

# SCREE

MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

FEBRUARY 1973

VOL. 16, NO. 2

FEBRUARY MEETING...Thursday, February 15, 1973...8:00 PM...Central Junior High Multipurpose Rm...Mini-show: John Dennis on Aniakchak Crater - Alaska Peninsula... Business Meeting...Refreshments...Gordon Reese will present a movie about Outward Bound. This should be of interest because an Outward Bound program is presently being planned in Anchorage.

## CLIMBING & HIKING SCHEDULE

Sunday, February 18 BARD PEAK 3850+50 Everyone has seen Bard Peak from Portage Lake, but it's only been climbed once. So let's get a big party together and go climb it. Skis and skins or snowshoes needed. Leaders: Art Ward HOME PH: 333-7870 and Larry Swansen WORK PH: 277-4210.

Sunday, February 25 MT. ALPENGLOW 4850+50 High point across Turnagain Arm at Sunrise near Hope. Bring skis with skins or snowshoes. Lone one-day climb so good physical condition is assumed. LEADER: Larry Swansen WORK PH: 277-4210 or leave message at 279-3804.

Sunday, March 4 GUNSIGHT MOUNTAIN 6441 Very nice one-day hiking-climbing trip at about Mile 117 on the Glenn Highway. Skis and skins or fast snowshoes. Leader: Art Ward HOME PH: 333-7870.

Sunday, March 11 MT. WILLIOW 5445 High point in the Anchorage skyline Chugach range. Skis or snowshoes required. Leaders: Trent Swansen HOME PH: 279-3804 and Scott Mueller HOME PH: 272-0867

Sunday, March 18 BYRON PEAK 4650+50 N.W. SUMMIT By the central north ridge, one of the finest one-day seasonal climbs in the Anchorage vicinity. This is an annual MCA climb with some fantastic views. Bring crampons, prussiks and a rope if you have one. Skis or fast snowshoes needed as well. Leader: Needed.

BOARD MEETING - March 5, 1963, 7:30 PM at Dona Agosti's home, 2324 Loussac Drive.

## PRESIDENT'S PEN

Recent issues of SCREE have demonstrated a definite shortage of trip reports and stories by MCA members. I know for a fact that many of you are getting out and skiing or climbing these winter weekends, but where are your contributions to SCREE?

Don't feel that you have to report a first ascent or a 50-mile traverse in order to have an article worthy of publication. Weekend MCA Club trips or private climbs of any magnitude are welcome and interesting, especially if they report new routes, interesting sights or events, or just a simple good time. Did you know, for instance, that a dog broke Larry Swanson's ski on a recent climb? Or that a recent traverse of Ship Creek to Indian uncovered the presence of a real live wolf pack in our own Chugach backyard?

PRESIDENT'S PEN CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## CONDENSED MINUTES OF THE MCA MEETING ON JAN. 18, 1973

The meeting was called to order by President Tom Meacham. Wendell Oderkirk, Climbing Chairman, reported that the Jan. 28th climbing school, limited to 20 members, had been filled. He named the following instructors for the session: Bill Barnes, Gil Todd, Tom Meacham, Mike Richardson, Art Ward and Larry Swanson. Barbara Winkley, Conservation Chairman, announced that a committee meeting will be held Wednesday, Jan. 24, at her home. Discussion to center on the Semidi Islands Wilderness proposal. President Meacham stated that plans for the translation of 55 WAYS TO THE WILDERNESS IN SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA into Japanese were about complete. Joanne Merrick was commended for her many years of service to MCA as Equipment Chairman. A volunteer is needed to take over the job; he must have storage space for items such as ropes, tents, crampons, etc. It was moved by Randy Renner, seconded by Doris Curtis and unanimously passed that MCA write to Borough Mayor Roderick in support of Tobben Spurkland to fill the vacancy on the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Advisory Board. Tom Meacham stated that the Brooks Range Trust Fund papers had been executed by the Van der Laans on Dec. 29, in Holland and that over a period of time between \$10-20,000 may become available to carry forward Hans Van der Laans often-expressed desire for a Gates of the Arctic National Park or Wilderness Area. MCA's Conservation Chairman will act as intermediary between the MCA Board and the Trustees who have responsibility for administering the Trust. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed that MCA's \$200 Brooks Range Fund be transferred to the Trust. The treasurer reported \$304.54 in checking and \$157.97 in savings.

