



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA BOX 2037 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

October 1983

Volume 26, Issue #10

### OCTOBER MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, October 19th, at 7:30 p.m. in the multi-purpose room of Central Junior High School, 15th and C Streets, Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting and the election, a Swap and Shop will be held for members to sell or trade their equipment. This is an excellent opportunity to pick up that much-needed pair of skis or sell that extra pair of crampons for a fair price. So bring your equipment and your checkbook Wednesday night.

Please Note: Meeting place has been changed from the Pioneer School House to Central Junior High.

### MINUTES FOR MCA SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

The September meeting of MCA was held on September 21st, at the Pioneer School House, third floor, at 3rd and Eagle Streets, Anchorage, Alaska. The meeting was called to order at 7:43 p.m. by Rick Severn, President. The reading of the August general meeting was approved as published in SCREE. Treasurer Reggie Buchanan reported:

\$ 220.82	- Petty Cash
526.51	- Bank Account
3,504.16	- Money Market
<u>\$4,251.49</u>	- Total

To expedite collection of membership dues at the monthly meetings, Reggie has put together packets containing dues information in an envelope addressed to the MCA. Individuals interested in joining the club should mail in their dues. Membership cards can then be picked up at the following meeting.

Welcome to new members and guests: Marilee, Michael, Jan, Matt, Artiss

### I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### A. Hiking: Dona Agosti, 248-0089

Harding Icefield was a very successful hike, as were the two Labor Day hikes; Byers Lake/Curry Ridge had a beautiful view of McKinley, and Lost Lake had a huge crowd and was one of the "best trips ever" to the area for the leader.

#### B. Library: Mike Frank, 243-7645

The library will soon be moved to its new home at Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking on Spenard Road.

C. Programs: Ernie Borjon, 344-8661

There is no program planned for the October meeting. If anyone has something they would like to present, please contact Ernie.

D. Huts: Dave Staehel

John Dillman has resigned as huts chairman. Dave Staehel will now be filling the position.

Expansion and repairs to the Mint Glacier Hut have been completed thanks to Dave Staehel and crew. Improvements included insulation downstairs, a new floor, paneling, a new door, and a new 6'x11' storm porch. There are still some odds and ends which need to be finished. Contact Dave if you will be going to the hut. Cost for repairs and expansion - \$1,361.58. Our thanks to Dave and crew.

E. MCA Equipment at Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking

Alaska Mountaineering and Hiking on Spenard Road has club equipment for use by members upon presentation of a current membership card. There are crampons, helmets, ice-axes, shovels, and pieps. Use is on a first come, first serve basis, although first preference for shovels and pieps goes to those involved in any club trips.

F. Executive Report

There was no meeting.

G. Special Committees

Ice-Climbing School - Mandatory meeting for students will be Thursday, September 22nd, at 7:30 p.m., Romig Junior High School multi-purpose room. Payment of \$12.50 (\$7.50 for entry to the glacier and \$5.00 for class) will be collected then.

## II. OLD BUSINESS

None

## III. NEW BUSINESS

A. There will be an equipment swap at the October Meeting after the general election.

B. Elections will be held at the October Meeting. Nominations to date are as follows:

President - Mark Skok  
Vice-President - Tim Neale  
Secretary - Eileen Cavanaugh  
Treasurer - Bernie Helms  
(2) Board Positions - Reggie Buchanan  
Willie Hersman

1. MCA meetings will be held at 7:30 p.m., 3rd Wednesday of the month at Central Junior High School, for the months of October, November, January, February, March, April, and May. The place for the December meeting will be announced in SCREE.

2. ACC currently has several mountaineering programs being held this fall. To provide for a true "backcountry experience" the list of hikes that are planned for their classes are listed below. Schedule yourself accordingly.

- Sept. 24 - Lazy Mountain
- Oct. 1, 2 - Pioneer Peak
- Oct. 8, 9 - The Suicides
- Oct. 15, 16 - Mt. Williwaw
- Oct. 22, 23 - Lynx Peak
- Oct. 29, 30 - Kickstep and/or Tincan
- Nov. 5, 6 - Modson
- Nov. 12, 13 - Matanuska Glacier
- Nov. 19 - Explorer Glacier
- Nov. 24-27 - Johnson Pass Traverse/Anderson Peak

