



MOUNTAINEERING CLUB OF ALASKA

BOX 2037

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99510

May 1985

Volume 28, Issue 05

### MAY MEETING

The meeting will be held Wednesday, May 15th at 7:30 p.m. in the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle St., Anchorage, Alaska. After the business meeting, participate in the equipment swap, where you can pick up that extra piece of gear at a reasonable price or get some extra cash for an item you no longer need. Also Todd Miner will give a short presentation on this summer's ACC climbing class.

### MINUTES FOR THE APRIL MEETING

The meeting was held on April 17, 1985 on the top floor of the Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd and Eagle Sts. The meeting was called to order by President Doug Van Etten, at 7:40 p.m.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

\$ 485.46 -Petty Cash  
2472.25 -Money Market Plus Account  
830.60 -Bank Account  
\$3788.31 -Total

Dues are \$7.50 for individual and \$10.00 for family. Membership cards are not mailed unless you send in a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

MCA  
P.O. Box 102037  
Anchorage, AK 99510

(remember that stamps are 22 cents)

## I. Old Business

None.

## II. New Business

- A. The club picnic will be held August 17 at Eklutna Lake. Anyone interested in helping to buy and/or shuttle food and gear up there please contact Bernie Helms or Nan deGood.
- B. Interest has been expressed in having a rock climbing class. A schedule is set to have an introductory class the evening of May 30. A one day class will be held close to Anchorage on the evening of June 2 with an overnight on June 8-9 to a further locality. Persons interested need to sign up at the May meeting.
- C. An announcement was made for a meeting concerning the management of the Hatcher Pass Area. Contact Tim Neale for details.
- D. Hiking season has arrived! Please either sign up at the meetings or call the trip leader so he/she knows whom to expect.
- E. A reminder to those who enjoy the Portage Glacier area. The surface of the lake is extremely unsafe this time of year. The ice is thin with a heavy snowpack on top. There are many fissures in the ice. BEWARE of these conditions and avoid going out on the lake itself.
- F. Chugach National Forest personnel are seeking your thoughts on the issue of allocation of certain areas for alping skiing, nordic skiing, snow-machining and other winter sports use. This includes the Glacier-Winnger Creek, Turnagain Pass, Manitoba Mountain and Settle Creek areas. This is your chance to have a say in how this area is to be developed. Send your opinions/recommendations to the following address:  
Chugach National Forest  
Winter Sports Study  
2221 E Northern Lights, #238  
Anchorage, Ak 99508

You may also call 279-5541 for further information

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nan DeGood  
Secretary

May 85

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## TRIP REPORTS

### Mount Redoubt Ascent

Larry Van Slyke, Bob Gerhard, Ken Zafren and I reached the summit ridge of Mount Redoubt in sub-zero but sunny weather at 4 p.m. April 10

Two steep ice pinnacles kept us from reaching the actual summit. We had the equipment to climb them, but our slow, exhausting ascent through snow that in places was waist deep, and the distinct possibility of time - and energy-consuming crevasse problems on the descent, caused us to decide to turn back.

Lowell Thomas Jr. made two flights from Kenai with his Helio Courier to land us on the Drift River near the base of Redoubt April 4. We cached extra food there, and that afternoon skied from the 650-foot level to about 2,500 feet on a glacier that flows off the mountain to the northeast.

The weather continued sunny but cold on April 5. We skied up to 5,000 feet on the northeast face of the volcano, and dug a snow cave on a gentle slope that was safe from falling ice. Clouds came in April 6, but we tried pushing a route through the lower ice fall until whiteout conditions forced us back to camp. Heavy snowfall and 30 mph winds loaded the mountain's east face, and kept us in camp through April 8. April 9 was sunny, though windy, and we scouted a route through the lower icefall.

April 10 was cold, clear and calm. We began climbing on skis at 8 a.m., and put on crampons at about 7,500 feet when we got into an area of crevasses and broken blocks of ice, interspersed by pockets of breakable slab and soft, deep snow. Relatively low slope angles kept the avalanche hazard minimal to moderate. Both Ken and I punched through snow bridges, but neither went in more than waist deep.

Our route was beautiful and fun to negotiate. It likely would be much more difficult and dangerous later in the season, when warm weather would open the crevasses and generate more ice fall activity.

Mark Skok

### Talkeetna Glacier Trip March 24-30, 1985

Eight folks got together for the second annual Talkeetna Mountains glacier trip. We were fortunate to have sunny skies and calm weather for most of the seven days.

