

SCREE

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA
BOX 2037, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
Vol. 13, No. 1, January, 1970

JANUARY MEETING Monday, January 12 at 8:00 P.M. Ben Crawford Memorial Park, 3rd and Eagle. There will be a full program with something for everybody . . . the presentation to MCA of the proposed Chugach State Park and Recreation areas and the boundaries of the Park areas . . . the bill that will be presented to the State Legislature . . slides showing the area to be set aside and the uses of the area . . . discussion on a proposed group committee etc. for future park planning, use and care of a parks area . . . the Conservation Committee and Board have been pushing hard in the Parks and Recreation area and now we need club support in the form of approval and a resolution to send to the State Legislature . . . other items on the agenda are . . . accepting paid advertising in SCREE . . . upgrading SCREE printing, paper, etc. . . . proposed book "50 HIKES", final discussion and decisions on this publication . . . proposed cabins in the Talkeetnas (Reed Lakes and Montana Peak areas) . . . if all goes well and slides can get developed in time, there will be a surprise showing of an expedition by club members over the holidays.

CLIMBING AND HIKING SCHEDULE

January 10 (Saturday) ESKA MOUNTAIN 5680' northeast of Palmer. Coordinator: Peter Vlasveld, 754-4119 days; 272-8326 eves.

January 18 (Sunday) - Picnic on BODENBURG BUTTE with an informal gathering afterwards at Randy Renner's. The purpose of the gathering is to get acquainted and re-acquainted and discuss anything (Budda, Zeus, or whatever . . .). Sorry, no fireplace. Members and guests welcome. Call Randy at 279-1192 eves or 277-6686, ext. 242 days. A call letting him know if you are coming and number of guests will greatly facilitate the logistics.

January 24 and 25 (Saturday and Sunday) MARY'S MOUNTAIN 4895' ("30 Hikes" No. 17). Excellent view - some climbing experience required. Leader: Barry Kircher, 753-2117 days, 753-7135 eves.

February 1 (Sunday) SKYLINE PEAK behind Anchorage. Leader: Dick Snyder, 2792808 eves, 277-5415 days.

February 7 and 8 (Saturday and Sunday) UPPER RUSSIAN LAKE ("30 Hikes" No. 29). A good hike, snowshoe or cross-country ski trip for everybody to participate in. If time is short, a stop can always be made at Lower Russian. Coordinators: Dave and Carol DeVoe, 333-5492.

FUTURE PLANS

A club sponsored expedition to MT. GOODE AND MARCUS BAKER is planned for late February or early March. Leader: Chuck Pease, 752-0209.

Annual BYRON PEAK climb will be scheduled in March.

Annual trip to SNOWBIRD MINE will be scheduled in February.

Future WINTER MOUNTAINEERING SCHOOLS on winter climbing, survival, and mountain safety will be scheduled in February, March, and April.

A future program: arrangements are being made for HOLUBAR of Boulder, Colorado, to bring sample equipment, etc., for a presentation on the latest gear . . . hopefully in March.

If you have a favorite peak or hike you would like to lead or climb, now is the time to make it known for the 1970 climbing and hiking schedule. Call Chuck Pease, 752-0209, the chairman of the committee.

CROW PEAK 5953' (Anchorage A-6)

October 25, 1969

Chuck Pease

For the second straight weekend the weather was just great. Saturday morning Barry Kircher, Steve Hackett, Woden Von Norden and I got an early start for Crow Pass. Odin sacked out on the back seat most of the way. By ten o'clock we had dumped our gear at the old cabin and headed for Crow Glacier. Upon reaching Crystal Lake we were pleasantly surprised to see an "A" frame Forest Service cabin. This two floor building was completed October 4, 1969. It has a stove fed by a fuel line from three 55-gallon drums outside, a burn carrel and an outhouse. Of course, we had to move our gear here before proceeding with the climb.

At the foot of Crow Glacier, we looked back to see other people arriving at the cabin and Steve decided he'd better return to babysit since Odin is only ten months old. Barry and I stayed to the right of Crow Glacier and then went up the easy East Face of Crow Peak. There was about one foot of snow present and we were on crampons most of the way. Beautiful clear skies in all directions made the view fantastic. The only climb in the summit register were the first ascent by four MCA members on October 23, 1966, and Vin and Grace's West Ridge climb in 1967. We started down the North Ridge, but finally went onto the East Face again. This was a wonderful climb and took only $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours round trip from the cabin.