3. Thank you, Rick Severn, for your slide presentation. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bernie Helms

### GATES OF THE ARCTIC NATIONAL PARK

July 23 - August 4, 1983

Day 1: There were no snafus getting 22 people out of Anchorage on Wien Air to Fairbanks where we met others who had driven cars. Wien personnel were also very cooperative about letting us pick six packs off the carts in the baggage room in Fairbanks - this in order that the first six persons could leave Bettles immediately upon arrival. Ron Costello of Brooks Range Aviation was ready and waiting, and the first six "gassed up" their mountain stoves and fuel containers and were at Chimney Lake in 45 minutes. (Ron purchased the fuel for us at Bettles Lodge.) Since the Bandereinte plane holds 18 passengers, but only 6 packs, others arrived at intervals through the morning. Group II stayed overnight in Bettles because there are no Sunday flights to the village. The remaining two loads of Group I were Beavered into Chimney, and all passengers were initiated into the art of wading right away. Group II claims their water was only six inches deep compared to our two feet. We camped on the highest ridge to the west of the lake to get the breeze - it was 70 degrees and hot. Later, groups chose the spruce-covered slopes nearer the lake which probably saved some water-fetching time. We had boiled our water after finding beavers in Chimney Lake, but later in the evening Bill Wakeland found a stream coming in on the north side of the lake. Bill also chatted with a group from the University of Alaska in Fairbanks who had just come from Summit Lake. They wondered why we were going up hill and we couldn't answer them; later, most of us agreed that we'd rather go up the Koyukuk than the Amawk gorge. Quick rain shower at 4 p.m., but over in a few minutes.

Day 2: We stayed high on the east side of Clear River the next day, probably around the 2500 foot level. We later learned that Gene Klymko in Group II had gone fishing in Clear River and found it easy walking to the aufeis on the river. Their group then followed the Clear River flats - so future hikers have two route choices here. We passed Holmes Creek and Pinnyanaktuk drainages to the west, then descended to the Clear River flats in about Section 28. Some camped by the river, others on the bench above. It had been 73 degrees so Sue, Pam, and Karen braved the icy water for a swim, but scurried out when our daily cloud burst opened up - this time around 6 p.m.

Day 3: we crossed two channels of Clear River with no difficulty, then headed for St. Patrick's Valley. The route was northwest through spruce, then across ankle-breaking mush to a boulder field. We jumped boulders heading due north. Group II elected to take a lower route on the river bed. We negotiated more of the bouncing terrain until a torrent sent us all scurrying for rain gear around lunch time. But, by the time we arrived at the end of the valley, the sun was shining. Two of our group had hiked ahead and we could see their tent, a tiny dot beside a huge boulder beneath Wien Mountain. Four decided to continue north and west around the end of the canyon and were rewarded with views of waterfalls and wild flowers. The rest of us descended (in Section 33) to St. Patrick's Creek, then climbed out of the canyon, and camped on the ridge to the northeast where St. Patrick's fork from the lake meets St. Patrick's fork from the west. Most of our group later agreed that this location was the most scenic of the trip. We had a visit from the penthouse types that evening and learned that Steve Wakeland had climbed Wien Mountain (6082) and had found a 1973 Sierra Club note. Alas, he was without pencil to record an MCA ascent. The temperature plummeted to 38 degrees, and our daily rain shower arrived at 5 p.m., right in the middle of the cocktail hour. It cleared up quickly and the rest of the evening was Kodak time.

Day 4: Hikers wandered in twos and threes to St. Patrick's Lake the next morning, then converged on Lake No. 2 in the pass. Photographic frenzy prevailed and for good reason; the view was superb. We were on a bench overlooking the deep canyon of the river running out of what I believe is Inyuk Lake (Section 26). Bill, Steve, and Marsha were so smitten they decided to stay and climb the 5580 ridge to the east. David Agosti and Chris Cadieux took over the tricky route finding at this point. We descended via the dried-up, partially grassed-over creek bed emanating from Lake No. 2. This route is to the east of the lake (not the west). After reaching the first bench below, we screeled down to the creek bed and boulder-hopped to the junction of Inyuk Creek. We crossed Inyuk and ascended a side hill to the east of what I'll call Main Creek. We traversed this steep slope downward to a bench where Amawk Creek enters the main stream from the east. This was an ideal lunch site, and it could accommodate four or five tents as a camp site. Loungers lounged in the warm sun, and the sightseers backtracked upstream on Amawk to photograph rock pillars framing the stream. Our departure was first across a small tributary, then across Amawk-Main, itself; this was a boot-removal job for most. We continued on the creek bed until we reached a dried-up, unnamed creek coming in from the east (Section 15-16). Here we climbed the bank and followed a game trail which paralleled Amawk Creek about 100 yards east. About 1/4 mile further, the trail became hazy, so we rested and viewed the Koyukuk far below while our two trail blazers checked out possible routes. They returned with exceedingly good news - a game trail seemed to go on forever along the river and down to its outwash plain. Not only did the trail do just that, it also wandered through a blueberry patch. No need to explain the delay here. We also had a most impressive view of Doonerak from here. It was to be the last time we saw the mountain for several days - its peak is as

