 6600 feet we came upon what we thought was Chickenshit Gully proper. A body-width vertical depression composed of dark downward-sloping holds made up the side



*View up the East Fork of the Eklutna River Valley from camp.*

climber's right. I started up the left side of the feature, which was wider, shallower in angle and with ample possibilities visible from below. We planned for the leader to potentially clip into slings slip-knotted around rock features, but the route appeared gentle enough to forgo the extra time and complexity.



*Home Stretch*

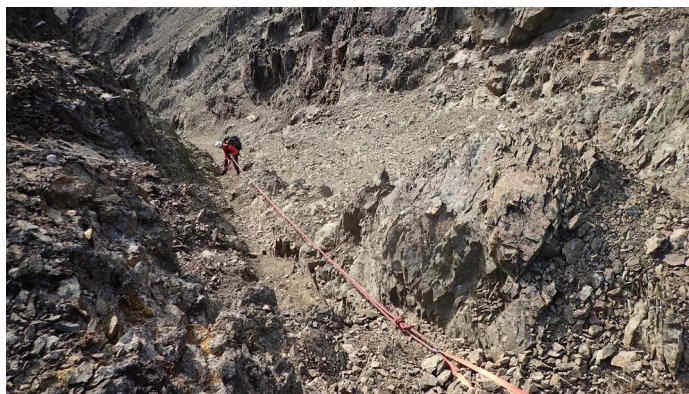
Only 30 feet up I found a blue sling secured around a solid feature. It was a comfortable spot to sit and point out loose holds to Mike. He followed me there and then 20 feet farther to another rest place. From there we both tended toward the right across a moderate scree field into the now-shallow gully. A short, though quite vertical, final section ended on the slopes above.

I was surprised to find not a rock horn, but a large boulder free of left-behind anchors. We later confirmed that this was an alternate option farther south on Bashful's west ridge. At the time, however, we weren't entirely clear on our position, so we continued to haul our technical gear up scree fields to regain the ridgeline climber's left.

By the time we reached a prominent high point on the ridge, clouds shrouded the remainder of our path. I was starting to have trouble and we were still just above 7,000 feet with time starting to run short. Finally the fog lifted and revealed the snowpacked and intimidating steep summit cone still a way up the ridge. We dropped our technical gear and made for it as quickly as we could.

The snow was hard and difficult to kick into. We picked our way up using rocks as holds where possible. The last few moves were exposed and not all that easy. I offered Mike dibs, but he asked me to go first. Now nearly 5:00, we were finally there.

Our view was 360 degrees, though not at once through the swimming clouds. Mount Marcus



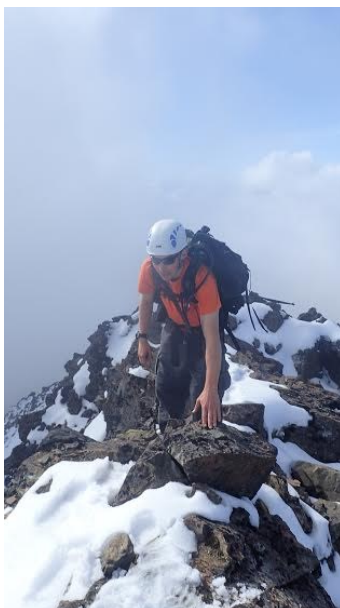
*Mike Ottenweller on rappel.*

down it, we spotted a second sling about 50 feet below. We opted to continue downslope to our original route.

It took all 40 feet of Mike's webbing to surround the large boulder and ensure the rappel ring hung over the edge of the short vertical section. Though this meant a little downclimbing, we wanted to make sure we would get our ropes back. Two not-quite 60-meter ropes tied together gave us each an ample rappel. The relatively low-angled slope made a good toss difficult and we lost time as Mike fought to untangle our mess. Pulling the ropes caused a barrage of falling boulders, though I found some adequate protection climber's left.

We raced down the mountain as quickly as we could. Two of Mike's previous attempts involved unplanned bivies and neither of us wanted that. It was after our 9:30 sunset by the time we reached where we first gained the ridge. Twilight ended as we reentered the moraine, but with Mike's previous experience and my new headlamp, we found our way through with little difficulty. At 11:30 we finally reached our campsite.

Exhausted, we forced ourselves to cook and eat. We made sure to say grace that night and thanked God with new appreciation for our food, shelter, safety, and success. The next morning started quite a bit later than the previous and we made our way out not without a few stumbles. We looked back on the mountain from where we stashed our bikes with only the deepest respect.



*Mike Ottenweller on the summit.*

## Cantata Peak (6391 feet)

Text and photos by Matt Nedom

With Mark Malagodi, Mark Smith, and Nathan Hebda

Sunday, June 28, 2015



*Nathan Hebda, (left), Mark Smith (center), and Mark Malagodi (right), at the start.*

*Cantata Peak, our goal, is above Mark Smith's head.*

All these mountains standing tall around us ask to be explored, to be climbed. For years I have flown over the Chugach Mountains, marveling at the landscape below me, wishing I could be there, be a part of it.

The reality of how immensely huge this backcountry is strikes when I actually find the time to hike into the wilderness. To really get inside the country takes planning and time. To begin your explorations, strap on your boots and head out the door.

