

the SCREE

Mountaineering Club of Alaska

May 2017

Volume 60 Number 5

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Peak 4050 and Point 3943

Alaska National Alpinism
Excellence Group Expedition

Peak of the Month: Mount Witherspoon
Book Review

Monthly meeting: Tuesday,
May 16, at 6:30 p.m.

Eric Parsons will present Axes and
Alders! Peak Bagging in Chugach
State Park.

"Perhaps we all need time
to be free, time alone in nature,
supported and encouraged to dis-
cover our own wild selves, to re-
connect with who we are and
what we want from life."

- Jennifer Hanson



The Mountaineering Club of Alaska

www.mtnclubak.org

"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 meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 16, at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, in Anchorage.

<http://www.alaskageology.org/graphics/meetingmap.gif>

For the MCA Membership Application and Liability Waiver, visit

<http://www.mtnclubak.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=members.form>.

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Cover Photo

Christophe Moulin in action during the first ascent of "It's not Good to be Dead" on Little John, a sub-peak of

Mount Johnson.

Photo by Steve Thibout

Article Submission: Text and photography submissions for *the Scree* can be sent as attachments to mcascree@gmail.com. Articles should be submitted by the 24th of each month to appear in the next issue of *the Scree*. Do not submit material in the body of the email. Do not submit photos embedded in the text file. Send the photo files separately. We prefer articles that are under 1,000 words. If you have a blog, website, video, or photo links, send us the link. Cover photo selections are based on portraits of human endeavor in the outdoors. Please submit at least one vertically oriented photo for consideration for the cover. Please submit captions with photos.

Monthly Meeting: Tuesday, May 16, at 6:30 p.m.

Eric Parsons will present Axes and Alders! Peak Bagging in Chugach State Park.

Hiking and Climbing Schedule

May 27-29: West Ridge of Bashful Peak. We will bike to the East Fork of the Eklutna River, then hike to the basin between Bold Peak and Bashful Peak and camp on Saturday. Climb the peak on Sunday and return to camp. Out on Monday. Some rock scrambling and a short rappel required. Participants must bring extra chocolate for the leader. Contact Cory Hinds at chinds100@gmail.com to sign up.

June 7: Bird Peak (5505 feet) rests north of Penguin Ridge and is briefly visible in impressive fashion from the Seward Highway. Accessed from the Bird Valley Trailhead, this peak involves 12 to 14 hours of mountain biking, off-trail hiking, and snow climbing with crampons, helmet, and ice axe. Email Nathan Hebda at ndhebda@gmail.com for more details.

June 17-18: Flattop Mountain sleepout. No leader.

June 23-July 1: MCA Summer Mountaineering Instructional Trip. This is a vigorous hiking, climbing, and glacier-travel traverse through the Talkeetna Mountains, the Bomber Traverse, wherein the group stays at various locations that lend to the specific instructions. Basic mountaineering skills, snow travel, ice axe/tool use, ice climbing, glacier travel, navigation, route finding, rappelling, rock climbing, fun, exploration, leadership skills, and confidence building. Glacier travel. Approximately 30 miles. Trip leader: Greg Bragiel, unknownhiker@alaska.net or 350-5146.

Online? Click me!



Check the Meetup site and Facebook for last minute trips and activities. Or, schedule one that you want to organize.

Eklutna Traverse Huts

To any groups traveling the Eklutna Traverse, conditions as of April 2017:

Pichler's Perch — Human-waste (poop barrel) 1/3 full. Three gallons of stove fuel present.

Han's Hut — Human-waste barrel full, no lid. Six and a half gallons of stove fuel present. Stove not working well, second burner bad.

Rosie's Roost — Human-waste barrel ½ full. One and a half gallons of stove fuel present.

WAG bags for these huts to pack out human waste are available upon request.

So that necessary plans can be made to service these huts in 2017, please report back to the MCA Huts Committee Chairman, Greg Bragiel and/or the MCA board your findings on human-waste barrel conditions, fuel, and any other needed repairs.

Climbing Notes

On April 17 John Giraldo wrote to let us know of his enchainment of two peaks in the Alaska Range with Jason Stuckey. Their route started from the Northeast Fork of the Yentna Glacier and ascended the east face to the north-northeast ridge of an 8550-foot peak they named Mount Gabriel. Upon reaching the ridge, the pair followed it to the summit. The team descended Mount Gabriel's southeast ridge toward Mount Laurens (10042), joining Thomas Bubendorfer's 1997 route at about 8400 feet on Mount Laurens' west ridge. The duo continued beyond the western summit, where Bubendorfer had stopped on June 17, 1997, to the higher eastern summit of Mount Laurens. Theirs was the first recorded ascent of Mount Gabriel and the third recorded ascent of Mount Laurens (and the second recorded ascent of the higher eastern summit). On May 21, 2013, Mark Allen and Graham Zimmerman climbed the northeast buttress of Mount Laurens to the eastern summit (see pages 144 through 146 of the 2014 *American Alpine Journal*).

On April 22 Ross Noffsinger wrote to let us know that Richard Baranow, Robert Suenram, and he climbed four peaks in the Chugach Mountains. They started from a camp in the East Fork of the Twentymile River drainage and climbed Peak 5050 in the East Fork of the Twentymile River drainage; Vigesimal Peak (6550); Peak 5750 in the Lake George Glacier, Sparrow Creek, and East Fork of the Twentymile River drainages; and Mismapped Mountain (4650). Theirs were the first recorded ascents of Peak 5050 and Peak 5750 and the second recorded ascents of Vigesimal Peak and Mismapped Mountain. The team's ascent up the south ridge of Vigesimal Peak was the first via that route. Patrick Bauer, Tim Kelley, Tuomo Latva-Kistola, and Bill Spencer climbed Vigesimal Peak via its north ridge on July 9, 1995 (see the December 1995 *Scree*). Tim Kelley and Bill Spencer climbed Mismapped Mountain in mid-July 1994 (see the November 1994 *Scree*).