elusive as McKinley's. The rest of the route was a breeze through the broad Amawk flats. Eventually we crossed the Amawk near its confluence with North Fork Koyukuk. Some boot-jumped, others removed foot gear, and eventually we all ended up at a spruce grove around the bend. (Group III found an established campsite in the birch and alder grove along the Amawk)

We were able to start a fire on the rocky beach that night and unbeknownst to the honoree, we quietly gathered everyone around the fire to sing Happy Birthday to David Agosti. David had caught three grayling and put them in a pool dug out in the sand, intending to eat them for a birthday banquet. He returned to the pool to find the largest fish missing. Until several days later, he thought he was the victim of a camp joke, but when he heard about bears wandering the area, he decided the bears may have been to his birthday party, also. Not everyone can make that claim. This so intimidated Mary Pat Brudie that she threw back the fish she caught later in the evening. She didn't want uninvited guests for breakfast.

Day 5: The weather next day was cloudy and the temperature about 45. We followed the Koyukuk stream bed for about a mile, then started climbing. There was disagreement here between the "highs" and the "lows", and to my dismay, the highs won out. Our route was across soggy tundra and the gullies didn't help. Nor did the frequent willow groves. We lunched on a high rock outcropping over-looking a bend in the river where a helicopter-supported geological party were tenting. (We later learned they had dubbed this outcropping "The Knockers".) Things got no better after lunch when we were forced even higher to get around another forest. Finally, the Doonerak peninsula was in sight. We worked our way down and along rocks close to the edge of the fast-moving Koyukuk. Bombardment Creek presented no crossing problems and tents soon popped up all over the peninsula.

Day 6: Our party divided into four groups. Bill, Steve, and Marsha crossed the Koyukuk about a half mile downstream from camp (it was fast and thigh high), and climbed the ridge north of camp. David, Jennifer, Chris, and Bob tackled the 5500 foot ridge south of camp and west of Doonerak on the way to Hanging Glacier Mountain. They successfully reached the summit by rock climbing through a couloir, a first for Jennifer. Two lazy types, who shall be nameless, sacked out in their tents. A fourth contingent raced into camp about 7 p.m. with the statement, "Have we got a story to tell!" That morning Pam, Eiven, Mary Pat, Karen, Doug, Blanche, Guenter, Sue, and Alex had hiked to Ernie Creek to view the Gates of the Arctic - Frigid Crags and Boreal. On their return, Pam and Sue were in the rear, probably because they had taken off their boots nine times in order to cross and recross the Koyukuk and its tributaries. About a mile from camp, they were silently trudging along watching their feet when they looked up to see a honey-colored grizzly, who, upon seeing them, turned and began to run away. About then, Pam fumbled her whistle to her mouth and blew hard. The grizzly then stopped, stood up, and turned around to see what the interesting noise was. Pam and Sue did not wait to see that he did next, and for some reason, the next stream was crossed with boots on. That night we all slept uneasily, but because it rained steadily, we hoped the bears were holed up somewhere staying dry. (Group II joined us about 2:30 that afternoon.)

Day 7: The rain abated next morning and by 8:30 we began crossing Bombardment Creek in tennies; by 9:00 everyone was booted and we departed. We decided to follow the riverbed route used by Group II, but this occasionally meant climbing the bank to get around the Koyukuk. We met up with the geological party just breaking camp, and it turned out to be Gil Mull, who was mapping the area for the state, and Karen, who was completing a

master's thesis. (Some of you will recall seeing Gil's beautiful photographs in *Alaska Magazine* and *Alaska Geographic*.) We gabbed a while, then at record pace, headed for Amawk Creek, cutting off about three hours from our previous time. Of course, we all had wet feet. About 70% of the route had been along the river, the rest on the banks not too far from the river.

While lunching, we yelled with Group III who were camped across the Amawk in the birch and alders. They were just preparing to leave for the downstream site - what you might call a laid-back schedule. About 2 p.m., we followed the Koyukuk flats upstream about a mile until the river flowed against the bank, and we had to climb. From this vantage point we could see Alinement Valley about three miles ahead. We once more descended to the river flats and meandered through willow and clearings before crossing an unnamed stream from the east (Section 4). This required a bit of tricky rock hopping. We stayed high until Alinement Creek, then crossed the two branches of that creek which were moving fairly fast and about knee deep. The wind was blowing at about 20 miles per hour and the temperature was 57 degrees. We camped below the bench along the Koyukuk but this only partially alleviated the discomfort from the wind.

