



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

JUNE 1982

Volume 25, Issue #6

JUNE MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, June 16th, at 8:00 p.m. on the top floor of the Pioneer Schoolhouse, Third & Eagle, Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting, Ashley Young will present a slide show of his two year trek along the entire length of the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada.

SPECIAL THANKS

The family of Roger Kennedy wish to express their special appreciation to those MCA members who ministered to Roger on the trail May 9. Roger loved the mountains and was fond of those who shared a love of mountains. We will miss him.

HIKING SCHEDULE June-July 1982

June

- Sat. 12 Day hike in the Chugach. Call Dona Agosti. 248-0089.
- Sat/Sun 19-20 FLAT TOP SLEEPOUT, Annual Solstice event. Leader, President John Dillman. Come up the mountain any time Saturday afternoon or evening. If we get a fire permit, bring a log for the fire. Enjoy the long hours of daylight on this longest day of the year. For details call John Dillman, 278-3537 (work).
- Sat/Sun 26-27 Ptarmigan Lake - Kenai Peninsula. Good views, good climbing in Paradise Valley beyond the lake, but trail is badly overgrown. See Hike #12 in 55 Ways to the Wilderness. Some may wish to camp near the lake, others will want to explore Paradise Valley. Okay for families. Leave UAA Sports Center parking lot at 6:00 a.m. Leader - Greg Higgins. Call Dona Agosti for details (248-0089).

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July

- Fri/Sat Independence Day Weekend. Crow Pass to Arctic Valley.
Sun/Mon Chugach Mountains. Drive to Girdwood and Crow Pass parking
2-3-4-5 lot Friday afternoon as early as hikers can get there, and
hike to first cirque beyond pass that evening. (See Hike
#25 in 55 Ways to the Wilderness). From here, leader Bill
Stivers, has a short cut over a ridge to eliminate the long
trek around through Camp Creek Valley. Follow North Fork
drainage out to Arctic Valley exit. Meet at UAA Sports
Center parking lot Friday afternoon at time to be designated
by leader. Call Bill Stivers - 277-2869. (For experienced
hikers).
- Sat/Sun New trail, north end Curry Ridge. This trail leaves the
10-11 Parks Highway further north than the Byers Lake Trail
(about Mile 140). It climbs to Curry Ridge overlooking
Mt. McKinley. Hikers can then proceed south along the
ridge which has numerous small ponds and camping sites,
and exit at several points - Byers Lake, Troublesome Creek
or near McKinley View Lodge. Meet UAA Sports Center parking
lot at 6:00 a.m. Saturday or drive up Friday night.
Determine departure time with Bill Wakeland, 279-2270.
- Sat/Sun ~~Carter Lake to Crescent Lake Trail.~~ The trail to Carter
17-18 Lake leaves the Seward Highway at Mile 33.1 and it's an
easy climb of about two miles to the lake. This is a good
stopping point for families with small children. Others
can continue on to Crescent Lake and down to Crescent Creek
Campground, a distance of about 18 miles. There is much
brush and little trail on the steep slopes around Crescent
Lake, so only experienced hikers should try it. Leave
Anchorage either Friday night or early Saturday morning.
Tom and Jane Meacham - 349-4850.
- Sat 24th Lake Clark National Park and Preserve. (Now Full)
thru
Sun Aug 1
- Sat/Sun Reed Lakes (Hatcher Pass area). Reed Lakes is located in
31-Aug 1 the Talkeetna Mountains and few have been disappointed
with this neat camping site above a turquoise mountain
lake. Roads to Snow Bird Mine have been improved recently
but four wheel drive is still necessary. Further details
in July Scree and at meeting.

BITS AND PIECES

Bold Peak Trail Clean-up: Over the weekend of May 22 and 23 eight members of the MCA cut the brush out of the trail from Eklutna Lake to the Eklutna Lake overlook. The trail is about 3-1/2 miles long. The upper 1-1/2 miles of trail were almost impassable because of the alder overgrowth. This section has been completely cleared.

The first 400 yards of the trail were left in a natural state to discourage two wheel hikers. The following people worked on the clean up: Reggie Buchanan, Tom Choate, Sam Dunagan, Willy Hersman, Tim Neale, Karen Rosene, Rick Severn and Jayne Slaughter.

TIM NEALE

Beginning Rock Class: The following club members participated in the spring two day class held at Boy Scout Rock, May 22-23.

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Barb Koehler | Sam Koehler | Will Nicholson | Jeny Blitz |
| Randy Simpson | Dennis Wood | Doug Wood | Penny Wood |
| Mike Wood | Lorraine Bosner | Sue Quan | Pam Flowers |
| Brian Williams | Peter Crimp | Evelyn Jervey | Dave Henning |
| Hal Christensen | Trish Heminghaus | | |

Special thanks to Graham MacDonald, Pete Sennhauser, Jeff Rubin and Keith Joct for lending their expertise as instructors.

JOHN DILLMAN

MCA Library Work Party: Volunteers are needed to help organize books and perform other various tasks. Peter Sennhauser is planning this work party for sometime after the June meeting. Peter may buy beer and the club may buy pizza.

