

  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA, P.O. Box 2037, Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
August 1970 - Vol. 13, No. 8

AUGUST MEETING . . . TUESDAY, August 11 . . . 7:30 P.M. at Ben Crawford Memorial Park (rear entrance), corner of 3rd and Eagle . . . Important meeting as it will be necessary to pick a new meeting time and/or place. Rod Wilson will show his excellent slides from a recent trip to Africa. Also there is sure to be much talk about McKinley since three MCA members recently reached the summit on three separate climbing parties.

#### CLIMBING AND HIKING SCHEDULE

August 8-9 (Saturday and Sunday) DEVILS PASS on the Kenai Peninsula. This is the highest point on the Resurrection Trail and is located ten miles in from the Seward Highway. It is not a climb, but just a good hike, if the weather cooperates. There is a cabin near the pass, but don't count on it's being available. Meet at Sear's parking lot on Saturday at 7 A.M. Leader: Bill Stivers 277-2869 (Evenings).

August 12 (Wednesday Evening) Glacier School Theoretical Session from 7 to 9 P.M. in the AMU Bat Cave (basement of Student Union). Bring: 20' of 1" nylon webbing, 2 carabiners (1 locking), 2 ten foot  $\frac{1}{4}$ " or  $\frac{3}{8}$ " goldline rope for prussik slings, matches and adhesive tape/ Instructors: Hans Metz, Dave Johnston and Steve Hackett. Phone: 344-6215 after 5.

August 15-16 (Saturday and Sunday) GLACIER SCHOOL SESSION. Eklutna Glacier, Chugach Mts. Meet at Sear's Parking Lot, N.E. corner mall at 6:30 A.M. Sat. morning. Bring: ice axe, crampons (i.e. ones that fit your boots), warm clothing, wool or nylon overpants, gloves, nylon webbing or chest harness, prussik slings, 2 carabiners (1 locking) and overnight gear and food. Group will stay in Pichlers Perch (MCA Cabin) Saturday night. Work party may attempt to put the metal siding on the cabin. Instructors: Hans Metz, Grace Roeman, Steve Hackett and any other MCA volunteers. Remember all personnel attending an MCA school must be paid up MCA members. Any questions phone: 344-6215 after 5:30 P.M.

August 22-23 (Saturday and Sunday) This is YOUR weekend to take a friend climbing and to write it up for SCREE.

August 28-30 (Saturday and Sunday) Pioneer Peak. Hopefully Fred Cady will be back in town to lead this again as he did (?) last year. Before you sign up for this trip be sure to read page 3 of the October 1969 SCREE. Leader: Fred Cady (or Chuck Pease) 753-6468.

September 5-7 (Saturday, Sunday and Monday) Labor Day Weekend. Where will we go? Bring your ideas to the August meeting and we'll decide.

If you plan a trip and would like to have company along call Chuck Pease at 756-1153 (days) or 753-6468 (nights) so we can put it in SCREE.

SCREE is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska which is affiliated with the Anchorage Department of Parks & Recreation. Editor: Liska Snyder. Ass't Editor: Chuck Pease. Staff: Carol DeVoe, Joanne Merrick. Please send material for the September SCREE to Liska Snyder, 2806 Alder Dr., Anchorage, Alaska 99504 by Monday August 31st.

The Alaska Rescue Group presents . . .

\* FOOD FOR THOUGHT \*

(i.e. an article to fill space and inspire thought)

WHY DO PEOPLE CLIMB? - Fosco Maraini

Some people have climbed for money (Chamoniards after De Saussure's prize), Sherpas-15 of them needed to carry the coins to pay the other 500 in a gigantic Japanese expedition), some climb for fame (Bourrit), some for advancement of science (De Saussure), others for home and country (Carrel), or because they "like that sort of thing" (Shipton), because mountains "are there" (Mallory), or to "knock off the bastards" (Hillary). It is also possible to climb mountains for the mystical experiences they seem to confer (Wills on the Wetterhorn, Tichy on Cho Oyu).

Styles considers the "love of adventure" and the "subtler motive of domination" to be the chief driving forces behind all voyages of discovery, desert journeys and mountain ascents. "The lords of the Earth", he adds, "cannot feel that they truly possess their estate while there remains some corner of the arctic wastes, some lofty summit, still defying the tread of human feet. Man has to prove himself master of all the intricacies and rugosities on the surface of this world". I think this is perfectly true and very well put. It also, explains the quest for the Moon, eventually for other planets and satellites of the solar system, now that the Earth has become a somewhat restricted estate.