In years past, I've looked up the South Fork of the Eagle River Valley with wonder, a desire to spend time exploring on foot what I have seen from the airplane. Day hikes have brought me closer, exploring where I can go and how to get there. I've backpacked in, many years ago, to climb Eagle Peak, and twice I've been turned around by weather.

While it is easy to observe the mountain from the air, it is much more realistic to view it from the ground where you can see really how steep or how far away the ridge is.

One free Saturday in August 2014, I packed a lunch and some water, plus a raincoat, and headed out the door with my dog, hiking two hours up to Symphony Lake to explore the

backcountry where I hadn't been in years. I'm lucky I left early. I found the last parking spot in the lot. Other cars had already parked on the street, possibly from a Friday night rush. It turns out that the boy scouts had a backpacking/camping trip at Symphony Lake that weekend.

I found the trail to now be almost a superhighway, wide, well trodden, with quite a few other hikers. The number decreased dramatically the farther I hiked. Before the Hanging Valley Trail, I was passed by two younger men hiking quickly with light packs. They told me they were headed for an overnight trip to climb Cantata Peak. I wished that I could join them. I decided that I would make the time and climb it the next summer. I spoke with Steve Gruhn and read earlier *Scree* newsletters to learn more about the climb; it could be done in one day. The route is to follow the Class IV west ridge after climbing the slope above Symphony Lake.

I found some time at the end of June to make this trip. Too late for an entry in the *Scree*, I posted my trip on the MCA Yahoo Groups notification email, getting three responses. Mark Malagodi, Mark Smith, and Nathan Hebda each wanted to go and had the necessary experience and skills. I phoned each of



*Mark Smith, Matt Nedom, Nathan Hebda, and Mark Malagodi traversing the top of the cirque, before the ridge. Cantata Peak is in the background.*

them, discussing the plan. We met in the parking lot of the Carrs on East Northern Lights Boulevard after discovering that it was not open at 6:30 a.m. So much for a cup of coffee and muffin for the drive!

We arrived at the trail parking just after 7 a.m., again finding a surprising number of cars parked in the lot. Cantata Peak stood tall, far in the background. Checked boots and gear then started hiking up the trail.

Two hours later we were at Symphony Lake, picking a route across the lateral moraine, which led to the beginning of the climb.

We hiked up the steepening slope toward the ridge hiding the peak, wondering what we would encounter. Finally, after having to hike down some then back up again, we reached the ridgeline. Looking southeast to our right, we saw the ridge curve counter-clockwise and then hit a wall. It looked like the way to go, so off we hiked, side-hilling around the cirque, trying to maintain a constant elevation, avoiding having to climb up then back down again.

We were on the top rim of a gigantic bowl dropping sharply down to the path from Eagle Lake to Eagle Peak along the Flute Glacier drainage. The face of Cantata was steep. The ridge appeared to also be steep. Unfortunately, the sky was overcast and the light flat. On a sun-filled day the scenery would be gorgeous, making for some fantastic photographs.

Across the north we could see Hurdygurdy Mountain and Eagle Peak. Mark Smith and Nathan talked about previous trips climbing Hurdygurdy, accessed from Hanging Valley. Oh, that's how you get to it!

The south side dropped dramatically down to the drainage of Mirror Lake and a rock glacier. Across the valley we saw Triangle Peak and the two tarns, then Calliope Mountain to the southeast. Triangle looked to be a hikeable peak. Calliope appeared to be a fifth-class mountain. At the finish of the top of this cirque, we met the west ridge, a wall with no trail. Here we go! I think it was Nathan leading the charge, route finding, heading up the mountain.

We followed, continuing up, helping each other to choose routes. The ridge was very steep, fourth and even fifth class. I remember having to chimney up certain paths. Other parts were traverses using hands and feet. It wouldn't have been a bad fall, but if I did fall, I might have slipped and fell more! Some of the ridge was loose scree, which normally is just a nuisance. One might slide a little. There, I felt I did not want to slide at all. I felt if I slid a little, I might continue to where I might have a hard time arresting myself, with the possibility of the slide continuing off the north face cliff. The climb was steep. I was very happy the rock was dry.

Ropes might have made the climb comforting, but I rarely saw places I could use as an anchor. The ridge was rough cut with scree, dirt, rock, and Chugach crud. I continually had to remind



*Nathan Hebda with the ridge in full view.*

myself to push DOWN on the rock holds. I remember many loose rocks, some the size of a loaf of bread. Though I don't remember any dangerous rockfall, I'm happy we were wearing helmets.

The day was wearing on. We could not see our goal. The ridge was continuous rock, no end in sight. I took breathers where I could. I noticed Nathan and Mark Malagodi occasionally eating, nibbling on something. I wish I had brought nibble food. I was beginning to feel the need for energy.

In my daypack I was carrying my single lens reflex (SLR) camera with a large lens. Unfortunately, nothing really stood out as photo worthy. It was now just extra weight and awkward in my pack, swinging while climbing and requiring extra energy to maintain my balance. I was feeling the pain!

Maybe I was getting old!

I was very happy to be with these three guys climbing the mountain. I told the guys that after the climb I would treat them to pizza at some place in Eagle River. We agreed now that we would be back too late. Nothing would be open when we would get there, especially being Sunday.