Peter is also planning another party for all MCA members (no library service required), for after the June meeting. For details on both parties come to the June meeting or call Peter at 345-5577(home) or 277-2711 (work).

PETER SENNHAUSER

Corrections to Peak Index: Please note the following corrections to the Peak Index published recently in Scree:

| | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Blueberry Hill | 2:4/11:4 |
| Lynx | 2:4 |
| Rendezvous | 5:4/6:3, 7/7:3/8:2/9:3 |
| Twin Peaks | 5:1/3/6:5 |

GREG HIGGINS

Note From Down Under: Pauline English, a former MCA member, sends regards to her Alaskan friends from Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia where she is working at a Coastal Plains Research station. In the several years since she left Alaska, she has hiked across Europe, worked with Greenpeace in the Black Sea and trekked in Nepal. She also found time to obtain another degree. Hopefully, she will return to Alaska in the next year or so.

TRIP REPORTS

MARCUS BAKER CLIMB

Two clear, calm days between storm fronts allowed four of us to reach the 13,176-foot summit of Mount Marcus Baker April 22.

David Blanchet, Michael Dunn, Stephen Koslow and I skied 25 miles up the Matanuska Glacier to reach the peak.

We left Lion Head after noon on Easter Sunday, cached Dave's kayak on the glacier side of the Matanuska River (we brought it in case the pending breakup might force us to ferry loads across the flowing stream on our way out; the river ice held, however), and made our first camp at the edge of the serac field.

We took 4-1/2 days to reach the base of the mountain's north ridge, which first was climbed in 1938 during a first ascent by Bradford Washburn. The better part of our first day on the glacier was spent breaching the seracs near the glacier edge. A blizzard held us up another day at the 6,400-foot level of the glacier. The route took us through three major crevasse fields, but only ski poles broke through the bridges.

We set up tents at our 7,000-foot-level base camp and dug a snow cave as a reserve shelter. Weather up high was questionable April 16, but we carried food and fuel for four days to 10,500 feet. Cornice crevasses and long, icy hollow-sounding slopes of 40 to 45 degrees made the climb interesting.

Lenticulars over the high ridgeline, and warm sunshine over our base camp, induced us to spend April 17 reading, working on tans, skiing fresh powder down the ridge to the edge of the crevasse field.

The storm dropped on us that night; Dave and I collapsed my VE 24 and moved into the cave. Steve and Mike followed the next morning as the blizzard continued. We enlarged the cave and brought down survival gear--cards and books pulled from drift-in tents. Steve had Mawson's Will. It is a great book for storm days. Whatever happens, read that book and you'll consider your trip a piece of cake compared to Mawson's Antarctic expedition.

April 19 featured a whiteout, but we were able to ski until the wind came up strong. The wind continued through April 20. April 21 dawned clear and calm. We dried our gear and moved up to 12,000 feet,

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where we dug another cave in hard snow. It was 10 below, but there was no wind or clouds and the view was tremendous.

Summit day also was clear and calm. But reaching the top involved climbing, then dropping back down, two steep, icy slopes, each more than 500 feet high. Between high camp and summit were four miles of deep snow and crevasse fields, all above 12,000 feet.

The wind picked up as we approached high camp on our return from the summit. We dropped back to base camp, and April 23 left it as high winds clouded the peaks above. We reached King Mountain Lodge for peach pie a la mode at 5 p.m., April 24.

In retrospect, we were fortunate to reach the summit at all. The mountain, which forms a wall between Prince William Sound and the Matanuska Valley, is notorious for its bad weather. In the 1939 American Alpine Journal, Washburn wrote, "The greatest deterrent to the exploration of the Chugach Range has been the unbelievably terrible weather which sweeps the slopes of these mountains almost every day of the entire year. Alaskan weather, at best, is notoriously bad; in the mountains fringing Prince William Sound it is awful beyond the most remote limit of the imagination."

Washburn, on the mountain in June (he was flown with three others to the head of the Matanuska Glacier by Bob Reeve), was snowed upon every night for the 22 days it took his party to reach the summit. "During the day when it was not actually snowing or blowing a hurricane, the lower glacier was usually blanketed in dense fog."

He wondered "whether even two months were sufficient allowance in order to have a single clear day."

In the higher areas of the Chugach, you take your chances with the weather. But on clear days, the scenery is spectacular. Peaks jut straight upward from glaciers and are ornamented by a mishmash of hanging glaciers that constantly release seracs. Avalanches roared down the walls of Marcus Baker every 10 minutes.

MARK SKOK

BODENBURGH BUTTE (881')
May 15, 1982

MCA's hiking season got off to a great start when nineteen folks showed up for the Bodenburgh Butte stampede. Ages ranged from 3 months to 72 years. Those puffing along were Dona Agosti, Reggie Buchanan, Beth, Christopher (7-1/2 months) and Jerry Blitz, Charles and Sally Cox, Pauline Dickey, Dan and Kathy Foxworth, Esther George, Evelyn Jerve, Annette Juliussen, Margaret Moore, Brigitte Ressel, Dave, James (3 months) and Linda Simons and Thomas from Nigeria.

