

the SCREE

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

June 2009

Volume 52 Number 6



There is not a sprig of grass that shoots uninteresting to me.
~Thomas Jefferson

Monthly Meeting
Wed. June 17 @ 6:30 PM
Program: MCA Huts,
Gateways to Outdoor Adventure

Mount Angayukaqsrq
Ptarmigan Peak
POM, Fang Mountain

The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

"To maintain, promote and perpetuate the association of persons who are interested in promoting, sponsoring, improving, stimulating and contributing to the exercise of skill and safety in the Art and Science of Mountaineering"

Join us for our club meetings the third Wednesday of the month at the First United Methodist Church, 9th Avenue and G Street next to the ConocoPhillips Building (You may use marked parking after hours. Do not park on the east side of the lot, which is controlled by Diamond Parking.)

Contact information is provided on the back page or visit us on the web at www.mcak.org.

Cover photo: John Mitchler in the Baird Mountains, Kobuk Valley National Park, photo by Greg Griffith.

Article Submission: Articles and photos are best submitted on the web at MCAK.org. You can also attach a word processing document to an email. Due to formatting problems please do not submit material in the body of an email. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. To get on the cover, a photo should convey the feeling of mountaineering and show human endeavor.

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June 6, Nantina Point (6850)

Class D, 15 miles round trip, 6,000 feet of elevation gain, Contact leader at least 24 hours in advance. Leader Steve Gruhn
Email sgruhn@clarus-ak.com.
Phone: 344-1219(h)

June 22, Bird Ridge Point (3505)

Class C, 4 miles round trip, 3400 feet of elevation gain, Contact leader at least 24 hours in advance. Leader Steve Gruhn
Email sgruhn@clarus-ak.com.
Phone: 344-1219(h)

July 3 – 6, Talkeetna Peak Bagging

Spend the 4th of July climbing Mt. Monarch (7108), Mt. Chitna (6544) and Crown Peak (6869) in the Talkeetna Mountains. Class D. Upwards of 30 miles and 9,000 feet of gain

roundtrip. Hikers could stop at base camp with about 16 miles and 5,000' of gain round trip. Sign up at the June MCA meeting. Trip leader Wayne L. Todd. 522-6354

July 19 – August 1, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Class B/C. The trip may include elevation gains over 2,000 feet on day hikes. Destination will be Cane Creek to Red Sheep Creek. Set up food cache at Red Sheep Airstrip along the East Fork of the Chandalar River. Fly from there to Cane Creek Airstrip drop off. Spend a week in the Cane Creek drainage and backpack back to Red Sheep Airstrip food cache resupply and spend the second week in the Red Sheep Creek drainage. Leader: Don Hansen, donjoehansen@msn.com.

President's Corner: Announcements

There will be a vote on a membership fee adjustment at the June general membership meeting.

Parking for meetings - A few MCA members received parking tickets last night for parking in the same lot that we've used for years. Unbeknownst to us, half of the lot is now under the control of

Diamond Parking Authority. Contact Wayne Todd if you received a ticket on the night of May 20th while parked in the 9th and G parking lot (church parking lot). These tickets are not related to the new meeting time as the tickets were issued at 8:30 PM.

From now on, do not park on the east side of the parking lot.

Ptarmigan Peak

by David Lynch

May 2, 2009

Brian Aho, Tony Lutes, Dave Lynch, Tim Silver

It seems fitting that a couple of Ptarmigans harass us most of the way on the hike in to Ptarmigan Peak. They appear to laugh whenever we take a plunge through the snow crust up to our knees or mid-thigh. They are nowhere around, however, when Tony Lutes finds the deepest hole and plunges in to his waist. Fortunately, we're there, and enjoy that laugh with/at him.

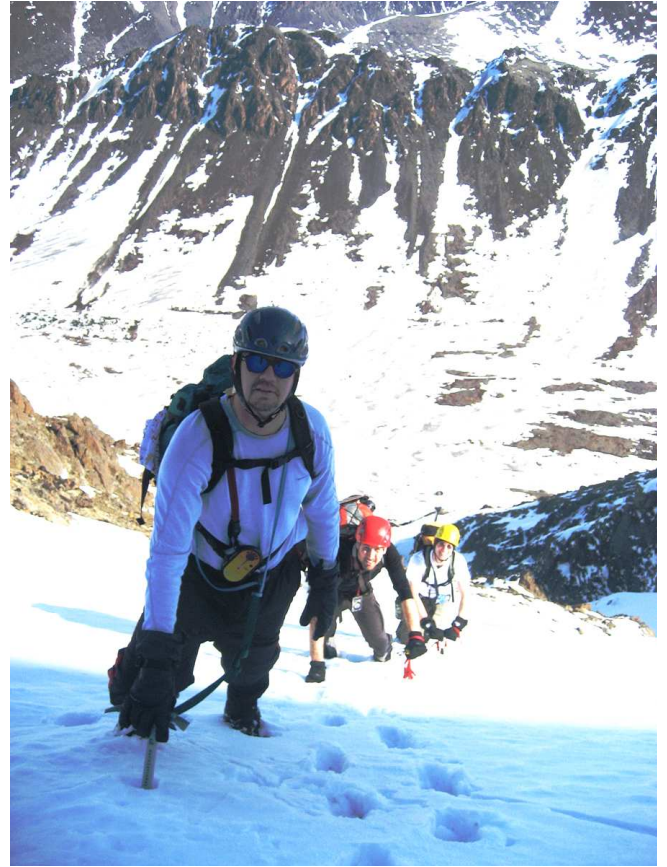
Five miles in we make it to the base of the "S" shaped couloir and around 7:00 a.m. take our first water and food break. It's turning into an awesome day with clear blue skies up above and the sun just hitting the top of our peak. Tim Silver and Brian Aho dig two separate pits to evaluate the snowpack and check the avalanche conditions. Tony and I wait patiently and around 8:00 a.m. after a favorable assessment we are kick-stepping up the North Couloir of Ptarmigan Peak.

