



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA
SEPTEMBER 1972

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510
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SEPTEMBER MEETING. . . Thursday, September 21, 1972. . . 8:00 PM. . . Central Junior High Multipurpose Rm. . . Program: Minislide presentation - Barbara Winkley. Business Meeting: . . Refreshments. . . Film presentation - Hypothermia.

BOARD MEETING, . . . October 2, 1972. . . 7:30 pm. . . Kathy Selken's, 2600 W. Northern Lights, Bldg 1, Apt 5, upstairs.

SPECIAL NOTICE: A new slate of officers will be elected in October. If you are approached by a nominating committee member for a post, please consider it thoughtfully. It means you have some qualities and interests MCA needs to keep functioning.

ATTENTION! HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE! ATTENTION!

Why no scheduled climbs and hikes for July and August? No leaders and no volunteers to lead! This summer's climbing school, lengthiest and largest in the club's history, has required many rope leaders, and consequently, many potential trip leaders have been busy. Members interested in leading club climbs have simply not been available! During July and August no one "volunteered" to lead any kind of scheduled trip.

Below is the trip schedule for the coming month, climbs and/or hikes which generally have "gone" at this time of year in the past. Each trip needs a leader and participant support. Sign-up sheets will be available at the September meeting. (R.S.)

September 23 & 24, Saturday & Sunday. LOST LAKE & MOUNT ASCENSION (5710), Kenai Peninsula. Depart mile 5 from Seward on west side of road, on graded, bridged, culverted and mileposted trail to Lost Lake, distance 6 miles, elevation gain 2000 ft. (A real W-1). Mt. Ascension can be climbed enroute via easy SE ridge. (A rope is necessary for glacier traverse to ridge.) Views of Resurrection Peaks & Bay and Harding Icefield.

September 30, October 1, Saturday & Sunday. YISBO (6050') and DIDILKAMA, 6100', Talkeetna Mtns. Pleasant approach from Fairangel Creek north to upper Fern Mine Valley. Ascend Didilkama and/or Yisbo; routes will depend on conditions. A Traverse between summits possible for ambitious party. Overnight in "refurbished" cabin.

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PRESIDENT'S PEN

The students of the climbing school could well think they have been overlooked in regards to the ice school which has been re-scheduled for September 23 - 24.

They shouldn't.

The MCA depends on volunteer instructors whose schedules cannot always be bent to fit the school schedule. All students agree, I'm sure, the quality of instruction has thus far been quite good. It was to maintain this quality that the school was re-scheduled. An inadequate number of instructors leads to a weak school. Experience has told us this.

So chin up! The school will run, September 23, 24, at Matanuska Glacier

-Wendell Oderkirk-

CONSERVATION COMMENTARY

The Conservation Committee meeting scheduled for last month did not materialize, due to some unavoidable conflicts with other commitments on the part of several MCA'ers who had expressed an interest in the subject. The subject, by the way, is the Chugach National Forest five year plan for road and trail construction, and specifically their plans for 48 inch "multiple use" trails, built and maintained by mechanized equipment.

I think some MCA'ers, myself included, are still interested in this topic, and I hope to gather some information this month, and schedule a conservation committee meeting on it in October. I'm open to all suggestions or opinions, pro or con.

The recent court injunction in California should put a temporary suspension to the five year plan here in Alaska, since I believe all "roadless areas" in the Western states were affected. Perhaps by the time the suit against the U. S. Forest Service is resolved, we will have an MCA "position" and some constructive suggestions to offer our public servants.

On the Chugach State Park front, a recent news item announced the opening of Bird and Penguin Creek valleys to off-road vehicles, both winter and summer. This is probably as good a place for this activity as any in the Park, since there are lots of old logging skid roads, and little opportunity to "cruise" on open alpine slopes.

However, I understand that unless individual hikers and other self-propelled outdoor users show some support for limiting off-road use to selected areas of Chugach State Park, more off-road areas may be designated. Some of these may be in areas where the damage potential is already obvious, i. e., Rabbit Lakes and Flattop-Campbell Creek.