Yet, it seems to me, the ultimate secret is not entirely unveiled. "Enumerate the parts of a carriage and you still have not explained what a carriage is", a Chinese saying goes. The motives of adventure and domination explain why mountains should be climbed once - the first time. Then again by all possible faces, ridges, couloirs, and overhangs- the first time. Finally in all seasons, under all imaginable conditions- the first time. But when human feet tread on every square inch of man's estate, why do it again? Clearly it is not only a question of adventure and domination, but a question of love; we are with a sort magnetic, irrational, irresistible attraction emanating from the mountains themselves, a secret and deeply rewarding link which unties man and crag, man and snow, man and sky, man and wind.

Such love is of a very special nature. Not only does it demand extremely hard work, but much risk and- often- willingness to lose one's life. Danger is always there. The greatest masters have been known to make a fatal step in the silliest of places (Solleder, Comici, Lachenal, not to mention Rand Herron who was killed on the great Pyramid of Egypt on his return from Nanga Parbat). If one, two, ten people do something risky which is strictly speaking unnecessary, such as climbing, they may be considered aberrant or mad; but when these people become legion belong to all ages, come from all classes, and from many different countries, we are dealing with something that cannot be laughed or smiled away. An explanation is required setting bare the deepest roots of motivation.

The first fact which strikes me, in such a context, is that men seem to have gradually expressed love, not hatred, of mountains. Even a superficial and indirect acquaintance with Indian literature shows us that the Himalayas have constantly been objects of wonder, worship, supreme inspiration and since earliest time mountains have been not only objects of a somewhat animistic cult, but sources of poetic inspiration and philosophical meditation. As for Japan, there we find an even deeper, - and certainly more lyrical - feeling for nature, due in part to the influence of the ancient Shinto and Buddhism religions. The birth of mountaineering is therefore not to be considered a curious isolated episode, but the outcome of much vaster spiritual developments; a chapter in the history of ideas.

In particular, mountaineering is connected with new interest in nature, detectable in the West since the of Leonardo, with the birth and development of science, with the retreat of theology from a dominant position, with a general shift of emphasis from transcendental to human values, with the "return to nature" movement and with romanticism. It is also connected, for good and for bad, with the typical aspect of our times, competitive nationalism.

If mountaineering, as a social and historical event, can thus be situated and at least partly explained, what about the individual? How is a historical necessity to be translated into terms of emotions and personal experience? I well remember ascending a minor virgin peak, some years ago, with only one thought in my mind, to get there before a rival party from a neighbouring city. And who has not climbed mountains to see the view, to get some exercise, to add a name to a list to pass a day with a girl friend, to take photographs, to collect flowers, fossils or minerals? Yet there are some climbs and I like to think of them as significant ones which leave us with memories of a most special intimacy with trees and water, snow and rocks, sky, clouds or wind.

In this context a climber may be described as someone who has, at least partially, found himself a new and deeper statement of man's relationship with nature. Let me repeat Tichy's words on Cho Oyu: "Snow, sky, the wind and myself were an indivisible and divine whole." Or those of Rebuffat on a wall in the alps: "The man who bivouacs becomes one with the mountain." The bliss felt in such moments is not something arbitrary or freakish, but the fulfilment of a deep urge born from our particular Western predicament.

. . . . Introduction to On Top of the World - Showell Styles

MOUNT MARCUS BAKER 13,176'

June 6-8, 1970

Bob Smith

Members: Pat Freeny, Wendell Oderkirk, Bob Smith

June 6 - Weather perfect. 2:00 p.m. all members informed. Smith gets off work at 7:00 p.m. Alyeska Air Service 180 Cessna takes off at 8:00 P.M. Arrive at Knik Glacier, 8,500' at 9:45 p.m. and immediately start packing toward peak. Pack 1½ miles, losing some altitude, but regaining to 8,600'. Place base camp - Jap tent and sack out.

June 7 - 8:30 a.m. set out for peak. Winding our way through open crevasse field to large plateau at 10,000'. Freeny decides to wait while Smith and Oderkirk try for summit. Some fancy snow bridge crossings and a moderate ice slope brought us to a plateau 1,000' below the summit. Moderate to steep snow and ice finds us on crusty, windy summit at 8:30 p.m. Pictures taken to record this fourth ascent were taken. 12:30 p.m. all were back at camp. Sixteen hours of continuous climbing behind us, and all feeling like Rice Krispies from the intense sun. Weather fantastic.

