

SCREE

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA, P. O. Box 2037, Anchorage, Alaska 99501
May 1970 - Vol. 13, No. 5

MAY MEETING . . . Monday, May 11, 1970 at 7:30 P.M. . . . Ben Crawford Memorial Park (r entrance) 3rd and Eagle . . . Steve Hackett has prepared a program on Mountain Safety. The program is a synopsis of and results of the Seattle meeting of the Mountain Rescue Council last winter.

MAY BOARD MEETING . . . A Board meeting of all officers, directors, and committee chair men will precede the membership meeting on May 11. The Board meeting will start at 6:45 P.M.

CLIMBING AND HIKING SCHEDULE

May 2 (Saturday) Climb and hike in little PETERS CREEK area. (This is a tentative area only and hike may be changed.) Leaders: Gayle and Helen Nienhueser, 277-9330.

May 9-10 (Saturday and Sunday) Ski trip into the Talkeetnas. Area will depend on snow conditions. Leader: Bob Smith, 333-8852.

May 17 (Sunday) A fairly difficult rock or rock/ice climb where the weather is good (Anybody for Mexico?). Leader: Nick Parker, 277-2030 (home) or 272-2641 (days).

May 23-24 (Saturday and Sunday) INDIAN VALLEY hike. This is an excellent family type outing, but there are also good peaks in the area. One or two day outing into the proposed Chugach State Park. This will be a joint Sierra Club/MCA trip. Leader: Sharon Cissna, 272-0858 (home), or 277-0124 (days).

May 29-31 (Friday thru Sunday) LOST LAKE area on the Kenai Peninsula. Six mile trail with excellent views of Mount Ascension (5810') and Resurrection Peaks. For those wishing to climb, Mt. Ascension rises SW of the lake. Also a good hike for families. Leader: Randy Renner, 279-1192 (home) or 277-6686 (days).

June 6-7 (Saturday and Sunday) CROW PASS area. Peak climbed will be determined by the ability of the party. Trip will be dependent on road and snow conditions. This is an easily accessible area for families and you can limit it to one day if you wish. Leader to be announced at the May meeting.

June 13-14 (Saturday and Sunday) Mountaineering School (Intermediate and Advance Rock Climbing).

June 20 (Saturday) Annual FLATTOP SLEEP-IN on the shortest night of the year.

June 27 (Saturday) INDIAN VALLEY trail improvement. Families welcomed. Work party to try to clear and mark trail up Indian Valley to the pass. Leader: Sharon Cissna, 277-0124 (days) or 272-0858 (home).

June 30 (Tuesday) INDIAN VALLEY trail improvement. Meet at Safeway corner of 9th and Gamble at 6:00 P.M.

July 3-5 (Friday thru Sunday) MONTANA PEAK in the Talkeetnas. This would be a second ascent. A good climb.

August 15-16 (Saturday and Sunday) GLACIER SCHOOL!

August 29-30 (Saturday and Sunday) PIONEER PEAK!

If you have a special climb you would like to try or a certain area you wish to visit, contact - Chuck Pease at 752-0209 (days) or 753-6468 (nights). People are also needed who are willing to lead club trips.

There is a lot more climbing being done than the above schedule would indicate. Contact individual MCA members for more information on what they are doing. And please, please no matter what you do write it up for SCREE.

APRIL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

At the April 13 meeting, Sharon Cissna reported that the Chugach State Park bill has passed by the Senate, amended by the House, and returned to the Senate for action. (bill passed since the April meeting.) Parks and Recreation would like assistance in planning trails, and Sharon suggested that this might be a summer project. There was some discussion, but no decision reached. We had one film on the Grand Tetons, and an aborted film on the Ski Doo --- that is, Yellowstone Park. All members were reminded that we have to be out of the building by 10:00 P.M. and so the meeting time will continue to be 7:30 P.M.

An Executive Committee meeting followed, with some discussion of trips, cabins, and repairs. There will be some information forthcoming on liability and release forms, and discussion of the responsibilities of the leader.

NOTICE

A practice that is becoming increasingly prevalent on organized club outings is the younger members, in an apparent effort to prove themselves to others, are running up the mountain ahead of the main climbing party. By fragmenting the climbing party and showering the main group with rocks they are creating an unsafe condition for everyone concerned, including themselves. If this practice persists, the offending member will be escorted to a safe position on the mountain and asked to remain until the party returns. The offenders will then be asked to refrain from participating in Club outings until they can demonstrate a respect for other people and a knowledge of proper climbing etiquette.

