

SCREE

Vol. 9, No. 8
June, 1967
MOUNTAIN CLIMBING CLUB OF ALASKA
P.O. Box 2037
Anchorage, Alaska, 99501

EVENTS TO COME

JUNE MEETING: A different time, a different place than the usual -- meeting will be held on Midsummer's Eve on Flattop. Pack a supper and come after work. Bring firewood, baseball bats or other items suitable for making merry. Program will be a Demonstration and Audience Participation on the subject of "How to build rock shelters." WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21st.

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SPECIAL PROGRAM, FRIDAY, JUNE 16th, 8 p.m. at Willow Park Community Center, 9th and Fairbanks. Boyd Everett will give a double barreled show consisting of a slide program on the first ascent of the NW ridge of Mt St Elias in 1965, and a movie on the West Ridge of Logan, done in 1966. This will be an excellent program, don't miss it! No admission charge.

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ROCK SCHOOL, June 15, Thursday evening, 6 p.m. until dark. "First Something" area on the Seward Highway. If you haven't attended earlier meetings of Rock School, information may be obtained from Ron Linder (TEL: 272-5968 home or 272-4401 work).

PEAK 6119, June 17, Saturday. (Otherwise known as Mt Vigor, Byers Peak or the Matanuska Matterhorn) Long climb up good trail and easy ridge. Views of the northern Chugach, Pioneer and Knik Glacier. **LEADER:** Gary Hansen, 272-1145.

ROCK SCHOOL sessions will continue to be held Thursday evenings if there is enough attendance. Dates are June 22 and June 29.

SUMMIT MOUNTAIN, June 24, Saturday. Above the Crow Pass area. **LEADER:** Bill Hague, 862-0136.

HOPE TO KINAI LAKE, July 1 through 4. Long hike with overnights at Forest Service cabins. **LEADER:** Dave DeVoe, 333-5492.

MARY'S MOUNTAIN, July 4, Tuesday. Long one-day trip with marvelous views of the Matanuska Valley. **LEADER:** Rod Wilson, 272-6219

BOLD PEAK, 7522', July 15 & 16. Overnight trip, strenuous. Elevation gain of approximately 6800'. **LEADER:** Hans van der Laan, 277-4251 (home).

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Executive Committee meeting was not held this month. The next one will be on Wednesday, July 5, at 3104 W. 30th, 8 p.m.

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The Kenai Chapter of the Alaska Conservation Society is sponsoring a number of hiking and canoe trips this summer on the Kenai Peninsula. Trips are only open to ACS members and their friends. For more information contact the Kenai Chapter, Box 563, Soldotna, Alaska, 99669.

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MISCELLANIE

NEW MEMBERS:		Home	Work
JOHNSON, Dave	3002 Wendys Way	277-7942	272-9477
STANKOWSKI, Bruce	4320 Dawson St	277-8832	
BRUCE, James B	PO Box 2376 (505 2nd Ave, Apt 201)	272-0107	277-4508

Address Changes:

VAN DER LAAN, Hans & Callie	1601 F Street	277-4251	277-7525
BADING, Helga	1815 NE Perkins Way, Seattle	EM 5-2889	
BYRRE, Robert K	711 Dexter Horton Bldg, Seattle		
SCHULTZ, Lawrence T.	1049 5th		

The following article is reprinted from the Anchorage TIMES. We don't know the author, but thought this letter deserved somewhat wider circulation.

IN DEFENSE OF MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

by George F Herben, Jr.

I have been hearing and reading many comments on the subject of the McKinley winter ascent, all of them negative. The last one, a letter to your paper from Marie Buge ((ed. note: Mr Herben refers to a particularly ignorant and abusive letter in the TIMES which suggested that climbers seek their glory elsewhere, such as in Vietnam and not in risking rescuers' lives.)) is the final straw for me -- I must try to present something of the positive side, lest we find our legislatures passing laws against mountain climbing.

My first observation is that many people who criticize mountaineering are those who know the least about it. It is easy to be critical of something not understood because the critic need not bother to gather facts, study, meet the people involved or put forth any effort other than that required to belittle.

All criticism I've heard or read includes remarks about the cost of rescue and the danger to rescuers. My only comment is that more often than not, the rescuers are volunteers and as such are, in my opinion, above censure. If a man chooses to risk his life to save another, that's his business and his alone. As for rescuers involving non-volunteers it is obvious that anyone who has to engage in such work is being paid for it as are firemen, policemen, etc.

