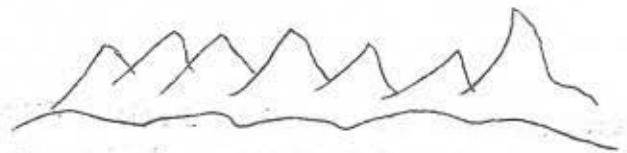


SCREE



MOUNTAIN CLIMBING CLUB OF ALASKA
Box 2037 Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Volume 11, No. 2
December, 1968

Meeting 8:00 PM 9 December basement of Pioneer Hall at 3rd & Eagle. V.G. Hoemen will show slides of Mount Igikpek and other peaks of the Brooks Rg. that they visited in August.

HATCHER PASS - Sunday 15 Dec. Tromp through ghost-haunted Hatcher Pass. Haven't looked at a map yet; if nothing, festive. Meeting place: Safeway parking lot on Gambel at 8 AM. Snowshoes or skis. Ldr. Sharon Cissna 272-0858

LET'S HAVE A PARTY!! Everyone invited, members and non-members! The 21st of December MCA will hold its 3rd annual climb and sleep-in at Flattop. That is on a Saturday, so let's get with it and have some fun! Bring all your friends (especially girls!), also don't forget to bring some firewood, wine, food and sleeping bag- snowshoes or skis may be needed but if you don't have any call me. Especially, don't forget to bring lots of enthusiasm and spirit OK!?! Call me at 272-2966 or 277-4924 and ask for GLENET.

SNOWBIRD MINE - Sunday 29 Dec. Annual ski trek to MCA cabin. Skiers wanting to make weekend of it could ski in to cabin on Saturday and meet group on Sunday. Leader: Tony Bockstehler, 694-2323.

SUICIDE PEAKS - weekend 4-5 Jan. Five mile approach on skis. Camp at Rabbit Lake. Climb SW couloir on North Suicide, rope up for short distance on SE Ridge to gain 5065 summit; traverse over "Indy Gap" and climb to summit of South Suicide 5005. Descend North couloir to lake. Good physical condition assumed and full winter overnight equipment required. Leader: Norm Staden, 279-1347.

O'MALLEY PEAK WEST FACE - Sunday 12 Jan. Elevation gain 3500' Lst. time 10-12 hours (few of which are daylight). Bring crampons and skis or webbs. Meet at 7:00 AM at Providence Hosp. parking lot. Ldr. Rod Wilson.

* * * *

CORRECTED CORRECTIONS Perhaps a useful permanent editorial corner.

Charles Kibler writes from Rose Polytech that he also climbed Pk. 4710 which has been called Mt. Elliott in both the AAJ and 30 Hikes, so it will be easiest to leave the name there though Lahlke and Dillman originally applied it to the peak 5150 we now know as Koktaya. Until we have someone object, we will assume Kibler made the first recorded ascent of "Mt. Elliott" 4710 on 15 Sept. 1968 by its west ridge from Wolverine (the drop between is only 700 feet). Kibler also climbed Powerline Pass Peak 5050 in June and it has probably been climbed several times, the earliest known at present being Frank W. Godfrey Jr. (1942-66) who climbed it with one companion in 1964. Rockrollers have disposed of most cairn material without which registers seldom last long.

Peak 4660 SE of the pass should not be grouped under the same name, thus the name "Homocide Peak" is here proposed as fitting to its character. The first ascent was by Bill Carlson, Ed Gendzwill, and Bob Goodwin in July 1961 traversing from E to W. Keith Hart was with them, but says he chickened out on the way up. The Bludworths' climb of 16 Sept. was with Kenny Schacht (not stump), who has the distinction of being our youngest member whose family are neither members nor climbers.