We climb unroped with ice axes in hands, crampons on, slowly making our way up. I lead out at first, Tony behind me, then Brian, then Tim. After about 20 minutes, Tony stops to take pictures; Brian passes him up and yells up that he'll lead for awhile if I need a break. I'm more than ready for a break and I step aside, move out to take some pics of my own and watch them all pass by.

We continue on like that, swapping leads, plodding upward, the views of the Chugach opening up more and more the higher we climb. Surprisingly, we climbed most of the day in the sun. This was the first climb for all of us on Ptarmigan and I think we had this vision of climbing in the shade the entire day. Not the case. Up around the "S" curve the slope steepens quite a bit. The snow is a little more solid up here, too. I get out on lead and kick up it, enjoying the view, reveling in the motion, kick two steps and step up, plant the ice axe, kick two steps and step up, plant the ice axe – man, I love this shit!

To get to the summit ridge I had read we wanted to take a right up above the S curve and I start heading over that way. Tim yells up from below, "Hey, I thought we were going to take that narrow, steep couloir over there." He points up above me to my left, and then adds, "That looks like fun." I agree and start heading up into it. Two rock bands funnel the climb up into a point about a foot wide. At the top, a deep sugary snow pillow slows my progress awhile. After fighting that for a couple minutes I move left and work my way up. Tim was right, that was fun.

Tony comes up through the mess, a little pissed at the last minute detour. He's over it quickly though and we start heading right, getting started on the long traverse



Near the Summit Ridge, Photo by Tony Lutes

across the bottom of the rock that juts up into the sky and forms the East Summit of Ptarmigan Peak. The sun is out in full force up here, working its magic on the snow. Globbs of snow cling to the bottoms of our crampons and we take one step, kick a boot against the other to dislodge it, take a step, kick it off, take a step, kick it off. I'm pretty wiped out from leading and Brian takes over on the traverse.

The traverse came off without incident and as we move up onto the summit ridge views of Turnagain Arm, and the Kenai Mountains open up. It's such a clear day we can see a plume of steam rising from Redoubt Volcano 100 miles away across Cook Inlet. Behind us, the Chugach Mountains stretch out in blue diamond beauty forever.

We are only 200 or 300 feet from the higher East Summit now, but a crux traverse across a steep snow chute stands in our way. Just below the snow chute is a small ledge and then lots and lots of rock in a quickly descending slope - some might call it a cliff. Brian, Tim, and Tony are not too keen to make that move. I ask, "Whatta you think? Give it a go?" The consensus is, "No, but if anyone wants to try, the others will wait here for him, or them." Heady with summit fever and having little common sense I say I'm in, but I can't convince anyone else to go. "Well that's it," Tim says, "Dave's our summit team."

Dave Lynch on the Crux Traverse



Photo by Tony Lutes

I get about halfway across the snow chute and sink in up to my waist, slide a little. Climb back out of the pit I've created and crawl, claw, and squirm my way across the top of the snow to the rock band on the other side. On the other side of that rock band I walk across the top of another snow slope that hugs the rock, careful not to step into the narrow moat. Around that corner I take a chimney up, mixed climbing a narrow strip of ice that runs up the center, stemming rock sometimes, using the ice when I can. Three quarters of the way up the ice runs out and I find a small ledge to drop my pack, take off my crampons, and head up to the top. I think with dread that I'm on the wrong summit peak, but when I top out of the chimney I see a reasonable ridge to the top. I head back down, grab my pack (it has my camera, water and food in it), and head back up. An easy rock scramble and I'm on the East Summit.

The view is of course superlative. Then it hits me that I'm fairly wiped out. Tired, dry mouthed, head spinning from the exertion of the climb, I take some quick pictures, head down several feet to a flat area where I see Tony and Brian over on the West Summit. Tony is waving me in. He yells something I can't make out. I yell back, "I need five minutes then I'll head back." I drop my pack, drink and eat too quickly and head down.