Finally we approached a level spot. Mark Malagodi was already scooting around the backside of some rock. I couldn't really see him from my perch. I had to sit down and take a break. Mark Smith and I carefully took off our packs, anchoring them with a leg to prevent the wind, howling past us, from blowing them over the other side. They would have been forever lost over the cliff.



*Mirror Lake and rock glacier*



*A view of the knife-edge ridge. Note the drop-offs to the left and right sides of the ridge. Mirror Lake is visible with Calliope Mountain standing tall above it.*

Nathan and Mark Malagodi were making their way around this rock, Nathan trying a route down the steep scree gully, a couloir really, to get across this gap. Against the wind I called that it was 2 p.m., that we really were pressed for time now. I was dreading the down-climb and did not want to be tired, risking a fall. These two younger guys wanted to keep going, so I told them we'd give them 30 minutes. We'd then begin our down-climb, but would not leave without them. I had the car keys!

As they continued across, Mark Smith vainfully tried to tell the other two his route book showed the path to be to traverse through a keyhole, instead of continuing upward. They were too far gone, climbing up a face that looked

steeper than what we'd already experienced.

Mark Smith and I talked and enjoyed the scenery while braving the wind. The other two were now out of sight. After 30 minutes we decided that it would be best for us to start the descent. We both felt we had enough rest. I found the down-climb to actually be easier than I imagined, almost easier than the ascent. I had an idea of where I was going and what I needed to do to get there.

A short time later, over the wind I could hear Mark Malagodi and Nathan approaching us. It was a comforting sound. They told us that they had summited and signed the register. The previous names, the only names entered this year before that day, were from the end of last year. I'm guessing these were the guys I had met while hiking with my dog. It is a small world! (I didn't get the names of the two climbers.)

Nathan told us that they did down-climb a different way, down a scree field, exiting through the keyhole, which was an easier route. The couloir across the gap was more difficult than traversing the back side of the rock, though a slip from the rock would not be survivable.

As we continued the down-climb, my energy level was back. By that time I was kicking myself for not finishing the climb after I took a short break. We did have time. Even if the pizza joint was closed, it was summer, so the sun was still in the sky!

After leaving the ridge, the rest of the hike was actually easy, though our legs were feeling the climb. Again on the broad slope, we found a large snow patch where we could glissade. On that same snow patch we found a bear track, though no other sign of the bear. The only animal we saw was a Dall sheep, or perhaps mountain goat, on the face of the ridge below us. Now finally down to the lake, I could filter some water to refill our bottles. And the down-climbing for the most part would be finished, allowing some rest for our legs!

The almost-two-hour hike back to my car felt like a leisurely stroll, arriving at 9 p.m. I wanted to go back and explore and climb some more!



*Climbing up the trailless ridge. Note the drop-off to the right, in the foreground. The left-side drop-off is out of the frame.*



*Looking back, as our trail became steep.*

## Late for Arctic Man: Isabel Pass to the Chistochina River

Text and photos by Justin Wholey

I'm always looking for new packrafting and backpacking routes, and I'd been wondering about floating the Chistochina River for the last few years. This spring I came across the web page of Gabriel Gersch, where it appeared he guided a trip down the Chistochina River; I found some photos of his hiking through the area, but still didn't know much about the river. On July 1<sup>st</sup> the three of us (Matt Rafferty, Andy Moderow, and I) drove two vehicles to an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) trailhead near the bank of the Chistochina River on the Glenn Highway (Tok Cutoff). We left a vehicle there and headed to the Paxson Lake Campground for the night.

The following morning we drove to Isabel Pass on the Richardson Highway, turned east on to a pipeline access road, and followed it as it turned into a trail and parked. We spotted another ATV trail that traveled a ridge to the east, and we followed it as it took us in the general direction we were headed. The ATV trail ended and the Hoodoo Mountains came into view, with their greens, oranges, tans, and greys. As we followed the ridge, we came across a good number of stakes, beer cans (one full), energy drink cans, and even a snowmachine! Years of Arctic Man trash litter the area. This would be the case over the next several miles. Eventually we made it to the top of Arctic Man's start "The Tit," for sweeping views of the smoky Alaska Range.

The walking up to this point had been fantastic, and that continued to be the case as we approached the Gakona Glacier. One of the features I was most interested in was a canyon area that cut through layers of glacial till as it



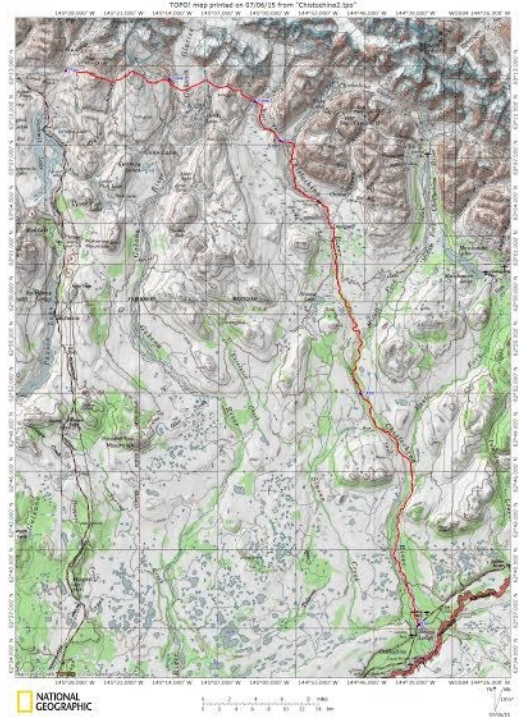
*A small canyon incises glacial till. This drainage flowed into a moulin on the flank of the Gakona Glacier.*

descended toward the glacier into a dramatic moulin. We found a campsite on a tundra bench just upstream of this feature, and we fell asleep to ice calving into the moulin in the distance.