We look forward to reading detailed reports of these expeditions in upcoming issues of *the Scree*.

Scree Assistant Editor Position

There is an urgent need for an Assistant Scree Editor for the June *Scree* (work to be performed from May 25 through about June 5). Also looking for someone to take over permanently. It takes approximately 8 to 10 hours a month.

Please contact Steve Gruhn at mcascree@gmail.com if you're interested and have document layout and publishing skills.

Choate's Chuckle

- Tom Choate

For years rock climbers and their anchors have had what in common?

(Answer: Both are nuts)

Peak 4050 and Point 3943; Kenai Mountains

Text and photos by Michael Lloyd



View of Fat Lab Peak from Swan Lake.

My summits of Peak 4050 (Fat Lab Peak, if I were picking a name) and Point 3943 (Fat Lab Tail Peak ... it's a working name) began the day before with a 14-mile hike from Cooper Landing on the Resurrection Pass Trail, followed by a two-mile rowboat trip to the West Swan Lake U.S. Forest Service Cabin. I was accompanied on the first two steps of this journey with Lucas, an old friend from Wisconsin. Due to poor footwear choices, Lucas was burdened with silver-dollar-sized blisters on the back of both of his heels and would not be joining me on the subsequent journey up the mountain. We arrived at the cabin 30 minutes before sundown with just enough time to scrounge some firewood, and about an hour later it started raining, which persisted until early the next morning. When we woke up, the sun was beginning to shine, and we could tell that it was going to be a beautiful day. Around 11:00 I decided it was time to hike. While studying the topo maps of the area around the cabin before the trip, I was thinking about hiking Peak 4283, but when we got to the lake it seemed that 4050 would be a much easier trip, based on the steepness and forest density. In hindsight I don't think it would have mattered which side I picked.

I started off by crossing the West Fork of the Chickaloon River

that is the outlet of Swan Lake and made my way through a marsh full of wet bear grass soaked from the previous night's rain. Being wet was a common theme of this adventure. A few hundred yards later, the slope turned noticeably upward. I was trying to take a route up the finger to the east of 4050, and after looking at the GPS track when I got home I did a pretty good job of it. The first mile took almost an hour and a half, consisting of a 1300-foot elevation gain and bushwhacking through a combination of spruce, alder, pushki (cow parsnip; dead, thankfully, in the fall), tall grass, and back and forth between all of them. The only constant was that everything was wet. At times it seemed as if the whole finger was made of some very wide creek bed. I was climbing over and crawling under and over and under while talking to myself and yelling at any bears that might be in the area to stay clear, as I was on an important mission. I had already given up on being dry. At some point the topo map I had printed fell out of the pocket of my running shorts. Yes, I was wearing running shorts because it looked hot on the ridge and the bushwhacking did not look like it would take very long or be very dense from the cabin. "It doesn't look that bad." Famous last words.

Finally, just after the first mile, the trees opened up to what looked like a grassy slope, but turned out to be mostly broken shale chunks with a carpet of moss growing all over. This made it 1) wet, and 2) very slippery. I meandered around making my own switchbacks trying to take the most gradual route up to the top. After 1.7 miles and 2300 feet of climbing, I made in onto the ridgeline that Peak 4050 and Point 3943 reside on. The ridge was rocky, but stable, and more importantly, it was dry, which gave my feet a break. I soon realized why it was so dry, which had to do with the 80-plus-degree temperatures in the hot midday sun. This was acceptable, as it was one of the most beautiful September days I had ever seen on the Kenai Peninsula.

From there it was smooth sailing for another 0.6 mile and 300 feet up to the top of 4050. That spot showed beautiful views in all directions. I was able to look down on Juneau Lake and could see a small portion of Swan Lake. I could see Lucas out in the boat fishing. I stopped there to eat some snacks and flew my pocket kite for a few minutes. The wind was not consistent, so I did not have much luck staying airborne. With kite conditions what they were, I resorted to sitting and contemplating life and the beauty of my surroundings. At the summit, I looked for signs of people or summit markers, but could not find any. I started to build a small rock cairn at the peak, but I felt that it spoiled the view so I knocked it down before I went on my way.

The ridge appeared to be easy going over to Point 3943 and since I still had time, I figured I could knock that peak out as well. The initial descent on the ridge was quick and easy. After



View during the descent from Point 3943, Fat Lab Tail Peak.

the first half mile it quickly turned to large rocks covered in black lichen and wet slippery moss. There was no clear path and several times I had to veer off the ridge due to unstable rock piles. I always seemed to end up on the wrong side of the rock piles, and that part of the trip was a bit unnerving. I would not attempt that solo again. At one point a rock gave way and I ended up with my foot in a hole while simultaneously slamming my shin into a sharp rock. Then my sock was wet and bloody. I seriously considered bailing out at that point, but it was not much farther to the top of 3943. I pressed on and the large unstable rock piles continued all the way to the top. I looked around and again saw no signs at the summit. The view from that peak was spectacular, and to the west I could see all the way out to Cook Inlet. I could just barely see the west end of Swan Lake and after a few minutes started scrambling down in that general direction. I did not have my map with me, but I had studied it enough to know approximately which direction I wanted to go.



View from the top of Point 3943, Fat Lab Tail Peak.