It was two hours roundtrip from the steep snow chute to the summit and back. Now I stand on the rock band on the summit side of the snow chute. Tim is waiting on the other side. The sun has been working on that chute the whole time and it's in even worse shape than when I last crossed it. I sink in to my waist the first two steps into the chute. Back on the rock band I ask Tim to see if he can throw me the rope. We had brought a 30-meter rope for emergencies and I knew I'd feel a lot better off tying in. Tim gives it a couple of tosses, but it's too far to throw directly across. He's only making it about halfway. I see a light bulb go on above his head and he says, "Hey, I'll tie a rock to it and try to throw it across with that, you're wearing a helmet, you'll be alright" I tell him to go for it. He does. Rope gets about three quarters of the way across now. "Hey," I tell him (because now I'm the genius), "Sling it David and Goliath style, you know, whip it around a couple times then let it fly." Tim starts whipping it around, gets it going really good, just when he's ready to let go I watch the rock fly out of the rope and see it come in towards my face like a slow motion 3D movie. I move slightly and hear it whistle by about a foot from my head. Next thing I hear is Tony and Brian wailing with laughter. They had moved closer down the West Summit to get a better view of the comedy show at 4600 feet. Tim is doubled over with laughter, stomping a foot for emphasis. I'm laughing my ass off, too.

Halfway across the chute, after I've fallen into another snowy pit, Tim is finally able to get the rope to me – sans large rock. I tie in with a bowline (no harness); Tim anchors the rope on a solid rock horn and puts me on a seated hip belay. I slowly make my way across; punching through the crust occasionally and sliding down a little, but with far less fear now. Funny how a little rope can have such a big impact on your nerves.

We all hit the West Summit after that. Enjoy the views up there. Denali, Foraker, and Hunter stand sentry over the north horizon, the endless blue and white peaks of the Chugach to the east, Turnagain Arm, Cook Inlet, and the

Kenai Peninsula to the west. We pose for pictures and scope out our descent down into the opposite valley than the one we hiked in some seven or eight hours earlier. I turn back for one last look up Ptarmigan Peak, its hulking rock mass jutting up into the blue sky, and silently celebrate my first classic Alaskan alpine ascent.

Brian Aho, Dave Lynch, Tony Lutes and Tim Silver, Photo by Tony Lutes



Mount Angayukaqsaq, Kobuk Valley National Park Remote Exploration Still Exists

by John Mitchler



John Mitchler and Anga
Photo by Greg Griffith

Mighty Anga hides unnoticed among a sea of peaks in the Baird Mountains, about 140 miles northeast of Kotzebue and 110 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Unrecognized and unappreciated at 4,760', Anga can still claim fame as the range highpoint and highest point within Kobuk Valley National Park, and thus is a worthy objective, especially for someone chasing the highpoints of all 58 national parks. After I completed the 50 state highpoints on Denali in 2003, I pursued 'Park Pointing' as a follow-up goal, and I've visited 51 through August 2008.

In 2006 Greg Griffith asked me if I would go with him to this remote region and I quickly said 'Yes,' being eager to appreciate wilderness, in Greg Griffith's minimalist style. Greg had made two attempts to reach Anga (via kayak on the Noatak River) and had thoroughly researched this peak, which had no known ascent. Greg is a 50-state completer, the only person to do all 46 national park points in the Lower 48, and was part of the successful ascent of Mount Igikpak on August 23, 2004. Together, we reached Anga's summit on August 13, 2006, during an eight-day expedition, excluding travel to/from Kotzebue.

The Peak

First, let's figure out how to pronounce this awkward name. The easy way is to just say "Anga," but being explorers, we like to understand the root reason for a name. I turned to Dick Ellsworth, librarian and teacher in Kotzebue. After consulting the Native experts in town (Willie Goodwin, Ray Ferguson, Nanyaq, etc.), he concluded we should say "anga-you-cuk-suk," which means "a younger old man" – not an elder, but old enough to care for the family. The rangers at the National Park Service office in Kotzebue were appreciative of this research, and for the details of our expedition to the rarely visited mountains in the park.

The Baird Mountains form one of the western ranges of the Brooks Range, and are comprised of rounded

summits heavily dissected by shallow streams. Anga rises as an abrupt bump along the ridgeline, but is well-hidden by neighbors of similar height. The rocky summit knob is surrounded by Class 2 scree slopes that, in most directions, lead down to cliff faces or very rugged terrain. Fortunately, the north ridge provides an even walk to the top, and our fear of an impassible ridge-line tower was not realized.

The Park

The NPS describes Kobuk Valley as follows: "Located north of the Arctic Circle, this is probably America's most mysterious national park. The Baird and Waring Mountains encircle this park, which provides protection for the central portion of the Kobuk River, the 25-square-mile Great Kobuk Sand Dunes, and the smaller Little Kobuk and Hunt River dunes. Half a million caribou migrate through the park, and for 9,000 years people came to Onion Portage to harvest caribou as they swam the Kobuk River."

Rare is the visitor who explores the mountainous northern half of this park, and in fact, rare is the visitor to this park at all. Official statistics indicate this is the least visited national park, after our park in American Samoa, with fewer than 5,000 annual visits. Most go to see the sand dunes in the park's south half. Access is by bush pilot, and it was our pilot's opinion that many visitors go just to say they've been to the park (often combining their visit with a second gravel bar landing inside Gates of the Arctic NP to claim two park visits during one flight). Outfitters guide rafters and kayakers along the Noatak River, which flows east to west, north of the park.