The following day we descended to the glacier, while eying an efficient route. We made our way through a few lateral moraines, until we got to a short section of blue ice. The rest of the way was on gravel-covered ice with some route-finding. We were able to cross the glacier without traction aids. We climbed up a lateral moraine away from the glacier, crossed a creek, and crested a ridgeline in an attempt to avoid the brush and steeper moraines lower in the valley. Once on the ridgeline we could see our route down to another creek and up to a pass. We had time, so we napped. From the pass we stayed on a ridgeline to avoid the steep brushy canyon areas below. Eventually we descended toward the West Fork of the Chistochina River. We camped on a bench overlooking the valley.

The next morning we headed to the river near what looked like a small mining operation on the opposite bank. The water at that point was swift, single-channel Class 2+, with boulders just below the surface. We decided to walk the bank to get an idea of the character of the river. On the USGS quad there was a section where the river looked like it went through a small canyon. As we approached that feature it was apparent that there was a section of cliffs, but no whitewater.

As we blew up our packrafts, a lone packrafter made his way downstream and met up with us. It turned out he (Chris Baisley) came across Gabriel Gersch's website, as well, and followed a similar route to ours. We traveled the rest of the





trip together. From our put-in, the river stayed braided Class 1 for several miles. Then we entered channelized Class 2 sections peppered with boulders. We found a nice camp on a vegetated gravel bar while in the channelized section.

The next day the river went back and forth from one to two channels, until it became braided spread in all directions. We only had to get out of our boats once, where the main channel took off into a narrow blind section lined with trees. We chose to walk a slough to a side channel, and made our way back to the main channel before the Chistochina River Bridge takeout.

This was a comfortable four-day trip, with eight hours of travel each of the first two days, nine hours the third, and five hours the fourth. The river really moved quickly. Total hiking distance was about 23 miles with 2,300 feet of elevation gain, and 44.5 miles of floating. Best of all, there was neither brush nor rain! It was quite a pleasant trip.



*Andy Moderow and Matt Rafferty beginning the packrafting portion of the trip on the West Fork of the Chistochina River.*

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## The Alaska Factor

Text by Annie Osburn

After four days of bad weather kept the team grounded in McCarthy, giving them time for what Ed McCord described as a “cultural tour of Alaska,” a break in the clouds gave Scott Hamilton Peters, Kristin Arnold, Ben Iwrey, and McCord a chance to fly out to the Nabesna Glacier northwest of Mount Blackburn with Paul Claus of Ultima Thule Outfitters on June 7th. They landed at an elevation of 7800 feet and quickly set off for an advance camp at 9000 feet.

Their first objective was Peak 11191, a glaciated mountain only ascended once before. The group nicknamed it the Fin for its resemblance to an ice shark rising up from the Nabesna. [Ed. note: *This peak is known as Turton Peak on bivouac.com.*] The next morning, Peters and Arnold led McCord and Iwrey up through ice towers toward the summit, but rapidly deteriorating weather kept them from reaching it. Visibility dropped precipitously and wind covered up their tracks behind them. Peters and Iwrey were forced to turn back about 100 feet below the summit, and met up with Arnold and McCord, who had dug a snow shelter about 300 feet below the front team. Together they fought the storm back down to camp.

The storm kept them confined to their tents through the next day, but slowed enough by the morning of the 10th to allow a second attempt on the summit. They traversed up on snowshoes for the first 1,500 feet until the summit cone became visible. The weather began to threaten again as they switched to crampons and snow climbed up several pitches of a small icefall to the rime snow of the cone. Finally, one more full rope length of technical ice climbing took them up the edge of

the Fin, with several thousand feet of exposure on either side. Near the summit, Iwrey punched his ice axe through the cornice, his scariest moment of the trip. But they safely reached the summit, taking in what McCord described as “ultimate vastness, ultimate solitude.”

Conditions continued to worsen on the descent. Eventually, they made it back to the advance camp in a total whiteout. They celebrated with a dinner of breakfast burritos, and woke the next morning to – of course – a bright, sunny day, perfect for descending to base camp.

Not willing to settle for a second ascent only, they attacked their second objective, Point 8615, on their last day on the Nabesna. This time, their good weather held out the entire day. In a more typical Alaskan fashion, however, they climbed only on two energy bars and a liter of water apiece. The climb began with three full rope lengths of a moderate ice slope before pitching up to 50-degree snow climbing for another three pitches. The team reached a knife-edge rock ridge, full of loose Wrangell rock. They took off their crampons and Peters secured a safe route upward by pushing loose boulders that tumbled off the ridge and exploded on impact a thousand feet below. Toward the end of the ridge, it pitched up again, giving the team two more rope lengths of steep snow climbing to gain the summit. The blue skies gave them tremendous views of Mount Blackburn, Mount Sanford, Mount Jarvis, and Mount Wrangell. They flew out the next day, grateful for the few breaks in weather that allowed them such a truly great experience.