Temperatures were a bit on the cool side. One evening or possibly it was one morning at breakfast the thermometer read -9 degrees F. We felt that was

probably cool enough so nobody bothered reading the thermometer any more.

Most of the time was spent skiing, climbing, building igloos and snow caves, eating and sleeping. The group was flown in by Talkeetna Air Taxi. Alaksa Mountaineering and Hiking loaned us a rather large old dome tent that made an excellent shelter to get out of the evening breeze.

The group was made up of the following: Nan DeGood, Tom Williams, Kieth Diehl, Liz Carey, Rick Maron, Doreen Dougherty, and Marilee Clack.

Everyone pitched in to help organize and put the trip together. Total cost per person was around \$250.00 including air taxi service, a couple of pizzas and beer before and after the trip.

Next year's trip will take place in the same general area about the same time of year.

Tim Neale

#### A Weekend on Marcus Baker - Winter 1985

"We glory in the physical regeneration which is the product of our exertions; we exult over the grandeur of the scenes that are brought before our eyes...; but we value more highly the development of manliness, and the evolution, under combat with difficulties, of those noble qualities of human nature - courage, patience, endurance, and fortitude."

- Edward Whymper  
Scrambles Amongst the Alps (1871)

"My feet are cold."

Voice from a snow cave, Mt. Marcus Baker (1985)

Marcus Baker is a large, non-descript lump of a mountain generally consisting of a north/south ridge left over from the bites taken by the Knik, Baker, and Matanuska Glaciers. It was first climbed in 1938 by Bradford Washburn, who took about 2 months to do it. It was then known by the more graceful name of St. Agnes. (After all, a mountain named Marcus?)

Peter, B.C. and I were flown to the upper Knik Glacier on a warm, windless Saturday in February. Unfortunately, Don Lee's plane broke a ski just as we touched down, requiring a prompt reversal of course. For half an hour, 3 nervous mountaineers and one frustrated pilot circled about the glacier, staring down at the drooping ski. Wishful thinking and colorful language weren't going to fix it so we were forced to return to an emergency landing in Palmer.

Don's flying was magnificent. He put the lopsided Cessna down in a hayfield amidst whooping firetrucks with a cool worthy of the Red Baron ("sure seems like alot of fuss. Say, why are you guys so green?") Diane and my mother

are eternally grateful for his skill. My legal clients are less sure. Anyway, we returned to the mountain in time to climb to Camp I, midway up a side glacier southwest of St. Agnes. Fun, if you enjoy hauling a sled up 45 degree snow and ice.

The next day I emerged from the snow cave before dawn on an errand of a personal nature. In the midst of fumbling with snaps, zippers and velcro, something shoved me facedown in the fortunately-still-white snow. This alerted my semi-comatose mind that a 60 mph wind was blowing. Since it was also 25 below, we decided to spend the day watching the water pot teeter on the MSR stove.

Monday was clear and cold...and cold -- 35 below at 10 a.m. Having put on every layer we owned, we popped out of the cave entrance like brightly colored nylon bubbles. On our way to Camp 2, we waddled up the mountain into the icefall that guards the col of the summit ridge.

The only alternative was crossing an avalanche chute. Since we'd previously watched a serac the size of Juneau come tumbling through there, the icefall was our choice. I did my best to provide my companions with plenty of crevasse rescue practice. However, B.C. eventually got tired of watching me disappear into cracks and complained of cold feet. Given his chosen career as a break dancer, we could take no chances on frostbite and returned to Camp 1.

We finished a palatial vestibule on the snow cave in which to store our gear. So proud of it were we that we forgot to put our gear inside it, necessitating a scramble in my underwear to retrieve and secure gear when the storm hit at 3 a.m. Tuesday and Wednesday were complete whiteouts, putting us overdue. We later learned that the weather 3 miles down glacier was beautiful

Don Lee had spent his afternoons circling helplessly below, watching the lenticular cloud that pinned us to the mountain. Boredom overcame common sense on Wednesday and we climbed back down through the storm to the main glacier. After an intimate night in Peter's tent, we were picked up the next day. Don Lee acted somewhat relieved, explaining that Diane had promised to break his airplane up into little pieces if he came back empty handed again.

All's well that end's well. No summit but then that's not really the point anyway.