The park visitor center is in Kotzebue (907) 442-3890 & 3760. This 1.7 million-acre park has no roads, gift shops, trails, or fees, and was converted from a national monument to a national park in 1980. Licensed air taxis are listed on-line at:

www.nps.gov/kova/planyourvisit/airtaxi.htm

The Approach

To reach our subject peak, a person must fly to a remote lake 140 miles north of the Arctic Circle, and then backpack four days and 25 miles over flat, but tedious, grass tussocks and easier but mildly undulating tundra to the base of the peak, from which a one-day ascent is possible. Total gain to the peak will exceed 5,000 feet. There are no signs of humans along the route.

Our research did not reveal much about this peak, let alone information about possible routes. We did not know if the route would go, if bears would block our way, or if the peak was technical. To travel light, we did not carry rope. Should we come from the south or the north? Based on Greg's previous experience, he chose an approach from the north, landing on Lake Kangilipak in Noatak National Preserve deep within the Northwest Arctic Borough, and hiking cross-country to the south-southwest (204 degree straight-line bearing) toward the ridgeline of the Baird Mountains.

Coming from the Lower 48, I first flew to Anchorage and then to Kotzebue. From there, we employed a bush pilot (Arctic) for a 2-hour, 160-mile flight northeast to Lake Kangilipak. Note: Be sure your pilot is equipped for water landing. A gravel bar landing can be made along the Noatak River, but this adds a grueling day to and from the peak.

The Hike

After our landing on the lake (975 feet), we struck out across the grassy tussock landscape that rose gently to the south. This experience is like walking across a field of tires. It required attention and was annoying. The minor drainages featured dense willows, which hid bears, so we chatted constantly and loudly. After a brutal seven hours and seven miles, we camped on a bare knob with long sight-lines (aka Perfecto Camp in Section 18, Township 29 North, Range 2 West.)

The next day we enjoyed firmer ground beneath our feet as we hiked south over a well-defined ridge and into a steep-sided gully. Then our route took us southwest and over a broad, brushy ridge, and again, more descent; into a deep drainage (Sec.14, T28N, R3W.) Due to weather concerns, we elected to stay off the significant north-south ridge, and instead hiked its easy, narrow, eastern bench, passing three hills. This we called Mammary Lane (Secs. 24, 26, and 35, T28N, R3W). We camped at the south exit of this convenient bench after eight hours of hiking, setting the bear fence just as the rain arrived.

Now we enjoyed a three-hour day, which was needed to dry out clothing and negotiate bear-dangerous, head-high vegetation along the east boundary of the national park. We crossed south over a broad saddle (Sec. 34, T28N, R3W) and contoured the east side of a rounded hill we called Jiffy Pop (3410 feet, Sec. 9, T27N, R3W) before finding camp on a hill with sight lines (Sec. 15,

T27N, R3W.) Conversation centered on which approach to take up Anga; the more direct route to the south through cirques, or the broader north ridge which would require an extra day to reach. We chose the latter.

The next morning was spent viewing wildlife (fox, bear, caribou) while the fog lifted. We struck out due west, over the 2435 foot saddle and for the first time entered the park. We descended 200 feet, tiptoed across the shallow Salmon River, and ascended two minor ridges before descending 150 feet to a creek that required wading. We were now at the toe of Anga's north ridge, and we set camp (2200 feet, Sec. 13, T27N, R4W.)

Greg at a River Crossing



We began summit day a bit anxious about our prospects. Would we meet with a technical impediment on our chosen ridge? Would the summit be a spire, as found elsewhere in this region? We progressed without incident, following the broad, gentle grade, south, then east, then south, to the steep, but easy, Class 2 scree that led to the rocky outcrop of Anga. We noticed a small spring at the base of the scree on Anga's north ridge.

The summit's rock blocks were a welcome relief from the scree slopes. We relaxed in relatively warm, still air, and marveled at the extended view of peaks and valleys that surrounded us, taking note of the easier ridges to the north and east, and the steeper terrain to the northeast and south.

Our descent was uneventful, and we needed next morning's full sun to dry out. Having taken four days to approach, we took three days to exit. We varied our return by ascending the top of Jiffy Pop where a caribou herd had gathered to escape insects and bears. We descended northeast, crossed the saddle and set camp. The next day we skipped Mammary Lane and instead hiked high on the ridge to 2906 feet (Sec. 23, T28N, R3W.) For the first time, we had clear views of Anga to the south, and we walked among the caribou on the ridge. It was a long day back to Perfecto Camp where we set tents in a cold rain (I use a Eureka Zeus 1LE). The next day, our eighth, we reached our lake. Not needing our two weather days, we called the pilot with our sat phone and were picked up the next morning.

Waiting for the plane, the mosquitoes were thick, but did not bite through our long sleeves and net hoods.

Overall, it was a pleasant outing, with a measured pace that accommodated weather, bears, and route-finding. The scale of this place is immense and is not captured well on the 1:63,360 map scale. We averaged 1 mile per hour, which included route finding. Our entry gained 5,964 feet and our exit required 4,325 feet, for a total gain of 10,289 feet over 53.9 miles. Our straight-line route was 48.3 miles, so we held true to that at 89.5 percent.