To many, mountaineering may seem a foolhardy and pointless risk. It is not. It is no more so than any other outdoor sport. It is no more so than was the first traverse of the Antarctic continent, than was Dr Leakey's research into man's past in Africa, than was the first manned space flight, than were any of man's efforts to enlarge his horizons. Man's growth depends almost entirely upon his courage, his foresight and what is beyond his grasp. Mountaineering stretches man's endurance, his patience, his courage and his knowledge of himself and of his world and its beauty.

Most men of achievement -- da Vinci, Socrates, Wright, Franklin, Fulton, Whitney and countless others -- were no doubt censured because they dared. They dared to fail.

I suspect that had the McKinley winter party not suffered death and obstacles beyond their control, and had all the climbers reached the summit, and then descended safely to Talkeetna, few voices would have been heard in judgement against them. Because they dared, and only partially succeeded, they are condemned. Because a man fell to his death in a crevasse, mountaineers and mountaineering are condemned.

A man died in pursuit of a goal only he could evaluate. Who are we to say he died foolishly? Is our well-being so uncertain that we are compelled to belittle those willing to sacrifice theirs to an end of their own choosing?

Marie Buge is sadly in error when she says mountain climbers "risk everyone's life including their own to gain a little publicity ..." I dare say that such a purpose is last on the list of reasons why men climb mountains.

I cannot help but think that the disparagement of mountaineering is a symptom of a nationwide disease called "againstitis". It seems to be catching these days. It is characterized mainly by the abuse of real achievement and values of mediocrities. Unless treated early it may result in the passing away of a great nation. It happened over 2000 years ago. The victim was ancient Greece.

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Scree is published monthly by the Mountaineering Club of Alaska. Scree staff: Marie Lundstrom, Marge Macgoe, Callie van der Laan, Carol DeVoe. Articles on trips or other material to appear in Scree should be sent to Marie Lundstrom, Box 4-964, Anchorage 99503, or call 277-0846 (home) or 272-0554 (work).

MOUNT SANFORD

April 29, 30 - May 1, 2

Bill Babcock

With full equipment for the MCA-McKinley climb, Gayle Nienhueser, Leo Hannan, Chet Hackney, Barney Seiler, Bill Hague and Bill Babcock departed Anchorage at 7 p.m. Friday and drove all night to Gakona. Mr Jack Wilson met the climbers bright and early and flew us to the 6400' level on the Sheep Glacier. The weather was spectacular, as it was to be for the next four days. With packs from 65 to 75 pounds, the climbers staggered up the glacier without snowshoes. Bill Babcock fell into a crevasse a half hour after starting up the glacier. After a short discussion it was decided, despite the hard snow conditions, to put on snowshoes for the extra safety factor. The lower portion of the glacier is covered with crevasses and in places three deep crevasses were found within 100 feet of each other. Progress up the mountain was slow but by 5.30 we were all tired out at the 9500' level. We quickly dug out tent platforms, with Chet Hackney and Leo Hannan doing most of the work.

April 30th. The group was up by 4 a.m. and underway by 7.30 a.m. We were beginning to feel the effects of altitude and our pace was somewhat slower. Fortunately we pared down our heavy packs somewhat, by leaving a cache at 9500'. At about 10,000' the mountain levels off to an enormous shoulder where walking was considerably easier. At about the 10,550' level the mountain begins to rise at a 20° angle up to another plateau at 13,000'. By three in the afternoon some of the climbers were feeling the effects of altitude sickness, so another camp was established at 11,700'. Everyone welcomed a long "siesta" before supper. As the climbers had planned only three days on the mountain, it was decided to take a fourth day and to make our summit bid the next day.

May 1st. The team began preparations for the summit attempt at 2 a.m. Because of the altitude it took two hours before breakfast was finished. Each member carried a 15 to 20 pound bivouac pack and by 4.30 a.m. the team was on its way. Progress was slow but Leo, Gayle, Chet, Barney and Bill all felt as though they were becoming acclimatized, despite the short time on the mountain. Crevasses again blocked the way and careful belaying of each climber was necessary. The day was clear but gusty winds of 25 mph blew into the climbers' faces. Each climber had his own special way of keeping warm. Some put on heavy down parkas while others added layers hoping it would warm up later in the day. However, the winds continued and temperature remained very cold.