## First Ascent of “Chappie” on La Esfinge (Peru)

Text by Roger Scháli

Photos by Frank Kretschmann [www.funst.de](http://www.funst.de)



*Roger Scháli (right) and Simon Gietl approach La Esfinge.*

The two alpinists Roger Scháli (Switzerland) and Simon Gietl (Italy) achieved a new first ascent on the granite monolith La Esfinge (5325 meters). The mountain is located in Paron (Cordillera Blanca), Peru. Alongside the first ascent the team also climbed the two routes “Cruz del Sur” (7b, 900 meters) and the classic “1985” (6c, onsight).

Their new route “Chappie” is situated on the 600-meter-high southeast face, and took them five days to reach the summit. Roger and Simon: “It’s an amazing gift to be able to leave our mark on this mountain with this beautiful route.”

Protection: Eight-millimeter bolts were used on all belays;

pitons and Friends were also used for the first ascent.

Rock: Solid, compact, steep granite; estimated time-span for repeaters: one to two days;

Gear: Two sets of Camelots (up to size 2) and one set of wedges

Directions: Six-hour drive from Huaraz to Lago Paron; additional four hours for the steep approach to the base of the southeast face.

Team: Roger Scháli, Simon Gietl, Friedrich Maderer, Frank Kretschmann

Dates: June and July 2015



*From left to right, Roger Scháli, Friedrich Maderer, Simon Gietl, and Frank Kretschmann at the foot of the La Esfinge wall.*

## Bushwhacking Makes One Highly Appreciative of Trails

Text and photo by Frank E. Baker



*Typical Alaskan mountainside in summer. Without a trail, which in this area is the Pioneer Ridge Trail, bushwhacking to the ridge would be a grueling, day-long ordeal.*

In my mind there is nothing more grueling than climbing uphill through an obstacle course of dense brush that would protect a king's castle better than high walls or a moat. I refer here to Alaska's thick alder bushes, bent downward from the weight of winter snows; clumps of prickly devil's club; patches of stinging cow parsnip; thorny wild rose bushes; and tangles of high grass.

In regard to challenging this fortress of nature, the first question that would occur to any sane person would be, "Why?" Why even try to go through it?

Sweat stinging my eyes, aphids and other insects that I've scraped off bushes now clinging to wet skin inside my shirt; left ear smarting from a branch that defiantly snapped back at me; pack straps digging painfully into my neck – I've often asked myself the same question.

I guess it boils down to this simple answer: The desire to go where others have not. Or in some cases, to get to the base of a mountain I'd like to climb.

I know, bushwhacking sounds rather lame. In my own defense, I bushwhack much less today than I did in my wilder, youthful days. But there are still occasions in which I find it necessary to tough it out, or "John Wayne" it, as I used to say, and go boldly where not many people, or beasts, have gone before. But I should say at the outset: I will invariably walk an extra mile to

avoid brush.

Anywhere you go in southcentral Alaska, particularly near sea level, you'll find that our mountains – the Chugach Mountains, for example – are flanked by nearly impenetrable barriers of brush that seem to go on forever – often more than a mile and nearly 2,000 feet in elevation.

Because I enjoy getting from Point A (brush purgatory) to Point B (alpine nirvana), I have developed an internal brush avoidance system, or BAS. Before setting out on summer and autumn hikes, I like to try to view the slope from a distance, identifying the locations of breaks in the brush thickets. And those breaks are generally there. Areas from winter avalanches are often clear of brush. I follow high timber whenever possible because there is usually no brush beneath the trees.

During this first 2,000 feet I try to remain on ridges rather than down in draws or gullies. Those areas of water runoff are where our arch-enemies – devil's club and cow parsnip – lurk. (I have learned over time, however, that you can move directly through a very thick patch of devil's club without being stuck if you proceed slowly. I don't recommend it, however. I do not advise short-sleeve shirts and shorts while bushwhacking. It's helpful to pull oneself upward by grabbing alder branches, but gloves are advised.)

Bushwhacking difficulty varies significantly – depending upon the time of year. Autumn is optimal – after leaves have dropped off bushes and trees, but before the first significant snowfall. Another good time is spring, after snow has melted and before everything greens up.

I look at a hillside and ask myself, what route would moose, bear, or other critters take? Sometimes game trails are good ways to score some distance and elevation. These trails always seem to peter out, however, which widens the search for the next trail. Also, when I break through a bad stretch of brush and reach a clearing, I look right and left to see if a traverse will lead to another relatively brush-free area headed upward. To spot the best route, my BAS must work overtime on the ascent. Descents are much easier. From above, one can detect clearings that are rarely visible from below.

My BAS won't prevent me from getting lost, so I only bushwhack from one highly visible feature to another: lake to mountain ridge and back; road or established trail to ridge and back, etc. I carry a compass, but not a GPS, so I avoid going high if the clouds roll in and obscure visibility. That has happened on occasion and I've built rock cairns to mark my descent point. But overall, in my Point A to Point B bushwhacking, identifiable features have been so prominent (lake, river, road) that I can't get lost.

