

SCREE

which
mountain?

Devil's Tower
Wyoming

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA
Vol. 9, No. 3
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EVENTS TO COME

JANUARY MEETING: Willow Park Community Center, 9th and Fairbanks, January 16, 8 p.m. Paul Crews will start off 1967 for MCA in proper fashion with narration and illustration of the first ascents of Mts Iliamna, Gerdine, and Torbert. He climbed Iliamna in 1959, Gerdine in '63 and Torbert in '64.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING: February 7, 8 p.m., 3104 W. 30th.

SKI TOUR TO WHITTIER, February 11-12, Bill Hauser, leader. This will be a two-day trip requiring either cross-country skis or downhill skis with an attachment or some modification to allow free movement of heels. To allow for gliding, those who plan to go should use wax rather than skins. Since this trip is 15 miles one way, people who want to go should have experience. They should also bring lunches and breakfasts. The plan is to stay overnight in whatever hotel accommodation is available, but this, as well as the evening meal question, is still unsettled, depending upon whether any hotel or restaurant is open. The route will cross Portage Lake, go up the ice cliff, over the pass, and come back the same way. Everyone will meet at the Safeway parking lot on 9th and Gambell at 5 a.m. February 11. Call Bill Hauser weekdays at 277-5511 and leave a message.

NORDIC SKI CLUB TRIPS in February include the following:

INDEPENDENCE MINE TO WILLOW. Overnight Friday evening at Independence Mine, then ski to Willow next day for Willow Carnival. February 3-4, Hans Aune, leader, 272-2214.

DIAMOND H RANCH TRAILS. February 5. Meet 10 a.m. Mile 3, O'Malley Road.

GOLDEN VIEW DRIVE TOUR. February 11. Meet 9:30 a.m. at intersection of Golden View Drive and Rabbit Creek Road. Terry Fleming, leader, 279-2167.

RUSSIAN JACK SPRINGS TOUR. February 18. This is a warmup for the next day's trip. Meet at East High, 12 noon.

FUR RENDEZVOUS TOUR--EAGLE RIVER TO ANCHORAGE. February 19. There will be Rendezvous publicity on this.

O'MALLEY TRAIL. February 25. Meet at 9:30 a.m., top of O'Malley at No. Hillside.

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING was held January 6 prior to the Fireside Session hosted by Gary Hansen. Discussion centered on the need for trip leaders, planning for a climbing school for the summer, co-sponsorship of a visit by James Ramsey Ullman in connection with a Centennial event, and sponsoring a Hans Gmoser movie this year or next. The Executive Committee did decide to reschedule Hans Gmoser next fall, about October 15, if he is available then, because he is not available this spring. The Committee also agreed to a request by the Centennial Sports Committee to co-sponsor a special appearance by mountaineer-writer James Ramsey Ullman about January 23. Co-sponsorship of this slide lecture will mean publicity and ticket selling to be done by MCA. Gary Hansen is chairman for this project. Ullman, author of several books on climbing, including *The Age of Mountaineering*, *The White Tower* (novel), and *Americans on Everest*, was the official historian of the American Everest Expedition. He, and possibly Sir Edmund Hillary as

well, are to be in Anchorage for the Centennial Sports Banquet January 21. There also may be other events in connection with these!

The Fireside Session which followed the Executive Committee meeting was a chance for the many MCA-ers who attended to socialize in some other element than howling winds, a snow cave, tent, or an alder-and-devil's-club-haunted trail. At present, another Fireside has not yet been planned, but this may be discussed at the next club meeting.

BASHFUL PEAK, 8001' -- Third Ascent

June 27-28

Nick Parker

Bashful, as the highest peak in the Western Chugach, seemed to be a worthy goal for our venture. Twice climbed, it also has the lure of new routes, a characteristic not unknown to most Alaskan peaks.

We four, Dave Meyers, Dave Roberts, Yoshio Inukai, and I, were in high spirits as we tramped up the East Fork trail. These spirits fled as soon as we left the trail, however. Waist- and chest-high undergrowth impeded our progress and brought black thoughts to our minds about the gay old art of scrambling amongst the Chugach. Some few hours of superhuman effort brought us to a point high over the valley; we lunched once among some tender flowers, and further on below the peak, among some not-so-tender rocks encasing a creek of unknown origin. We put our camp near a sloping wall of ice, in close proximity to our route on Bashful.