At 13,000' the mountain again levels off and there is a long tiresome walk over to the actual base of the upper slopes. Visibility was perfect so the team photographer, Gayle Nienhueser, was taking many pictures. Everyone was still feeling fine, but those who had never been high before marvelled at the necessity to move so slowly. At about 14,000' the team took a lunch break. It was already noon and the winds were as bad as ever. The climbers found some protection in a broken-up section with protective crevasses. After some discussion it was decided to leave our bivouac packs at this spot in case we were to spend the night away from camp. At 1.30 we were on our way. Several hundred yards above, two large crevasses crossed our path. Eventually, a snow bridge was found to cross the first. The second took more time and a narrow ice block was found wedged between the walls of the crevasse. It was necessary to tight rope across this narrow ice block, but all made it safely. Each crossing was carefully belayed and took time. The final 1500' of the mountain is fairly steep -- perhaps 30 to 35°. The snow was rock hard with some ice. Progress was about 1000' every three hours. By 3 p.m. we were at 15,100' and another three or four hours remained to get to the summit. Leo, Gayle, Chet and Barney felt well and wanted to continue. Bill explained that it would be at least 6 p.m. and probably later before the summit was reached. That would mean a bivouac away from camp, and possibly mean that the pickup by Jack Wilson would be missed. Bill felt that all climbers had acclimatized well and could be confident that they would acclimatize on McKinley. Our descent to camp was tiresome and seemed almost as difficult as going up. About 1000' above camp, Barney fell into a deep crevasse. Chet and Bill held fast and Barney was able to climb out by himself. Barney said that looking into the deep crevasse was just the tonic he needed, since his headache disappeared immediately.

May 2. Being exhausted the team slept until 7 a.m. Everyone got up slowly and breakfast was started and camp broken. The descent was blessed by beautiful weather and the photographer was busy again. We all felt that Barney had become the crevasse expert so we let him be the first to cross the multitude of snow bridges spanning the crevasses of the descent. Despite Bill's feeling that

some of the bridges would not hold in the heat of the day, the team descended without incident to 6400' where everyone stripped to the skivvies and took a snow bath. Shortly thereafter Jack Wilson arrived and flew the team out. Another all-night drive and somehow all of us made it to work on Wednesday.

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PEAK 6119 (BYERS PEAK)

April 22 & 23

Bill Babcock

Chet Hackney, Leo Hannan and Gayle Nienhueser left at 6 a.m. with heavy packs for Byers Peak. Bill Babcock and Bill Hague left later in the day to meet with the rest of the group at the foot of the steep climb leading to the summit. All the climbers got an early start and climbed on rock-hard snow with some ice to reach the summit at 8.30 a.m. Weather was beautiful and a long hour was spent on top.

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MOUNT GANNETT FIRST ASCENT, 10,000±

March 18-19-20

Hans van der Laan

Early Saturday morning Frank Nosek and I watched Gary Hansen and Bill Long climb into an Alyeska Air Service plane. Pilot Huntley's instructions were to drop them off at the upper end of one of the spurs of the Knik Glacier and return to pick us up. We were not very pleased when all three came back an hour and a half later. The weather in the vicinity of Gannett was poor so they had not landed. Since it promised to be a relatively short climb, we decided to try again the next morning if the weather looked good.

Early Sunday morning Gary and I were dropped on the glacier at about 7000', where we set up camp and were joined shortly by Bill and Frank. It was a completely clear and warm day with excellent visibility. We roped up and headed for the northern spur of the mountain. Snow conditions were good and did not require crampons until about 8000'. Tracks were seen in the snow up to about 8600', but positive identification (lynx, wolverine or ?) was beyond the capabilities of our party. The summit was reached in the early afternoon so we stayed for some time enjoying the view. While on top we reflected on a PNA plane crash on Gannett's slopes which had taken the lives of all passengers and crew including three close friends of our pilot.

At the appointed hour we were back in camp and soon a plane appeared to pick us up. However, he circled several times, dipped his wings and left. A 15-20 knot wind had come up and he considered it too risky to land. After a breezy night in the tent, the wind slackened off and we were awakened by the roar of an engine outside. A quick trip got us back into town in time for a half day of work.

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WHITEOUT PEAK FIRST ASCENT, 7135'

May 27-28-29

Bill Hauser

Whiteout was a special invitation climb for my Community College mountaineering course. Members of this miniature expedition were Kyle Atkins, Gordon Reese, DR. Charles Munns, Dr. Ward Hubert and I.