So, letters of support for present park administration policies are certainly in order. Many times when an administrator makes a decision we agree with, we are apt to believe that he is aware of our approval, and that this awareness continues to bolster him, even if he is "out on a limb." But he is a public servant, and other members of the public are continually chopping away at his precarious perch. That is the present case in Chugach State Park.

So, if you agree with present vehicle use policies in the Park, let someone know! The man to tell is:

UPPER O'MALLEY TO CROW PASS

August 1 to 5, 1972

Bill Stivers

I departed Upper O'Malley Road at entrance of the State Park on Tuesday evening, August 1, and camped near creek at west end of the Wedge. On Wednesday, I proceeded across the pass above Ship Creek Lake, eastward to north of Indian Creek Pass and into first valley east of the pass. I then crossed the creek in valley floor and climbed to top of east ridge. There was a lake draining from the north side below west side of ridge. A good view of the upper Bird Creek drainage was observed to the east. Incidentally, the alder appeared very dense along Bird Creek to several miles beyond my observation point. I then proceeded north along the ridge for a short distance to another ridge (separating the Bird Creek drainage from North Fork Ship Creek drainage), and along this ridge eastward to a pass. Small tarns were located on each side of pass. I descended a rather steep slope to north of pass into the North Fork Ship Creek drainage system. Campsite Wednesday was on tundra near creek about 1/2 mile below tarn.

Thursday, I climbed east up small valley to ridge above Bird Creek Pass. The scenery was very impressive in all directions from the ridge, however, much less energy would have been expended by hiking around the base of the ridge. The descent was rather steep on east side of ridge into Bird Creek Pass. I then followed the south side of the North Fork Ship Creek over tundra and occasional low brush to the cirque containing lake at head of the North Fork. I camped on the tundra near the lake Thursday night. The views were beautiful in all directions. Five ewes and lambs gamboled down from a small cirque above and to the north of my camp as I was eating dinner. Unfortunately, a small aircraft circled the site and the sheep disappeared back into the higher cirque.

Friday morning I climbed up a low ridge of lateral moraine to south of the lake and about one hour later started the gradual descent into Camp Creek Valley. The easiest route initially is relatively low in the valley. I spotted a couple of wolverine about two miles below the pass. Upon encountering the first alder it is necessary to remain high enough on the valley ridge to bypass the alder patches. (There is no trail through the valley.) The most eastward stream draining into Camp Creek runs down a steep gorge, therefore it must be crossed high on the ridge. A very good camp site is located at the crossing.

My intentions were to remain high on the ridge after turning the corner above the confluence of Camp and Raven Creeks. However, soon after turning up Raven Creek, I encountered a steep gorge, and decided to descend into the valley. (I later discovered that I could have climbed higher and passed above the gorge, remaining high on the ridge for a complete traverse to Crow Pass.)

It was a long steep descent through lots of alder and large rocks hidden by brush and high grass. Traveling in the valley was initially rough going until I found a well worn trail which was good for about 2 miles. I camped Friday night on the west side of Raven Creek, just south of the drainage of the most northern glacier draining into the creek. This stream was swollen and rampaging, as also was Raven Creek. (The trail to Eagle River would have been difficult due to high and fast water.)

Saturday morning, I discovered that my trail ended just past where I had camped, and I could observe lots of dense alder ahead. I decided to ascend the ridge and traverse to Crow Pass via that route. The weather was partially cloudy and the views magnificent. The glaciers on the east side of Raven Creek were in full view and many torrents of white water were cascading down the slope. I ate lunch in a beautiful cirque just north of the cirque containing Clear Glacier. The floor of the cirque was blanketed with tundra as soft and luxurious as the finest carpet. Three streams converged at the cirque outlet to flow down a moderate gorge. This is an excellent camp site. Unfortunately, there was considerable litter. C ration cans, plastic tarps, paper, etc. I buried most of the litter under rocks.