After a slow and tedious descent on shifting slippery black-lichen-covered rock slopes, it turned into a long sidewall on shifting slippery, wet moss-covered rock slopes. The water appeared to just come directly out of the mountain. I kept on that course, trying to take the most gradual (but still in the correct direction) path. That became difficult at times as I dropped in right on top of a very large alder thicket. It was there that I started to finally become frustrated and my memory seemed to go back to four hours prior when I thought about turning around. "No chance to do that now," I thought as I repeatedly hit myself in the face with branches and stabbed

myself on sticks while I tried to descend. I attempted to follow a creek down to no avail, so I ended up crossing it and heading up the other side. I kept pushing on and all of a sudden saw a piece of paper and thought, "That's odd." It turned out that it was the map I had dropped earlier in the day. I knew I was close. After what felt like an eternity of bushwhacking downhill and side-ways, I found myself at the edge of the marsh where I started. Needless to say, I was very relieved. It was a quick trip across the marsh and the river back to the cabin. I didn't care about being wet or tired anymore. I took my shoes off and sat in the sun, wondering if it had been worth it. It did not seem like it at the time, but now I'm glad I went up that day.

Statistics according to my watch: Total distance was 4.9 miles. Total elapsed time was 5:03. Total elevation up/down was 3287/3251 feet.



View to the east from the summit of Fat Lab Peak.



View to the northwest from Fat Lab Peak. Point 3943, Fat Lab Tail Peak, at right.



View to the north from Fat Lab Peak. Point 3943, Fat Lab Tail Peak, at left.



View of Swan Lake from the top of Point 3943, Fat Lab Tail Peak.

Alaska National Alpinism Excellence Group Expedition

Text and photos by Steve Thibout



The view from the Ruth Glacier base camp. To the right, from the front to the left: Mount Bradley, Mount Wake, Mount Johnson, Mount Grosvenor, and Mount Church; and to the left: London Tower.

In April and May 2016 with the other members of the National Alpinism Excellence Group, we visited Denali National Park.

What was the goal of this expedition? To take advantage of our mountaineering skills by navigating technical itineraries, and establishing new routes on the mountains of the 49th state.

More precisely, it was in the Ruth Glacier area we set up our base camp for about 20 days, with neighboring mythical mountains such as Mount Dickey, Mount Bradley, Mount Grosvenor, Mount Johnson, Mount Church, and Mount Barrille.

To get to the Ruth was "simple." We just had to take a plane from home to Anchorage, once there rent a big 4x4 to get to Talkeetna, then take another plane (but much smaller than the first one), which deposited us directly on the glacier (guaranteed sensations ...). Once landed on the glacier, we still had to walk for about two minutes and choose the most appropriate place to set up our base camp (if possible, not over a hidden crevasse ...).

Lest I forget to mention it, before we took this little jaunt, we had to, of course, go grocery shopping, because on the glacier, although we were in the U.S., there was still no supermarket. And it goes without saying that groceries for 12 people for 20 days, that's a lot ... A whole lot ...



Our taxi to the Ruth Glacier.

All this, without forgetting the equipment necessary for our climbs, because we did not go there to be chefs ...

Another small detail, even though we were in the second-most polluting country in the world, the Americans were very focused on cleanliness in the national parks, so the rangers had lent us 24 "s--t boxes" [Ed. note: *Clean Mountain Cans*] to leave the snow of the Ruth Glacier totally immaculate ...

Besides, what is a "s--t box?" In the language of Molière, one could translate it simply by "box of s--t" ... And why 24 "s--t boxes?" The Americans were afraid that one per person would not be enough ...

Going back to the very purpose of this expedition, we had the chance to complete many mountaineering routes, but also steep-slope skiing, and even some new routes!

Here's a list of what we did in mountaineering:

- “The Trailer Park” on London Tower (ED WI6 M6+, 1,000 meters);
- “East Pillar” of Mount Bradley (TD+ 5.9, 1,600 meters);
- “Colton-Leach” on the north buttress of The Rooster Comb (ED+ IA5 M6 A2+, 1,200 meters);
- First ascent of “It’s not Good to be Dead” on Little John (a sub-peak on the southeast ridge of Mount Johnson) (ED WI4+ M4 5.10 R, 500 meters);

Matthieu Rideau on the first ascent of "It's not Good to be Dead" on Little John.



- “The Warrior’s Way” on Mount Grosvenor (ED+ WI5 90° snow M6 R, 1,400 meters);
- “Kuriositeten” on 747 Peak (ED WI5+ 90° snow R M, 800 meters);
- First ascent of “Deep Throat / The Midnight Demons” on Mount Church (ED+ M7 90° snow R X, 1,300 meters); and
- “Japanese Couloir” on Mount Barrille (TD, 900 meters); and steep skiing:
- “Northwest Couloir” on the upper north col of London Bridge (5.3 E3, 600 meters); and
- ‘Y Couloir’ on Mount Barrille (5.1 E3, 300 meters).

Mount Barrille and its Japanese Couloir within range of spatulas.



Mess Tent on the Ruth Glacier. Note the soccer ball to occupy the long days spent at base camp.

Thank you to our partners who made it possible for us to live this superb adventure: Beal, Petzl, Blue Ice, Altitude Eyewear, Solemio, and Outdoor Research!

But since photos are usually more than words, here is a review in pictures of our expedition, just to pleasure the eyes ...



Mount Dickey and Mount Barrille.



Antoine Rolle during the first ascent of "It's not Good to be Dead" on Little John.



Route of the "Northwest Couloir" of the upper north col of London Bridge.