We assembled our giant packs, wands, tents and stoves at the end of the Eklutna Road and headed up the moraine. We put crampons on in order to assure positive traction on the glacier. Just below the third icefall we roped up and put on skis because the glacier was covered with very wet snow. Some used skins and others used ropes wrapped around the skis. We got to the small self-emptying lake at the base of "Pichler's Sliac", packed our skis again and climbed up to the MCA cabin. The easiest way around the "corner crevasses" and on to the East Fork of the Eklutna is to go to the cabin and contour over to the upper glacier, so we went that way. No elevation was lost, and we again put on our skis. The next five miles looked flat and purple Klister wax proved to be superb for ski travel. There were some 21 crevasses about a mile up, but these were all snow-covered and easily skirted. The unrelenting sun proved to be the real adversary and effective temperatures soared to 80°. It is a long road past Peril Peak to the pass between Peak 5798 and Peak 6060, which we called "Centennial Pass." After sweating out our last grains of salt and sometimes seeking shade behind our packs, we arrived at the pass to a fantastic view of the Northern Chugach, Upper Lake George and an infinite array of giant peaks. This pass is a small rock garden surrounded by ice and it was a great relief to get off the super-Sahara reflector oven onto this eye-relieving garden. The elevation of "Centennial Pass" is 5250', and the view is the best I've seen in the Chugach. We camped there at 5 p.m. after twelve hours of climbing from the army carnival area at the end of the Eklutna Road. We used willow wands every 100 yards from the MCA cabin.

The next day was clear and the glaciers were glistening; Whiteout looked easy but was a long way from camp. The bergschrund below "Centennial Pass" was easily crossed on our skis. At 7 a.m. the super-Sahara sun again reached its full intensity. The views of Bashful, Baleful, Peril, Yukla and Beelzebub were quite alpine. We gained elevation easily to 6500'. Some towed their skis and walked on the early-morning ice — others used purple Klister wax. A wind-slab-covered crevasse was negotiated by a nice snow bridge and the rock was taken to the final snowy pyramidal summit. A rock cairn with register was placed just ten feet behind or to the east of the actual summit. The view was great and we spent an hour there taking pictures of the Western Chugach.

We then skied roped up down a long ramp to Peak 6505 which we called "Warm point". From here we could see the snout of the Whiteout glacier, Upper Lake George and the Lake George Glacier. We built a cairn and placed a register. By now it was noon and avalanches broke the stillness of the icefields, and the sun was getting to all of us. The ski run down was classic. Kyle was on skis for the first time and did as well as the others. We picked up all the wands, each taking every fifth one. It was a great relief to get off the super desert to our rocky camp on "Centennial Pass".

The next day we got up late and climbed Peak 5795. It turned out to be a nice rock scramble and a long glissade down. There was evidence of army cans on the summit but we built a cairn, placed a register and called it "Antarctic View." We skied out in three hours to the cabin using hard wax. Three hours later we arrived at the cars. This was an excellent ski tour for May and we all felt that "Centennial Pass" was the best view in the Chugach. In the future this whole area should be set aside as a National Monument before it is too late. The Western Chugach is unique and the most accessible alpine area in Alaska.

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MOUNTAIN NOMENCLATURE → TWANAKPIES

Vin Hoeman

It is hoped that MCA will be represented when the State Geographic Board next meets in Juneau and discusses the names we have proposed. Those currently submitted are MT. ALICE, local name for the highest peak across Resurrection Bay from Seward; BEAUTY CREEK for the east fork of the stream above Lake Eklutna; BLUE LAKE at the head of the North Fork of Campbell Creek; BYRON PEAK at the head of Byron Glacier; CUL-DE-SAC GLACIER in the Kichatna Cathedral Spires; THE HARPIES for the 14,445' peak near Mount Bona recently climbed as "Mount Kobe"; ISTHMIUS PEAK, 6532', overlooking Kenai Peninsula's isthmus; JINX PEAK, the one we earlier tried to name Lynx in the Talkeetnas; KATANUSKA PEAK, 6119', east of Palmer; NEAR POINT, an Anchorage landmark; POINTED PEAK above Lost Lake on the Kenai; RESURRECTION PEAKS near bay and river of that name; SALIX PEAK, generic name of willows, for highest in Willow Creek drainage of Talkeetnas; SHADOW and SHELF GLACIERS in the Kichatnas; SKYBUSTER PEAK near Kings Mountain; SOGGY PEAK near Mount Yukla; SPYGLASS HILL and TRANQUILITY PASS near Mt Foraker; and TATINA GLACIER in the Kichatnas. We are also resubmitting most of the names that were turned down last time without reasons being given for their rejection.

