



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

November 1984

Volume 27, Issue 11

NOVEMBER MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, November 21st at 7:30 p.m. on the top floor of the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle St., Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting, Doug Fesler from Chugach State Parks will present a program on Avalanche Awareness.

MINUTES FOR OCTOBER MCA MEETING

The meeting was held on October 17, 1984 at Central Junior High School. The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by President Mark Skok. New members and guests were introduced.

Treasurer Bernie Helms reported:

\$ 240.76- Petty Cash
1109.49- Bank Account
3160.50- Money Market Rate Plus Account (Current rate 9.5%)
\$4510.82- Total

Dues all expire on 12/31/84. Will accept dues now for 1985. Please send a check to the post office box--

MCA
P.O. Box 102037
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

\$7.50 for single membership
10.00 for family membership

MCA 1983-84 INCOME STATEMENT
FOR DATE ENDING 10/17/84

Income:

Dues & Fees	\$2687.50 *	
Interest on Money Market	<u>328.28</u>	
Total Income		\$3015.78 *

Expenses:

SCREE Printing	346.85	
SCREE Postage	410.25	
P.O. Box Rental	26.00	
Equipment	339.40	
Library - binding	218.72	
Meeting place fees	70.00	
Shows/Films	105.46	
Refreshments	317.91	
Picnic	145.45	
Bank Service Chgs.	73.22	
Miscellaneous	<u>543.38</u>	
Total Expenses		<u>2596.64</u>
Net Income		\$ 419.14

*Estimate. (This is due to all members not paying by check.)

Note: All figures exact except those as noted.

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. Equipment

The club has purchased 6 ropes, 2 ice axes and 2 pairs of small crampons. The ropes are for use in MCA classes only.

B. Huts

Mark Skok reported that he will present to local legislatures after elections, plans and budget for the MCA huts.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. Library Committee

There was a committee meeting Friday Oct. 19th at the library. A comprehensive program for the library was discussed. The library is in need of a typewriter, filing cabinets, and a chair. Anyone interested in making a donation or lending these items, please contact Terry Becker at AMH (272-1811).

Also...during the past ten years, many books have disappeared from the Vin Hoeman Library. A list of the missing books follows the minutes. If anyone happens to find any of these please contact Terry Becker at AMH (272-1811).

B. Elections for 1985

The following people were elected:

President:	Doug Van Etten
Vice President:	Mark Findlay
Secretary:	Nan DeGood
Treasurer:	Bernie Helms
Board Members:	John Lohff
	Rick Severn

C. Announcements

The Chugach National Forest Cabin reservation center is now at 2221 Northern Lights Blvd. Room 225 276-0472.

Doug White is looking for volunteers to help fix a cabin used by skiers and hikers on the edge of the Talkeetna Mountains. Call Doug for information at 563-4060 or 783-2640 (H).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Cavanaugh, Secretary

Books Missing From The Vin Hoeman--MCA Library

as known by October 1984

AMERICAN ALPINE JOURNAL, THE Volumes I-IV (Bound, blue), circa 1920-1930

Adams, Ansel and Nancy Newall. THIS IS THE AMERICAN EARTH Sierra Club, 1968. 111p.

Auden, W.H. and C. Iserwood. THE ASCENT OF F6 (also called THE DOG BENEATH THE SEA). Random House, 1935.

Banks, Mike. RAKAPOSHI. Seker & Warburg, 1959. 238p.

Buhl, Herman. LONELY CHALLENGE. Dutton, 1956. 318p.

Conway, William Martin. THE BOLIVIAN ANDES. Harper, 1901. 403p.

Cook, Frederick A. TO THE TOP OF THE CONTINENT. Doubleday, 1908. 301p.

Ekvall, Robert B. TIBETAN SKY LINES. Farrar Strauss & Young, 1952. 204p.

Escarre, Jean. IMAGES DE L'HIMALAYA. ENCYCLOPEDIE ALPINE ILLUSTRÉE., n.d.

Everett, Boyd N., Jr. THE ORGANIZATION OF AN ALASKAN EXPEDITION. Private Printing, March 4, 1966. 56p.

de Filippi, Filippo. THE ASCENT OF MOUNT ST. ELIAS. Archibald Constable, 1900. 241p.

Harrer, Heinrich. SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET, Harte-Davis, 1953. 288p.

Hedin, Sven. MY LIFE AS AN EXPLORER, Garden City Pub., 1925. 544p.

Irving, R.L.G. THE MOUNTAIN WAY. Dent, 1938. 656p.

