



MARCH 1996

A Publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc.
Box 102037, Anchorage, Alaska 99510

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MARCH MEETING

Wednesday

March 20th, 7:30

Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle Streets
Downtown Anchorage

Slide Show: Professional photographer,
Tom Evans, will share some of his best
shots, including extreme skiing in Valdez
and climbing in the Wrangells.

ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

Mar 23

Ice Axe Training & Avalanche Beacon Practice

Two sessions: 1) ice axe self-arrest techniques, roped-arrests, and general use/safety; 2) practicing avalanche beacon searches. Full day—may split into two groups depending on number of participants. Essential gear: ice axe, working avalanche beacon, snow shovel; and appropriate clothing to spend all day in snow. Optional climbing harness and avalanche probe. Meet at Glenn Alps parking lot near Flattop, 10:00 A.M. Instructors: Bill Romberg 338-2052, 267-2145 w and James Larabee 522-3854

Mar 26,28,30

Outdoor Leadership Class

Two classroom sessions and one day outdoors. Class is taught by Paul

Twardoc of A.P.U. Goal of the course is to improve leadership skills of club members and develop new trip leaders. Focus is on non-technical skills and safety.

Contact: James Larabee 522-3854

Apr 20- May 5 Grand Canyon & Havasupai

Trip has two openings, but act soon.
Leader: Bill Wakeland 563-6246

Apr 27

Map & Compass / Orienteering Class

Instructors: Brian Carey and Steve Gruhn
344-1219, 563-8102 w



TRIP REPORTS

Letter from a Small Island

from Jonathan Rose



Scottish climbing was what I was brought up on; guide books, campsites and unreliable snow. It was big adventure and dangerous. It has always lead the pack in terms of technicality which must be something to do with the lack of space, variety of conditions and increasing popularity of the sport.

More and more people striving for different thrills in the same space. During the 15 years since I last ventured into the Scottish hills in the winter I have been through the stages of responsibility, reality, self fulfillment and mortality.

Last weekend saw Greg and me, climbing partner of developmental years, slogging up The Ben with a foul forecast in our ears and considerable avalanche conditions posted in our minds. Time and experience has improved the avalanche monitoring and forecasting and the five grade system is posted prominently for all to see in the most popular areas.

We arrived at the hut amongst the usual mix of tweed and goretex; 20 year old gear and the very latest. There was a mixed response to our tent and we pushed off to higher ground that wasn't scoured by the wind. A usual Alaskan campsite made us comfortable and by 1:00pm we were ready for my first shot at Scottish ice in 15 years. Manky, wet and black was all I could think. I took the lead with no expectation of difficulty at the back of a deep cleft. Fortunately I had a few pegs which helped me over the first nerve-racking bit. Grunt and shove, the commitment started. Four or five pitches of soft ice and snow brought us to a final top out pitch, along with four other folk. We had seen others hiking up the corrie to gullies higher up all through the afternoon.

In the failing light, the spindrift and wind was building and all I could think of was tent. It was going to be an interesting trip down not knowing the exact route. Enclosed in concentration and feeling our way, we headed south. Four pitches down, I looked back up and Greg was shouting. A head lamp was bounding towards us. Hmm, I thought glissading was not a good idea tonight. A cry for help stated the need of this headlamp, and my immediate reaction was to think it was their fault if they got into trouble while glissading and I was not going to help after a 12 hour day and a long climb. Reality brought me to my senses

and I struggled the 200 ft back up to where they were, to find avalanche debris, five people, one of whom seemed badly injured and a lot of headlamps bobbing around. All accounted for, one bloodied and in shock. No-one seemed to know what to do. Why me? I didn't know what to do. Better do something. The victim could talk, didn't seem incoherent, had his arm trapped underneath him. Shocked and fearful of hypothermia, he was alive. Not spouting blood, so must be OK. Shaking like a leaf though.

First thing was to get him walking and the second was to get him to the hut. Two to find the way and one to hold his arm. The other three seemed to have found an injury and were staying put in a three man bivvy sack - good luck to them I thought. No snow shovels to be seen so it was going to be cold. Down we went and four hours later, wet through but relieved we arrived at the hut. Warm drinks and TLC to the victim brought us all around. The mountain rescue were called via the radio and our man was flown out. The other three were attended to by the mountain rescue some hours later, one of them being hauled down by stretcher to the local hospital.

There is much to reflect on here. It is probably a typical scene. The weather is foul, but not so cold as to put you off. The victims had driven up from the south and were hungry for action, went high and caught the leeward snow pillows. No beacons, no shovels, not mentally prepared for avalanche. One was a complete novice, probably put off Scottish mountains for life. Lucky to be alive.

I don't want to climb where other people put my life in danger. I'll stick to places where I have to rescue myself, where there aren't other people.



MINUTES

FEBRUARY MEETING

Three visitors introduced themselves, one from Switzerland and two from Anchorage. Total attendance was about 40.

TREASURY REPORT

Money Market:	3870.08
Checking:	2291.69
Petty cash:	<u>52.00</u>
Total in treasury:	\$6233.77

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Hiking and Climbing.

Mark Fouts said the committee plans to complete preparation for summer trips at their 2/26 meeting. The committee is looking for a fifth member, preferably with a hiking emphasis. 248-0048, for more information.

Huts.

Chairperson **Mark Miraglia** announced plans to build an outhouse at the Moose Creek hut, install a new outhouse at the Mint Glacier hut and general repairs at the Bomber Glacier hut.

History.

The six-member history committee met for the first time in early February and have determined an approach for documenting the club history. The first phase is to review prior Screes, and the committee will be looking for assistance. More on this at the March meeting.

Equipment.

Bill Romberg took the initiative to inventory the club gear stored at AMH. He reported some of the equipment is dated, and that two of the avalanche beacons are past due.

Parks Advisory.

Chair **Scott Bailey** announced the Chugach National Forest has been approached by two helicopter companies, one who would like to drop off rafters in the upper reaches of Twentymile and Placer Rivers and the other land on Eagle, Twentymile, Skookum and Spencer glaciers. The Chugach National Forest requested comments in a February 5 letter and would like comments by March 1, 1996.

Scott also announced the need to improve the trail to the Mint Glacier hut, and he would try to coordinate a trail maintenance day this spring.

OLD BUSINESS

The club president asked for a volunteer to update the club brochure. The brochure is given to prospective members and may be improved to include a map or photos of the club's huts, which all club members may find useful.

NEW BUSINESS

American Alpine Club Presentation

Steve Davis, a national board director, introduced the American Alpine Club to the MCA. He also suggested the AAC and MCA work together on common issues and that both clubs could benefit by sharing resources.

Stacy Tanaguchi gave a wealthy person's guide to traversing Mt. Kilimanjaro. He showed slides of Paris, the pre-climb meeting place, followed by the multi-day traverse in day-packs and tour of the great plains of the Serengeti in Africa. Stacy had a lot of good stories to share and gave an excellent narration of how to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Notice from the Editor

Every five years, two complete copies of the Scree are gathered up and sent to be hard-bound for posterity. To provide for this, the mailing folks send two copies to the Vin Hoeman Library every month, in the name of the librarian. The copies sit there in a drawer until binding time. Upon visiting the library last week I found many issues missing. Please — DO NOT REMOVE SCREES from the club library! We now need to solicit for the following issues. If you can donate them, please let me know:

February, March, June, July 1993
January, April, June, July 1994
June, December 1995

Willy Hersman 373-4734