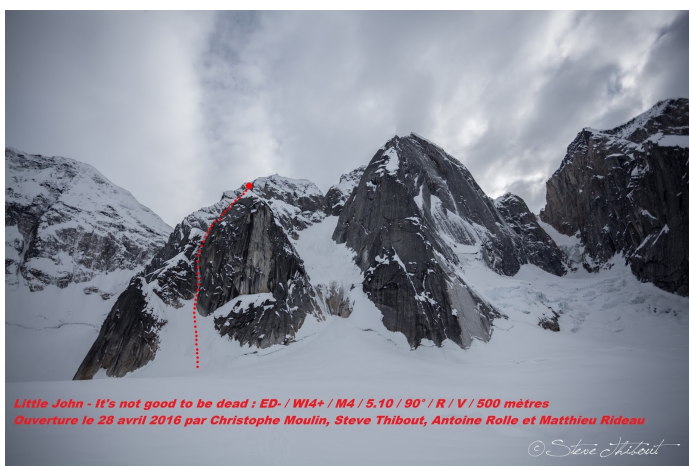
Christophe Moulin in action during the first ascent of "It's not Good to be Dead" on Little John.



Route of the "Y Couloir" on Mount Barrille.



Camille Marot, Benjamin Ribeyre, and Mathieu Détrie en route to the "Colton-Leach" chute on The Rooster Comb.



Route of "It's not Good to be Dead" on Little John.



Mess tent and Mount Bradley at night.



Titi Gentet, Mathilde Oeuvrard, Benjamin Védrières, and Léo Billon on their way to the "Colton-Leach" chute on The Rooster Comb.



Titi Gentet and Mathilde Oeuvrard on their way to the "Colton-Leach" chute on The Rooster Comb.



Christophe Moulin, Matthieu Rideau, and Antoine Rolle returning from the first attempt of "The Warriors Way" on Mount Grosvenor.



Titi Gentet, Mathilde Oeuvrard, Benjamin Védrières, and Léo Billon on their way to the "Colton-Leach" chute on The Rooster Comb.



Antoine Rolle and Benjamin Ribeyre during the downhill of the "Northwest Couloir" of the upper north col of London Bridge.



The National Alpinism Excellence Group on the Ruth Glacier.

Article and captions translated from the original French by Eve Van Dommelen.

Peak of the Month: Mount Witherspoon

Text by Steve Gruhn

Mountain Range: Chugach Mountains; Dora Keen Range

Borough: Unorganized Borough

Drainages: Norse Branch of the Columbia Glacier, Harvard Glacier, and Yale Glacier

Latitude/Longitude: 61° 23' 43" North, 147° 12' 2" West

Elevation: 12012 feet

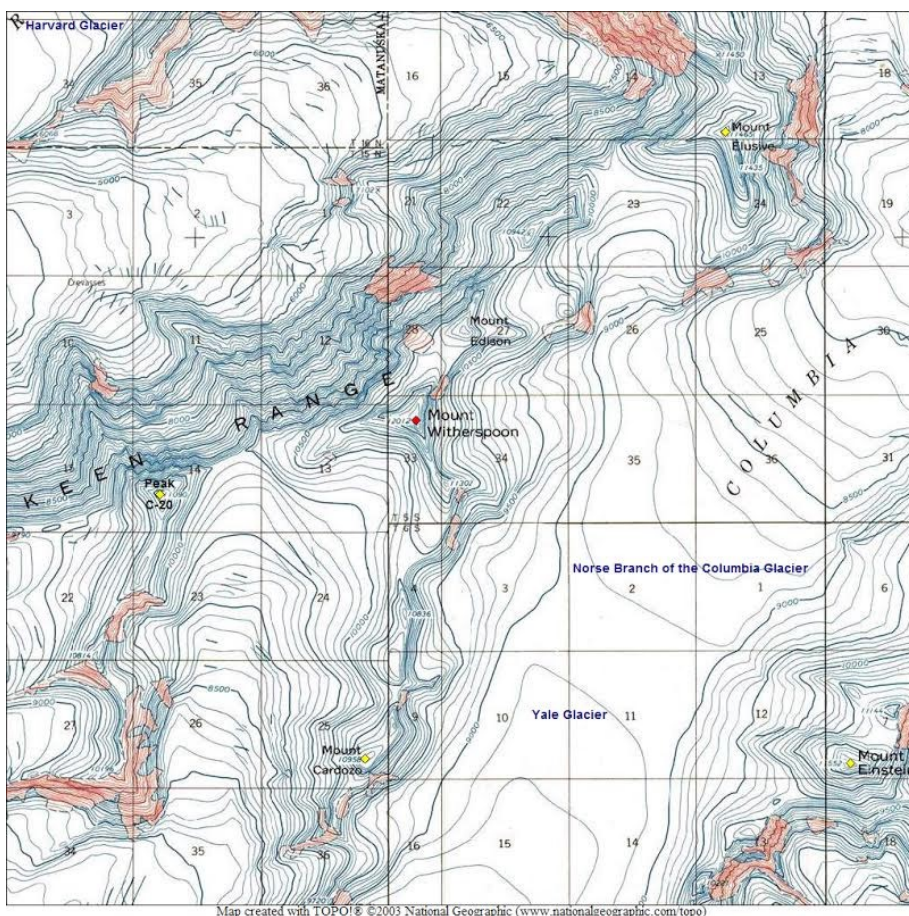
Prominence: 2162 feet from Mount Gilbert Lewis (12250)

Adjacent Peaks: Mount Cardozo (10958), Peak C-20 (11090), Mount Elusive (11465), and Mount Einstein (11552) (The 2013 Anchorage B-1 SW map indicates a Peak 10760 in the Yale Glacier drainage between Mount Witherspoon and Mount Cardozo.)

Distinctness: 1562 feet from Mount Cardozo (The 2013 Anchorage B-1 NW and Anchorage B-1 SW maps indicate a distinctness of 520 feet from a Peak 10760.)