- Kurten, Bjorn and Robert Rausch, BIOMETRIC COMPARISONS BETWEEN NORTH AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN MAMMALS. Kobenhaun, 1959. 45p.
- Marcus, Melvin. CLIMATE-GLACIER STUDIES IN THE JUNEAU ICE FIELD REGION, ALASKA. University of Chicago Press, 1964. 128p.
- Mariner, Westl. MOUNTAIN RESCUE TECHNIQUES. Australian Alpine Club, 1963. 200p.
- MOUNTAIN OPERATIONS: ARMY MANUAL FM 70-10. Sept. 1947. 264p.
- National Ski Patrol. ADVANCED AVALANCHE COURSE. National Ski Patrol, 1957. 36p.
- Olsen, Jack. THE CLIMB TO HELL. Harper & Row, 1962. 213p.
- Pallis, Marco. PEAKS AND LLAMAS. Readers Union, 1948. 248p.
- Pyatt, E.C. THE BOYS' BOOK OF MOUNTAINS AND MOUNTAINEERING. Roy Pub., 1963. 144p.
- Shipton, Eric. LAND OF TEMPEST. Dutton, 1963. 224p.
- Siegner, Otto. MUNCHEN. Im Verlag Ludwig Simon, circa 1969. 92p.
- Snyder, Howard H. THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING (paperback edition). Scribner, 1973. 207p.
- Thorington, J. Monroe. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FIFTY YEARS. Privately Printed, 1967. 120p.
- Tichy, Herbert. CHO OYU. Methuen, 1955. 196p.
- Tilman, H.W. MISCHIEF IN PATAGONIA. Travel Book Club, 1956. 185p.
- TUARE '67. (Report of the 1967 Japanese Mt. Hesse Expedition to Alaska).
- Wood, Walter A. A HISTORY OF MOUNTAINEERING IN THE ST. ELIAS MOUNTAINS. Yukon Alpine Centennial Expedition, 1967. 45p.

MCA Members Supported Activities in 1984

I want to thank Mountaineering Club members for your support for club activities during the past year. I particularly want to thank the officers, board members and leaders of various projects. They all put in more than their share of time and effort, much of which pertained to monthly business and could easily go unrecognized.

Among the club's accomplishments this past year, we established a membership directory that I've found useful, and I'm sure others have too. Peggy Michaelson has done a tremendous amount of work cataloguing the publications in our library at Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking. Perhaps soon we can even get the project wrapped up. Tim Neale again led trail-clearing crews in Chugach State Park.

The annual ice climbing class, again organized by Terry Becker and conducted on the final weekend in September on Matanuska Glacier, remains popular. This year 39 students took part. They were taught by 10 instructors and 5 assistants. There were no injuries, either during two days of instruction or at the Saturday night blow-out at the lodge.

Tom Meacham said it doesn't look like the club can acquire a long-term lease on our three Chugach State Park huts. Park managers will decide in 1985 whether our lease will be renewed.

At the same time, I've looked into the possibility of legislative funding for maintaining the huts. Rep. Mike Szymanski's legislative assistant told me it's quite possible that \$5,000 could be appropriated to cover materials and helicopter transportation. MCA members would volunteer their time to maintain the huts.

The assistant, Roger Poppy, suggested we not pursue the matter until after the Nov. 6 election. In the meantime, I want to put together a history of the huts, along with a firm budget we can take to legislators.

If it looks like State Parks will not renew our lease, the appropriation could go to Chugach State Park, but be earmarked specifically for hut maintenance.

Whether the huts remain with the club or revert to the park, we will work closely with park officials regarding any activities related to the huts.

I also have formally applied to the state DNR for a lease for the Mint Glacier Hut, on which the club has expended a considerable amount of time and effort. Unless someone can show cause why we shouldn't be granted a lease--and that appears unlikely--we should have a non-profit corporation lease on the Mint Glacier hut by spring.

Mark Skok

Note From New President

You can hardly say I was elected, since I ran unopposed, but I am glad to be MCA President. Thanks for your votes.

By the time you read this we will have had a board meeting and I hope the club's general direction for the coming year will be outlined. Had there been a real campaign I would have promised more classes, trips, etc. As it is I hope we, the membership of the club, can effect many active programs. Since we are a "club" the membership must respond to its own needs. If you want a class or trip, speak up. If you can lead a class or trip, or can assist, please volunteer.

The officers and Board of Directors are a steering committee. Membership as a whole can provide leadership and participation for the club to be active and responsive.

Feel free to contact the officers and Board with your ideas. With approximately 350 club members there must be plenty of good ideas and unlimited potential.

I hope to see you all outdoors this year.

Doug Van Etten
President

Eagle River Greenbelt

The municipality of Anchorage is attempting to obtain land from Eklutna Inc. along the Eagle River valley bottomlands to be placed into a protective greenbelt. This land was once within the Chugach State Park and was obtained by Eklutna via the Alaska Native Claims Act.

The proposed greenbelt extends from the State Park boundary (approximately seven air miles from the Eagle River bridge), downriver to the bridge.