Bob and Helga Byhre write of their kayak tour to the Northwest Territories

Travelling in a kayak is the easy way to "backpack" and see many miles of beautiful country. We traveled down the Ft. Nelson River in nice sunshine - much brush on the sides of the river; in fact, the country would be impenetrable on foot. Much sign of wildlife, but we didn't see any until we got to the Nahanni. The Liard is impressive - very lovely scenery, a wide, wide riverbed with lovely gravel bars, beautiful views of distant mountains and several interesting trapping cabins along the way. From Ft. Liard we were airlifted to Rabbit Kettle Lake in the McKenzie Mountains, just off the Logan Mountain Range-- a most impressive range of spires that resembles very much the Cathedral Peaks north of Rainy Pass. Found two write-ups in the Alpine Journal, 1961 and 1966, where Bill Buckingham had been there. The Logan Mountains are very worthwhile for those climbers who are proficient in steep rock. Also, the flying charges are reasonable, not as high as in Alaska. We employed an outfit from Watson Lake (B. C. Yukon Air Service) and we flew in an Otter floatplane that packed all five of us and all the boats and gear in a single trip. The charge comes to \$110 an hour, which isn't bad when you have so many people sharing it. If we were high angle rock climbers we'd go back to get some of the peaks -- just fantastic and very, very pretty.

Unfortunately we were besieged by very bad weather (in August) as an unusually early fall brought heavy rain, snow, and freezing temperatures. We had planned to climb some of the lower peaks, but continuous rain kept us confined to the river valley. But the scenery is superb and wildlife abounds and it was a great $3\frac{1}{2}$ week trip. In heavy rain we visited Virginia Falls, 380 ft. high and believed to be the largest in North America.

HURDYGURDY MOUNTAIN 5965'

November 9, 1969
A First Ascent (Anchorage A-7)

Grace Hoeman

"What's a hurdygurdy?" I asked when I first heard the name, and it was explained to me. In case you didn't know, it's called a "draai-orgel" in Dutch. The crank-shaped summit ridge gave Hurdygurdy its name.

The time of spectacular sunsets is with us again, but, alas, also the time of short daylight hours. One can select big targets and have a good chance to fail or one can look at lesser objectives and be pleased and satisfied with an occasional success. Hurdygurdy qualified as a lesser objective. It had been tried in April 1967 by Bill Babcock and his McKinley training group, but bad weather turned the men back.

I called Bill to make a date for Hurdygurdy, but unforeseen circumstances prevented him from accompanying us. Ned Lewis, April Allen and I set out on a snowy November Saturday morning, our gear and skis piled high in Redback. We drove way up on the South Fork of Eagle River Road until Redback refused to go farther. There was not enough snow so we left our skis in the car, followed the high valley trail to Eagle Lake. It looked solidly frozen, but I let Ned try it out first, my ice axe hooked onto his trouser waistband. He didn't go under, so we crossed the lake.

At the head of the lake, we encountered numbers of game and enjoyed watching them with binoculars. A miniature cottonwood grove provided an ideal campsite. The night was cold and we warmed ourselves with a hot meal in front of a willow wood fire, expertly kindled by Ned.

All three squeezed into my Salewa quonset hut-type tent, a present of the 1969 German Brooks Range expedition leader, and spent a sleepless night. This provoked us sufficiently to charge up Hurdygurdy's south face "diretissima" style Sunday morning. Steep gullies between rock buttresses brought us quickly to the summit. Eagle's majestic contours made us feel small but the good view of its ridges from Hurdygurdy helped us plan for future great deeds on it. We took an interesting long snow gully back to camp and arrived at faithful Redback before nightfall.

In wintertime, Hurdygurdy should be an enjoyable ski trip, but don't go "direttissima" if you want to avoid avalanches. For then, I'd suggest climbing up the unnamed valley west of the summit to the col and follow the ridge east-southeast to the summit.

IXTACCIHUATL, Mexico 17,342'

June 17-19, 1969
(Sleeping Lady or White Woman)

Bill Babcock

"Ixta," as it is called even by Mexicans who also have trouble pronouncing the name, is much more difficult than Popo. In a terrible storm a few years ago the mountain claimed eleven lives of men who chose to ascend to search for a small hut in a wild storm rather than descend to the security of the forest only a few hours below them.