There was no cairn or register on Anga's summit, and we did not leave any evidence of our visit. There is a small national park communications repeater on a sub-ridge to the west of Anga, although we could not find information about its placement, presumably by helicopter. Apparently during the survey of ANWR, spot elevations were shot from the slopes near Anga, but the surveyors did not reach the summit.

Concerns

The best time to visit is the mild summer weeks. Although this is arid country, the first 6 miles of our trek



was soggy grassland, and we encountered 50-degree rain with one evening dipping down to 36; however, the daily sunshine dried our clothes. Weather is a threat secondary to the presence of grizzly bears. We viewed a solitary male and a mama bear with cubs, as well as numerous signs of their immediate presence along our route. You do not need rock climbing gear nor experience with glacier travel; however, you do need bear experience; knowing where they're likely to be encountered, how to look for their presence, how to sustain a noisy presence (startling a bear is bad news), tricks for setting a camp (view lines), and protective camp behavior (odor management). Rangers carry firearms in the bush, so we brought a Ruger Redhawk Alaskan .454 Casull, and protected our two solo tents with an electric bear fence (4 pounds.) Caribou were abundant; the youngsters were curious as to what we were and the older males showed aggressive protective behavior.

Details

Mt. Angayukaqsraq at 4,760' can be found on the Baird (C-1) map. Look in Section 30, T27N, R3W at latitude 67° 42' 21" North, longitude -159° 25' 45 West"

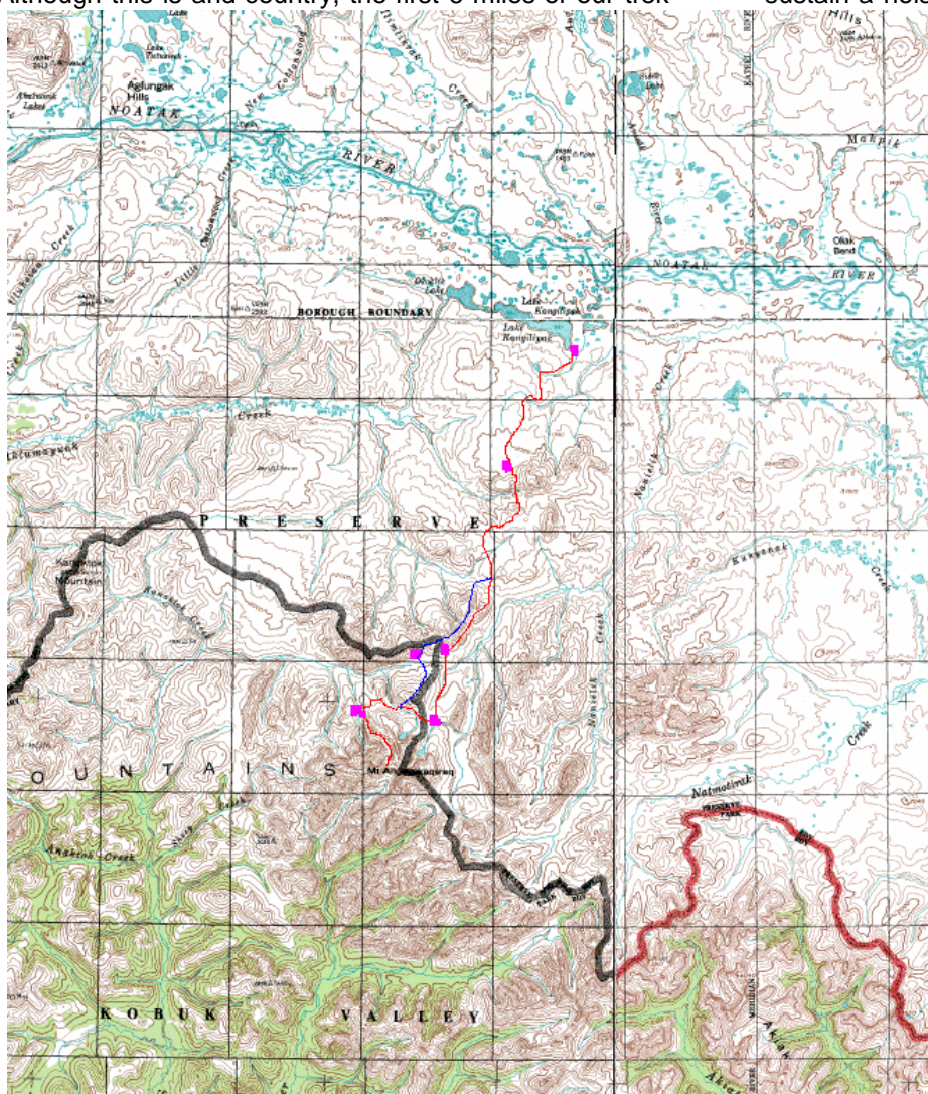
Our landing site was Lake Kangilipak at 975' on the Baird (D-1) map. We began our hike in Section 15, T30N, R2W at latitude 67° 59' 39" North, longitude -159° 5' West"