Bill immediately hiked off to investigate the route ahead; he had been worried when two men we met along the way asked if he knew what he was in for after Alinement Creek. It had been suggested that we stay high, but not too high when heading up the Koyukuk. Bill did just that but ran into a canyon coming in from the east about 1-1/2 miles from Alinement. He descended into this river canyon, then down to the Koyukuk and discovered that it was possible to walk along the river, sometimes hugging the cliffs along the east side. He was quite elated when he returned to camp and we decided this news warranted our staying two days at this location.

Day 8: The next morning, we all gathered around Steve's tent before he was up and helped him over the hill by singing Happy Birthday on his 30th. This so inspired him that he, Bill, and Marsha climbed to 6800 feet that day and saw one band of 16 sheep - with many full-curl rams. There were people scattered all over the mountain tops that day - the sunny day helped even though the temperature was only 46 degrees. The wind had subsided quite a bit. About 3:00 p.m. Group II appeared on the horizon bearing tales. It seems that late on the day we left, a grizzly showed up while Penn Rossback was cooking one of her many gourmet meals. She and Marty flew down the Koyukuk to catch the hikers heading for Ernie Creek; this group opted to return to avoid starvation in the coming days. Finally, after many votes and Don Hanson's personal encounter with one of the grizzlies, they decided to move camp. (It seems the final straw came when Don, chomping on a cracker, tried to blow his whistle, and it got plugged with crackers.) They also decided that these three bears were either dumb or awfully smart - they were not daunted by humans. It was on their retreat that Group II encountered Group III en-route to Bombardment and scared them into a change of plans. Group II then continued upstream to a good camp site. It wasn't until the post-hike slide show that we heard from Judy Whitcomb about their Encounter. Judy's story has to be the funniest of the year. The highlights are as follows: Judy and Peter are fishing near the Knockers. Judy goes downstream to pick up her cheese and salami sandwich, carrying with her two very dead fish. She looks up to find she is being watched by one big grizzly. She screams for Peter, but he is upwind. She starts to walk away, and the bear follows. She tosses the fish and salami. Then, she turns around, stops, and points her finger at the bear. Her words: "Now you just go away, you bear!" And he did! She races to find Peter. They pack up and decide to return to camp downstream. On the way, they again run into the bear. The last Judy sees of Peter, he is disappearing in the forest



along the stream. They both end up on the Knockers high above the stream, feeling quite secure as they watch the bear amble to the northeast.

Day 9: Came Sunday and our Big Putsch. All had been warned about the 1000 foot climb in one-half mile and then another 500 foot altitude gain before reaching Summit Lake. We stayed close to leader, Bill, who maneuvered us down to the Koyukuk flats, then through alder and willow, then again on rock piles against the cliffs, sometimes only a foot from the water, and finally, in 1-1/2 miles, to the creek and ravine where we would commence our steep climb. Bill's warnings made it seem a lot less of an obstacle, probably because we were all psyched for it. Following a center game trail, we headed east up the ravine, sometimes using vegetation holds to pull ourselves up, sometimes switching back. All negotiated the first 700 feet and by 10:00 a.m., everyone had topped the last 300 feet to the floor of the pass. From here, everyone chose his own route. Some stayed at the 3800 foot level and said they had marshless walking; others opted for 500 feet lower along the east slope and encountered occasional cotton flower marshland. Others hit it straight down the middle, mostly marsh. Part of the group detoured way over to the west canyon in order to photograph the waterfalls. They said it was one of the more scenic parts of the trip. Four seemingly endless miles later, we spotted Summit Lake, one marsh and one hill away. That marsh was the ultimate indignity, but plunge in and on we did; some of the speed demons were already setting up tents on the northwest side of the lake just beyond the old hunting cabin and where a stream enters the lake. This was one of the few dry, flat spots around the lake, and even then, we had to walk a way for water. After I found the door to the outhouse (it had blown some distance away), we were able to use that facility. Some still had the energy to walk to the Continental Divide that evening - after our customary shower, that is. We watched a caribou at dusk.