An important rule in bushwhacking is making a lot noise to alert bears and moose. If someone heard me thrashing uphill through mazes of undergrowth – shouting out an endless litany of meaningless phrases, sometimes expletive deleted – they would certainly declare there is someone on the loose more dangerous than a bear. I have never encountered one of Alaska's large creatures while bushwhacking, and I attribute it

to a strong set of lungs.

And finally, to further answer the big "Why?" When you finally emerge from what from is no less than a "living hell," you're greeted with a breeze that drives away pestiferous bugs; the view opens up and for the first time in hours, you can actually see where you're going. Hiking over the alpine tundra and up higher, on the rocky slopes, seems effortless. Once on the ridges and unimpeded by brush, you can hike blissfully for miles.

Don't get me wrong. I like trails and will almost always begin a hike from one of them. Compared to many locations in the Lower 48, however, Alaska doesn't have that many established trails, and some of those are only social trails that won't remain sustainable (drainage, erosion, etc.) for the long haul. I wish there were more funds budgeted within State Parks for trails, but all budgets are under siege during this period of low oil prices (except for downtown legislative offices). But it seems that even back in the days when Alaska was flush with petrodollars, trails weren't much of a priority.

I used to proclaim, "The best trails are those we make ourselves." That's not necessarily true. There are many trails in southcentral Alaska and on the Kenai Peninsula that are premier experiences. But sometimes a short, well thought-out bushwhack can offer a bit of spice and surprise to an outing.

And for the benefit of others who might be bushwhacking in the same general area as me, I promise to make a supreme effort and curb my "expletive deletes."

*Frank E. Baker is a freelance writer and MCA member who lives in Eagle River.*



*The Matanuska Glacier from Lion Head.*

*Photo by Frank Baker*

# Peak of the Month: Mount Sergeant Robinson

By Steve Gruhn

**Mountain Range:** Chugach Mountains

**Borough:** Matanuska-Susitna Borough

**Drainages:** Assassination Glacier and Glacier Creek

**Latitude/Longitude:** 61° 34' 34" North, 147° 51' 6" West

**Elevation:** 10620 (± 20) feet

**Prominence:** 1,600 feet from either Peak 10910 in the Marcus Baker Glacier drainage or Icing Peak (10955).

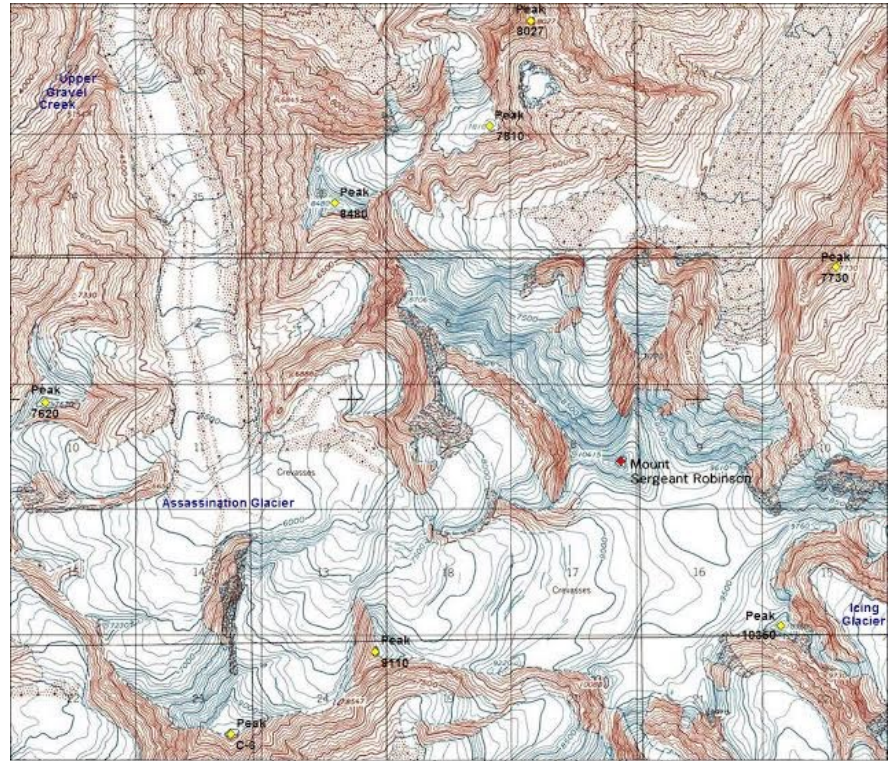
**Adjacent Peaks:** Peak 10350 in the Icing Glacier and Marcus Baker Glacier drainages and Peak 8480 in the Assassination Glacier drainage

**Distinctness:** 1,150 feet from Peak 10350

**USGS Maps:** USGS Maps: Anchorage (C-3) (1:63,360) and Anchorage C-3 SE (1:25,000)

**First Recorded Ascent:** August 8, 1969, by Georg Gruber, G. Mündl, and W. Münster

**Route of First Recorded Ascent:** Southeast ridge via the Assassination Glacier



**Access Point:** Matanuska River Bridge at the Matanuska Glacier

Mount Sergeant Robinson is the 28th highest peak in the Chugach Mountains, excluding that portion of the range east of the Copper River. It is the 242nd highest peak in Alaska.