Mike Moxness 3-31-85

Penguin Peak  
April 20, 1985

With a light snow falling, six members of the MCA started up toward the avalanche gully on the west side of Penguin Peak. This winter's avalanches had not deposited nearly as much snow as last year's had. That left most of us with a longer slog through snow which had almost enough crust to support us.

Five of us post-holed through the snow while Mike Reese thought light

thoughts as he walked on the crust up ahead. With dieting firmly in mind we reached the avalanche debris and solid footing.

The clouds overhead obscured the mountain ahead of us but the route simply follows the gully.

We headed up thru the lower bowl and then the upper bowl below the false summit. Snow in the bowls was soft so, with an eye out for avalanches, we headed up to the ridge overlooking the Seward Highway.

Jim Hill and I stopped for a break here to enjoy the view down to the highway. Mike, Don Hanson, Keith Diehl and Tom Macchia continued on to a break near the large reflector, where we joined them.

After Kicking steps up and over the false summit, we traversed the last quarter mile along the corniced ridge to the summit. Despite wind and blowing snow we spent well over a minute on top before reluctantly turning around to head back down. Additional interest on the trip down was provided just below the summit.

Although the wind and snow had reduced visibility, everyone heard the "whoomp" and then watched as the whole slope -- starting only 30 feet below us -- fractured into a slab avalanche. As we all quickly tried to think stationary thoughts, the slab broke up and disappeared down into the clouds with increasing speed toward the Seward Highway.

Plans to glissade the lower slope were generally abandoned. The trip up had taken 4.5 hours, but we arrived back at the road 2 hours after leaving the 4305 foot summit.

Jim Pommert

Hatcher Pass Management Plan Meeting, April 22, 1985

The ad hoc committee submitted the following information to the DNR regarding traditional recreational use areas in Hatcher Pass. The folks that showed up for the meeting included Pat McManus, Stuart Ollanik, Sandi Foster, Rick Maron and Tim Neale.

Additional information would be appreciated, but should be specific and submitted in writing. Submit comments to Ms. Sandra Cosentino, Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources, Pouch 7-005, Anchorage, AK 99510-7005

Ms. Sandra Cosentino  
Hatcher Pass Management Plan  
Alaska Department of Natural Resources

COMMENTS: HATCHER PASS MANAGEMENT PLAN  
Submitted by The Mountaineering Club of Alaska  
May 2, 1985

### Introduction

With these comments we hope to bring to your attention the area within the Hatcher Pass Management Plan of greatest interest to our membership and to others who enjoy hiking, rock climbing and mountaineering in Alaska. We have limited our comments to one portion of the Management Plan area, one which has both a strong history of use for this type of recreation and a great potential for continued enjoyment.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list of the sites within the project area used by hikers and mountaineers. There are other popular spots. We have found, however, that the area described here contains the greatest concentration of sites of interest to us. Its enduring, pervasive popularity reflects a recognition that it offers some of the best quality mountaineering within weekend access of residents of Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna valley.

### Primary Interest Area

The area we are most concerned with includes the Little Susitna River drainage from the Little Susitna Roadhouse up to the glaciers at the source of the Little Susitna; Mint Glacier and the string of glaciers to the Northwest and West of Mint Glacier; the Reed Lakes; the Reed Creek drainage, including Glacier Creek and the Snowbird mine area; and the Archangel Creek drainage, including Fairangel Creek and the Fern Mine area. This relatively small section of the plan area North and East of the Little Susitna Roadhouse contains a high concentration of the sites most suitable to hiking and mountaineering. A loop trail through this area, and sites in the area of special interest, are described below.

## The Loop Trail

By following a continuous loop beginning and ending at the Little Susitna Roadhouse, hikers can experience a remarkable variety of scenery and terrain. Many hike only a section of this trail on an outing rather than the whole circuit. There are endless possible side trips accessible from this route.

From the roadhouse, sec. 36, T. 20 N., R. 1 E., this route follows the Little Susitna River upstream to its headwaters at Mint Glacier, sec. 34, T. 21 N., R. 2 E. From here travel continues west through a pass in the Southeast corner of sec. 33, T. 21 N., R. 2 E., gaining access to a glacier in that section commonly referred to as Penney Royal. After following this glacier north into sec. 29, T. 21 N., R. 2 E., the now undefined trail heads south onto and across what is known as Bomber Glacier, in sec. 32, T. 21 N., R. 2 E. Leaving the glacier, the traveller heads southwest and through a pass in the North Central portion of sec. 5, T. 20 N., R. 2 E., before dropping down to Upper Reed Lake in the Southeast portion of that section. The trail returns to the Little Susitna Roadhouse via Lower Reed Lake, Reed Creek, and the Fern Mine Road, as described in Nienhueser and Simmerman's 55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska, p. 126.