After lunch, a short climbing traverse led to a sheep trail which was followed into the Clear Glacier Cirque. The stream was crossed inside the cirque, then a gradual descending traverse was commenced at the cirque exit. A sheep trail was followed until it merged with a well-worn foot trail leading gradually up to Crow Pass.

Many families of wild flowers were observed along the route.

There are many potentially interesting and exhilarating experiences, such as this pleasant tour, to be enjoyed in our State Park.

THE PINNACLE 5050

August 11-12 Dale Leslie & Gary Grinde

On Friday, August 11, Gary Grinde and myself, Dale Leslie, arrived at Independence Mine. After exploring the old mines until darkness fell, we camped for the night. We had planned to meet the MCA the next morning and join them on the Pinnacle. By 9:30, no MCA. We started without them. The weather wasn't too good, but we hoped it would burn off by noon. Unfortunately, it didn't. We got wet and cold! The route would have been great in dry weather. The wet rock made the climb real treacherous. We traversed the knife's edge that goes around the cirque to the final wall on the southeast side. Roping up after gaining the lower ridge, we scrambled across the ridge to the knife's edge. This went fine: still good weather! By the time we reached the knife's edge, the weather was getting worse. The summit was in clouds. It started spitting snow and then changed to blowing rain. Decided to get the summit, despite the weather. Only another 500 feet up on the southeast wall. That was a mistake! Halfway up the face, we were soaked, the wind had picked up considerably, and we were cold. This is a reminder to the old rule: Turn back at the slightest sign of bad weather! Once on the face, climbing was extremely slow and treacherous, with a lot of exposure. What started as a Class 5 climb changed to about a 5.9 on the wet rock. Using chocks and nuts for protection, I led the rope to within 50 feet of the summit. We stopped on a small ledge to shiver together and discuss the final pitch. Both exhausted and cold, Gary led the final pitch. After 3 hours of

climbing we reached the summit. Signed the register and made a quick retreat down the back side. We became a bit disoriented a couple times, as the visibility was limited to 100 feet or so. By 10:30 we were back at the truck. Donned some dry clothes, made some hot cocoa and soup, and related our feelings about the climb to each other. Despite the bad weather, we enjoyed the climb and the experience.

PIONEER PEAK 6400

August 19-20, 1972

Mark Rainery

On August 19, Bob Coleman and Louie Kozisek came over to Dave Britch's and picked us up. We then drove out to Eagle River to pick up Dick Greeley, and then; headed up to the standard creek route. We reached the meadow camp at about 3:00, accompanied by several billion raindrops. Bob had to put three men in his two-man tent, which, of course, was a Coleman tent.

About a half hour later, Bob Sartor and two friends came up with a dog, which we called Gibbs.

We all wanted to cook dinner, so I went to a nearby stream - 30 minutes round trip - and returned to barter water for gorp. Later on Bob came over to my tent to borrow some paper towels. I told him he could use toilet paper because it was not so rough. Later on I found the problem was chicken stew. On his tent floor.

About 10:30 that night, we all got to have a look-see, and who should show up but Bob Sr., Ed "Spider" and Greg "Monk" Coleman, who arrived on a sheep hunting trip. The result was tent city, with two 3-man tents, two 2-man tents, packs all over, eleven people, and a dog.

The next morning we were off at about 6:00 and headed up to the saddle. Near the top of the long snowfield it turned to ice and I slipped. My Stubai ice axe didn't stop my slide until I hit the snow.

We reached the saddle and proceeded to rest. Then we headed up the ridge. There was some interesting rock-climbing with exposure. However, I was disappointed in Pioneer Peak because it was easier than I expected. I never needed my rope. When I got off the rough part I yelled, "What's taking you guys so long?" You could not put the replies in Scree. I later learned that Dave Britch took three falls while not on belay. Dick took no falls while on belay. Pioneer Peak is now 6400, thanks to my cairn. We also sacrificed several rocks over the cliff in thanks to the gods.