. . . Randy Renner, MCA President . . .

FLAT-FOOTED MOUNTAINEER

Hey, you big flat-footed good for nethin' mountaineer. Don't look over your shoulder I'm talking to YOU!! SCREE is YOUR newsletter, isn't it?? Well, get off your lazy rear and make it even more YOURS by contributing! Other of us flat-footed mountaineers like to know what YOU are doing, whether it be hiking, ski trips, snow shoeing, or

climbing - BUT, how are we going to know if you don't write about it? Why not draw straws or whatever before you start on your next trip and appoint one member of your party to write something for SCREE. You don't have to be a Hemingway to write - if I can rattle my dusty attic to write this, anyone can write!!! So pick up that rusty pen and write. We want to hear from YOU!

. . . Marty Corcoran

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR "50 WILDERNESS ROUTES"

This summer is the big effort to get the research for the "Hike Book" done. Hopefully the sun and clouds will cooperate to give us good photographic weather when we need it. With our luck this will be the rainiest summer on record. But raincoats or no, one of the selling points of the book will be the photographs in it.

I've just returned from an intensive several days of conferences with THE MEN (the ones who write the books and technical data) at Eastman Kodak in Rochester, New York. The photographic work they do is magnificent, even starting from 35mm. film. I was delighted with their results knowing that most of the MCA photographers prefer to take 35mm. slides. So I'm revising our photographic requests to include Kodachrome slides. The slides must be extremely sharp - this means extra attention given to focus. To minimize camera movement, use an exposure of 1/250 sec. or shorter when hand holding. Slower speeds will normally show camera movement to some degree. On the whole, however, we're better off with 2 1/4 inch. or 35mm. black and white negatives taken at 1/250 second.

When you take the picture, consider light direction (sun coming from 90 degrees right or left is better than that coming from directly behind you). Use a lens shade to protect the lens from stray light. Include people doing things, but don't make it a portrait of a specific person. Take close-ups of camp (Be sure it's neat!), flowers, animals, etc.

I'll be happy to meet with you to look over your photographs and/or answer your photographic questions. Drop me a note - Nancy Simmerman, Alyeska Village, Girdwood, Alaska 99587 - or call 783-4435. Photographs (carefully labelled with your name and address) may also be left with Helen Nienhueser, 2561 Lovejoy Drive, Anchorage, or with Helen Nienhueser or Dick Snyder at the MCA meetings.

If we accept a photograph for serious consideration in the book, we'll give you an 8 X 10 black and white enlargement. All slides and negatives will, of course, be returned as soon as possible. Photographs published in the book will carry a credit line to the photographer.

. . . Nancy Simmerman . . .

UP-DATED DATA FOR "50 WILDERNESS ROUTES"

In addition to photographs we need up-dated data on the proposed trips. Even if the trip was originally included in "30 Hikes" it needs to be rechecked because things about it, particularly access, may have changed.

We have drawn up a tentative list of about 65 trips from which we will make a final selection of 50 trips to be included in the book. The area covered is basically that part of Southcentral Alaska which is accessible by road. It includes, in addition to the Anchorage area, the Kenai, the fringes of the Talkeetnas, and the Valdez-Chitna-Nebesna area. A few trips not accessible by road may be included; definitely included will be ski and canoe trips.

Copies of this list will be available at the next MCA meeting. It is by no means in final form. If you know of other trips which you think should be included, please tell us.

We need help in collecting this data from anyone who is interested. Data sheets which tell you exactly what kind of information is needed will also be available at the meeting. If you would like to help please call me at 277-9330 or see me at the May meeting.

. . . Helen Nienhueser . . .

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BEGINNING MOUNTAINEERING SCHOOL

April 22 Theoretical Session, AMU Bat Cave
April 25 Practice Session, Flattop
April 26 Clinb, 4155' on McHugh Ridge - *McHugh Pk Ridge*
Instructors: Wednesday - Steve Hackett, Art Ward, Barry Kircher, Randy Renner
Saturday & Sunday - Barry Kircher and Randy Renner (Special Thanks are due Wendell Oderkirk for filling in for Barry on Sunday.)