The State Park is drafting up another proposal which will be published for public comments sometime toward the end of November or early December.

Municipality contact is Hadley Jenner at 264-4862.

The most important thing now is identifying the boundaries of the greenbelt and starting the process of obtaining the land, but the municipality needs the backing of the public. Not only those of us from Eagle River, but Anchorage and elsewhere. We need to show interest.

Fred Harnisch

Andrew Embick, M.D., Leader
P.O. Box 1889 Valdez, Alaska 99686
(907) 835-4200 home, 835-4811 office

Dear Friends and Sponsors:

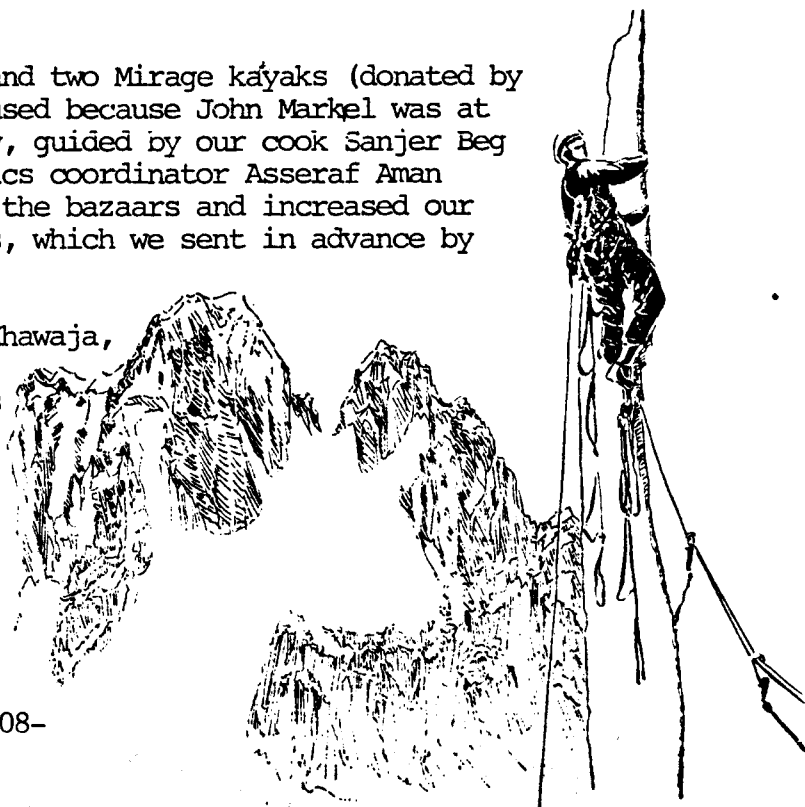
Our expedition is now back home after seven weeks in Pakistan, and was successful in all respects. We climbed our peak, kayaked our river, ran parts of the river at three different water levels, ran four more rivers, trekked from Baltistan to Hunza, shot more than twelve thousand photographs, and came back a week early, below budget, and with our only casualty Jack Tackle's case of malaria.

Though a major article written by Galen Rowell for the National Geographic Magazine is expected, it will not appear for six months or more, and this report will try to provide some immediate follow-up for those with a special interest in our trip.

With our final purchasing and packing completed in Seattle, the team (minus Jack Tackle and Gray Thompson, who came a week later) rendezvoused in New York. The American Alpine Club's New York Section hosted a benefit slide show and a quick dash through the AAC clubhouse gathered up some last minute sponsorship money from Phillips Petroleum and well wishes from a number of Board members, as well as hors d'oeuvres. We flew from JFK on May 4, with three thousand pounds of baggage (two thousand of that gratis, courtesy of PIA), stopping in Frankfurt briefly, where personal well wishes (and a case of beer) were presented to us by Wayne Jordan of Flying Tigers. Wayne's help in air freighting our six kayaks from South Carolina to Islamabad saved us about \$21,000. Arriving in Islamabad/Rawalpindi fairly well rested (thanks to modern pharmacology utilized during the flight), we were met by the teeming poverty, unfamiliar smells, 103° heat and hallucinatory traffic typical of Asian cities. Because John Mueller of Adventure Pakistan/Walji's Travel and his staff facilitated all our arrangements, the necessary shopping, the briefings with Tali Muhammad and Muneeruddin of the Ministry of Tourism, and a myriad of other hurdles were accomplished in only three days. In keeping with expeditionary traditions of the past, we were hosted at a U.S. Embassy party on the eve of our arrival. We were quickly made to feel welcome in Pakistan by Americans and Pakistanis alike, a feeling which was reinforced during the entire trip.