USGS Maps: Anchorage (B-1) and Anchorage B-1 NW

First Recorded Ascent: June 25, 1957, by Dave Bohn, Arthur Maki, Jr., Martin Mushkin, and Lawrence E. Nielsen



Route of First Recorded Ascent: West ridge

Access Point: 6500-foot level of the Norse Branch of the Columbia Glacier

On February 18, 1924, the USGS proposed the name Mount Witherspoon for the highest peak in the Yale Glacier drainage basin, the 10th-highest peak in the Chugach Mountains, and the 93rd-highest peak in Alaska. The name was intended to honor David C. Witherspoon, a USGS topographer who, from 1891 to his retirement in 1921, had mapped more of Alaska than any other person. In 1928 the U.S. Board on Geographic Names voted to make the name official.

On June 26, 1955, Art Maki, Larry Nielsen, and five teammates unsuccessfully attempted to climb the east ridge of Mount Witherspoon's south summit. Although the team reached the 11302-foot south summit, a broken cornice, poor weather, and a late start combined to stymie the attempt on the higher northern summit. The team was also thwarted from an additional attempt because it had spent eight days to travel

from its base camp at 3180 feet on the East Branch of the Columbia Glacier to a camp at the 9300-foot level of the Norse Branch of the Columbia Glacier and their scheduled pickup at the same location was in three days.

Two years later Maki and Nielsen were back again. They were joined by Dave Bohn, Marty Mushkin, and Don Moksiki. On June 14, 1957, Layton A. Bennett flew Maki, Bohn, and Mushkin, one at a time, in his Piper Super Cub from the Trappers Den airstrip southwest of Tex Smith Lake near Milepost 161 of the Glenn Highway to the 6500-foot level of the Norse Branch of the Columbia Glacier. The next day, after making an air drop of supplies to the 7700-foot level of the glacier, Bennett deposited Moksiki and Nielsen at the 6500-foot level of the glacier. The team moved their gear to the 7700-foot airdrop, where they established a base camp.

In the following days the team moved camp, climbed Mount Einstein (11552), moved camp again to over 9500 feet, and ascended Mount Elusive (11465).

On June 23 the team attempted to climb Mount Edison, a northeasterly sub-peak of Mount Witherspoon, from the east. The attempt was aborted after the party encountered dangerous wind-slab conditions on the steep face. On June 24 the team moved camp to the 9300-foot level east of Mount Witherspoon.

On June 25 the team, except Mokski, set out from their 9300-foot camp at 5 a.m. to ascend the south summit of Mount Witherspoon via its east ridge. Upon reaching the south summit, they turned northward and followed the exposed knife-edge ridge toward the north summit. Concerns about seracs and cornices pushed the team out onto the east face. However, they eventually had second thoughts about their intended route and returned to the south summit. From there Maki found a route through the crevasses of the west face and crossed a tributary of the Yale Glacier a thousand feet below the south summit to reach the corniced west ridge, which they followed upward. Nielsen described the west ridge as “a spectacular ridge with tremendous cornices, but ... comparatively easy to climb.” They reached the summit at 3:40 p.m. They returned to camp at 9:30 p.m. after 16-1/2 hours of climbing.

In the following days Bohn, Maki, and Nielsen climbed Mount Valhalla (12135) and subsequently the entire team moved its camp to the 7600-foot level of the Norse Branch of the Columbia Glacier, where they remained to await their flight out.

On July 4 Bennett returned to retrieve the party. He was able to fly Mushkin and Bohn to the Trappers Den airstrip before the weather closed behind him

and a snowstorm set in for several days, causing the party to begin rationing their meager food supply. Bennett returned on July 10 and was able to fly the remaining members of the party to the Trappers Den airstrip.

In June 1972, after Don Sheldon flew them to the Columbia Glacier, the six-member Mountaineering Association of Higashimatsuyama City of Saitama Prefecture Expedition attempted an ascent of Mount Witherspoon, but wide open crevasses just under the south peak stopped the team.

The information for this column came from correspondence between Alfred Hulse Brooks and George Otis Smith archived in the USGS’ Geographic Names Information System; from Nielsen’s report titled “Attempt on Mt. Witherspoon, Alaska,” which appeared on pages 533 through 537 of the December 1955 *Appalachia*; from a summary titled “Chugach Mountains,” which appeared on page 57 of the 1955 *Mountaineer*; from Robert West’s article titled “In the Chugach Range, Alaska,” which appeared on pages 40 through 46 of the 1956 *American Alpine Journal*; from Nielsen’s report titled “Climbs in the Central Chugach Mountains, Alaska,” which appeared on pages 491 through 497 of the December 1957 *Appalachia*; from Nielsen’s trip report titled “Chugach Mountains,” which appeared on pages 92 and 93 of the 1958 *AAJ*; from Vin Hoeman’s trip report titled “Main Chugach First Ascents,” which appeared in the July 1968 *Scree*; from Ichiro Yoshizawa’s summary report titled “Witherspoon Attempt, Chugach,” which appeared on pages 409 and 410 of the 1973 *AAJ*; and from my correspondence with Thomas “Harry” Bludworth and Winford “Dub” Bludworth, Jr.



The southeast aspect of Mount Witherspoon in early June 1968.

Photo by Dub Bludworth

MCA Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Monday, April 10, 2017, 6 P.M. — BP Energy Center, Fir Room

1. Call to Order — Roll Call

Stephen Austria (Director) absent
Ralph Baldwin (Director)
Jennifer DuFord (Director) absent
Nathan Hebda (Director)
Cory Hinds (Past President)
Brian Miller (Treasurer)
Max Neale (Secretary) absent
Charlie Sink (President) absent
Katie Strong (Vice-President) absent
Scribe
Nathan Hebda

2. Welcome Guests (None)

3. President's Report (Charlie Sink)

- a. Not Present.