View an on-line map at:

<http://mapper.acme.com/?ll=67.7088,-159.4022&z=13&t=T>

DeLorme Atlas & Gazetteer page 133 gives a poor overview of the area, so look for park & commercial maps. I have annotated topo maps showing the route.

jdmitchler@aol.com



Peak of the Month: Fang Mountain

by Steve Gruhn



Photo from: <http://www.mountainproject.com/v/alaska/106246720>

Mountain Range: Alaska Range

Borough: Denali Borough

Drainages: Riley Creek and the Sanctuary River

Latitude/Longitude: 63° 33' 35" North, 149° 11' 11" West

Elevation: 6736 feet

Prominence: 1986 feet from Peak 6850 in the West Fork of Windy Creek and Cantwell Creek drainages

Adjacent Peaks: Peak 6450 in the Riley Creek and Savage River

drainages and Peak 6350 in the Riley Creek and Sanctuary River drainages

Distinctness: 886 feet from Peak 6450

USGS Map: Healy (C-5)

First Recorded Ascent: late June 1973 by John Bryant and Steve Hackett

Route of First Recorded Ascent:

West face

Access Point:

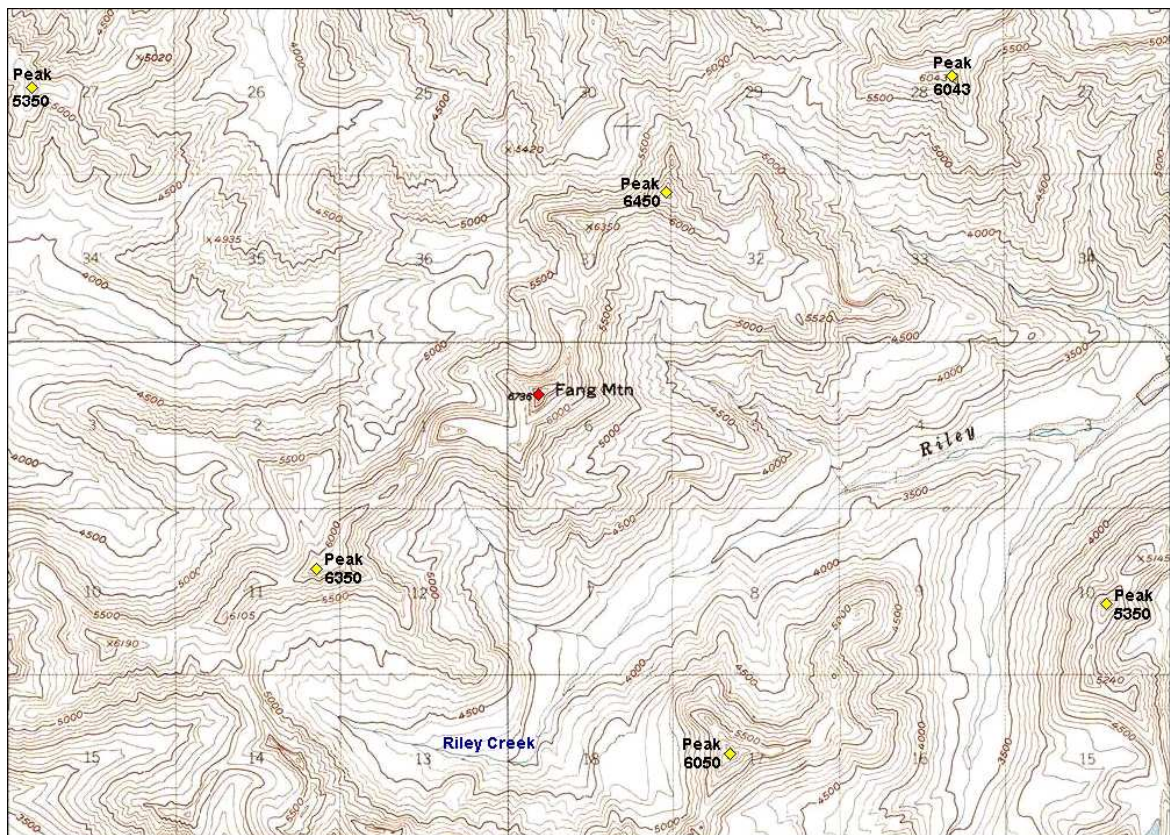
Savage River Bridge on the Denali Park Road

Fang Mountain juts high into the sky near the headwaters of Riley Creek.

There are no higher peaks within eight

miles of Fang Mountain, so it is an attractive goal for park visitors. The steep northwest, west, and southeast faces invite climbers; the quality of rock on the peak, though, is reportedly poor.

While working as a seasonal park ranger at Mount McKinley National Park (now Denali National Park) in the summer of 1973, Steve Hackett made several



Map created with TOPO10 ©2003 National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com/topo)

notable climbs. In late June Bryant and Hackett hiked up the Savage River and crossed into the Sanctuary River drainage, camping at 5200 feet on morainal debris below Fang Mountain's northwest face. They then climbed the peak's west face and hiked down the Sanctuary River in time to catch the last shuttle bus of

the evening to the park headquarters where they were based.