TO HOLISTARCH, NY

Day 10: About 6:00 a.m. the next morning, Chris pointed out six sheep on a grassy knoll directly across the lake and six more behind our camp. The place was teeming with shorebirds; arctic terns dive-bombed our tents. After an hour's rain, the sun came out and so did the explorers. Jennifer tried for a ridge to the northwest of camp and came face to face with a caribou. Each graciously withdrew. Several of us checked to see if the Continent was still Dividing and not knowing exactly where, we took two sets of pictures at two locations. Bill, Alex, and Bob went into the valley to the north and east of Summit Lake and scared up some bull caribou and rams. Group III came trooping over the horizon late that day and camped at the other end of the lake. There was lots of tent-to-tent visiting and imbibing on this our last night. Our first flight out in the morning was at 4:30 a.m.; so I tried to get some early sleep, but without success. I promised to call the first load of passengers at 4:00 a.m. About 3:00 a.m., I awakened with an uneasy feeling. Did Ron Costello say he would leave Bettles at 4:00 a.m. or would he arrive at Summit Lake at 4:00 a.m.? About 3:55, I awakened five others and just then heard a plane. It took the six of us exactly 12 minutes to pack up and get on the plane. We saw the panorama of the Brooks Range below us including Group III still at Alinement Creek. Bettles was strangely quiet at 5:00 a.m., but we were able to get into the lodge at 8:00 a.m. The usual pigging-out ensued. Promptly at 10:15, eighteen persons boarded the Bandareinte flown in from Fairbanks. However, only ten packs accompanied us. In a split-second maneuver, the packs finally arrived five minutes before the owners and caretakers boarded their Fairbanks-to-Anchorage flight. Moral: Don't expect to get passengers and 18 packs on one Bandareinte. The afternoon included another snafu. Guenter and Sue had checked their car with Hertz and learned that the latter had allowed it to be impounded; intervention by the airport manager himself turned this into a happy story, and we all drove off to revive our ingards at Shakey's

We heard that Group II was picked up at Summit on Wednesday, flown out to Fairbanks, and whisked off to Anchorage with split second timing and nary a problem. Group III, however, was weathered in at Summit Lake, and Ron was not able to penetrate the fog until noon on Thursday; they arrived in Anchorage at 10 p.m.

Despite the few logistical inconveniences, we remember great scenery, moderate to difficult hiking, lots of wild game, easy stream crossings, and good-humored companions. We were also impressed with our pilot, Ron Costello. I'd say the trip gets a high rating on the MCA roster of hikes.

Hikers were: Bill Wakeland and Dona Agosti (co-leaders, Group I), David Agosti, Pam Bearden, Eiven Brudie, Mary Pat Brudie, Bob and Chris Cadieux, Blanche Crandall, Brenda Davis, Karen Forsyth, Doug Gerke, Jennifer Powell, Guenter and Sue Rostin, Alex Sisson, Marsha and Steve Wakeland; Don Hanson, (leader of Group II), Marty Bassett, Pauline Dickey, Joe and Tim Dugan, Ann Marie Herfindahl, Gene Klynko, Marian Paulson, Thyrsa Pelling, Penn Rossback, Jane Stammen, Linda White; Peter Hoose, (leader of Group III), Pete Dohan, MD, Paul Larson, Michael Rees, Gill Salmon, and Judy Whitcomb, MD.

Dona Agosti, Organizer

# IN SEARCH OF THE ELUSIVE CHUGACH

## El Rojohombi

The Chugach is a range full of mystery. Great peaks have been rumored to mysteriously appear from the enshrouding Gulf of Alaska storm clouds once every generation or so altho no reliable witnesses to these dubious apparitions have yet been found (most reports come from a scraggly-faced group of social deviates locally known as mountaineers). In order to ascertain the validity of these phantom massifs, this writer contacted three well-known companions with unblemished reputations for flawless fact-finding and organized a quest to end all spurious speculation.

Our quest for truth began March 5 when I flew out of Anchorage with a local pilot. I became suspicious of our pilot, though, when, shortly after take-off, he directed his plan through a series of cloud banks and emerged into brilliant sun-lit skies hoisted aloft by ice-encrusted peaks. I became even more suspicious when he landed us at what he called the uncharted upper Nelchina Glacier below an amazingly beautiful ice sculpture he named as Valhalla (claiming it was 12,135 feet high) and then promptly skied away to cut strings of figure-eights in the previously unmarked snow.

The search for the elusive, cloud-drenched Chugach summits began in earnest the next day as we trekked skyward up the east ridge of the local hill our pilot had called Valhalla. From this higher viewpoint we hoped to glimpse the cloud-choked ethereal towers of our quest. The hike to the overlook was longer than expected and more difficult as we never did find a handrail but had to create our own to calm our nerves.