Committee Reports

4. Treasurer (Brian Miller)

- a. We had a very fun and successful film festival with \$1,151 collected plus 19 new memberships and 2 renewals. After expenses we made \$701 from the festival.
- b. The full \$33,900 for new hut construction funds, including the Holden Hut donation, and \$3,900 for existing hut maintenance are in one subaccount. Cory was provided access to the hut account via debit card at Credit Union 1 for purchase of supplies and services for the hut.
- c. Brian emailed an attorney club member with questions regarding legal advice on apparel and calendars.
- d. Brian updated the board with the current balance of funds for all accounts (\$73,300.14).

5. Huts (Cory Hinds)

- a. Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Hut Lease Renewal: Cory provided an update on the options described to him by DNR. The board discussed the options in depth, keeping in mind that the new hut con-

struction is now connected to the existing huts' lease renewal. The options are 1) to move forward with block lease renewals, paying a significant, but affordable, fee increase, 2) open the hut leases to a more rigorous public comment period, estimated at two to five years, which would hold up the new hut construction, 3) move to a commercial lease option with a higher lease fee and the ability to charge users for the huts. There is an option to contest the fair market value of the huts, and therefore the lease fees. To do this, we would need a professional survey and assessment at each hut, which would take time and money, and would hold up new hut construction.

- b. BOARD VOTE: All four members present voted yes to Option #1 on DNR hut lease renewal plus four email yes votes received following the meeting (Jennifer, Katie, Charlie, and Max). Waiting to hear from Stephen (in Nepal). The vote is yes to accept the increase in lease fees considering that alternate options would not result in significant savings and postpone hut construction for the year or more.
- c. New Hut Construction: With a total hut construction estimate of \$44,789 and only \$30,000 approved for the new hut, the plans are \$14,789 over budget. Our options are to build a smaller hut, abandon the Structurally Insulated Panels (SIPs) and go back to a stick frame construction, or fund raise to cover the additional expenses. We believe that the larger hut with the arctic entry would mean less maintenance for the MCA in the future, and that would be in our best interest. Further, we have the \$20,000 donation from the Holden family specifically for use of the energy-efficient SIPs in our new hut. Cory proposed going back to the membership for a one-time request for up to \$14,789 additional dollars, given a commitment of the board for a capital fund drive to replenish our hut funds.
- d. BOARD VOTE: All four members present voted yes to bring the request to the general membership plus three email yes votes received following the meeting (Katie, Jennifer, and Charlie). Waiting to hear from Stephen (in Nepal) and Max (on Mount Logan).
- e. BOARD VOTE: All four members present voted yes to spearhead a capital fund drive plus four email yes votes

received following the meeting (Katie, Jennifer, Charlie, and Max). Waiting to hear from Stephen (in Nepal). The Board vote is yes to lead a capital campaign.

- f. **UPDATE, VOTE BY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:** At the general meeting on Tuesday, April 18, the board presented a request to the membership for an increase to the budget for new hut construction in the amount of \$14,789. (Approval by a majority at a general membership meeting is required by MCA bylaws for increases of 10% or more to the budget accepted in January.) It was pointed out that the \$33,900 approved for huts this past January included \$3,900 for maintenance for existing huts and \$30,000 for the construction of the new hut. Of that \$30,000, \$20,000 was a donation by the Holden family in memory of their son, Seth. So, the amount allocated out of MCA savings in 2017 was only \$10,000. The request for additional funds would bring the total 2017 allocation out of MCA savings to \$24,789. This was compared to the 2016 allocation of \$30,000 that did not include a donation. **RESULTS:** Motion made by Matt Nedom to allocate an additional \$15,000 for the construction of the Seth Holden Hut, a total construction budget of \$45,000. Motion seconded by George Ferry. Discussion ensued. Membership voted with the following results: YES votes of 21; NO votes of 1, motion passed.

6. New Member Engagement (Stephen Austria and Ralph Baldwin)

- a. The film festival was a great opportunity for new member engagement. Ralph to provide poster and membership sign for future general meetings. Treasurer and one additional board member will continue to man a “new-membership table” during the break at monthly club meetings.

7. Training (Nathan Hebda)

- a. Nathan in process of reaching out to club members to volunteer to help instruct a crevasse-rescue course. Some instructors from last year are unavailable, so new potential instructors are being reached out to.
- b. Another option is to offer payment out of the training budget. Brian is to email Jayme Mack to see how much of that budget is to be spent on Ice Fest, as well as updates on Matanuska Glacier Access.
- c. Summer Mentorship is now up and running. Nathan is working to sign up new mentors and mentees and make connections. He also plans on gathering feedback from winter participants.

- d. Need to have an attorney look at waiver and mentorship program.

8. Parks Report (Jennifer DuFord and Ralph Baldwin)

- a. Hatcher Pass Report: Lower mountain shut down to snowmachining this week. Snowmachining season might be over altogether there in two weeks. Ralph also discussed with the chief ranger locations for the drop-off locations for helicopter pickup for the new hut construction. Additionally, there have been no avalanche fatalities this season.

9. Hiking and Climbing (Ed Smith)

- a. Cory to lead trip up Bashful Peak, possibly Memorial Day Weekend
- b. Nathan to lead trip up Bird Peak June 7th
- c. Charlie Sink to lead trip up Bold Peak (Charlie to confirm the trip and announce date)

10. Library (Charlotte Foley)

- a. Charlotte reported via text regular attendance to library social nights. She also reported we can get discounts on books from The Mountaineers for the library. The board would like a report on her plans for the library budget.