Hackett's trip reports appeared in the December 1974 *Scree* and on page 137 of the 1974 *American Alpine Journal*.

Additional photos can be found here:

<http://www.peakware.com/peaks.html?pk=2579>

<http://www.alaska-in-pictures.com/exhilarated-hikers-2713-pictures.htm>

http://www.trekearth.com/gallery/North_America/United_States/photo406278.htm

http://mb.horolezci.cz/articles?action=image;art_id=20;image=000059



Climbing Notes

Ice Pyramid

Climbing.com reported that in May Clint Helander and Seth Holden made the first recorded ascent of Ice Pyramid (9250) in the Revelation Mountains. Their route was the southwest ridge of the peak. The peak is in the Big River Glacier and South Fork of the Swift River drainages.

http://www.climbing.com/news/hotflashes/first_ascent_of_the_ice_pyramid_in_alaska/

Mount Bertha and Fifty Years of Alaskan Statehood

Climbing .com reported that New Zealanders Paul Knott and Guy McKinnon climbed the northwest ridge of Mount Bertha to the summit and made the first recorded ascent of Peak 8599 in the Johns Hopkins Glacier drainage of the Fairweather Range on May 2. Their route was via the east rib to a couloir and snow-covered rock rib on the south face. The two climbers named the peak "Fifty Years of Alaskan Statehood."

http://www.climbing.com/news/hotflashes/new_routes_above_unexplored_alaskan_glacier/

Parting Shot



'Will you quit fooling around and let's go!'

MCA Trip Classifications

The classifications below do not take into account individual trip hazards such as river crossings, scree slopes, snow fields, bears, etc. Trip leaders are required to inform the trip participants of any such hazards either verbally, on the sign-up sheet, or in the trip description. Leader approval is required for participation on all trips. **NON-TECHNICAL:** Following are a few standards used to classify nontechnical trips. The classification is made in terms of hiking distance and altitude gain. Many trips are not on established trails.

CLASS A: Easy hikes with a maximum distance of 8 miles for day trips or 4 miles per day for overnight trips. Altitude gain up to 1200 feet.

CLASS B: Trips involving a maximum distance of up to 12 miles for a day trip or 6 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain of 1200 to 2500 feet.

CLASS C: Trips up to 15 miles for a day hike or 8 miles per day for an overnight trip. Altitude gain up to 3500 feet. Scree, steep grass or other rough terrain problems may be encountered.

CLASS D: Hikes and climbs with an altitude gain of over 3500 feet or a distance of greater than 15 miles for a day-hike or greater than 8 miles a day for an overnight trip. Peaks in this classification may require minimal climbing skills.

CLASS E: Hazardous climbing conditions or stream-crossing conditions may be encountered. A basic mountaineering course may be required.

TECHNICAL: Technical trips are open to all qualified climbers. However, the registration on any particular trip must be restricted to a safe and manageable number of climbers. Registration is made directly with the leader, who determines the qualifications needed for the trip.

GLACIER TRAVEL: Trips requiring roped travel over glaciers. Knowledge of crevasse rescue, and ice axe and crampon skills are required. Basic understanding of ice and snow anchors also required.

FIFTH CLASS: Trips which involve fifth class climbing. A Basic Mountaineering course or equivalent is required. Knowledge of belay and rappel techniques and placing anchors is required. Climbing difficulty varies widely with each trip.

TRIP PARTICIPANTS have the obligation to acquaint themselves with the nature of the trip and to verify that it is within their capability and experience. Anyone wishing to participate in any trip above CLASS A must have completed one or more trips of the next lower classification, or the equivalent.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

General Rules for MCA Sanctioned Trips

1. Proper equipment is available from the trip leader.
2. No dogs. (Among the reasons are bear problems).
3. The trip leader can require special equipment and refuse participation to any person that is ill-prepared (e.g. inappropriate clothing/gear).
4. The leader's suggestions are to be followed. Do not go off alone, return or rush ahead without his (her) permission, and don't ford a stream before the leader assesses the situation. Remember, this is a club trip and the leader must know where all participants are. Anyone separating from the group without the leader's approval is no longer considered a participant the MCA Sanctioned trip.
5. The trip leader has the authority to split the group (fast and slow), dependent upon current conditions. However, he/she must appoint a qualified co-leader to lead the second group using the guidelines specified in the current Trip Leader Responsibilities.
6. Trip participants who, in the leader's opinion, put themselves or other members of the group in danger by disregarding the leader's suggestions, shall be subject to sanction by the club. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, reprimand at general meeting, exclusion from future trips, termination of annual membership, or lifetime exclusion from the club.
7. You must sign up on a trip roster (club meetings) or contact the leader, and you must have signed the club waiver to be on a club trip.
8. If you find you cannot participate after signing up on the roster, please let the leader know, both for transportation and gear-planning and so someone else can go. If you are the leader, help find a replacement.
9. Total number of people on club trips:
Minimum: 4 (for safety reasons)
Maximum: Leader option, depends upon the trail and campsite conditions, but generally limited to 12 in trail-less areas or State/ National Parks
10. Firearms are not encouraged, and please let the leader know if you want to carry one - it will be leader's option. Aerosol bear repellent is preferred.