In 1965 Senator Edward Lewis “Bob” Bartlett named Mount Sergeant Robinson in honor of George Foster Robinson, the 32-year-old Union soldier who, a century earlier, had thwarted an assassination attempt on Secretary of State William Henry Seward on April 14, 1865, the same evening that President Abraham Lincoln was shot. For his valorous service, Robinson was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, one of only two Civil War veterans to be recognized for their service to the Union Army (the other being Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant). Seward survived and two years later brokered the purchase of Alaska from Russia. However, the peak’s name contains an inaccuracy. George Foster Robinson was a private, not a sergeant, with Company B of the 8th Maine Volunteer Infantry at the time of the assassination attempt. Although Robinson was later commissioned as a major and was promoted to lieutenant colonel after his retirement, he never

was a sergeant. The confusion was likely the result of having a name similar to another George F. Robinson who served with the Union in the Civil War – First Sergeant George Foreman Robinson, of Company E of the 80th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, who later became the Mayor of Ravenna, Ohio.

From March 29 to April 5, 1968, Ned Lewis, Chuck McLaughlin, Bob Spurr, and Norm Stadem attempted to climb Mount Sergeant Robinson via Gravel Creek. They turned back at 3600 feet on the second icefall on the glacier at the head of Gravel Creek, which they named the Assassination Glacier.

A five member party from the Bavarian Section of the Deutscher Alpenverein (*German Alpine Club*) arrived in Alaska in the summer of 1969 for an expedition to the Franklin Mountains of the Brooks Range, during which they climbed Mount Chamberlin (9020) and three of their party made the first ascents of Kulavok Peak (8045), Mary Peak (7702), and Peak 8300 in the James Robert Glacier and West Patuk Creek drainages. Upon their return to Anchorage from that



*North-northeast aspect of Mount Sergeant Robinson. Mount Sergeant Robinson is on the skyline slightly left of the center of the photo.*

*Photo by Richard Baranow.*

expedition, three members of the party – Gruber, Mündl, and Münster – decided they wanted more adventure in Alaska. They sought out Grace Hoeman for ideas for an unclimbed peak in the Chugach Mountains. Hoeman suggested Mount Sergeant Robinson, a choice she later admitted regretting. The three Germans started out from the bridge across the Matanuska River near the snout of the Matanuska Glacier because they didn't have a means to cross the river. Starting a considerable distance upstream of Gravel Creek meant a fair amount of bushwhacking to reach the Assassination Glacier. They encountered moderate difficulties ascending the icefalls on the glacier, but ultimately reached the southeast ridge of Mount Sergeant Robinson. They followed this ridge to the summit, arriving on August 8, 1969. Their descent retraced their ascent route.

Gary Tandy and Larry Tedrick attempted the north ridge of Mount Sergeant Robinson via Gravel Creek from July 8 to 13, 1974. They reached Point 8770, about a mile north of the summit, before turning back amid fresh snow and avalanche hazards.

In the first week of January 1988, Brian McCullough and Karl Swanson made the first winter ascent of Mount Sergeant Robinson via the north ridge, which Swanson deemed "wildly corniced" and "knife-edged."

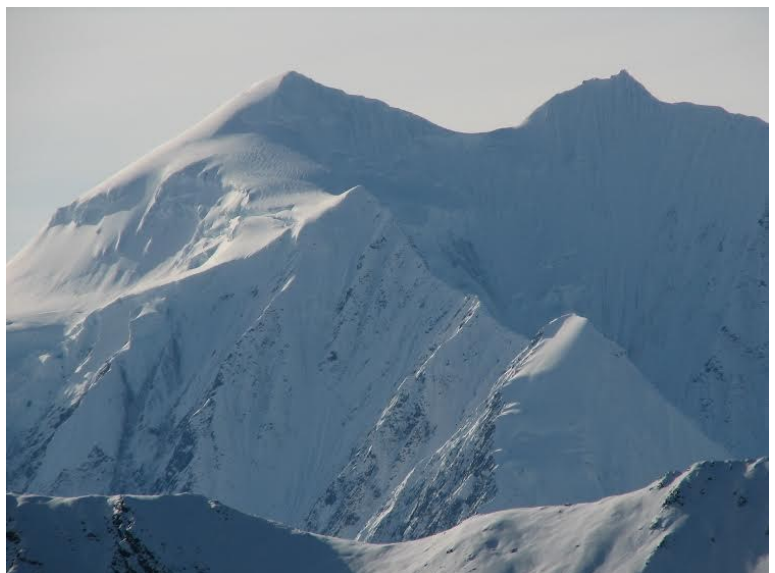
In early May 1999, Carl Oswald and Evan Phillips climbed Mount Sergeant Robinson via the Icing Glacier. They descended via Glacier Creek. Their trip, which started and

ended at the toe of the Matanuska Glacier and included an ascent of Icing Peak, took 10 days.

In 2001 Cash Joyce and Oswald climbed the north face of Mount Sergeant Robinson via Glacier Creek. The ascent took them 12 hours and was described as a 4,500-foot-long, mostly straightforward snow-and-ice face as steep as 80 degrees.