Respectfully submitted, Dona Agosti, Secretary

1972 MCA ACTIVITIES

The following is the write-up submitted to American Alpine Journal for 1973 Journal by President Tom Meacham:

**MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA:** The MCA in 1972 continued its active program of sponsoring and practicing the use of mountaineering skills, both in our "backyard" Chugach Range and in the Talkeetnas, Wrangells and other challenging Alaskan massifs. The year began with several assaults by Club members on nearby summits in the Northwest Chugach, most of which have yet to register their first winter ascent. Short daylight hours and unpredictable snow conditions did their best to insure that the list of winter-climbed Chugach peaks would not be enlarged this year.

Expedition-oriented Club members participated in a winter attempt on 13,176' Mt. Marcus Baker, highest of the Chugach, but were stalled at base camp by freakish winds and downed aircraft. Another MCA expedition launched the first winter attempt of Mt. Foraker, but were turned back at 13,600' by massive cornices and a shortage of fixed rope, returning to civilization after nineteen cold and windy days on the peak. A summer attempt on Mt. McKinley by Club members was thwarted by the weather at 17,200', but a measure of light relief was gained by their grandstand view of the antics of French ski ace Sylvain Saudan, and, upon their descent, the collection of considerable booty discarded by the French entourage. MCA members also tackled Mt. Drum in the Wrangells, recording the third ascent of that 12,010' peak.

The MCA again organized its popular series of climbing schools, with its winter skills school in January and its extended rock and ice school in late summer, instructing approximately 25 beginning mountaineers in each school. The Club's stake in the environment was examined in detail, and extensive testimony was presented by the Club and by individual members at public hearings on Chugach

State Park and the proposed Kenai Moose Range Wilderness. The major non-climbing event of the year was the long-awaited release of 55 WAYS TO THE WILDERNESS IN SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA, authored by MCA members and published by the Club in conjunction with the Mountaineers of Seattle. This briskly-selling 160-page volume expands and replaces the popular 30 HIKES IN ALASKA, published by the same groups in 1967 but long since out of print.

### CONSERVATION COMMENT

The Conservation Committee met at my house on January 24, 1973. Despite the fact of 20° below zero temperatures and a conflict with A.R.G., two M.C.A. members showed up.

We discussed the possibility of having a representative from the U.S. Forest Service on a program at M.C.A. in the near future to inform us of their five-year proposal for trail construction on the Kenai Peninsula and justification for the mechanized methods currently used by them. We also discussed the possibility of volunteering M.C.A. services (if agreeable by the members) to the Forest Service to brush out one of their trails next summer. Could they still argue that it could be done more cheaply by mechanized equipment?

Public Hearings on the Semidi Wilderness Proposal will be held in the Loussac Library on February 20th at 7:00 p.m. The Semidi Proposal includes a small group of islands located between Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula.

A total of 43 species of birds has been identified on the islands including the American bald eagle and 2 pairs of the endangered peregrine falcon. Total numbers of birds are in the millions. Attendance of the hearings does not mean you have to testify. Written testimony will be accepted by the Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife, 813 D Street up until March 23, 1973. If you don't have time to stop by Fish & Wildlife, a copy of the Wilderness Brochure will be mailed to you on request at F & W Wilderness Studies at 265-4312 or contact me at 344-0458 for additional information.

I might point out that:

1. For the exception of a few small island refuges totalling 50 thousand acres in a state of 370 million acres, Alaska presently has no designated wilderness areas.
2. The Semidi refuge is outside of the major petroleum provinces of Alaska and has no known mineral deposits.
3. That less than 100 years ago east coast streams of the U.S. supported salmon in quantities that Alaskan streams do today. Look at them now.
4. The New York Times wrote on April 23, 1967, "The wild places are now seen not as an enemy but as a vanishing resource. As the neon lights glare ever brighter and the miles of paved roads wind ever onward, the chance to escape to the solitude of the roadless area, and unspoiled forest or an untamed river, become ever more precious."

- Barbara Winkley -

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

Five Years Ago, February 1968 - Vin Hoeman reported he and Grace had reached the highest summit of Chimborazo 20,563'. He stated, "Not many husband-wife teams have reached such heights." Frank Nosek, attorney, wrote on "Some Interesting Legal Aspects of Mountaineering." It included a discussion of "Club Liability, Assuming the Risks, Obeying the Leader, Rescue, Death on the Mountain, Products Liability, and Random Notes."