Approved: MCA Board, February 15, 2000

SIGN AND INITIAL THIS RELEASE OF LIABILITY— READ IT CAREFULLY

I _____ (print name) am aware that mountaineering and wilderness activities (including hiking; backpacking; rock, snow, and ice climbing; mountaineering; skiing; ski mountaineering; rafting and pack rafting, kayaking, and use of remote backcountry huts) are hazardous activities. I wish to participate and/or receive instruction in these activities with the Mountaineering Club of Alaska, Inc. ("MCA"). I recognize these activities involve numerous risks, which include, by way of example only, falling while hiking, climbing, skiing or crossing rivers or glaciers; falling into a crevasse or over a cliff; drowning; failure of a belay; being struck by climbing equipment or falling rock, ice or snow; avalanches; lightning; fire; hypothermia; frostbite; defective or malfunctioning equipment; and attack by insects or animals. I further recognize that the remoteness of the activities may preclude prompt medical care or rescue. I also recognize that risk of **injury or death** may be caused or enhanced by **mistakes, negligence or reckless conduct** on the part of either my fellow participants; MCA officers, directors, instructors, or trip leaders; and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding MCA backcountry huts. I nevertheless agree to accept all risks of **injury, death, or property damage** that may occur in connection with any MCA activity, including use of MCA furnished equipment and MCA backcountry huts. **(As used in this agreement, MCA includes its officers, directors, instructors and trip leaders.)**

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

GIVING UP MY LEGAL RIGHTS I agree to give up for myself and for my heirs all legal rights I may have against the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities (except to the extent that insurance coverage is provided by automobile insurance policies) and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding MCA backcountry huts. **I give up these legal rights regardless of whether the injury, death, or property damage results from mistakes, negligence or reckless conduct of others.** I understand this agreement shall remain in effect until I provide a signed, dated, written notice of its revocation to the MCA.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY PROMISE NOT TO SUE I will not sue or otherwise make a claim against the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities (except as noted above for automobile accidents); and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding use of MCA backcountry huts, for **injury, death, or property damage** which occurs in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering and wilderness activities. Any lawsuit relating to MCA activities or this release shall only be filed in Anchorage, Alaska. The provisions of this release are severable and if any part is found unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in effect.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY RELEASE OF LIABILITY I agree to release and discharge the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities; and the State of Alaska and its employees regarding use of MCA backcountry huts, from all actions, claims, or demands, both for myself and for my heirs, dependents, and/or personal representative, for **injury, death, or property damage** occurring in the course of my participation or instruction in mountaineering and wilderness activities.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY PROMISE TO INDEMNIFY I will pay all expenses, including attorney fees and court costs, that the MCA; my fellow participants in MCA activities; and the State of Alaska and its employees may incur as a consequence of any legal action arising out of **injury, death, or property damage** suffered by me in connection with any MCA activity or the use of any MCA backcountry hut.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

MY CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT I consent to any hospital or medical care that may be necessary as a result of my participation in MCA activities. I understand and agree that I am solely responsible for all charges for such medical treatment, including evacuation and/or rescue costs.

_____ (initial that you have read this paragraph)

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT, UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT, AND RECOGNIZE IT IS A BINDING LEGAL AGREEMENT

Dated: _____ Signature: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian (if under 18): _____

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

President	Wayne Todd	522-6354
Vice-President	Ross Noffsinger	336-2233
Secretary	Annei Goldsmith	301-7055
Treasurer	Travis Taylor	382-4823

Board member	Jayne Dixon	382-0212
Board member	Sean Bolender	830-5102
Board member	Mark Kimerer	360-5935
Board member	Tim Harper	240-1506
Board member	Richard Baranow	694-1500

Annual membership dues: Single \$15, Family \$20

Dues can be paid at any meeting or mailed to the Treasurer at the MCA address below. If you want a membership card, please fill out a club waiver and mail it with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If you fail to receive the newsletter or have questions about your membership, contact the club Treasurer. The Post Office will not forward the newsletter.

The 'Scree' is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be submitted on the web at www.mcak.org or e-mailed to the Scree Editor. Articles should be received by the monthly club meeting (third Wednesday of the month) to be in the next month's Scree.

Paid ads may be submitted to the attention of the Vice-President at the club address and should be in electronic format and pre-paid.

Missing your MCA membership card? Stop by our monthly meeting to pick it up or send a self-addressed stamped envelope and we'll mail it to you.

Mailing list/database entry: Yukiko Hayano and Randy Plant - 243-1438
Hiking and Climbing Committee: Jayme Dixon - 382-0212, Richard Baranow - 694-1500
Huts: Greg Bragiel - 569-3008
Calendar: Stuart Grenier - 337-5127
Scree Editor: John Recktenwald - 346-2589
Web: www.mcak.org (change your address here)
Mailing list service: MCAK@yahoogroups.com

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