The information for this column came from Spurr's report titled "Mt Sergeant Robinson Attempt," which appeared in the May 1968 *Scree*; from the September 1969 *Scree*; from correspondence between Hoeman and Hubert Adams "Ad" Carter, which is available in the Grace and John Vincent Hoeman Papers at the Archives and Special Collections at the University of Alaska Anchorage/Alaska Pacific University Consortium Library; from Grace Hoeman's report titled "Mount Sergeant Robinson, Chugach

Range," which appeared on page 112 of the 1970 *American Alpine Journal*; from Tandy's article titled "North Ridge Attempt; Mt. Sargeant [sic] Robinson," which appeared in the August 1974 *Scree*; from the March 1988 *Scree*; from Swanson's trip report titled "Awesome!!!," which appeared in the June 1988 *Scree*; from Phillips' report titled "Icing Peak, North Ridge, Previously Unreported," which appeared on page 220 of the 2001 AAJ; from Phillips' report titled "Mt. Sergeant Robinson, north face," which appeared on page 250 of the 2002 AAJ; from <http://8thmainepeaksisland.com/about-us-2/our-hero/>; and from <http://arlingtoncemetery.net/gfrobinson.htm>.



*North-northeast aspect of Mount Sergeant Robinson at left.*

*Photo by Richard Baranow.*

# MCA Board Meeting Minutes – Monday, September 14, 2015

Attendees: Galen Flint, Cory Hinds, Carlene Van Tol, Rachad Rayess, Josh Clark

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## **1. VP-Upcoming programs (Galen)**

- a. September: Dave Staeheli on Mount Blackburn
- b. October: To be determined
- c. November: something about ice climbing

## **2. Treasurer's report (Aaron Gallagher)**

- a. (Year to date) revenue: \$11k, expenses: \$13k. \$10k in checking.

## **3. Secretary's report (Max Neale)**

- a. Nothing to report.

## **4. Huts (Cory)**

- a. Pichler's Perch re-skin. Complete! \$50 gift certificates provided to MCA volunteers.
- b. Dnigi Hut relocation. Flew to the new hut location and determined a feasible route there. MCA paid for the gas money. Hut condition assessment next summer. Max will coordinate acknowledgment plaque to be installed in hut.
- c. Mint Hut. Successful work party decanted poo barrel. Stan Olsen: suggested washing lower walls with trisodium phosphate (TSP) and installing vent to cut mold growth. Unclear whether urine-separating toilet has been installed. Vent not installed yet. Need to schedule more work parties.
- d. Bomber Hut. Dave Rhodes and party washed lower walls with TSP.
- e. Scandinavian Peaks Hut. Boris Babaev and his wife Nica Zlatkovski flew in with Meekin's Air Service on August 19th, fixed the window, and painted the deck. MCA covered the flights. Then they walked out.
- f. Greg Bragiel doing a great job fielding reports and getting information posted on the website.
- g. Leases on Department of Natural Resources land need to be updated every five years. Cory's court; needs to happen soon.

## **5. Training (Jayme Mack)**

- a. Ice Fest – Jayme is organizing; announcements have been posted. Registration opened September 1, online only, and closes September 18th.

- b. Update on Winter Basic Mountaineering School. Plan to line up a selection of courses with a combination of volunteer and paid instruction.
- c. Ice climbing with Ascending Path
- d. Snow climbing with Dave Staeheli
- e. Avalanche with Alaska Avalanche School

## **6. Hiking and Climbing (Cory)**

- a. Need a volunteer on the Board to help find a replacement for the Hiking and Climbing Committee Chair; Vicky Lytle is stepping down. Revisit next meeting.

## **7. Mentoring (Rachad):** ongoing, no updates.

## **8. Library (Cory)**

- a. Gift certificates to Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking were given to Charlotte Foley and Vicky for their work and leadership.

## **9. Equipment (Josh)**

- a. Folks completed a huge gear inventory!

## **10. Parks Advisory (Cory)**

- a. Intent-to-Adopt versions of the Chugach State Park Management Plan and Trail Management Plan now available for public review.

## **11. New Business**

- a. Elections in October.

## **12. Next Board meeting:** October 5th

## **13. Adjournment**

## Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Cory Hinds	229-6809	Board member (term expires in 2015)	Rachad Rayess	617-309-6566
Vice-President	Galen Flint	650-207-0810	Board member (term expires in 2015)	Joshua Clark	887-1888
Secretary	Max Neale	207-712-1355	Board member (term expires in 2016)	Jayne Mack	382-0212
Treasurer	Aaron Gallagher	250-9555	Board member (term expires in 2016)	Carlene Van Tol	748-5270
Past President	Greg Encelewski	360-0274			

Annual membership dues: Single \$20, Family \$25

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 Membership Committee at [membership@mtclubak.org](mailto:membership@mtclubak.org).

*The Scree* is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes, and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be emailed to [MCAScree@gmail.com](mailto:MCAScree@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted by the 24th of the month to appear in the next month's *Scree*.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be in electronic format and pre-paid. Ads can be emailed to [vicepresident@mtclubak.org](mailto:vicepresident@mtclubak.org).

Missing your MCA membership card? Stop by the monthly meeting to pick one up or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

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Hiking and Climbing Committee: Vicky Lytle - [hcc@mtclubak.org](mailto:hcc@mtclubak.org)

Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008 or [huts@mtclubak.org](mailto:huts@mtclubak.org)

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Find MCAK listserv at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MCAK/info>.

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