June 8 - Broke camp at 11:00 to return to plane pickup point. Arrive 2:30 p.m. with beginning cloud formation. At 6:00 p.m. snow socked in. Fun and games continued until Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. An unsuccessful take off attempt found Oderkirk and Smith remaining until Wednesday, as ice and snow conditions allowed only one man out on Tues.

GRANITE PEAK 6729' (Third Ascent)

June 6, 1970

Chuck Pease

As you drive north to Palmer one Talkeetna peak stands out higher than its neighbors. This is Granite Peak, located just north of Sutton. Vin Hoeman and Scott Hamilton made the first ascent on the 18th and 19th of August 1962. Six years elapsed before Bill Babcock and Hans Van der Laan made the second ascent on the 19th and 20th of October 1968. Both parties camped high on the mountain and climbed via the southwest ridge and west side. Vin and Scott descended the southwest face.

Since the summer of 1969 I had often looked at Granite and thought about the feasibility of a one day climb via the east ridge. In October five of us camped at 3700' and looked at possible routes, but a snow storm the following day threatened to trap the Glacier Rat at the top of the mining roads, so we retreated and most forgot about Granite. May 9, 1970 saw Bob Spurr, Nick Parker and myself back at Granite's foot. But for some reason we elected to do Vista instead. The next week I returned and climbed the east ridge to 5400', stopping at the foot of a steep snow couloir due to avalanche conditions.

Saturday, June 6, I returned. The Glacier Rat was able to get to the top of the mine roads again, but in wetter conditions it would probably take four-wheel drive to get this far. It was two in the afternoon when I left the car and followed the

old road and excellent moose trails to the right side of Granite. I followed the skyline east ridge and then went up the snow couloir which ran from 5400' to 6400'. Climbing around a few gendarmes I reached the summit at 8:45 p.m. The remains of a cairn were there, along with an empty C-ration can and the quarter left by Bill Babcock. There was no sign of the plastic cottage cheese register that Vin had left 8 years earlier; probably the victim of some hungry animal or strong winds. Whenever possible you should carry a register with you and try not to leave empty food containers as registers. I rebuilt the cairn and left a plastic bottle as a register, adding another quarter to it. I returned down a different couloir and it was necessary to climb past several waterfalls changing couloir a couple of times. I was back to the car by 12:30 a.m., three hours after leaving the summit. I carried crampons but they are not needed on this route at this time of year.

This is a beautiful peak and there is no reason why it should not be climbed much more frequently. Accessibility is no problem and the round trip from the top of the mine road can be made in ten hours easily.

The approach is as follows: turn off the Glenn Highway in Sutton, drive straight toward Granite Peak on the dirt road; at the T-junction turn right and then take the next left, continue twisting back and forth turning uphill at most junctions; eventually you should arrive at the top of the hill with a clear view of Granite Peak, park anywhere in this area and follow the old road to the right (east) side of Granite, about 1 or 2 miles from the hilltop there will be a 10' by 60' trench on the left, turn left after this and go down the small dale until you pick up faint signs of the road again; road will head towards the right skyline of Granite and change into a good moose trail, climb to the east ridge and follow it to an obvious couloir leading to the summit. Large or inexperienced parties should be on guard for much loose and falling rock.

#### FLATTOP SLEEP-IN

June 20-21, 1970

The annual Flattop Sleep-in on the longest day of the year was a big success- 36 people and 1 pregnant dog showed up. They were: Marty Corcoran, Bmji Ivanoff, Bob Zahl, Whitney Jones, Kathy Kippenham, Dave Iappi, Steve Hackett, Scott and Odett Foster, Sharon Cissna, Jim and Tom Rogers, Ludwig and Jane McNeely, Hans Metz, Dave Meyer, Christa Timm, Sharon and Wayne Groomer, Hassie Bunnelle, John and Margaret Wolfe, Johnny Meyer, Frank Nosek, Bennett Williams, Jim Bruce, Mary Sweet, Peter Henning, Hans Schwaiger, James Harley, Steve Johnston, Doreen Vilmany, Susan Neville, Freda Russell, Perri Aiken, Paul Lemp, and Anaka, the dog. According to reports a fun time was had by all.