11. Unfinished Business

Max Neale (Secretary)

- a. Ask Haley Johnston about presenting to MCA on Mount Sanford.
- b. Look into what Alaska Pacific University does at their Eagle Glacier facility.

Charlie Sink (President)

- a. Read Matanuska Glacier Access thread on Facebook
- b. Contact Ed Smith about hiking and climbing trips

12. New Business (None)

13. Announcements (None)

14. Board Comments

Brian: Great meeting

Cory: Great meeting. Very productive. Thanked Ralph for driving in.

Ralph: Great meeting. New hut has potential to galvanize membership.

Nathan: Great meeting.

15. Time and Location of Next Meeting

Monday, May 8, 6 p.m., BP Energy Center, Fir Room

16. New Action Items

- Brian: Work on a concise, simple financial statement of where we are at and where we expect to be at the end of year, with and without the new hut budget increase, graphing it out to demonstrate the impact relative to past construction.
- Brian: Contact Jayme regarding how much of the training budget is to be spent on Ice Fest as well as updates on Matanuska Glacier access.
- Cory: Work on a concise statement regarding our decision on the lease renewals.
- Cory: Outline our proposed strategy on the new hut.
- Cory: To work on slide for new hut.
- Cory: To email board members for consensus on fee issues.
- Cory and Brian: To send drafts to the board
- Ralph: To complete a donation letter relative to new hut construction and send a draft to the board for approval.
- Ralph: To work on conceptual rationale for the capital funds drive.
- Ralph: To work on poster display for new hut.
- Nathan: To work on gathering summer mentors and mentees and then connecting them. Make an announcement at the next meeting
- Nathan: To continue looking for volunteer crevasse-rescue course instructors
- Nathan: Make changes to the website relative to training changes.
- Nathan: Write Jonathan Rupp a thank-you note.
- Nathan: Email Cory liability forms for legal review.



Granite Peak, 6729 feet, in the Talkeenta Mountains, from Granite Creek.

Photo by Frank E. Baker



*Benign Peak and The Watchman taken from Eklutna Lake.
Photo by Frank E. Baker*



*Tiger swallowtail butterfly on Mount Magnificent.
Photo by Frank E. Baker*

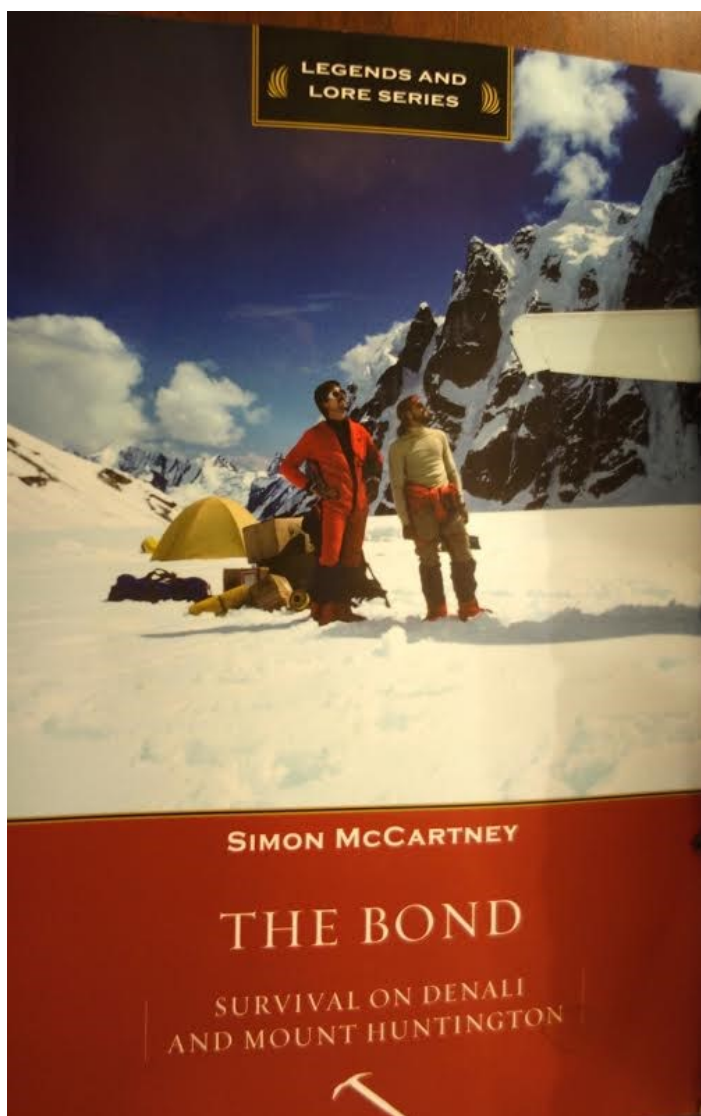
Author: Simon McCartney

ISBN 978-1-68051-090-4

Mountaineers Books

320 pages, 16-page color and black-and-white insert \$21.95

The Bond: Survival on Denali and Mount Huntington



*Book Cover, The Bond: Survival on Denali and Mount Huntington,
Mountaineering Books*

Reviewer clichés like “page turner” and “cannot put it down” come easily when describing The Bond: Survival on Denali and Mount Huntington. It is an incredible tale of two young climbers from different worlds who met in 1977 and embarked upon an epic, three-year climbing odyssey that dramatically changed their lives and made history in Alaska alpinism.

In 1977 Jack Roberts and Simon McCartney met for the first time in a bar, the Bar National, in Chamonix, France. At only 22,

both had impressive climbing resumes, with Californian Roberts making several first ascents in Canada, Yosemite, and the Rocky Mountains, and British climber Simon McCartney completing several difficult routes in the European Alps.