The day of the climb dawned with a lazy unsureness. We were pessimistic but went on in the drizzle. We followed a buttress to a low point on the west ridge. Then we proceeded up the ridge, having found the weather to be passable. Easy ridge hopping brought us below a towering gendarme, and we had to rope up and climb around its flank. Dave Roberts led the four pitches to the other side. From there, we went on to the summit, where it was snowing and blustery. We dined, so to speak, and left after a very short stay.

Descent was managed with little trouble, although we did manage to roll rocks upon one another going down a steep snow/rock couloir. Camp was gained in a drizzle after twelve hours of climbing.

Bashful has many routes left: the north face has been done only once, and the west ridge twice.

PRE-HONEYMOON BLISS-TERS

Vin Hoeman

On the 21st of December Grace Jansen, Dave Johnston, Mairiis Kilcher, and I started up the Kachemak Bay beach from the Kilcher homestead. Grace, Dave, and I had very heavy packs as we three hoped to accomplish the first ascent of Truuli Peak, 6612', the highest point on the Kenai Peninsula. However, so much ice was drifting with the tides and piling up on the narrow beach that the going was tough right from the start, so after five miles, we looked again at the map and reconsidered the 80 miles ahead and our December 29 deadline for return. We decided to try something less expensive of energy and more assured of reward.

Peak 6532, at the other end of the Kenai Range, is the peninsula's third highest mountain and the monarch of an unnamed glacier-spawning icefield. On the 22nd, Grace, Dave, and I left our car at Portage Junction and walked up Placer Valley on the railroad. The trip in was so hampered by bad weather along that seven miles of railroad and a comparable distance up the Spencer Glacier among icefalls we could have avoided, that we were not ready to make our summit attempt until Christmas Day. The pretty crystals in the socks we'd encouraged Dave to hang outside the logan tent were the kind left by the Prince William Sound wind, not Santa's kind, but we could sort-of-see our regal objective and thought ourselves due for a weather respite, so off we went at dawn. Linked snow ramps led us easily to 5000' on the north face, but the blizzard grew rather than abating until we were forced to give up beneath the steep final wall at noon. High winds at 10 to 20 below zero whipped snow in every clothing crevice and filled our tracks the moment we left them. We blundered downward by gravity in a blind whiteout and tried to steer by compass when our sense of direction failed, but soon we mistrusted it or our ability to read it.

A bivouac was unavoidable. We chose a windtunnel, crevasse-like depression and dug a snowcave in its side to huddle in for 12 hours sitting on our snowshoes and rope, thinking of our tent no more than a mile away full of sleeping bags and food. The blizzard soon sealed the entrance so it was like a hibernation chamber or fetal triplets in the glacial womb, but without nourishing placentae, we were more apt to compare ourselves to

Scree

Gerald Rose, who perished in a crevasse on this glacier in 1951, and, if unrecovered, must be moving toward the snout at about the same rate as we. In the morning, however, we were not content to ride at glacier speed and broke from this snowy cocoon to stand shivering in the diminished storm and not-so-whiteout. The weather was not really ameliorating though and allowed us only time to locate our half-buried tent before pinning us down for another two days and two nights. This was sheer comfort by comparison, and I read T.E. Lawrence's Seven Pillars of Wisdom aloud until I was too hoarse to holler over the steady drone of the Optimus tended by ever food-minded Dave. It cleared up for our trek out, and we gave many a wistful glance back at snowplastered 6532. Beautiful, but we had "...promises to keep, and miles to go before we sleep." We walked the entire distance out on the 28th, the only traffic on the railroad being a snowplow in the wrong direction.

Ascents of major Alaskan mountains in the true winter (the period from the winter solstice to the vernal equinox) are quite rare; in fact, I know of none on any mountain exceeding 10,000 feet, and only a handful in the 6000- to 10,000-foot class. However, the sourdough ascent of McKinley's North Peak was on 3 April 1910, within 2 weeks of being in this period.

MIDWINTER NIGHT ON FLATTOP

Steffen Maagoe

The group consisting of Gary Hansen, Hans Van der Laan, Frank Nosek, Dave DeVoe, and I started from Hans' mansion at 9 p.m. One hour of warming up consisted mainly of getting our Scout out of a ditch. The climb continued and the peak was reached at midnight. The wind was blowing, and it was generally unpleasant. We slept behind a few rocks and left at five in the morning. The well-known MCA dog Violetta proved useful in testing the snow; she rode down on a big snow slab in a small avalanche, but she came back to guide us further on. Breakfast at the Van der Laans' was welcome at 7:30--then back to work.