In Rawalpindi we outfitted our three Dancer and two Mirage kayaks (donated by Perception, Inc.), the third Mirage going unused because John Markel was at the last minute unable to come. Bo and Kathy, guided by our cook Sanjer Beg (a cheerful Tajik from Passo) and our logistics coordinator Asseraf Aman (first Pakistani to climb K2) spent hours in the bazaars and increased our total weight of gear plus food to 6000 pounds, which we sent in advance by Bedford truck to Skardu.

Our Liaison Officer, Lieutenant Hamid Javed Khawaja, was the first-ever L.O. from the Pakistani Navy, and was on leave from his normal duties commanding an underwater demolition team. With excellent, even idiomatic American English and climbing experience on Rakaposhi, he was a tremendous asset to the expedition. Taking upon himself the work of hiring and managing the porters, translating for hours with local officials and at daily sick call



held for porters and villagers, carrying loads, sharing our tents and food and tolerating our foibles, he was the best L.O. Galen had met in four Karakoram expeditions.

We were also fortunately joined by Pervez Khan, Pakistani Air Force and free-lance photographer. A friend of Galen's, his Karakoram experience went back several decades and essentially provided us with another (unofficial) liaison officer.

Though we avoided the days and days of waiting typical of attempts to fly to the Northern Areas, our two-day van ride was grueling. Our driver was arrested for running an oncoming Army paratroop major's jeep off the road while trying to pass a tractor; we had multiple flats, delays to clear landslides and to dynamite boulders off the road, frequent pit stops for those with gastrointestinal afflictions, and nerve-wracking hours grinding along a one-lane road cut into cliffs high above the raging Indus River. Several members rode on the roof rack to stay cooler, ameliorate car-sickness, and be able to jump off if we went over the (guard rail-less) edge. Others just took Valium, took pictures of Nanga Parbat, or both.

Two days in Skardu completed our shopping and load packing. We then jeeped 47 miles up the Shigar Valley to Dasso, our gear sent ahead on trailers towed by Massey-Ferguson farm tractors. In addition to our three Pakistani members (Asseraf guiding us just to the end of the road) we now numbered eighty-four, including our 73 Balti porters and eight Americans.

The success of our attempt to run the Braldu, we knew, depended completely on our arriving before temperatures rose and water volume increased abruptly sometime in May. We drove ourselves close to exhaustion from our arrival in Pakistan, almost frantically rushing to get to the river. Eight days after arriving in Pakistan, after having hiked the initial day's stage up from Dasso, we put in at a flow of about one thousand cubic feet per second. The winter had been a dry one, and recent weather was cool and overcast. At this water level, the river was technically very demanding, and the rapids were complex mazes of steep, twisting, blind drops through large, jumbled boulders. But there were defined drops with pools separating them, and though the gradient averaged sixty feet per mile (and was as high as ninety) it was possible to stop, scout, and (on nine occasions) portage. The carries came to less than half a mile out of about fifty overall, or about one-half percent; a far cry from what had confronted the ill-fated 1978 British team led by Dr. Mike Jones. Making the mistake of attempting the Braldu at peak flow in August, Jones was swept away and drowned saving the life of a teammate, and was never seen again, though fragments of his boat - and a month later his helmet and a shoe - were eventually recovered. Mick Hopkinson, the strongest member of the 1978 team, had estimated to me that no more than five percent of the Braldu was runnable, and had been vehemently negative about our chances.

With Balti porters eager and willing (for fifty rupees a day, about four dollars) to carry our kayaks upstream (or alternately, our gear and clothes downstream), we could hike with light loads and paddle empty boats. With a trail (albeit rough) along the river and (for its lower half) villages spaced a walking stage apart, we could run the river in a novel but necessary way: from the bottom up. Our most severe test would come in the Chokpo-Chongo Gorge, the fifth of six walking stages from the river's origin to its end. To be sure of completing this notorious section at low water, we planned to run the lower river below Askole first, then trek upstream again to run the upper half. We were thus obligated to walk twice as far (one hundred miles in all), but we also reduced as best we could the risk of being unable to run the river, either the upper half being too shallow above the inflow from the Biafo Glacier, or the constricted lower half being too violent. The plan would also permit Galen to photograph us from the bank, getting far more and better shots than we could ever hope to get from river level.

The plan worked perfectly, to my considerable personal satisfaction and great relief as its originator and promoter. The kayakers (Kathy Blau, Rob Lesser, Bob McDougall, Bo Shelby and myself) ran first of all the lowest of the six stages (Chokpo to Dasso). Then, stages four and five (Askole to Chongo and the crux, Chongo to Chokpo) with Galen pounding the trail to keep up with us, at times being forced to climb and descend hundreds of feet of elevation where rock buttresses closed in on the river. We made use of the log bridges still in place from winter and criss-crossed from bank to bank. With just a dozen porters, a select group kept on after we had gotten all the loads to Askole, we had no organizational problems at all, our devoted group charging headlong down the trail to keep up or waiting patiently while we scouted. There was no hint of the resentment and distrust toward outsiders which expeditions to Baltistan had encountered just ten years ago. Our rugged, cheerful group was as proud of us for our (to them) astounding feat of kayaking the Braldu as we were pleased with their helping set up our tents, their carrying the awkward (up to thirteen-foot-long) boats, and their solicitousness about our welfare. Rather than supply clothing and food as had been usual in the past, we simply negotiated extra payment and they used their own rubber shoes and brought their own food, mainly atta, ghee and salt for chappattis, and sweet milky tea.