## Sites of Special Interest

### 1. Mint Glacier Hut.

This wooden hut has been used continuously since its construction by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, about 1922. Northwest corner of sec. 3, T. 20 N., R. 2 E.

### 2. Upper and Lower Reed Lakes.

This traditionally popular hiking, camping, and climbing area is described in 55 Ways to the Wilderness in Southcentral Alaska. Secs. 5, 6, and 7, T. 20 N., R. 2 E.

### 3. Snow Bird Rock Slabs.

This popular camping area is particularly well suited for rock climbing. Located just east of the junction of Reed Creek and an unnamed creek in the central part of sec. 13, T. 20 N., R. 1 E.

### 4. Fern Mine Area.

Rock climbers, hikers, campers and cross country skiers all use this area, including the rock outcropping north of the mine. Northeast corner of sec. 15, T. 20 N., R. 1 E.



5. Fern Mine Access Road Area.

Climbers, hikers, and campers enjoy this area, including the rock buttress in the Northeast corner of sec. 22, T. 20 N., R. 1 E.

6. Unnamed Cabin.

This useable cabin built in bygone years by miners has been used as a traditional shelter for rock climbers, hikers and skiers visiting the vicinity. East Central portion of sec. 10, T. 20 N. R. 1 E.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please Contact: Tim Neale  
P.O. Box 6724  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502  
274-4952

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ELECTION FOR A NEW BOARD MEMBER

Rick Severn is resigning from the MCA board since he is leaving the state. We will all be sad to see him leave, however it means that his position will have to be filled. His term still has one and a half years to go. During the May meeting we will be taking nominations and holding an election. So far the board has come up with several nominations, as follows:

Michael Reese, Joy Hornberger, Ron Van Bergyk, Sandy Foster, and Marcia Bandy.

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Map and Compass Class

Two meetings, the first at Russian Jack Chalet, 7:30p.m June 5 and the second June 9 at Eklutna Lk. Meet at 8a.m. UAA parking lot. If you live in Eagle River, meet us at the Eklutna Lake parking lot; be prepared to leave at 9a.m.

Items to bring: compass, USGS map Anchorage (B6), notebook, pencil and day pack, water bottle and lunch.

For information call Tim Neale, 274-4952.

## HIKING AND CLIMBING SCHEDULE

- May 11 RAINBOW MOUNTAIN  
4 miles, 3400' elevation gain; trail part way from Rainbow Valley strenuous. Meet 8:00 a.m. UAA parking lot.  
Leader: Gene Klymko 346-2953
- 12 JOHNSON TRAIL  
Length to be determined by trail conditions and party members.  
Meet 8:00 a.m. UAA parking lot. Easy.  
Leader: Nan De Good 337-4875
- 18 Trail Clearing  
Leader Needed.
- 19 WINNER CREEK  
Leader needed.
- 25 DEW MOUND  
Leader needed.
- 26 HOPE POINT  
Leader needed.
- 25-27 SHEEP VALLEY  
18 miles; 3200' elevation gain, strenuous. Good side trips middle day to Lava Peak, Red Mtn. and Upper Sheep Valley. Call leader. Meet 8 a.m. UAA  
Leader: Bill Wakeland 563-6246
- 25-27 RUSSIAN LAKES - RESURRECTION RIVER TRAIL  
29 miles, 500' gain, strenuous. New trail, 16 miles second day.  
Meet UAA 7 a.m.  
Leader: Jim Pommert w:563-3585 h:344-5656
- June 1 LAZY MOUNTAIN  
5 miles, 2900' elevation gain, moderate; near Palmer, nice views, may be windy. 55 ways #43. Meet 8:00 a.m. UAA parking lot.  
Leader: Esther George 337-7948
- 2 WOLVERINE MOUNTAIN  
10 1/2 miles, 3380' elevation gain, strenuous; 55 ways #34. Meet 8:00 a.m. UAA parking lot  
Leader: Jane Stammen 563-7703
- 8 GULL ROCK  
9 miles, 700' elevation gain, family trip, easy. Meet 8 a.m. UAA parking lot.  
Leader: Pat Klouda 243-3216

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