Second Ascent of Granite Peak 6729 Bill Babcock & Hans Van der Lean

With the aid of tire chains Hans' VW almost made the end of the road above Jonesville through the open pit coal mines October 19th. We discussed the possibility of a one-day ascent, but fortunately had better sense and shouldered our packs through brush and grass and up the steep scree of the southern slopes of Granite. The day had been sunny and hot and when a stop had been made to remove long johns Hans had snagged his pants, air-conditioning them. We traversed to the north side of Granite's SW ridge and gained the ridge higher with the security of a rope and the surefootedness of crampons, though there was no snow to contend with till 5500. At 5900 Bill located a relatively flat 12x15' platform on which we anchored the tent with our only pitons, pushed boulders over the cliff and watched the setting sun. It had taken 8 hours with 35 lb. packs. With high overcast the next morning we started along the ridge which proved too gendary to follow; so we kept on the east side till forced to the west. Donning our crampons and rope, we traversed on down-sloping slabs and scree several hundred feet to a snow-filled gully which led to the ridge where it was now negotiable. Past a false summit was the true summit with ~~cairn~~ and empty ration can left by Vin and Scott in 1962. Bill deposited 25¢ for the benevolent mountain god who immediately blessed us with lower clouds and light snow. It had taken 2½ hours to climb from our camp and we descended the same way reaching the car in late afternoon. It was an excellent climb and could be done by most intermediate climbers with a competent leader.

Three Didilkama Climbs in 1968

JVH, RLS, & GLN

Prior to this year the 6100-foot peak NW of Snowbird Mine that we call Didilkama had been climbed only once each by different routes in 1965, 66, and 67. Grace and Vin Hoeman traversed the mountain in a fast climb of two other new routes last June 30th. They went up the SW Ridge from Fern Mine, roping up for a 5th class route on the south face of the final 300 feet less than 2 hours later. After cairn-building and supplementation of the original Planters Peanut can register containing only the now inedible remains of a few raisins, they left the summit to the eagles who'd cached a bloody bone there and descended the West Ridge for 6-hour round trip including over an hour on top.

On October 12th a snow practice was held on Didilkama Glacier for the MU climbing class. Bob Spurr, the senior instructor, stopped with Hope Chorney, Madelon Green & her Mittel brother, Alma Hartman, Jim Kross, and Bryan Long just beneath the summit while instructor Nick Parker and Tony Barnes scrambled to the summit, though snow was the day's objective rather than any summit and the steep slopes of the upper glacier were ideal.

October 19th Gayle Wienenheuser led Jim Britton, Sandy Frenzen, Katie Hammond, Lotte Kramer, Jim Mahares, Rich Olson, Noel Roche, Clarke Stockwell, Peter Vlasveld and a 3-month old black puppy up this same NW glacier route. The weather was tremendous and despite 4 inches of snow they were able to drive assorted vehicles to Fern Mine. Clarke led the first rope all the way and belayed Jim, Gayle, Lotte, Noel, Peter, and Rich to the tiny actual summit by turns.

Pestle Peak Attempt

Vin Hoeman

The Mortar and Pestle group of mountains surround Crescent Lake on the Kenai Peninsula. Look at the map, it's obvious which is which. Pestle is highest and has 4 summits over 5000'; the second from the south being our objective at 5320. We didn't even come close! Weather was poor and we wasted daylight drinking coffee at Moose Pass village and shifting from

Pestle continued

Lark Mountain to Pestle, so that there was only an hour of light left when we parked at the salmon sign by Moose Creek, crossed the highway bridge and headed up SW through the brush which was mostly stinking Lenziesia and not too bad except that it showered us with snow and soaked us through by the time we found a clearing at 1450 elevation where we could pitch our camp. ~~3:41~~ made a fire where we dried out and Lotte figured out her new tent. Snow fell all night, so we slept in and went no higher. A short trail could be cut to high country here, but perhaps it is better left wild.

Blizzard on Ragged Top 23-24 Nov. by Vin Moemen

It was not a good weekend in the Chugach, but the trip was scheduled and Bill Babcock, Dick Barquist, John Samuelson, Carl Williams, Grace & I showed up to make the 2-day effort. It takes over 5 miles of skiing, webbing, or slogging to get to the Milk Creek Parking Area we drive to in the summer. As snow machines buzz by we look forward to the day we can afford this means of access. We were accused of using such an amulet early this year when it was actually only half a mile of their tracks we used. There is nothing immoral about using machines as long as one states to what extent they are used and doesn't pretend that it's as pure as doing without. At this time of year they can open up areas that are even hard to reach in summer and save the daylight for climbing.

As it was we hit the hazardous sidehill after dark, made our way down to the 3-year old snowbridge over Crow Creek at 2050 feet and camped on it for the night since avalanche danger was nil. Interesting spelunking underneath, the stream having cut a cave 100 yards long.