Many thanks to Ron Linder at AMU for providing a nice warm, dry area for the Theoretical session - we even had music, though my ears will never be the same, and a comfortable mat on the floor. Steve opened the session with the basics on climbing, safety, and attitude. Barry Kircher brought his pack loaded for a semi-expedition and commenced to unload the pack and explain what each piece of equipment was and what it was for - the last we heard Barry was still trying to repack. He claimed his pack shrank during the session! Art Ward took over and explained all about ice axes and crampons, including all of the Brand X equipment. As usual I brought up the rear and talked about ropes and knots, complete with a demonstration on an official 13-turn hangman's knot. This knot is to become the new leader knot for leaders that go to the top. After the explanation on knots, we split into groups to practice knot tying and answer questions. The session was adjourned around 9:00 P.M.

Saturday Morning - where is everybody?? Twenty-six at Wednesdays session and only ten now?! Barney sure does make a lot of money on people who go to theoretical session but don't show up for practice - what a waste - hope they show up for future sessions. Anyway, so much for dissappointments. At 8:00 A.M. we took off for Glen Alps anticipating the roadblock, dogs, guns, tanks, and an irrate homesteader. When we arrived at the confrontation area - what! - nothing! - we drove right through to the Bach house where we parked and headed for the West Buttress of Flattop. Halfway up we found a nice snow slope and started with the rope and crampons - a session on the ice axe and ice axe arrest. Off to the summit - a short exercise in kick-stepping and step cutting on the way up and lunch on the top. The weather was beautiful. The view started to the North with the Big One and all the way South to Mt. Ilianna. After lunch we had a session in belaying and rock climbing. The best was yet to come - Glissading!!! The gully on the West side of Flattop was perfect for the occasion and everybody took advantage - even a few went back up to try again. Back to the cars by 4:00 P.M. and the end of a most enjoyable day.

Sunday - the day to test the skills we learned yesterday. The goal for the day was to be McHugh Peak, but our first problem was finding a route to the Stewart Homestead. Forget it if you want to drive to the Stewart place - right now the easiest way is to get on Golden View Drive off of Rabbit Creek Road and rather than take the sharp left called for in "30 Hikes" continue South and go to the end of the road near Potter Creek Park the cars at the fallen tree and procede on foot, veering to the left, until you reach the power line. Follow the powerline (single pole and 2 wires) up the hill until you can start up the valley on the road to the Stewart Place. (From the parking area the road is not more than 500 yards.) We walked along the road to the Stewart Place and then across the wind packed snow toward the head of the valley. The beautiful weather was fast beginning to deteriorate, the wind was increasing and tired muscles were beginning to have an effect on the speed of the group. The slope started to get steeper and the snow was hard and wind blown, so on with the crampons and the rope. Whirl winds and snow plumes were beginning to show toward the top, indicative of the high winds. Up the gully and toward the top - man was it ever blowing - 30 MPH started with gusts to 50 MPH and in the whirlwinds you just laid down. I took the direct route with a nice scramble of 50-60 feet with plenty of snow, ice, and rock. Found the top of point 4155' and went over to bring the rest of the group up the comfortable east ridge. Five of the original 26 on the summit - Beth Blattenberg, Wendell Oderkirk, Andsen, Val Stuve and Paul Metz. By now the wind was miserable, so we started our descent and picking up others on the way down. As in each experience we go through learn some new skills as well as something about ourselves - I'm sure this was no

exception for everyone who participated - instructors included.

Those who participated in the school were: Betty Ivanoff, John and Helen Nelson, Wendell Oederkirk, David Hawley, Steve Jones, Les Baird, Thain Ramley, Beth Blattenberg, Ken Andsen, Val Stuve, Dave Lappi, Wesley Reed, John Clord, Marty Corcoran, Paul Metz, and Richard Roberts.

. . . Randy Renner . . .

The Alaska Rescue Group presents . . .