Ten Years Ago, February, 1963 - Ted Shohl reported the first successful winter climb of O'Malley Peak on January 26, 1963. Rod Wilson; Dave and Don DeVoe; Don's friend, Steve; Kim Degenhardt, Dale Hagen and Ted Shohl made it to the top. Walt Coin developed equipment difficulties and returned to base. A climb up the rocks alongside Portage Glacier was attempted by Dale Hagen. Due to winter snow and ice he turned back at about four hundred feet which was well above the glacier.

P R E S I D E N T ' S   P E N   ( CONT. from Page 1)

Perhaps you will see these accounts in this issue of SCREE, or in a later issue. But altogether too many of these funny or interesting or exciting anecdotes and accounts are lost because noone took the time to tell others about them through SCREE. Our back issues are now bound in two volumes and offer a fascinating insight into outdoor activities in Anchorage and Alaska 15 years ago. This issue of SCREE can do the same twenty or fifty years from now. The University of Alaska historical library has expressed an interest in our old files, records and newsletters, as a reflection of life in Alaska and the people who are making the State what it is today and what it will be tomorrow. I think that MCA definitely has a contribution to make in this regard.

When you do contribute a write-up to SCREE, please get it to Kathy Causton as early as possible before the copy deadline. She has a difficult chore getting everything typed when contributors wait until deadline day before handing in their stories. The deadline is usually one or two days after the monthly Board meeting which is held the first Monday of each month. So contribute early and often!

- Tom Meacham -

WINTER BEGINNING CLIMBING SCHOOL  
FLATTOP, RENDEZVOUS PEAK 4005'

January 28, 1973  
February 4, 1973

DONA AGOSTI

Wendell Oderkirk's school was unexpectedly stretched to two sessions, Part I on January 28, more commonly known as the Flattop Wind School and Part II, February 5, which took place on Rendezvous Peak. Those attending both sessions were Dona Agosti, Bill Brickley, Paul Carnicelli, Jerry Gottbehuet, Rick Huffman, Gerald Kurtz, Terry Muehlenbach and Mike Sawada. Tony Bell, Carol and Warren Cotts, Charles and Paul Evans and John Mucha were present at the first session. Instructors in addition to Wendell were Barry Kircher, Tom Meacham, Gil Todd, Mike Richardson and Art Ward.

There was notable contrast between the cold stillness at Carr's Parking Lot January 29th and the 60-mph gusts which greeted the group on Flattop. When the scene took on the appearance of the business end of a bowling alley, Wendell turned the group around, with instructions to come back next week.

Part II was worth waiting for. Bright sunshine and 15-degree weather welcomed the gang at Arctic Valley. However, there was some indication the first class should have covered communication skills, because Tom Meacham's carload failed to get the word and ended up at Flattop. This error was eventually corrected, and they joined the crowd on Rendezvous Peak in time for lunch. Conditions were ideal for practicing use of crampons and ice axe arrest. Next Wendell escorted the entire class atop a cornice and explained how to probe for a body in an avalanche. It must have been a sturdy cornice, because it withstood the assaults of four belaying teams, not the least humorous of which was Dona Agosti dangling on a slab minus one crampon. At that point, Tom Meacham firmly instructed that the rope was for protection not for climbing, but Paul Carnicelli on belay noticed unusual rope tension for the next 30 seconds. The homegoing scene was varied: slick-seaters glissading out of sight in seconds, plodders up to their hips, and an unusual

*continued March page 3*

## HOW TO FREEZE YOUR TOES - A CAUTIONARY TALE by William A. Barnes, Sr.

On Saturday, January 13, 1973, I went to the house of Dave and Carol DeVoe to go on the snow cave exercise of the Nordic Ski Club. In my LaFama rucksack I had a McKinley 3 1/2 lb. down bag, a Holubar down parka, down booties, extra sox, a gasoline stove and cooking pots. I did not have canvas mukluks and this is the main reason I now have a swollen black toe.

Dave and I, and Sharon DeVoe and two of her teenage friends drove down to Turnagain Pass in the big Chevrolet van. We parked at Turnagain and ascended the hills on skis to find enough snow for a snow cave. We found snow about six feet deep and Dave and I started on our cave and the three girls worked on theirs. We found that we only had enough snow to make two sleeping chambers and in the mid-afternoon we had to expand our digging as the girls' cave had fallen in on them. The main objections that I now have to snow caves is that you will get yourself covered with snow while digging and you will get wet. By the time the snow cave was complete and the dinner had been heated, the moon was out and the temperature had fallen to -15°F.