The most spectacular kayaking photographs may be those Galen took dangling on a rope down inside the famed Narrows of the Braldu. Cut deep down through sculpted granite, the entire river flows through a rock cleft almost narrow enough to jump across. Running one at a time, we even stopped in eerie swirling cave-like eddies sixty feet below the surface before emerging into daylight again.

Spending time in the villages of the Braldu Valley, we were able to visit with villagers in their homes, and learn the (oral) history of the area's settlement (over the Hispar La from Nagar in Hunza, some four hundred years before). We tried to understand both the archaic Tibetan roots of the Balti tongue and the current Shiite Moslem influence of the Ayatollah Khomeini, whose baleful visage adorned the carved planks of the tiny mosque in Askole. Our willingness to provide free medical care for villagers (all of our left-over medical supplies being donated to the hospital at Skardu) and the presence of our two female expedition members, Kathy Blau and Barbara Rowell, as well as Galen's renown in the region, all contributed to the warm reception we received and our thorough introduction to village life.

The completion by the kayakers of the river section below Askole coincided with the arrival of Jack Tackle and Gray Thompson, who were eager to climb. The paddlers headed up the river with ten porters, past Payu to the Baltoro Glacier's snout at 11,224' where the Braldu emerges from a black hole in the ice. Altitude, exertion and heat combined to force Rob Lesser to recover for a day from dehydration but permitted the others to hike on the lower Baltoro Glacier. I was, however, ^{feeling} urgently compelled to complete the run of the Braldu quickly and reach Base Camp to join the climbers. So my two ^{trustworthy} porters, Hussein Shah and Abdul Khaliq, shouldered loads at seven ^{A.M.} on May 24 and headed ^A down from Payu at the same time as I headed up, a third porter carrying my orange Dancer, the last mile to the highest put-in. Solo, I then turned around and paddled the Braldu for twenty-five miles that day, ^{to Askole} rendezvousing with Hussein and Abdul once at Bardumal halfway down what was a triple stage for them and a seven-hour marathon for me. In places shallow and braided, in others very steep and rocky, the Braldu at one point essentially disappeared underneath huge boulders, compelling another portage.

The others followed the next day, taking two days to Askole and feeling the increasingly pushy character of the river as temperatures climbed to the hundred-degree mark and water levels rose. Rob Lesser and Bob McDougall on reaching Askole continued downstream, running (this time at a marginal and very exciting 3500 cfs) the entire lower Braldu again. Where we had initially spent long periods scouting especially complex rapids, Rob and Bob ran on sight and after what was for them the trip's high point, returned to the U.S. Because on our low water run, technical difficulty reached V+, there doesn't seem much doubt that the

Braldu by any definition can be considered a "Class VI" river. Though we avoided innumerable potential and dangerous pins, the rocky streambed took its toll in the form of two broken paddle blades (for Rob) and once an entire paddle jerked out of Bob's hands (though he proceeded to demonstrate his virtuosity by hands-rolling up and then reaching shore). Tough, plastic boats were a major key to our success, roto molded of cross-linked polyethylene plastic from Phillips Chemical (who generously underwrote part of the expedition to the tune of three thousand dollars).

The same hot weather which began to render the Braldu unrunnable simultaneously made our climbing objectives possible. On May 29 after sitting out a storm, the climbers began to move. Base camp had been situated on the east side of the Biafo Glacier a few miles up from the Baintha Glacier, at 13,500 feet. Galen, along with Rob Milne, Jack Tackle, and Gray Thompson, located the same strikingly steep and dramatically beautiful red granite tower he had photographed during his 1980 winter Karakoram ski traverse, and which we had selected as our prime objective from those photographs. Rising directly from the glacier, its base at 14,000 feet and summit at 17,650 feet, the spire had never previously been climbed or even attempted, though later we were to learn from our veteran sirdar, shikara (hunter) Haji Ali, the peak was called "Lukpilla" (possibly a name from Eric Shipton's personal life) "Brakk" (Balti for rock tower).

Though I assisted carrying loads to the base, five climbers would have been too many, so I wished the other four well and began instructing an apt (and very fit) Balti porter, Ghulam Mahdi, in technical rock climbing on boulders near Base.