* FOOD FOR THOUGHT *

"High proficiency in the sport is only attainable when a natural aptitude is combined with long years of practice, and not without some, perhaps much, danger to life and limb. Happily, the faithful climber usually acquires this skill at an age when the responsibilities of life have not yet laid hold upon him, and when he may fairly claim some latitude in matters of this sort. On the other hand he gains a knowledge of himself, a love of all that is most beautiful in nature, and an outlet such as no other sport affords for stirring energies of youth: gains for which no price is, perhaps, too high. It is true the great ridges sometimes demand their sacrifice, but the mountaineer would hardly forgo his worship though he knew himself to be the destined victim. But happily to most of us the great brown slabs bending over into immeasurable space, the lines and curves of the wind-moulded cornice, the delicate undulations of the fissured snow, are old and trusted friends, ever luring us to health and fun and laughter, and enabling us to bid a sturdy defiance to all the ills that time and life oppose."

. . . A. F. Mummery, My Climbs in the Alps and Caucasus

UPPER RUSSIAN LAKE

February 13-15

Dave and Carol DeVoe

February has always been a good month for ski touring. There's usually enough snow by then and the weather is not extremely cold. So after we agreed to lead a group on skis in to Upper Russian Lake for the weekend, we decided to make it a three-day trip for ourselves. We planned a leisurely day at the Forest Service cabin with perhaps some ice-fishing and exploring before greeting the others when they arrived Saturday night. We'd have hot tea ready when they slogged in after their 12-mile trek from the Russian River Campground.

Such were our plans; the facts were that the snow conditions had greatly deteriorated by the time we arrived at the campground Friday morning, following several days of unseasonably warm weather and rain. Water ran across the road that leads to the new trail head. The trail, well packed by snow machines, was in tolerable good condition to begin with, which prompted us to continue on. Ashes mixed with slushy snow seemed to act as a wax remover as we poled through the sorrowful black sticks of the fire-ruined section of forest near the Russian River Falls.

There were other ugly reminders of man's recent passage over this otherwise beautiful trail - litter - dropped by winter travelers.

Where the trail led out of the heavy woods and along the slope to the left of Lower Russian Lake, we encountered yet more water running on the trail from seeps in the hillside. Then we were forced out onto the lake surface to detour around some recent avalanche debris that covered the trail. There was overflow on the lake to avoid, and we observed some of this water sucking down through a hole in the ice near the shore.

Due to our late start and slow progress we were still by the Lower Lake when we realized it would soon be dark and we needed to set up some sort of shelter. While looking for a campsite in the woods, Dave spotted a grouse which he shot and we later cooked it in foil in our campfire for dinner. Our camp shelter was set opposite the up-ended roots of a large wind-fallen spruce. The warmth of the fire was reflected toward the shelter. We hung our water soaked boots near the fire by the roots of the tree in hopes to dry them some by morning. It felt good to crawl into bed on a bough mattress that night.

I In the morning our first visitors were a cow moose and her calf strolling by a hundred feet from camp. We started out that morning toward the Upper Lake, but left the trail and wasted about 45 minutes looking for it. There were several downed trees across the trail at this point and after awhile we decided not to continue, but turned back. At the avalanche area we met John and Joanne Merrick, Tony Bockstahler, Roger C. Barbara Winkley and Betty and Don Cornelius on their way in. After talking for awhile continued back toward the car while John, Joanne, Tony and Roger skied on for a couple miles before turning back. Barbara, Betty and Don were going to ice fish there for an hour and then return.

Even though the goal of the Upper Lake was not reached, this would make a very three-day trip under better snow conditions and we hope to try it again.

BITS AND PIECES

The Marcus Baker Expedition was stopped in base camp by a five day storm and never got above 8500'. The complete story is being written by an out-of-town member of the expedition and will appear in the June issue of SCREE.

Most MCA'ers received a letter and an affidavit from Glenn M. Clarke concerning the Chena Valley road. Additional copies of the letter and affidavit will be made available at the May meeting for those who did not receive one. All MCA'ers are urged to fill out their affidavit and MAIL IT!! Let's help keep the road open to public use.

NOTICE TO SCREE CONTRIBUTORS!!

Liska Snyder will be returning (Thank Goodness!!!) in mid-May and will take over her duties as editor starting with the June issue of SCREE. All future articles should be addressed to Liska at 2806 Alder Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99504.

SCREE is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, which is affiliated with the Anchorage Department of Parks and Recreation. Editor: Marty Corcoran. Staff: Carol DeVoe, Joanne Merrick, April Allen, Chuck Pease. Please send material for the June SCREE to Liska Snyder, 2806 Alder Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99504 by May 25.

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