On the way back down, Dave broke his axe by using it to pry out a rock. We met Mike Mobley and Mike Richardson, who gave us a ride back in his Datsun - seven people and seven packs in a four place car. It was so crammed I had to lift my leg so Mike could shift.

WEST AND EAST PEAKS (High point, 5350[±]) August 11, 1972 Greg & Loretta Higgins

On August 11, early Friday morning, we forded South Campbell Creek in Powerline Pass by the old junked auto. Picking our way through the alder, we ascended the tiny couloir and passed through the gap between peak 4250 and the ridge end. The traverse up the pass to Deep Lake and "The Glacier" was directly into the hot morning sun and very uncomfortable. We finally made the descent

to Black Lake and stopped for lunch. The echo here against O'Malley's north side wall is tremendous.

Pushing on we reached the first Williwaw Lake about three, and ascended to the second by going around to the right beneath Williwaw Mt. Here we set up camp. While Loretta napped, I climbed Williwaw via the northwest ridge to about the 5100 ft level. Since nighttime was swiftly approaching and the ridge was becoming treacherous, I gave the climb up and returned to camp.

Foul weather issued in Saturday, so we moved camp to the base of Tanaina since Williwaw seemed too much on a "white out" day, as the clouds were making it. We climbed both the West and East Peaks in a driving rain and mind-befuddling fog. Our descent took less than an hour, as we glissaded down the scree areas to camp. Later we moved down the valley and camped below Wolverine for the night - all the time it was raining.

We broke our windy, rainy camp early and hiked straight up the north ridge of Wolverine and traversed till we reached the peak. The wind and rain quickly drove us on our way and after spending some time hiking down the wrong roads, we hitched back into town, and it was still raining!

HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

October 7, Saturday BYRON (4550') Portage. Long one-day climb at this time of year; summit will depend on glacier conditions. Ascend glacier through lower ice fall to central north ridge. All glacier school participants should make this trip.

October 14, Saturday. HIGHER SPIRE (6135'). Talkeetna Mtns. From Snowbird Mine, ascend Glacier Creek to Prospect Pass at 5100'. Cross Aura Glacier, overlooking Bartholf Creek drainage and gain short north ridge to summit. Pleasant autumn climbing in good weather.

New Address: Bob Spurr
5300 Kennyhill Drive
Telephone: 333-7157

WHAT-SCREE-SAID-WAY-BACK-THEN-DEPT.

Ten years ago - September, 1962 - Vin Hoeman reported that he and Scott Hamilton had made a first ascent of Granite Peak 6729'. Before the climb, they watched a mob of fishermen at Knik River Bridge catching red salmon. On the way down from the summit, blueberries and brushier shortcut made the return trip 3 1/2 hours long. He concluded his report with "A very satisfactory mountain we thought."

Five years ago - September, 1967 - Rod Wilson reported climbing "Kanchee" 4310'. He stated that a new coke can and rude cairn at the top indicated a "previous (first?)" visitor. He and his party improved the cairn and left a register. Charles McLaughlin reported climbing Mount Sentry 3849' and four associated peaks. Round-trip time was 11 1/2 hours; however, their route was not the easiest, they learned later.

The Vin Hoeman Map Collection is now at Tom Meacham's. There are over 11000 maps. They have all been catalogued by Barry Kircher. Tom's phone is 277-2129.

The 1958 - 1968 bound copies of SCREE are available for reference at Marie Lundstrom's (272-0858).

Cathy Stevens was the typist this month. Cathy, you did a commendable job! Thank you very much for contributing an evening of your time. This girl is efficient--we're definitely going to have to recruit her. She works as a secretary at Alaska State Troopers and had never typed on the Executive typewriter before. She learned for us. The use of the fine Executive typewriter is compliments of the Alaska State Troopers.

John Samuelson, Hank Nolan and young Susie Nolan climbed Mount Drum 12010', taking four days. Their ascent was the third ascent of Mount Drum.

Several Mountaineering Club members are running for office this election-- Sharon Classna is a candidate for School Board, as is Gwenneth Wilson and Leo Hannan is running for City Council.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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