In four days of perfect weather the team climbed and descended (by the same route) thirty-four rock pitches up to 5.10 in difficulty, alternately leading and hauling in teams of two. Because they wore light rock shoes, the entire route was done free except for two points of aid on the overhanging summit block. Even short sections of snow and ice didn't negate the advantage of smooth soled shoes, especially because the rock in places was so compact that in boots, to aid blank sections would have been horribly laborious. Abandoning gear on the way up to save weight during their headlong summit push and recovering it on the descent, they wore T-shirts at almost 18,000 feet and all proclaimed the summit view the most breathtaking ever. Because the climb was done early in the Karakoram season (summit reached June 2) objective danger was high as late winter snow and ice melted, releasing a barrage of falling rock. Rob Milne, an Eiger veteran, thought the Nordwand had felt safer and slept in his helmet. The only damage sustained was Galen's bashing his finger with a piton hammer, and the only time lost was to quickly tape that up.

In the meantime, Bo and Kathy arrived at Base. Bo, Ghulam and myself attempted a route on the 19,000 foot peak behind camp, but the discovery of a huge, threatening cornice high up forced a retreat from 15,600 feet.

Ours was the first American Karakoram expedition to take advantage of the Pakistan Ministry of Tourism's recent relaxing of climbing regulations. By restricting ourselves to peaks of under 6,000 meters, we requested and received blanket permission to climb in an entire area (the whole length and both sides of the Biafo Glacier) and required neither peak fee nor liaison officer (though an L.O. was required for the river phase of the trip). Such flexibility (and reduction in costs) will be a boon to future expeditions, especially small and inexpensive ones.

There was no lack of other climbing objectives on the Biafo, but now after successes on both the river and climb, the pressure was off. An experiment by Jack confirmed that 190-proof ethanol is nearly toxic at high altitude, and our momentum now carried us into smaller groups with multiple objectives. Kathy, Bo, Jack and Gray trekked one hundred and twenty miles, without porters, over the Hispar La (16,900') and down to Nagar, reaching Hunza. Galen and Barbara stalked wildlife in the form of bear tracks, herds of ibex, and

the fresh skin of a young snow leopard clubbed to death by villagers. In meetings with district and regional officials, Galen investigated what appears to be the failure of Pakistan to adequately protect its large mammals, primarily from village poachers.

Leaving Base early as runner to send up porters, I descended to Askole and a convivial brunch with the hereditary chief or "lambardier" Haji Madi as well as Reinhold Messner and Hans Kammerlander (who were headed for a traverse of Gasherbrums I and II).

The Braldu had by now, in the second week of June, become more than what is normally known as a river, rather an awesome natural force unleashed, with nightmarish power and violence. Its flow had multiplied twenty-five times and now the truck-size boulders which we had paddled around were themselves rolling down the river's bed. Bridges (except for a swinging vine rope "jhola") were gone as well as was all semblance of being kayakable or survivable. This was the Braldu we had been warned of, with twenty Susitna-size rapids per mile and five worse. As brown as Karakoram rock and as cold as glacial ice, the Braldu (Balti for "canyon") River was the embodiment of death immediate and irrevocable. Now for the fourth time I traveled the Braldu Gorge: hiking, not kayaking. Only at Chokpo did the gradient begin to decrease and permit tentative, brief and very nervous excursions along the bank, high-velocity seconds of terror punctuated by tedious and fatiguing scouting and portaging in ninety-plus degree weather in a wetsuit.

Once, standing awed on the bank, I watched an entire rapid move fifty yards downstream and felt through the earth the reverberation of the rolling boulders. To venture, even briefly, out into the probably thirty mph current was to court instant disaster - which I courted - and narrowly escaped.

American expeditions (and Aleister Crowley) in the past made use of "zahks", rafts of inflated goatskins, to descend from Dasso to Skardu, where the Shigar (formed of the Braldu and Basra Rivers) joins the Indus. I kayaked the braided though fast Shigar forty-seven miles through a wide, mountain-rimmed valley where emerald terraced fields rose steeply up hillsides toward any available water sources. Villages were perched below nullahs bearing snowmelt from high above, the apricots were beginning to ripen, and dust storms alternated with sunshine. In the river, huge symmetrical sand waves provided sublime kayak surfing.

A quick jeep ride up to Khapalu while waiting for the base camp group to arrive permitted my solo first descent of the Shyok River's forty-five miles. The four portages were made easier by the eagerness of villagers to help carry my boat, and much was enjoyable Class IV kayaking. From Gol, the Shyok-Indus confluence, I sneaked twenty-five miles of the huge (100,000 cfs) Indus (in two hours) as it rolled out of Tibet toward its encounter with the Rondu Gorges.

We rendezvoused in Karimabad, capital of Hunza. Luckily, Jack didn't come down with malaria until completing his trek. Just as luckily, I had my tropical-medicine notes and a supply of chloroquine.