#### LOST LAKE

May 24-26 and June 27-28, 1970

Bill Stivers

I departed the parking lot below the Lost Lake trail at about 10:00 a.m. May 24. This trail starts from the west side of the Seward Highway about 5 miles north of Seward. There are the usual signs on the highway indicating the location of the trail. The trail was well marked through the heavy timber, but I could find no markers on the final three miles over the tundra. I encountered snow about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile up the trail and it became progressively deeper as I proceeded up. The snow was fairly well consolidated so I was forced to use snow shoes only occasionally. I estimated the snow to have been 10 to 12 feet deep at the higher elevations.

I camped about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile north of a small lake (It was hidden under a blanket of snow at that time. I discovered it a month later). The camp was about 3 miles south of Lost Lake. There was a heavy overcast, poor visibility and intermittent light rain. The weather cleared on the 25th. There was an orange glow on the eastern horizon at 1:00 a.m., a few hours later the snow was glittering in the bright sunshine. Birds were singing in the evergreen clusters. After breakfast I began to explore the area around the camp. I regretted that I hadn't brought my skis, as this was a vast open area of mostly gentle terrain - ideal for ski touring. I eventually walked north toward Lost Lake. I followed the top of a ridge which overlooked a valley to the east

and a gorge to the west. Wolverine tracks and a marmot standing by its hole were seen on this ridge. I walked this ridge until about 1 mile south of Lost Lake before returning to camp. I didn't reach the lake on this trip. On the 26th I broke camp and returned to the Seward Highway.

On the morning of June 27, I again started up the Lost Lake Trail. There were still about 3 to 4 feet of snow at the higher elevations, even though great quantities of snow had run off since my trip up one month before. The markers that I had tied to trees at that time were 12 feet high now.

The small lake about 4 miles up the trail had begun to thaw. There was still much snow on the lake but there was water around the edges. After passing this lake I had to follow a compass course because of clouds lowering over the mountains. I followed 330° magnetic quite closely and eventually reached the ridge with the gorge to the west. I continued on this same compass course until I started descending the ridge. Soon I could hear a waterfall to the left. (I learned the next day, when there was good visibility, that I had here passed the upper end of the gorge). I continued on the north-erly heading up another ridge, passing some steep rock and snow walls. About 4:00 p.m. I saw a small section of fairly flat tundra which was snow free and decided to camp there. I couldn't see more than 100 feet in any direction. I erected my tent and then started melting snow for water and supper. It was not raining at the time - in fact the tundra was quite dry and I enjoyed my supper in comfort. I turned in for the night at 5:30 and it soon started raining. The rain continued until about 2:00 a.m. I was up at 3:00 a.m. Sunday morning and looked off the ridge directly north. The eastern end of the main body of Lost Lake was about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile below. After breakfast I climbed up the higher ridge about  $\frac{1}{4}$  west, (peak 2533'), and looked down on the entire lake. There was a light blue outline around the lake. The rest of the lake was snow covered. About 5:00 a.m. I departed for the Seward Highway.

"ALABASTER", 8065'; First Ascent July 2-6, 1970  
Northwestern Chugach, Anchorage Quads C-3, C-4, D-3

Bob Spurr

It was late Thursday evening when I and Alaska Alpine Club members, Bob Pelz and Royce Purinton, rendezvoused about mile 94 on the Glenn Highway after driving from Fairbanks. While my family continued to Anchorage, we three reunited climbers rode Royce's Land Rover to camp on the north sandbars of the Matanuska River. You didn't have to be a river boatman to judge our one-man kayak and 300 feet of rope inadequate for the rain-swollen channels; early next morning we went to the Hicks Creek "horse ranch" for advice.

"River very high, even horses marginal", the guides say. "Why don't you check with so and so. Maybe he'll fly you across."

"What, a plane?" If any of us suffered from ethical revulsion, we didn't mention it.

So it was that we reassembled later that morning on the south sandbars of the Matanuska. We headed downstream to the mouth of Monument Creek, took turns fording with a worn-out pair of my running shoes before plunging into the willow and alder blanketing Monument's west benches. By following moose trails over-trod by bears and horses, we had it much easier than had an April '69 party approaching on snowshoes. We took advantage of the upper valley's plush green carpeting to camp about a mile below Spectrum Glacier. On the adjacent slopes of Amulet we sighted a grizzly with her two cubs.

Next morning we found the wands I had cached after that earlier venture. We ascended Spectrum's steep snout while listening warily to Monument tumbling noisily somewhere beneath us. Camp was made above the firn line at 6000 feet. We noted considerable avalanche debris on all exposures.