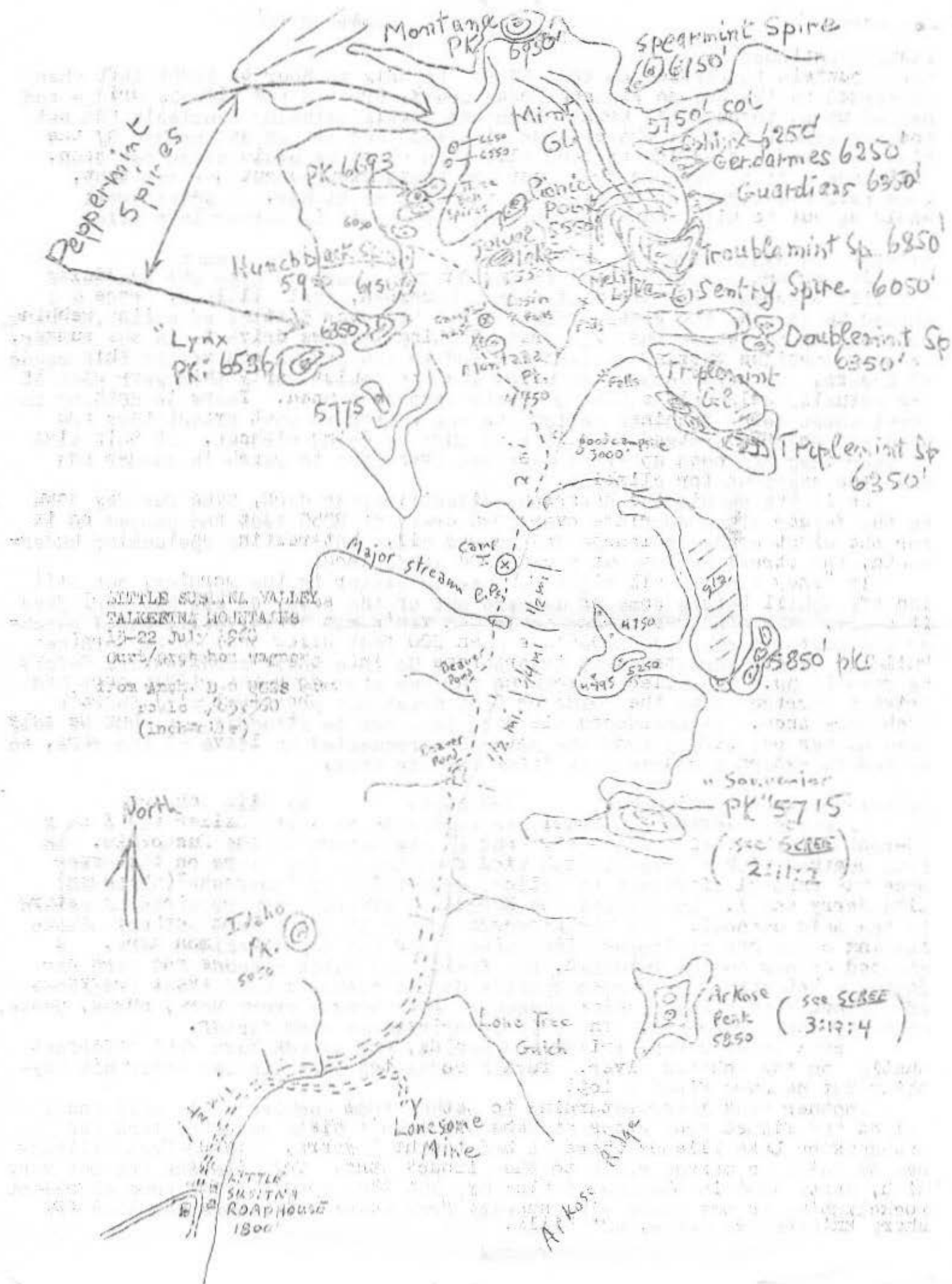
It "snow & blew" all night and was no better in the morning, but Bill led off uphill before some of us were out of the sack, so all but Carl gave it a try. The wind was strong on Ragged Top's but Grace, Bill, and I reached the narrow part above 5000 (less than 200 feet below top) where cornice-building blasts threatened to incorporate us into their architecture before we gave it up. We collected John on our way back down the ridge. Carl had tried a shortcut down the gorge on Crow Creek not practical till there's much more snow. He abandoned his pack in order to struggle out, but we only knew he was out safely from the note we'd requested he leave at the cars, so he had to return a couple days later for his pack.