The barroom meeting in 1977 was the genesis of a plan that resulted in the first ascent of the north face of 12,240-foot Mount Huntington in the summer of 1978, and two years later, the southwest face of Denali. That was also a first ascent, which began on June 8 and in early July culminated in a dramatic rescue that ultimately involved 30 climbers from six countries.

The pair was among some of the first in mountaineering history to climb alpine style, traveling fast with a minimum of gear and provisions. The Bond is told in first-person by Simon McCartney and augmented by extracts from the diaries of Jack Roberts and others.

After making his bid for Denali’s southwest face, which nearly ended in tragedy, Simon McCartney literally dropped off the face of the map for nearly 40 years before coming forward with this story. Out of touch with the climbing community during all that time, he did not know that his legendary climbing partner and friend, Jack Roberts, died in 2012 at age 59 in a fall at Bridal Veil Falls in Colorado.

McCartney’s direct, honest and personal tone throughout the narrative makes this book appealing even to those who are not technical mountaineers. It is more than a nine-day assault on daunting seracs, ice-encrusted cliffs, and overhangs of Mount Huntington, with only five days of food; or the merciless days of hunger, biting cold, and privation on the unforgiving flanks of Denali. It is a very human story about a bond the climbers developed between themselves and others. It is about heroism and sacrifice at the extreme.

Their bond was so strong that through this book’s pages, it is certain to be felt deeply by readers.

A breathtaking spectacle: On several airplane trips to the Ruth and Kahiltna Glaciers, I have flown past Mount Huntington and stared in awe at its spectacular ramparts. While reading the day-by-day account of Roberts’ and McCartney’s ascent, I found it necessary to refer often to a photo of the massif’s north face.

Since the mountain's first ascent in 1964 by a French expedition led by Lionel Terray, via the northwest ridge, it has been climbed by several routes and I am aware of two who died. But when one gets close and personal to the mountain – and studies the serac-encrusted flanks of its north side – one wonders how anyone, especially a couple of 23-year-olds with limited gear and resources, would dare take it on.

A comment from legendary climber Tom Hornbein, author of Everest: The West Ridge: “A cannot-put-down book ... a large

dose of addicting adrenaline coupled with a virtue uncommon in mountaineering literature: insight into the shared and sorely tested feelings of two very different individuals.”

The publisher, Mountaineers Books, calls this the “quintessential climbing story” and “the stuff of legends and lore.” The book is available through Amazon and local book stores.

Frank E. Baker is MCA member and freelance writer who lives in Eagle River.



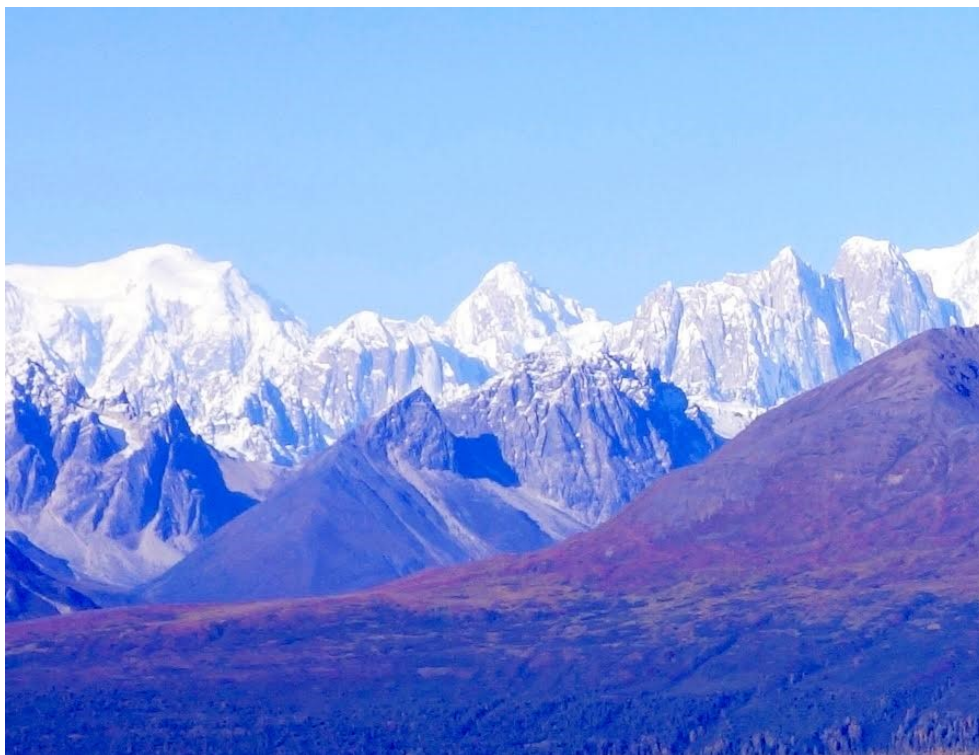
Oblique aerial photo of Mount Huntington from about 7000 feet over the Don Sheldon Amphitheater in 1975.

Photo by Bill Barnes



Mount Huntington from high on Peak 11301, aka Mount Kudlich, in May 2015.

Photo by David Stevenson



Mount Huntington, at center, in the Alaska Range.

Photo by Frank E. Baker

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Past President	Cory Hinds	229-6809			

Annual membership dues: Single \$20, Family \$25

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 Membership Committee at membership@mtnclubak.org.

The Scree is a monthly publication of the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Articles, notes, and letters submitted for publication in the newsletter should be emailed to MCAScree@gmail.com. Articles should be submitted by the 24th of the month to appear 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. Ads can be emailed to vicepresident@mtnclubak.org.

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

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Find MCAK listserv at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MCAK/info>.

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