Hikers were subjected to a lunch time geography lesson, including the derivation of the word Knik from the Eskimo word igknik (fire).

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(Question: Why was a glacier named fire? Did Mt. Marcus Baker blow its top at some time? Knik Glacier heads on Baker). We also looked down on Jim Lake and Swan Lake, areas we will be exploring in later hikes.

DONA AGOSTI, LEADER

SLAUGHTER GULCH - COOPER LANDING
May 22, 1982

Ten MCAers took on the strenuous climb from Cooper Landing to Slaughter Gulch. They were leader Pat Klouda, Dona Agosti, Sally and Chip Cox, Doug Gerke, Esther George, Homer Enriquez, Gene Klymko, John Nevin and Brigitte Ressel. All of us made it to the Gulch - from 400 feet to about 2400 feet in several miles; but John Nevin and ten year old Homer, plus Brigitte decided to tackle VABM 3216 to the west. And they did it. That's a good afternoon's work.

A few wildflowers were already in bloom enroute, but just over the summit we found enough snow to call for a lunchstop. Naps for the old folks were also in order. The view from the top was great and according to the peak baggers, even greater. We also watched about 18 canoes and five rafts run the Kenai River down below. No animals observed, but they probably heard us coming.

There were groans from the sore knees crowd on the way down, but Dona served appropriate medicine at the Agosti trailer several miles down the road. Then we tried to teach several cheechakos how to fish in the Kenai. Great day - weatherwise and peoplewise.

DONA AGOSTI

WINTER INITIATION
OR
NOBODY SAID IT WOULD BE EASY

The other three plodded on, seemingly oblivious to the distinct lack of temperature and the overabundance of wind. Rich screamed that he was freezing but a frost-encrusted apparition slowly turned only to say "But nobody said it would be easy" and trudged on.

Who were these guys? They'd invited Rich to climb the north ridge of Mt. Hayes with them then dumped him on the Hayes Glacier where the thermometer said 30 degrees below zero and the sun lit the camp for only an hour and a half a day. It was mid-February and Rich found himself alone with three of those legendary Winter Mountaineers.

It didn't seem to bother those other three that the way to the first camp at 8200' feet lay through minus 20 to 30 degree air and up thinly snow-covered scree. . . Or that temperatures inside the 8200 foot igloo usually consisted of only 5 or 6 degrees. One was so tough that he'd left his polarguard booties at base camp. Rich's camera froze and he thought he would do likewise.

And those three Winter Mountaineers unconcernedly hiked up the ridge to establish the Col camp at 9700 feet paying little heed to the -20 degrees and 70 mph winds that inhabited the dome of hill 9900. Rich worried about full-body frostbite.

Those three did spend one day in the 8200' igloo, though, when the snow plume off the North Shoulder stretched over a mile long, saying something about feeling like a good game of cribbage.

The day after moving into the Col camp those three announced a great desire for some serious cribbage playing and spurned all else to huddle about the game board. Rich's complaints about the 5° cave, his freezing feet and that strange roaring sound outside the cave brought only one response, "But nobody said it would be easy."

A day of fixing rope in fog followed by a push for the summit. The three grizzled Winter Mountaineers led Rich up the great ridge, leaping gaping crevasses, poking pickets and stopping for nothing as minor as frozen feet and hands.

The summit of the North Shoulder, 12,700, was attained in early afternoon. Those three stood muttering words such as "too late", "cornices", "lotsa belays", "bivy". Rich just enjoyed the sunlit view of Denali, Deborah and Sanford while trying to ignore the idea of sub-zero bivies. But suddenly the three announced "cribbage" and stormed off down the slope.

Cribbage pegs marched that whole next day, too, even though food was low. Rich worried about the puny food pile and that strange, ever-louder roaring outside but his worries were received with a glare and the words "But nobody. . ."

A day to descend with backbreaking packs and a day to consume the standard Winter Mountaineer base camp food-steaks, corn-on-the-cob and cheese cake.

Another day while two of those others wandered up the north ridge of Skarland to bask in the sunlit radiance of blowing snow on its 10315' peak.

The same two abandoned Rich and their rapidly degenerating third so as to ski to the road, a trek of three days, many moose tracks and 40 miles.

The last Winter Mountaineer grinned at Rich as the others skied away and calmly broke the stove. Two and a half days of a stove with the power of a candle, of that leering, grease-encrusted face grinning over the pot that was dinner-maltomeal, tepid water and garlic flakes. And all the while saying "But nobody. . .".

The plane came only just in time and Rich thought he'd survived a Winter climb unscathed. Until, that it is, he walked into a small shop and heard the leering clerk say "But nobody said it would be easy."

EL ROJOHOMBRE

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FOR SALE

Hiking Boots For Sale - Fabiano, medium weight hiking boots, size 9-1/2. Nearly new - \$50.00. Call Bill Wakeland -- 279-2270(H) or 274-7539(W).

CLIMBING PARTNERS WANTED:

Looking for partners to climb and explore in Chugach State Park on Sundays and Mondays. Call Peter Porca, 345-7090(H) or 274-2561(W)