Bethel-Tuluksak by Riverboat 7-8 Sept. by Bill Babcock

My second weekend in Bethel was enjoyable as Gerry Heller and I in a 23-foot riverboat with a 50-gal. tank of gas headed up the Muskokwim. In fine weather with a brisk 15 mph wind from the S, the glare on the water made the channel difficult to follow, especially by "gussocks" (whitemen) like Gerry and I. Long poles and Herculean efforts were required to return to the main channel. The banks become wooded 15 miles from Bethel; Eskimo fishing camps had blossomed with white tents and drying salmon here. We stopped at one on the Tuluksak, the family had built a sauna and were enjoying a hot bath. We camped 5 miles up the Tuluksak amid sweet fragrance of willows with a spectacular sunset. Moose tracks everywhere, ducks, geese, no bugs, cool crisp air. The trip downriver was much faster.

A week later Gerry, Tristram Reynolds, and my son Tuck went waterfowl hunting on the Johnson River. Tucker commented that his Dad never hit anything but he sure fired a lot!

Another week later returning to Bethel from Anchorage Al Corey and I walked and fished from stops at Babe Alsworth's place on Lake Clark and Kakhonak on Lake Iliamna where Al had taught 2 years. Flying from Billingham to Aniak we passed close to the Kilbuck Mtns. The Kilbucks are not very high, under 4000 in the area I flew by, but they should offer some excellent rockclimbing as the peaks rise sharply from sea-level tundra and they are sharp knife-edged peaks, not hills.



MINT GLACIER SPIRES EXPLORATION

by Curtis A. Wagner

On Sat. July 13, 1968 my wife Gretchen and I left the Little Susitna Roadhouse and packed up the mining road along Little Susitna River. After $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles the road turned into a jeep road and cattle trail; in 2 more miles we came to many branches of the trail. Although we initially went west of the river, we soon discovered the necessity of remaining close to the river banks at all times. About $\frac{3}{4}$ mile later we came to a large beaverpond and remnants of old campfires. (A lovely lunch stop by the brook feeding the pond). We circled it on the west and followed a faint trail along the river another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to several smaller ponds. Beyond those the trail was practically nonexistent. Another $\frac{3}{4}$ mile and we came to a major stream tumbling down from the west. Crossing was made a few hundred feet up the hill where it was divided into three. We covered another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile (and several tiny beaver ponds) before making camp as the rain descended. Not until the morning of the 16th did clearing skies and sun beckon us up valley. We bushwhacked another mile upstream before cutting left and ascending the slopes west toward a mound we called Montana Point (could see Montana Peak from it). Luckily the alpine slopes and meadows near the top led to a shallow dip or pass into a beautiful glacial basin above the head of the valley which was steep and gouged out by waterfalls. In this basin at about 4250 nestled among jagged spires we set down our little tent.

July 17 we set off to look over the NW side of 6850 Troublemint Peak. It looked pretty wild for the two of us, but then the mist descended for 45 minutes of whiteout. We waited at the edge of Mint Glacier, but then decided to try another approach some other day. So we went over to the cleaver of Mint Gl. and romped easily up it to what we dubbed Picnic Point 5550, since we had a delightful 3-hour picnic on top of it enjoying probably the best view of the area-jagged spires everywhere. The Three Bell Spires were particularly impressive, as was Spearmint Spire, 6750. We returned to camp via beautiful Jewel Lake in about 1 hr.