Never-the-less, the next day found us pering anxiously from the apex of Valhalla, bewilderingly wondering what all these glaring, sun-glistening hills about us were and where the white, viewless summits of the fabled Chugach could be lurking.

Valhall's crest had been gained in vain so we descended to ascend to another point. A scenery-strewn pass of 9700 feet brought only tears of disappointment and that nite



we huddled miserably in our hole in the ground urgently seeking inspiration so as to lead our quest to its ultimate fulfillment.

we morosely crawled out to greet the following morn while our enthusiasm mutteringly slunk to the darkest corners of our den. But to our wondering delight we found ourselves snowed in! Eager excavating brought us quickly to the surface. There we excitedly discovered ourselves to be in the midst of those mysterious Chugach peaks we sought, completely encased in a blizzard of raging white. Snow, avalanching out of the temptous sky, was tucked away by the overexuberant wind into every nook and cranhy of clothes and body. There was no visibility and notable few degrees.

We celebrated by rapidly diving back into our hole where, once we'd calmed down enough for rational thought, we discussed the nature of our unexpected arrival amongst the gloomily reknown Chugach. Plate tectonics, or continental drift, we decided, had to be the answer. It was no wonder these great peaks could remain undiscovered for so long if they were in constant motion and in everchanging locales.

For three days we basked in the spectacular viewless white of the great Chugach. But a fourth day arrived and we awoke to find that the mist-masked Chugach summits had drifted on, leaving us with the mundane local hills. We hiked up the dragon's back to the 10,620 foot top of Fafnir's upthrust bulk and then to 11,000 feet on an impersonal hill known as Gilbert Lewis but saw not a trace of the spectral Chugach. In the darkness, however, the devious Chugach drifted back as if to say farewell. We descended, then, the Chugach, catching a rare, fleeting glimpse of their shadowy feet but awoke the next day to find ourselves below the familiar Valhalla, again.

Our nefarious pilot, his pleasure for skiing temporarily satiated, never did come back. The journey back to the less ethereal world crossed forty miles in four days.

From a final vantage point near Eureka Roadhouse we gazed longingly to the south, hoping for one final panorama of our mysterious Chugach...but saw only the sun-swamped topographic chaos of the local hills.

#### THE MINT HUT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

I admit, it was a tough trip in. The weather was drizzley wet and cold, and for some reason it was windy, too. Our personal gear weighed upwards of 90 lbs a person. Nevertheless, we managed to drag our packs the 30 feet from the chopper to the hut. After the chopper lifted off, the wind died, but there was some doubt as to the ability of the pilot to maneuver through the fog to bring our two sling loads of building supplies in. Shortly he did return, and shortly did he leave. Leaving us with 2,200 lbs of lumber, nails, roofing, paint, and other articles too numerous to mention.

We had made it. We broke open a box of the grape to celebrate. The Mint Hut Construction Company has arrived. What a relief. After two very panicky days, a couple of misorders, arranging for a helicopter, and one very badly overloaded van trip, we are here. Now to work and play.

This day is Tuesday. We did do some work on this day; a little insulating and paneling. But, about dark we got tired of that, and proceeded to celebrate some more.

Morning broke late with snow at the hut. I kept wandering around the hut mumbling to myself, "but this is the middle of August". Nothing to do but work. While I measured and nailed, Brennan plugged the hand-operated Skill saw into his right arm and cut paneling. "Two walls done and we're not making loads of progress. ~~Believe it or not~~ Thursday came with a little nicer weather which led Brennan and me to take a day off and try for Spearmint - which we didn't do because of possible avalanches - which made me mumble somemore, "but this is August!". Back to the hut for more construction work."

Friday saw us climb Peppermint Peak. There was about 3 feet of snow on the glacier and a single foot on the rocks. Just a whole load of fun. Honest! During the descent we discovered that the hut rope (sub-standard length) was insufficient to complete some of the rappels. Back to the hut in zero visability and more construction. About midnight the wood butcher extraordinair, John Tuckey wandered in. This time, he had remembered to bring a headlamp.

Saturday dawned clear, cold, and to put it simply - gorgeous weather! I guess we work on good days and climb on bad days. But watch the hammers fly today. Take no prisoners!

Tuckey took over the building of the stormporch. He quickly discovered that the original building is neither plumb, square, nor level. But, press on he did, and a fine job to boot. By this time Brennan's sawing arm was positively bulging with new muscles. I attacked the interior walls with more insulation and paneling. Even put some new floor (plywood) down with a layer of anti-parky squirrel wire mesh underneath it.