Ixta consists of several summits, and I suspect that our own "Sleeping Lady" across the inlet would resemble Ixta favorably if it were 10,000' higher. Ixta is not climbed very frequently as the true summit is the last of a series of high altitude humps forming the hips, breast, and head of the "sleeping lady."

One parks his car at the toes, so to speak. Many people make the mistake of ascending a good trail up towards a significant sub-summit leading to the main body of the sleeping lady. This is a serious error as time is lost and the route difficult to correct this mistake. Departing the parking lot in darkness about 4:00 AM, one descends another good trail into a valley with fresh water, trees, alpine cattle and a sense that to climb a mountain one should be going up instead of down. Soon one changes his thinking and starts ascending the opposite side of the valley towards a prominent buttress resembling a castle wall. Cairns mark the way and footing is solid. Water cannot be found above the valley and it is wise to take plenty with you. An alternate route is discovered above the buttress traversing the body and ascending to the neck of the sleeping lady. This route exposes one to continually falling rock and ice and should be attempted very early in the morning. The main route continues upward towards the hips, passing two huts at 13,800' and arriving at another hut at 15,700' at the base of the first series of endless sub-summits. A short rock climb brings you to the sub-summit or hips. Only then do you realize how far you have to go to reach the true summit. Numerous glaciers must be crossed and Rainier-like

crevasses abound with sickly sulfur fumes coming forth. Great care must be taken crossing these crevasses and I was very unhappy to be where I was alone. Several hours later I dipped into the neck and began the final ascent to the head of the sleeping lady. The glaciers are like a violent sea suddenly frozen solid in a fraction of a second, so that the "waves" of glacier ice must be climbed over. Some of the waves were more than 6' high and have to be cut through with an axe. Finally one reaches the apparent true summit, only to find that another glacier must be crossed to reach the highpoint of the mountain. Another hour passes before one stands on the edge of overhanging ice with a vertical drop measuring in the thousands of feet. The return is agony as one is descending and ascending several times before returning to the hut at 15,700' and an easy slope to the parking lot.

MCA Profile: President RANDY RENNER

Born and raised in Des Moines, Iowa...Schooling includes...Iowa State-architecture...Drake University-business and marketing...C.R.E.I.-electronic engineering...now a senior engineer (communications and electronics) at Federal Electric Corporation here in Anchorage...has one son, 2½ years old...came to Alaska in July of 1966 looking for something better than Iowa...has climbed in the Talkeetna, Chugach, Kenai, and Kaiyuh Mountains...hobbies include writing...climbing...hiking...cross-country skiing...flying...and young ladies (not necessarily in that order).

BITS AND PIECES

A Correspondence Committee is genuinely needed. See Randy Renner at the January meeting. The club is receiving quite a few requests for information from various individuals and organizations in the Lower 48, as well as foreign countries. The Board members are currently tied down with activities in ARG, conservation societies and the Parks and Recreation programs and really could use some additional help.

FOR SALE:

1. Skis Head Standard - Marker bindings, good condition - \$80.00
2. Ski Boots - (used three times) Rieker buckle boots, size 8 medium,- \$30.00

Karen Courtright, 277-3843 after 4:30 pm.

Volume 8 of The American Alpine Journal containing issues from 1951 to 1953 is missing from the Hoeman Library. If you have borrowed this volume, would you please return it to the owner rather soon.

John and Betty Ireton are the happy parents of a baby boy, Douglas, born December 24.

It's a small world indeed when MCA'ers meet accidentally in the remoteness of Nepal . . . Gayle and Helen Nienhueser were wending their way on a trail between Lukla and Namche Bazaar when they heard Lotte Kramer's familiar "Yoo Hoo!" Lotte spent a day in Anchorage recently on her return trip to California. An account of the Nienhueser's adventures in Nepal will appear in a future issue of SCREE.

SCREE is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, which is affiliated with the Anchorage Department of Parks and Recreation. Editor: Liska Snyder. Typist: Marty Corcoran. Staff: Carol DeVoe, Joanne Merrick, April Allen, Chuck Pease. Please send material for the February SCREE to Liska Snyder, 2806 Alder Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99504, by January 23.

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