We were up at 5 A.M. Sunday, welcoming the overcast skies shielding from the sun slopes still over-burdened with snow. Within two hours we were winding around Spectrum's only icefall enroute to the uppermost cirque beneath our objectives. When it was learned MCA climbers were busy elsewhere, mutual aversions to a rope of three for anything other than snow-ice routes directed us to "Alabaster". Visible (on a clear day) at about mile 92 on the Glenn, peak 8065, as the central most distant albeit the lowest of three sentinel eight-thousand footers containing the glacier, displays a smooth face of ice

and snow offset by green slopes (in summer) bordering Monument Creek, brown rock, and scattered summit ice-mushrooms. We contemplated a direct line up its NE ice face which under good conditions will be short but sweet. While the lower half was clean, the upper slope was still plastered so we settled on the north ridge. After crossing an avalanche slough, we climbed a clean NE snow-chute to the west of the face. The rock in the northwestern Chugach is generally so badly fractured you need to hold it together with both hands if you dare get on it. Predictably I managed to dislodge some sizable crud in the direction of Royce and Bob before reaching the ridge via a rock island. Several rope lengths along a section of moderately corniced ridge led to a broad rock - surprisingly solid, I was able to place belay anchors on two snow chute leads cleaving its NE face. Only easy snow ridge walking remained and we reached the summit ahead of a general whiteout slowly lowering on Spectrum's peripheral peaks. A few summit shots, a note in a plastic bag inserted in a very moderately stacked cairn wrapped with a few strips of survey tape, a fresh bottle of lemon tea polished off with assortments of gorp, salami and cheese comprised our summit activities. This was Royce's first Alaskan peak after several weathered-out attempts in the Delta Mountains. For Bob P. who frequented MCA meetings in 1966, it meant a pleasant return to Anchorage terrain. Not much of a view in a whiteout, but the east ridge attempted with Jim Lethcoe and Tom Meacham looked much hairier and definitely not the choice for a rope of three. We should have picked this route. Following an uneventful descent, we arrived at the tent about mid-afternoon just before whiteout and snow socked us in.

On Monday we slogged off at 6:30 to meet our scheduled plane pickup nine miles and 10 hours off. Super-saturated snow on the glacier prompted us to pioneer a westerly route off the snout. So good was the going that we huckldebucked back to the Gravel Creek strip three hours early. A bush pilot on schedule is an Alaskan rarity, but ours set his wheels down exactly on time. In a short while we were headed back to Fairbanks reunited with family and vehicles. Wish some MCAers had been with us.

#### BITS AND PIECES

##### 50 Wilderness Routes in Southcentral Alaska-

Many of the hikes have been written up, but we desperately need people to check out the directions. It would be particularly valuable to have newcomers unfamiliar with the area, to check them out. But this is also a splendid chance for you oldtimers to check out all those hikes you've been meaning to go on, but never got around to doing. Help is also needed to collect data on trips not done. If you are interested in helping please call Liska Snyder 279-2808 until August 19, and Helen Nienhueser after the 19th, at 277-9330.

On June 5th, a 4-man party led by Ray Genet reached McKinley's South Peak. Members were: Doege, Hunter, Henderson. On July 13th, 14 members of a combined 2-expedition teams of 17, led by Genet, also reached the South Peak. Members were: Schenk, Brunner, Dr. Brunner, D.B. Ullrich, Rice, Dr. Schierle, Brest, Pyne, Fialkow, Reed, Dailey, Ramsey, Niedra, Engi, Jungen and Stark. Because of ideal glacier conditions this year, Genet will lead another expedition leaving approx. August 15 or 20. Anyone interested in joining call 277-1443 unit 990, or write Box 48, Anchorage 99501.

The Chugach Gem & Mineral Society cordially invites MCA'ers to join them on their trips. The following trips are scheduled for August:

- August 9 - Upper Caribou Creek- for tunderegggs from 1 lb to 300 lbs., agates, Cost: \$38.00 each.
- 15-16 - Squaw Creek - jasper, geodes, agate, fossils.
- 22-23 - Peters Creek (Dutch Hills)- gold, pyrite, fossils.
- 29-30 - Tustumena Lake- phrenite, tourmaline, fishing.

Call Ivan or Ora Stewart for more information. Phone: 272-8581.

Steve Hackett soloed 5085' (Talkeetna Mts), A GENDARME ON THE RIDGE running S-SE between Upper & Lower Reed Lakes to 5538'. Built cairn, left registrar, and rappelled off SE side. Suggests it be called Panorama Point (provides a fantastic view of valley and the surrounding mts). Low to middle 5th class climb & good work-out for ridge runners & slab climbers.