PERIL PEAK, 7020' -- 2nd Ascent

July 10-11-12

Nick Parker

As I trudged up Eklutna Glacier, dwarfed by my awkward Kelty, my thoughts lay far ahead--on Peril Peak. For Yoshio Inukai and I planned to climb it the next day, and our route was very difficult. But the weather was beautiful, and my crampons bit with a reaffirming crunch into the ice. Yoshio and I felt as one with the land around us, and he occasionally spoke of his own mountains, the Japanese Alps. Conversation was difficult, though, so we turned to ourselves as we walked.

Below Peril Peak, the easy-to-walk-on ice degenerated into rotten, calf-deep snow. After four laborious miles, a campsite was found. We pitched the tent quietly. Yoshio left to search the route, and I sat cooking, aware of the enormous, brooding peaks around me. Alone on the glacier, I found a tranquility unknown to the lowlands. Each peak was beckoning me to come, but Peril was calling louder this time.

Yoshio's figure appeared farther up, on the preliminary slopes of the route. We were going to try to gain the south ridge at the junction of it and the west spur, go to the summit, and then descend the south ridge, over the Flatiron via rappel, and down to the glacier. I saw him returning, so I quickly finished brewing dinner. He greeted me in his own tongue, forgetting where he was. I guessed his thoughts were of home, so I answered back in a feeble Japanese. He smiled and corrected me, then taught me to say, "I'm cooking dinner" in Japanese. He told me of the rock on the wall below the ridge, "Not good, but maybe okay." Then it was time for sleep, but I couldn't, so I lost myself in the pages of an Aldous Huxley novel, and finally slumbered with my own thoughts of Utopia.

Tomorrow became today, and we ate a hurried breakfast. Rucksacks were packed with slings, pitons, a bivouac tent, our rope, and anything else we might need. We walked quickly, for at 6 a.m., it was still a little cool. We went left sharply, paralleling the spur by which the first party had climbed the peak. We reached the bottom of our route and roped up. I led the first pitches, for they were easy, requiring pitons only for anchors or belays. However, the angle steepened as we went higher, and the rock became smoother, i.e. large, loose flakes. Yoshio led for five pitches, and he constantly cursed the lousy strata. The rock was bad near the ridge, and I carefully placed a pin behind a semi-attached block for psychological protection as I stepped onto the magnificent south ridge. At this point I could lie flat and have my arms and feet hang off the edges of the ridge. It was noon; we had been climbing since 6 and still had about 1000' to go. We felt at home in our vertical environment, however, and eagerly moved up the ridge. But the belays took time, even though we used natural anchors. One scary, vertical step 60' high sticks in my memory. Soon the summit loomed overhead, and for the first time, we could move simultaneously. The last move was

very difficult, as we went out on the west face to get onto the snowpatch. I kicked steps up the slope and if I looked between my legs, I could see 1500' down on our camp. The summit was beautiful, but we had a hard time setting up the camera with the timer. Success came, however, and we could satisfy our egos with pictures at last. It was 3 p.m., so we dallied, thinking we had lots of time.

The descent proved to be very difficult. Each movement was compounded in difficulty. Our progress was slow, and we began to think of a bivouac. We passed the point where we came to the ridge and kept moving down the south ridge. After each pitch, the angle steepened, building up to the vertical step midway down the ridge called the "Platiron." When it was reached, we first fixed a rope, and I went over the edge to scout for anchor points. If there were none, I could prusik back up, but there were some, and we proceeded. We fixed six rappels to get to a thin, steep couloir. Three more led us to a long snow slope where we belayed on the snow to the base of the ridge. It was then 1 a.m., and we had one hour more to go before we reached base camp. At 2 a.m. we arrived, tired, but elated at our success on the ridge. The sun came up as we cooked, and we were content with the climb, and for a while at least, content with ourselves.

COMMENTARY

To: Editors of SCREE/MCA
From: Bob Byhre

Reference: Dec. 1966 Issue of Scree and Reference to 10 Essentials

First let me offer my congratulations on the SCREE which is being put out and tell you how much I enjoy receiving each issue.

