

SCREE

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA BOX 2037 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

NOVEMBER 1976

VOLUME XIX, No. 11

NOVEMBER MEETING

Wednesday, November 17, 1976, 8 PM, Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third and Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska.

Mini Slide Show: the first ski-tour of the Kichatna River Valley, Alaska Range, by TOM MEACHAM (prelude to a proposed 1977 MCA ski tour).

Film: something unusual--hopefully "Death of a Legend," about arctic wolves; expressing a particular point of view, but very beautifully done.

HIKING SCHEDULE

- November 14
Sunday PROSPECT HEIGHTS TO MIDDLE FORK. Moderate ski tour to point overlooking Anchorage. Meet at 9 AM at the Fred Meyer parking lot.
- November 20
HATCHER PASS/SNOWBIRD MINE SKI TOUR. For all abilities from beginning to advanced. Beautiful Talkeetna Mountain country an hour from Anchorage. Meet at 8 AM at Fred Meyer.
- November 26-28
Friday through Sunday THANKSGIVING WEEKEND. UPPER RUSSIAN LAKE CABIN. In at Cooper Lake Trail. Out at Russian River Campground. Those who have a Friday holiday may leave early Friday morning. Others may wish to depart on Saturday morning. The Forest Service cabin has been reserved on both Friday and Saturday nights. Leaders and cars needed. Call DONA, 279-2901.
- December 5
Sunday POINT WORONZOFF SKI TOUR. Meet at Turnagain Market (just West of RR tracks on Northern Lights Boulevard) at noon. Leader, DONA AGOSTI, 279-2901.
- December 11
Saturday OIL WELL ROAD SKI TOUR. Meet at 10 AM at Fred Meyer. Call 279-2901 for details.
- December 18
Saturday FLATTOP SLEEPOUT celebrating the winter solstice. Led by President TOM MEACHAM, 277-2129. Meet at 2 PM at Fred Meyer.

REMINDER!!! Dues for 1977 are due by January 1, 1977. SCREE in January will contain a notice to everyone who has not paid prior to the mailing of January's SCREE. If you receive a notice with your January SCREE, that's the last issue you'll receive until you renew your membership. Fair enough??

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING, MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

Wednesday, October 20, 1976, Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third and Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska.

The meeting was called to order at 8 PM by President BILL STIVERS. Preceding the business meeting BARNEY GRIFFITH presented an exciting slide show on kayaking down Devil's Canyon.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. DONA AGOSTI announced that the previous hikes were successful, even though there have not been good turn-outs. Anyone interested in scheduling hikes should call DONA at 279-2901. BILL STIVERS announced that the Army lease on a section of land on the North Fork Campbell Creek has terminated. Consequently the land is up for lease again. A motion was made and seconded that custody of the land should be given to the National Park Service.

TOM MEACHAM announced that the Alaska Alpine Club requested MCA involvement concerning positions on the proposed extensions to Mt. McKinley National Park.

Nominations for new MCA officers were then held. As there were no further nominations and as there was only one nominee for each office, the candidates listed in the October SCREE were unanimously accepted into office.

After the break for refreshments, MIKE McCLELLAND presented an informative slide show on the MCA trip to the Brooks Range this summer.

The meeting was adjourned.

DAVID NEWCOMBE
Secretary

PRESIDENT'S PEN

This is the second year I have had the honor (and the burden) of the MCA presidency, a repeat performance which has not occurred before in the 18-year history of the Club. I accepted the nomination only because no one else willing to serve as President could be found. While membership and outdoor activities remain at an all-time high, there is less willingness among the members than ever before to assume and share the responsibilities of keeping the Club going. A number of people who now plan programs, schedule climbs and hikes, and contribute to SCREE and to the regular business of the Club have done so for several years, and they could use some help.

I'd like to thank BILL STIVERS and PAUL DENKEWALTER for their work as President and Vice-President during the past year. PAUL was elected to a Board term, but BILL didn't run for the usual "President's" Board seat, and he has kindly consented to be MCA's new Treasurer, replacing PAT LEMKE who has resigned.

I plan to run a "caretaker" administration of MCA this year, keeping the monthly meetings and SCREE functioning with help from everyone who is willing to help. Monthly program suggestions are sorely needed--slides, films, lectures, or whatever! Camping and climbing schools will depend on interest shown, and a willingness to share the work of these schools. If everyone pitches in, I'm sure we will have an active and successful year.

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Following is a reprint of parts of a letter to DONA AGOSTI from HELGA BYHRE. After reading DONA'S account of the MCA Brooks Range trip, HELGA wrote describing a similar trip she made in 1955. Permission to reprint parts of this letter has been given by DONA and HELGA.

"I am one of the early members of the MCA--in 1958 I helped start the Club with Paul Crews, Rod Wilson, and others--my name at that time was Helga Bading and I did a good deal of climbing with Paul, Rod, Hans Metz and others.

"Your description of your backpack trip to the Brooks has caught my attention. . . . In 1955 my ex-husband Peter and I walked what may be the first section of your recent trip. That seems like ancient times--20 years ago when we didn't even know the Arrigetch existed! But, in retrospect, it isn't all that long; I've been actively climbing every year since then and there is still a lot that I plan to do.

"In 1955 and 1956 we spent a year with Bud and Martha Helmericks on Walker Lake. We built a cabin in which we spent the winter of 1956, but in September just before winter, Peter and I were flown to Takahula Lake by Bud for a 5-day trip. The object was to look for uranium (that was the thing to do in those days as there was some indication of ore in that area). I don't remember that we had a map, we just flew over the area that Bud pointed out and then we landed on Takahula opposite the cabin and started out. We went in and along a river in a westerly direction. Our habit was to wear hip wading boots and carry the leather boots in the packs, so as to be able to walk right in the riverbed because of the alders. I remember very well the "canyon" (the cliffs that you describe), but we went in the river right under the cliffs (water was low) and we found lots of sheep tracks as you did. So perhaps that was the same valley. We struggled up through lots of alder and willow to a pass where a grizzly lived (as judged by its tracks) and then down a rather steep slope to a river valley where we camped. We did all this in a day and a half (as you did). I was rather bushed, but we had lived in the bush all summer and were pretty tough. Also we didn't carry very much. Not having access to store food we had dried fish, dried meat, oatmeal, sugar, and tea--that was about all. We did carry a geiger counter, though! We camped in the valley where the stream came from a northerly direction (perhaps this is somewhere where you made your second camp, or at least in the general direction). The next couple of days were spent climbing up to a cirque somewhere opposite the pass we had come over. This is where the ore was supposed to be and wasn't (isn't that lucky for the environment). Instead we found new snow which made walking among the large boulders very tricky. . . .

"You certainly had a beautiful trip and I envy you. . . . I enjoy reading about various excursions in Scree and hope that sometime soon I get a chance to see how everything has changed in the past years (as it does everyplace!) in Alaska."

THE MYSTERY HAS BEEN SOLVED! During the Brooks Range slide show at the last meeting, DONA AGOSTI asked if anyone knew the meaning of the word Xanadu--the name given to the highest of the Arrigetch Peaks. After the meeting JIM SPROTT provided the information that British poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, writing Kubla Khan while in an opium dream, described an earthly paradise and named its mythical mountain "Xanadu." It was JIM'S contention that someone who knew something about literature had named the mountain. He's right! DAVE ROBERTS is a professor of English at Hampshire College, and it's a pretty good guess that he named the mountain!