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"GOAT ROCK" AND WEST TWIN PEAK May 21

Grace Hoeman

Early on May 21st Dave Meyers, Clarence Serfoss, Ned Lewis and I drove up toward Lake Eklutna parking just before reaching the lake. We went up the ridge of West Twin but decided to do "Goat Rock" first as we hoped to traverse all three peaks, and so we traversed across the southface of West Twin to the col between "Goat Rock" and West Twin. We left the packs there, roped up, and tackled the previously unclimbed east ridge of "Goat Rock". A delightful class 5.4 pitch brought us to the summit which, according to the register, was previously reached by Vin Hoeman and a beercan, the former using the west ridge approach and the latter unknown (see September, 1966, SCREE).

Since clouds were forming, we descended rapidly, ate a hasty lunch at the col, picked up our packs, and ascended the west ridge of West Twin where some friction climbing pleased us. We reached the summit of West Twin, 5401', and examined the register, finding that Paul Crews was the first to climb it in 1952. With time advancing and obligations bothering our conscience, we decided to save East Twin for another occasion and screeled down the main south gully at full speed.

The next day Dr. George Hale asked me if I was one of the four climbers seen

stop Goat Rock. He then told me that in October, 1950, he saw from the Klutna Road what he believed to be goats near the summit of "Goat Rock." He left his wife in the car, promised to be right back, and ascended the west ridge. On top of "Goat Rock" the goats he had seen turned out to be sheep (out of season). He drank no beer, descended via the west ridge and reached his car and slightly disgruntled spouse five hours after he left.

STRELISHLA MOUNTAIN, 5450'

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June 11

Vin Hoeman

After guiding a Prospectors Club group on Litanuska Glacier the morning of 11 June, Grace and I still had nearly half a day of beautiful weather. Strelshla Mountain in the Talkeetna Range seemed a worthy goal as our friend, Martin Voorhees, had been injured on it in a rockslide years ago and doubted if it had been climbed. We parked a mile in on the Victory Bible Camp road, went up through nice open aspen, and found many leaf fossils in the limestone of the lower portion of the mountain. The upper part is a good reddish igneous rock providing enjoyable friction on our SE ridge route. We were on top in two hours and five minutes. Much as we enjoy first ascents, it is a greater thrill to find an old record on a summit. The rock block summit was cairnless, but something glittered on an earthquake shattered ledge below. It was a stainless Marble's matchbox, patented 1900, with the following record inside:

"This 30th day of July 1955 climbed to peak Goat trail route 4 hours ascent; gully between two peaks. (rough going) Patrick D Cohen Joel O Bardwell"
"We got here also at 4.00 started at 1.30 on Aug. 4 1955
Dick Norton Keith R. Shepard"

We put this old record with one of our own in a new canister in a small cairn and descended by easy scrambling on the south face.

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MISCELLANIE

Art Davidson and Mairiis Kilcher were married on May 29th at the van der Laan house on the hill. Each friend brought some poems or thoughts of their own choosing, which were read aloud informally. One message was given on the bagpipes by Sparks Jewett before the wedding feast.

The Crow Pass cabin was visited on June 11 by the van der Laans, Dave Johnston, Karen Courtwright and Fialoeta. The cabin was filthy and was cleaned up. Please call Hans van der Laan, 277-4251, before trips are made to the cabin so that he may tell you what things need to be taken up there. Hans suggests that firewood be carried up on all trips from the old mines below.

FOR SALE: one pair Hochland double boots, size 7. Call Grace Hoeman, 277-7871.

A second ascent of Whiteout was made on June 11 by Paul Crews, George Wichman and Lowell Thomas Jr., who flew in and then skied.

Please send information on all first ascents and other significant climbs to Scree for easy reference by future climbers and/or historians.

Steffen and Marge Naagoe report from Denmark that they ascended the highest point in Denmark where they enjoyed the view before getting back in their car to descend.

Mountain silhouette in May Scree was Wolverine.

On 30 May Grace and Vin Hoeman visited the SE summit of Raggedtop Mountain, 5200'+. On 4 June Grace and Vin traversed East Twin Peak, 5873', up the east ridge and down the South gully, this latter route having been used by two unknown climbers the day before. The summit cairn needs rebuilding and the register needs replacement.

A party led by Jack Henry is planning a four week climb of Mt Blackburn via the southwest buttress starting from Chitina about June 23rd. Their fourth man had to drop, and they are desperately in need of a good fourth man. Cost from Chitina about \$200. Write to: Jack Henry, 1017 Jonas Ave, Albany, Oregon, 97321.

Space is available in Scree for want ads of all sorts.

Don't forget Boyd Everett's program on St Elias and Logan to be given at Willow Park on Friday, June 16th, at 8 p.m. (Bring folding chairs for the evening, if possible.)