The next day was a lazy rest day, but on the 19th we set off to attempt the SE ridge of Troublemint (the N. ridge looks great on the topo but requires ascent of steep snow & ice to reach col, then it's studded with pinnacles & spires). We crossed the tongue of Mint Glacier and headed up talus slides and the Doublemint Glacier to the 5950 col between Troublemint and Gentry Spire, 6050. This was steep going on very rotten snow and once at the narrow col I decided to scramble up the remaining 150 feet of fourth class ledges on Gentry Spire as a consolation prize. A piece of alpine cord I tied to the very sharp summit rock. Then Gretchen & I started up the SE ridge of Troublemint. The lower portions were rotten, but eventually we got to good firm lichen-covered granite. After several good 4th class pitches we got to the start of the 5th class pinnacled ridge at 6400 or so. It looked so broken and the hour was so late with clouds moving in around us that we descended. Given time and good weather that ridge will definitely go if you don't mind lots of ups & downs! Saturday was a rest day, but Sunday July 21st we set off for one of the nearby Bell Spires. Rain drove us back, but as it lifted we decided to try one of the lower spires N. of camp. We scrambled to the basin below Hunchback Spire, 5950, then headed up the obvious couloir to the col just N. of the peak. The ledges on Peak 6050 looked lousy, so we did a pleasant rockclimb up the NW side of Hunchback. The summit view was fabulous; to the NW tundra and lake country, to the SE Granite Peak, and south the magnificent Chugach. Descent was made by the same route as the ascent.

The next day, July 22nd, we sadly packed out the 8 miles to our car at the roadhouse on probably the clearest, hottest day of the whole period. We were amazed by the fantastic growth of vegetation during our short stay at 4200, everything seemed to have shot up a foot! May or June might be a better time to traverse the valley, though early July was still reasonable. There is no timber to speak of and willows underfoot are abominable!

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RENDEZVOUS PEAK TRAVERSE (Lost Lake That Wasn't) 17 Nov. by Lotte Kramer

A call to Ranger Byron Baldwin at Ptarmigan Cr. Sat. foretold rain for Lost Lake area, so Jim Britton "Oley" Olson, Clarke Stockwell, and John Westling with snowshoes and Dick Barquist and I on skis, having left one car up the south Fork of Eagle River, went to Arctic Valley with the other. We ascended the ridge from the military ski area this beautifully clear and sunny day well before the ski lifts started and followed the ridge to Rendezvous Peak, 4050, the snowshoers on foot well ahead. After a fine view, we went down the ridge (I like ridges!) to point 3855, down the ridge to tree-line, then contour N. until we hit a road which soon had snowmobile tracks leading to our car. An enjoyable trip.

ODDS & ENDS

On 3 Nov. G&V Hoeman climbed Round Mtn. 3875 on the Kona just inside the Moose Range finding tattered remains of US flag near E. subsummit. According to Sportsman Lodge barkeep it was put up the summer of 1965 by a soldier who bot he could do it in 2 hours but it took him nearly 3. No prior record found on or near higher summit as traversed E-W.

15 Oct. marked formation of Alaska section of the American Alpine Club and to celebrate the occasion next day members V&G Hoeman traversed what they named Harp Mtn. (from shape), 5001, a first recorded ascent, east of the South Fork of Eagle River, up NW, down SW Rgs.

On 24 Nov. Dub and Harry Bludworth, Nick Parker, and Bob Spurr "toured" Gunsight Mtn. 6441, experiencing cold temps but not the wind that afflicted Chugach climbers that day.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Mr. W.R. Bendy, who was in the Chilkoot Range near Skagway with Larry Nielsen making several first ascents last summer, would like to return to get Boundary Peak 104 which they didn't attempt this coming spring in the 8 days following 21 May. He wants a 4-man party and is willing to pay the bushpilot's entire charges from Haines. Elev. of B.P. 104 is 6816 but a more difficult peak nearby reaches 7810. Contact Mr. Bendy at 9 St. Alfred Rd., St. Louis, Missouri 63132.

MT. MCKINLEY EXPEDITION! A special inaugural climb to Alaska's 20,320' peak will be led by Ray Genet of "Alaska Mountain Guides" early in 1969. Total cost including transportation (fly in-out) and supplies from Anchorage to McKinley and back to Anchorage will be \$580.00 per person. Send information and inquiries to GENET, Box 48, Anchorage 99501 or call 272-2966 or 277-4924.

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NOTE

The promised appendices to this SCREE are late, but we plan to have them out before the new year. They are:

- 1) Complete Tentative Winter Hike Schedule
- 2) Index to SCREE
- 3) Membership List

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Box 2037
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