I put on my down booties and put my damp clothes in the bag with me. The plastic pad underneath certainly didn't prevent the loss of heat where your weight pressed against it. I wore a pair of Harris Tweed pants and put these under my rear which helped. But the snow cave dripped moisture from our breath. However, I was reasonably snug through the night.

Morning came with a brilliant sun and bright blue sky and the temperature -17°. I got out of the bag and put on wool socks and my frozen ski boots and went out to offer ineffectual assistance to Dave who was trying to get some heat out of the gasoline stove. Dave had on canvas mukluks whether with down socks I do not know. But certainly the right combination for moving around camp would be mukluks with felt innersoles and heavy wool socks or down boots. It was during this time that circulation in my feet slowed down and the damage was done. If I had immediately skied down, I would have avoided freezing. The three girls stayed in the snow cave in their sleeping bags and only one of them had minor frostbite although they had no mukluks.

We skied down and I had an enjoyable run because by this time there was no feeling in the feet. We drove back and I sat in the front, and I took off my socks and thawed out. Later, I found out that I did the right thing by warming my feet in a temperature of about 100° by the heater outlet. (See the monograph by William Mills, MD of Anchorage on freezing.)

On Tuesday I went to see Dr. Mills at the Emergency Ward of Providence. I was told to stay off my feet and use a Jacuzzi bath. For some reason the damage to the right great toe was much more severe than to the left. Dr. Mills told me that infection was the great danger.

The right toe developed enormous blisters (blebs) on the tip and the top of the toe behind the nail. By the 22nd one of the blisters had broken and the other was draining and I was back on my feet and able to move around with moderate discomfort. Probably no permanent damage was done although I am told that the injured parts will be sensitive and susceptible to freezing.

If you are going to camp out in weather below zero, be properly equipped with mukluks and heavy sox or down booties for the times around camp. Ski boots are likely to restrict circulation. If you put on icy ski boots in the morning, they will drain the heat out of your feet. If you are going to put on the boots get moving right away on skis.

I am told that the use of old woolen socks over the ski boots helps keep the feet warm. Perhaps for an overnight ski tour in subzero weather, boots with insulation should be used. Regular ski boots are only shells usually with enough room for one pair of sox and this is not enough protection unless you are moving.

Be careful when the weather is below zero. Injury can occur quickly and because it is not very painful, it can happen before you are aware that it is going on.

## ASCENT OF TAKISHLA 5150'

January 10, 1973

Bill Barnes, Jr.

The ninth of January saw Sam Means and myself packing up the north side of the north fork of Campbell Creek. Carrying our skins and walking on a hard packed snowmobile track, we climbed above alder line by noon to find that the snow cover was nonexistent further up the valley. Nonetheless, we skied over the tundra to reach the southwest ridge of Takishla by two in the afternoon at which time we decided to make a summit attempt. By three forty-five we had reached a point within about three or four hundred feet of the summit, but the fading light and our discretion forced us to turn back. Camp was made in the dark under clear skies while Anchorage sat in the fog. We had a good laugh.

The next morning found us on the summit ridge by noon (We slept in.). As it turned out, we spent another hour climbing the gendarmes along the ridge looking for the summit. We finally found the remains of a register in an old Borden's Buns can on the last gendarm (of course).

The morning of the eleventh found us pushing up the valley towards Mt. Williwaw. After a couple hours of pretty heavy going, we took note of our progress and decided that we would not be in a position to attempt Williwaw the next day. After some cussing and rechecking the map several times, we turned back vowing to give ourselves more margin for error next time.

A small amount of research and some checking with Bob Spurr and Rod Wilson indicates that our ascent of Takishla was a first winter ascent.

B I T S   &   P I E C E S

THANK YOU, Bob Spurr for compiling the Index for Volume 15 - 1972 SCREEs. We appreciate all your work and effort.

On January 28, 1973, Mt. Eklutna was climbed by Charles Rigden, Wayne Cotes, John Pinamart, Larry Swansen and four dogs.

LOST & FOUND: One windbreaker at the November MCA meeting. Size Large. If it is yours, identify it by brand name, color and articles in pockets to Marie Lundstrom (272-0858) and arrange to pick it up.

ANNOUNCEMENT: On February 20, 1963 at 7:30 PM at Dimond High School's Little Theater, there will be a presentation covering the establishment of an Outward Bound program in Alaska. All are welcome to attend.