About 2 o'clock Jim Laschae stumbled in, and as the new boy, he got the jobs no one else wanted. As Lieutenant Laschae discovered, rank didn't have its privileges.

Sunday morning saw the installation of the stormporch roofing, windows, a door, and more interior paneling. The construction tended to be done in a less than enthusiastic manner as we were all suffering from hangovers.

And so it was with some regrets that that afternoon we packed up and left. Most of the basic construction was done. Still to be done are some painting, shelves, insulating and paneling, caulking, anti-squirrel siding, and the stormporch bunk. Any questions about the project can be answered by calling 688-9958. Ask for me, Dave Staeheli. But don't thank me, nor Norm Brennan, John Tuckey, or Jim Laschea. It was our pleasure.

#### LOST LAKE

Although the weather dawned dubious, and some did not show up, sixteen people set out for Primrose campground near Seward. When shuttling cars to the Seward end we picked up Curvin Metzler, giving 17 that headed up the trail amongst a sprinkling of rain and blueberries. The rain pretty much ceased by tree line but then the wind took over. Fresh bear signs were evident. The old mining cabin below tree line now sports a sign saying it belongs to the US government.

As usual, the group got split up due to diverse hiking speeds and wound up camping at two different places even though maps had been disseminated to prevent this. Many new people were awed by the beauty of the place. We found that the marmot population

still abounds. Low clouds blew in and out but most were optimistic about the coming day. I quickly established the presence of salmon berries nearby before setting up camp.

Next day arrived sunny and cloudless. Everyone seemed to take advantage of no schedule and pursued various activities at leisure. Joyce Leonard and Liz and Al Robinson decided to go out this day and departed at noon. Mark Skok conducted a compass seminar for those interested, and Linda White, Jane Stammen, Curvin, Doug Dougherty, and myself wandered up to the mountain peak behind the campsite. A rousing snowball fight took place, and it is doubtful whether the hims or the hers won. The view from the peak was superb, but cold and windy. A peak register was found with pen, but no paper. We all signed one of my business cards, and put it in the jar. After a quick trip on the scree, we investigated an ice tunnel and on our way back to camp met Mike Rees, who had hiked up the higher peak behind ours.

The most ambitious member was Ron VanBergrgryk who set out with ice axe and crampons to scale the lower peak of Mt. Ascension and conquered the main peak, also. He enjoyed reading the peak register which started out with Vin Hoeman in '68 and included two people this past July - most MCA members.

Back at camp we picked up Ron Rhodehamel and sons, Logan and Howard, and a friend, Sam. Ron quickly landed a large rainbow trout from the lake.

The next day was even prettier than the previous one, and going out was sheer delight. Except for Reggie Buchanan, the pace was less than blistering since the berries and this beauty were preferable to getting back to civilization. Again, several other groups were in the area, but due to the large acreage little or no contact was ever made. Others contributing to the enjoyable trip were Peggy Michielsen, Deanna Bell, Mark Smedley, and Tim and Joe Dugan.

John Nevin

#### MCA 1983 PICNIC

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska's annual picnic was held at Eklutna Lake under very sunny skies, Saturday, August 27th, with over 35 people in attendance. Rose hips were in abundance for the picking as well as groups of goats up in the valley between and around East and West Twin Peaks.

There were plenty of hamburgers and hot dogs (of which there were a number left), potato salad, chips, melons of every variety, cookies, and corn on the cob.

After eating, volleyball was started, with the team facing into the sun dropping the game to the other team with systematic regularity. Those with sun or glacier glasses had to make up a lot of territory for those on their team who did not. There was the usual "competitive" spirit, ribald humor, and general "ball-hogging", but several good games developed later in the afternoon as the sun went behind the trees eliminating the handicap.

The Trail Mix contest had three entrants: Michael Rees with a nut gorp; Mark Findaly with an oat/honey granola bar; and Tim Neale with a conglomeration of what was on the picnic table, in a potato chip bag. The prize was a \$10.00 gift certificate at AMH which was awarded to Mark Findlay after the official "tast-test" of the entries by President Rick Severn.

Eileen Cavanaugh and Bernie Helms

### BOLD PEAK CLIMB, AUGUST 6 AND 7

Apparently the threat of rain kept over half of the 23 folks that signed up for the Bold Peak trip from showing up. All ten people that showed up made the summit. Most of the folks rode bicycles back to the East Fork trailhead on Friday evening. We camped along the East Fork River Friday night and ascended the peak via the south gully (Stiver's Gully) on Saturday.