In the December edition you pose a question under the item pertaining to 10 Essentials.

I would like to contribute my three cents worth (inflation, you know). It is my understanding that the items are grouped as: 1. Waterproof matches 2. Knife 3. Twine 4. Fire Starter 5. Sun Glasses 6. Flashlight 7. Compass and Map 8. First Aid Kit 9. Sunburn preventative 10. Extra Food and Clothing.

I don't understand the grouping of your item 10. That is-- Candle (or mittens). The reason for a candle is so that a piece about an inch long can be cut off and used for a fire starter. I get the impression that you intend for the candle to be used for warmth or to use a pair of mittens. Actually mittens are not normally included in a list of 10 Essentials because they are part of one's normal climbing equipment and should be taken along just as are one's boots. Of course the matches should be waterproof (make some by pouring paraffin into penny match boxes). Twine can be most helpful in a multitude of ways, as you know, and should be included in the list. Sunburn goop should also be in the 10. Map and compass should be together because if a person has only one of the two he may well be hard pressed to know what he is doing, not to say where has been or is going.

Thanks for the invitation to add comments. My best wishes to you all and have a good year!
Bob Byhre.

(Ed. note: Scree would benefit from additional commentary on this or other topics.)

MISCELLANIE

New and newly paid up members of MCA since the December issue: Fred and Janet Bailey, Nancy and Bill Davis, Art Davidson, Mr and Mrs Ed Fisher, Erwin C. Hoeman, Ned Lewis, Theresa Overfield, H. Ruiz Robinson, Ted Schultz, George Wichman, Harold Yeger, Peter Vlasveld.

Howard and Elinor Schuck are now back from Europe and living once again in Menlo Park, California.

Recommended survival gear for an overnight or day-long trip on a snowmobile: tent (for party), Sleeping bag with insulated pad per person, stove and gas, food (dehydrated emergency), snowshoes, hatchet, matches and candles etc., signal flares, FAA signal cards.

On Jan 6/7, 1967, four members of ARG participated in a search for four missing snowmobile travelers touring between Hope and Cooper Landing. Further information relating to this event will be published in the February Scree when the participants and would-be vic tims will have reported in detail. Nobody was damaged. Gary Hansen, ARG Chmn.

MCA members Grace Jansen and Vin Hoeman were married December 30, 1966. At the reception that evening, many MCA-ers socialized in honor of the couple.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday, Leo Hannan, Chet Hackney, Bill Babcock, and John Ireton spent some days in the Snowbird Mine region. They had aimed at Montana Peak, but the avalanches were too much for them. They stayed three nights in the Snowbird cabin and spent their days doing mostly practice stuff on ice-covered slabs behind the cabin.

Members of the Winter Expedition to McKinley currently are Gregg Blomberg, Art Davidson, Shiro Nishimae, John Edwards, George Wichman, Jacky Batkin ("la Farine"), Ray Genet, and Dave Johnston. Plans still are to leave for the mountain about January 25.

Mountain silhouette on page 1 of December Scree is the Matterhorn, 14,701', in the central Pennine Alps on the Swiss-Italian border, first climbed by Edward Whymper and party in 1865.

Grace Jansen, Vin Hoeman, and Dave Johnston spent Thanksgiving on Skyscraper above Hatcher Pass. They were there overnight.

NOTES ON THE MCA SECRETARY: Helen Wolfe...originally from Pennsylvania...met husband John in college at Pembroke/Brown...climbed enthusiastically in the Appalachians with Appalachian Mountain Club...homestead wife for three years at end of Eagle River north road ..."old-timer" member of MCA...mother of Johnny (4) and David (2)...active in MCA activity in the Chugach...first ascent of Peek-A-Boo.

Members of the MCA Centennial McKinley Expedition scheduled for the summer are now: Chet Hackney, Don Haglund, Barney Seiler, Bob Hansen, Leo Hannan, John Ireton, Gayle Nienhueser, Bill Babcock and his brother, and Grace Jansen Hoeman.

Scree is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Box 2037, Anchorage, Alaska 99501. Scree staff: Marie Lundstrom, Marge Maagoe, Callie Van der Laan, Helen Wolfe. Articles on trips and other material to appear in Scree should be sent to Marie Lundstrom, Box 4-964, Anchorage 99503, or call 277-0846 (home) or 272-0554 (wk).