Jack was weak but clearly improving a couple of days later, and the Hunza River had looked to me (on the seventy-mile jeep ride from Gilgit) to be pleasant Class IV. But the clear air and the size of neighboring peaks (like 25,550 foot Rakaposhi) make errors of scale inevitable as Bo and I discovered. Though of continuous gradient rather than pool-drop, the thirty thousand cfs of the Hunza did drop thirty feet per mile. We didn't feel completely in control in water of that awesome power and speed, and great care was required to avoid being pushed into gigantic holes by powerful breaking diagonal waves. However, hundred-degree air temperatures did help make possible this first run of the glacial Hunza at high water.

1984 AMERICAN BRALDU RIVER-BIAFO SPIRES/KARAKORAM EXPEDITION

From Gilgit, Jack and I did a "dying man and doctor" imitation (which wasn't that hard) and got on the Fokker F-27 aircraft which flies past Nanga Parbat enroute to Islamabad. Our brief time in the capital was spent based at the air-conditioned, luxury Hotel Intercontinental lying in the pool, buying rugs, sampling the buffet, washing off seven weeks of dirt, and giving newspaper and TV interviews. We were congratulated by the U.S. Ambassador, Deane Hinton, as well as by Galen's old friend Mr. Awan, now Pakistan's Minister of Sport. At a relatively painless debriefing at the Tourism Ministry, we were given an opportunity to congratulate the Pakistanis for the superb job they have done in streamlining expedition regulations and removing various hurdles. We did indicate, however, that more timely responses by the Pakistanis to permit requests would be most helpful for those planning expeditions in the future, and this hint seems likely to have been noticed, as it was made in person to Mr. Mohsin Kamal, Minister of Tourism.

We returned to the U.S. a week ahead of schedule, ^{below} budget (\$2,500 per person), having exposed more than twelve thousand Kodachromes. Except for Jack, we were in at least as good shape as on our departure, and in several cases already making plans to return to Pakistan. Our Perception kayaks are in good shape and being stored for later use by us or others. The National Geographic has rights to our story so for now, other coverage is limited to short news items. After the article appears (as seems very likely) in the Geographic, then other stories are expected, so coverage for our sponsors should be excellent.

kayakers: Kathy Blau, Andrew Embick, Rob Lesser, Bob McDougall, Bo Shelby
climbers: Rob Milne, Galen Rowell, Jack Tackle, Gray Thompson
trekkers: Blau, Shelby, Tackle, Thompson
photographers: Barbara Rowell & Pervez Khan
liaison officer: Lt. Hamid Khawaja, Pakistani Navy

ANDREW EMBICK MD

Andrew Embick, M.D.
expedition leader
August 16, 1984

Classified Ads

Blue Water Paddler, an ocean kayaking publication about sea kayaking in Alaska. Articles by Alaskan paddlers cover such topics as camping in the rain and low impact camping, boat and paddle selection, eating from the beach, making your own equipment and more. Also classified ads and calendar of events.

Subscriptions: \$8.00 per year (4 issues). Contact BWP at Box 105032, Anchorage, AK 99510 or 243-1550, 345-2294.

FOR SALE: Easy Rider double Sea Kayak (Sea Eagle). Fiberglass, 18 1/2-foot, center cargo hatch, rudder, spray skirts, float bags. Used 3 weekends as a rental. \$1250. Call 243-1550.

FOR SALE: in good condition: tent, crampons, 2 ice axes, snowshoes, mitts, bivy sack, climbing pants, parka, harness, goggles, stove, sled, gaitors, headlamp, sweater, 2 double boots (10, 11), balaclavas, much more. Very reasonable prices. Gail or John 349-5388.

WANTED: Extra small adjustable crampons, Inexpensive whitewater kayak (any state of repair). Marsha. 274-9553 (W), 243-1550 (H).