The weather was very pleasant and would have been exceptional if it were not for the perennial cloud on the summit. Most folks stayed at camp on Saturday night and had a leisurely bike ride back to the parking lot on Sunday.

The folks participating on this climb included Marilyn Swanson, Ron VanBergryk, Jim Laschae, George Rooney, John Kerr, Gretchen Bishop, John Lohff, Tim Neale, Evelyn Jerrey, and Sandi MacDonald.

Tim Neale

### EAST TWIN PEAK TRAIL CLEARING

An MCA group cleared the upper section of the East Twin Peaks Trail. The trail was cleared back to the width of the original roadbed. It is hoped that this and other existing trails in Chugach State Park can be kept free of overgrowth so they are passable on skis or while carrying a pack.

Volunteers will continue to play a big part in maintaining trails in the park. We would like to thank all the folks that have volunteered their time this summer to work on the trail clearing crews.

The people helping out on the East Twin Peak Trail were Mark Skok, Sandi MacDonald, Mardie Prentke, Tim Neale, Sam Dunnagan, and Michael Rees.

Tim Neale

### BOOK REVIEW

*Alaska's Parklands - The Complete Guide* by Nancy Lange Simmerman. Paperback, 336 pp., 6" x 9". Photos, maps. 34" x 48" full-color topographic map. The Mountaineers, Seattle. July 1983. \$13.95

This is a unique and invaluable guide to public recreational lands in Alaska, both for Alaskans and for prospective visitors. The completeness of the book is astounding, and it will probably be the authoritative guide for years to come, both for its wealth of accurate information, helpfully arranged, and for its excellent illustration.

Nancy Simmerman is familiar to many Alaskans and visitors through her co-authorship of *55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska*, now in its second edition and fifth printing, and her many illustrations of Alaska scenes in other publications, especially



*Alaska Magazine* and *Alaska Geographic*. She is a long-time Alaska resident who has traveled from one end of the state to the other as a professional photographer. She is also a real lover of the wilderness, with concern both for its enjoyment and for its preservation.

To help guide the reader through the complexities of land ownership and government agency responsibility, the author has made contact with every federal and state agency having responsibility for Alaska recreational lands and waters. That these contacts have been friendly and fruitful is shown by the number of agency photos which supplement the author's own in the book. Appendices include the mailing address and telephone number of every agency - it is most useful to have these together in one place.

The text of the first part of the book includes sections on getting around (all the methods of transportation), special hints for the visitor from Outside, cameras, gold panning, firearms, artifacts and relics, ice-bergs and glaciers, mosquitoes, camping, backpacking and hiking, boating, beating the cold and snow, villages and the Bush, wild foods, the land - its forms and weather.

The larger section of the book is taken up by descriptions of every Alaskan park-land, including wild rivers, alphabetically listed, with at least one black-and-white photograph for each. Each description is prefaced by information on location, size, high and low points, best time of year to visit - on foot, by ski, or by boat, pertinent USGS map, date established, and managing agency. There are many other helpful features, for instance, all measurements are given in both US customary and in metric. Suffice it to say that almost every bit of information the visitor might want is included, or one is told where to go for it.

This reviewer is impressed by the author's dedication to the wilderness ethic, and her concern that Parkland visitors travel safely as well as happily. Sections on bears, avalanches, hypothermia and frostbite, giardiasis, and red tide draw on authoritative sources. The reader is reminded of the need for courtesy toward privately owned land, and respect for the request by a few Alaska Native villages that they not be visited by non-residents.

Highly recommended!

Liz Robinson

#### **\*\*UPCOMING CLIMBS\*\***

October 29: Pre-Halloween climb. One day (Saturday) activity. Meet at UAA parking lot at 7 a.m. Usual equipment for this time of year plus ice axe, crampons, swami belt, and headlamp or flashlight. Exact location will be determined just before Saturday depending on weather, snow conditions, etc. Possibilities are Crow Pass area, Blueberry Ridge or Little Denali. Elevation gain will be, hopefully, 4,000 - 5,000 ft., moderately strenuous. Contact Tim Neale, 274-4952.

November 5: One day winter snow climbing techniques class. Good for beginners or just review. Warm clothes, lunch, thermos with something hot, ice axe, crampons, swami belt, and headlamp. Bring picket or snow fluke if you have one. Class will be held in local Chugach Mountains. Meet at 7 a.m. at UAA. For more information call Tim Neale, 274-4952.