UPCOMING TRIPS

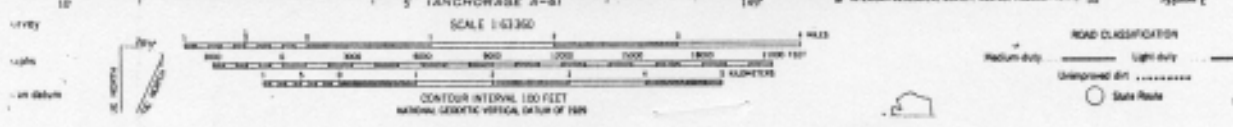
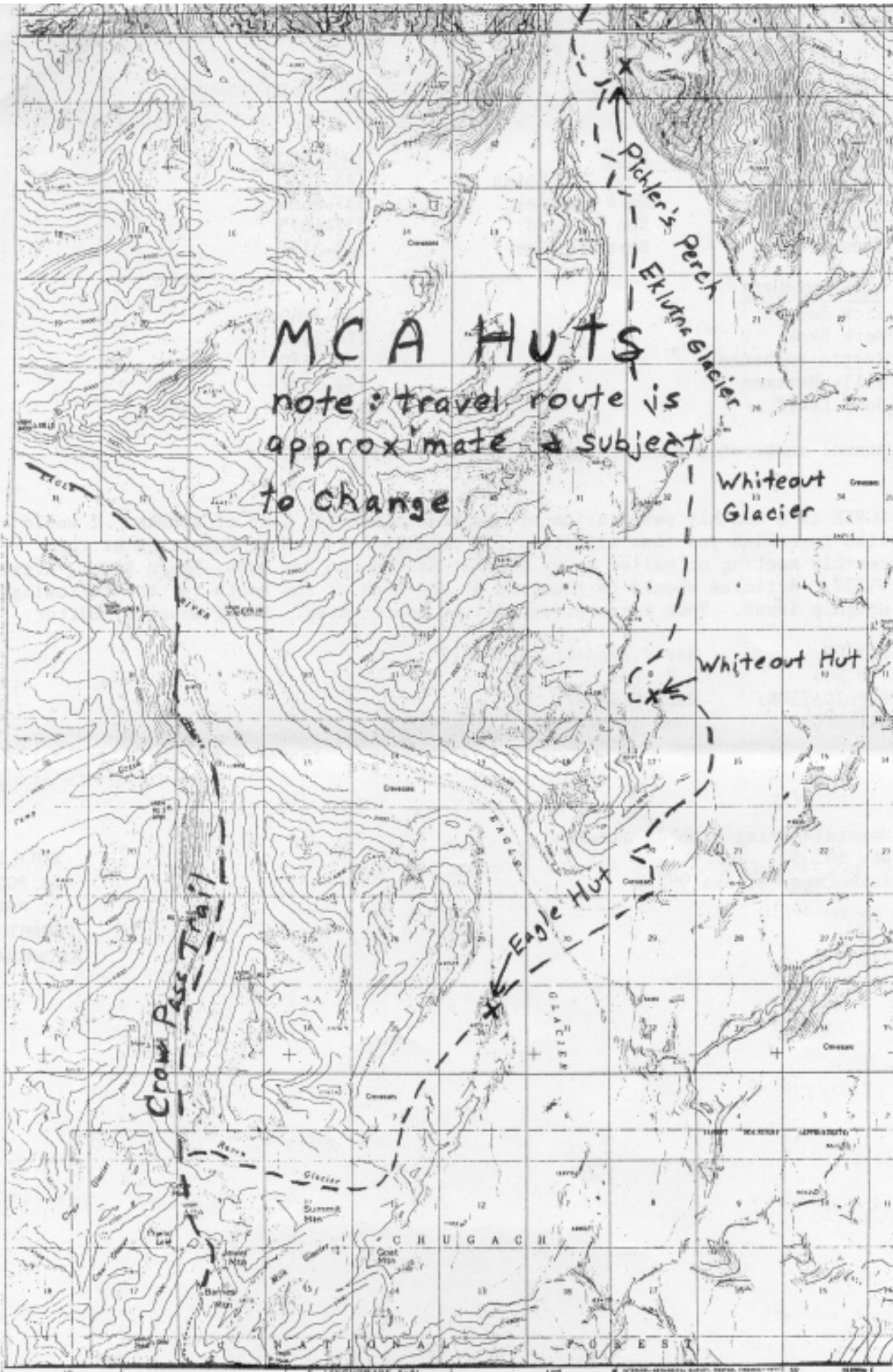
November 18 SKI TO THE WEDGE
Sunday. For skiers of all abilities. If conditions allow, there will be telemarking in the bowl and a ski to the top. Bring your skins and put a file to your skis before the trip! Meet at the Glen Alps parking lot at 9 A.M. Trip leaders Dan O'Haire (248-3634), and Trisha Herminghaus (248-6043).

March 1985 TALKEETNA GLACIER SKI/CLIMB TRIP
We will fly in, establish base camp and ski or climb on various one-day outings from camp. This trip is open to folks with limited experience; only requirement is some limited cross-country skiing experience. Exact date will be determined in February. Approximate cost will be \$270. Will fly out of Talkeetna on a Sunday and return Saturday. For more information contact Tim Neale. (274-4952)

DON'T JUST PUT THIS DOWN

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THAT MAY BE ON THE MISSING BOOKS LIST !



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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SCREE is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. I would like to remind you that all items for publication must be submitted at the monthly meeting or mailed to my home at Star Route Box 9204, Eagle River, Alaska 99577. Articles should be received by the 25th of the month for the following month's issue. Your cooperation will be appreciated. Marty Bassett, Editor.

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